



First Family

We welcome all people... are guided by the teachings and unconditional love of Jesus... are inspired to participate as faithful disciples of Christ.

January 2021

Have a Blessed New Year!



**First United
Methodist Church**

230 E. Skyline Parkway
Duluth, MN 55811
www.fumcduluth.com



Our First Family

Lighting Our Church

A donation to light our church the first week of January was made in loving memory of Dorothy Aubut. Dorothy is Sharon and Patrick Alexander's mother/mother-in-law and Pastor Jeanine's grandmother. The family is so thankful to Linda Wiig and her team of lay pastors who visited her often over many years. This donation was made by friends of Dorothy. "Dorothy lit up our world and lives on in our hearts."

A gift to light the church the week after Christmas was made in honor and memory of Lucy June Brummer. Lucy is Carrie and Brian Moe's oldest daughter's (Sandra and Charlie) daughter, their first granddaughter. First great-granddaughter to Dick and Linda Peterson! Lucy was born December 13, 2011 and died February 28, 2012. She lives on in the heart of all who love her!

Thank you, thank you to the many who took the time to give me a beautiful send-off in our church gardens. I felt so loved.

~Verna Porter

On the Journey With You

Happy and blessed New Year! I can hardly wait until we can gather again in person. It will be sometime this year when it is safe and people have had vaccinations. What a joyful reunion that will be! In the meantime, we are blessed to have worship on YouTube. Those who can't join us on YouTube receive the sermons either by mail or email, so if you need the weekly sermon either of those ways, please call and let the church office know. We love you and want you to be spiritually fed.

One of the hymns of the season is "In the Bleak Mid-Winter." This year it has taken on new meaning to me as this pandemic, the death of my grandmother, and family illness have caused bleakness. Read a few verses of this meaningful poem written by Christina Rossetti:

In the bleak mid-winter
Frosty wind made moan;
Earth stood hard as iron,
Water like a stone;
Snow had fallen, snow on snow,
Snow on snow,
In the bleak mid-winter
Long ago.

Our God, heaven cannot hold Him
Nor earth sustain,
Heaven and earth shall flee away
When He comes to reign:
In the bleak mid-winter
A stable-place sufficed
The Lord God Almighty —
Jesus Christ.

What can I give Him,
Poor as I am? —

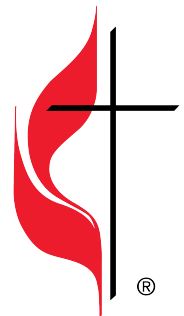
First Family

First United Methodist Church

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Next First Family deadline: **January 20**
Submit to connect@fumcduluth.com



fumcduluth.com

If I were a Shepherd
I would bring a lamb;
If I were a Wise Man
I would do my part, —
Yet what I can I give Him, —
Give my heart.

There are seasons in life that have a sense of bleakness to them, and yet out of that bleakness can sometimes emerge beauty, meaning, and depth. I pray that as we journey together out of the bleakness of events of 2020 and this pandemic, we will emerge stronger, more faith-filled, loving people.

The last paragraph of the poem asks a question, "What can I give him?" and then gives this answer: "Give my heart!" May each of us find ways to give our hearts by offering hope, healing, help, and encouragement to others. When we do this, we too get a gift. When we offer kindness and compassion to others in a variety of ways, not only does it bless the heart of God, but it blesses our spirits—and we find meaning and possibility even in bleakness.

Looking forward to our continued journey together!

Blessings,
~Pastor Jeanine

Bishop Ough Retires



Read Bishop Ough's letter by going to the [Minnesota UMC website](#).

Worship in January

Out of an abundance of caution and care and wanting to do no harm, we will not return to in-person worship until it is safe and healthy to do so. Thanks for being flexible and keeping worship a priority.

During January we will continue to worship online on YouTube every Sunday morning at 10am. The service can be watched any time after 10am Sunday morning, but we encourage as many of us as possible to watch together as a community of faith. Please make worship a soul destination.

Sunday, January 3—Bishop David Bard will be preaching. His sermon is called "Step by Step, Grace Upon Grace." As of January 1, David is the interim bishop of the Minnesota Area of the UMC for one year. He takes this on along with his duties in Michigan.

Sunday, January 10—Lee Stuart, the Executive Director of CHUM, will preach, giving us an update of CHUM's work during this pandemic. We will also update you on our Advent/Christmas giving.

Sunday, January 17—Human Relations Sunday. Our Racial Justice Action Committee is helping with this special service.

Sunday, January 24—The sermon title is "Driven by Vision." We will reflect on what God has for us next and our purpose.

Sunday, January 31—TBD

Winter Book Study

In the fall of 2019, a rather large group of FUMC members and friends gathered for the study of the Enneagram. There is still interest in this fascinating topic, so we have planned a follow-up book group to meet virtually from mid-January through mid-March of 2021. Would you like to join us?

The planning group is previewing two possible books and will decide on one of them in the next couple of weeks. Zoom meetings will be scheduled for Tuesday evenings starting either January 12 or 19, depending on how soon the books can arrive. If you don't have a lot of information about the Enneagram, no need to worry—our first session or two will provide enough background information to get you started.

Sessions will be facilitated by Rev. MaryAnne Korsch and friends. If you'd like more information, please reach out by email or phone/text (Maryanne.korsch@gmail.com or 218-343-8813). This would be a great way to learn and grow through the dark winter days. All are welcome!

EarthKeepers

Ten Ways to Care for God's Creation

Submitted by EarthKeeper Chuck Campbell

John Wesley began a New Year tradition of leading people in renewing their covenant with God. At the very beginning, God gave us a garden to tend and till. Now is the time to renew your commitment to be good stewards of our Earth. Choose one new thing you can do throughout the year to care for creation.

1. Recycle your Christmas cards—carefully! Plain paper Christmas cards can go straight into the paper recycling bin, no questions asked. But shiny cards printed on photo paper and ones that have metallic embossing or glitter are no-no's. However, look closely: even they may have a half that is free of the contaminants and so can be safely recycled. Before you dispose of the cards, take an extra minute to reread them and give thanks for your friends.

2. Make a green resolution for the New Year. Ask your family for ideas of what you want to do for God's creation during the coming year. In your discussion, celebrate the steps you are already taking, individually and collectively. Choose at least one new thing you will do together. Consider adding one other action for each family member, even the younger ones. Talk also about how you can support one another in realizing your goals. Hint: Blaming is not helpful!

3. Paul talked about food choices: "All things are lawful,' but not all things are beneficial" (1 Corinthians 10:23). His point is that Christians are to exercise their own rights in light of concern for others. Agricultural practices in raising beef, especially, are contributing to climate change. **Try a plant-based burger.** What you choose to eat is a spiritual decision.

4. You may not think of Martin Luther King, Jr., in relationship to the environment, but corporate and governmental practices that despoil the land or water affect the poor and people of color disproportionately more than richer and whiter communities. King stood against racism, including environmental racism. **Caring for creation also means working for justice.**

page 4

5. January is trade-out month, going through the old to make room for the new, especially from Christmas. **Spare your gently-used toys, clothes, and household goods from the landfill, and give them new life with people who need them.** Visit givebackbox.com for easy-to-make-a-difference instructions. Note that you will be reusing the shipping boxes too! Good for all!

6. Are you investing in your values? Scrutinize your portfolio, especially investments that are lumped together. If you find your money is going to support fossil fuels, **change to supporting sustainable alternatives—solar and wind**, for example. Money talks, and corporations listen. Invest in the future, not the past.

7. Are you a fan of the convenience of the clips that make it easy to keep a bag closed? Love the convenience but hate the plastic? Go classic! **Switch to wooden clothespin clips.** A package of 36 costs about the same as a package of 4 plastic specialty clips—10 cents vs. one dollar for each! Good for your wallet and much better for Earth.

8. Change the light bulbs, and 9, Change the laws! Every small action we do on behalf of creation helps, but the key driver of the climate crisis—burning of fossil fuels—can only be stopped through legislation. Write letters or emails, sign petitions, or call. Push the people in power to act on behalf of the planet, the future, and their constituents.

10. This winter, welcome the sun, God's natural heater. Conversely, shut out the cold. If you have drapes or blinds, open and close them at appropriate times. You'll save money on your heating bill and also reduce energy emissions that unnaturally heat up the Earth.

The United Methodist Creation Justice Movement is providing these Tips as a tool to equip church members, families, and individuals to respond to God's call to care for creation and do justice with our neighbors.

For more about the UM Creation Justice Movement, go to umcreationjustice.org.



Advent/Christmas Mission Project

Thank you for your generous giving this season! We gave over 150 toys that were distributed through the Union Gospel mission during Christmas. We haven't yet counted up all the boxes of cereal and food, or all the hats, mittens, gloves, coats, socks, and underwear you donated. We will be delivering them to CHUM soon and will report back to you on our giving. Thanks also to those who gave financial gifts to this project and special Christmas end-of-year giving to your church. Your generosity is amazing and beautiful—and it makes a difference!



Thursday Zoom Sessions

Every Thursday at 10am, Pastor Jeanine hosts a Zoom meeting open to all. This is a time to visit with one another, hear church updates, and share Scripture and prayers. Come anytime, come once, or come every week. This is an open and flexible opportunity for connection. Link and meeting number: • Zoom Meeting: zoom.us/j/915188407 • Meeting ID: 915 188 407

Family News

Wednesday Night Programming for Our Young People

Wednesday night 6:30-7:30pm via Zoom continues!

- Confirmation meets every week
- Youth Group for 6th-8th graders meets 2nd and 4th Wednesdays
- Tweens, 3rd-5th graders, meet 1st Wednesday of every month

Sunday School

We have Sunday school each week for K-12. There are packets to pick up at the FUMC east parking lot entrance in the blue bin. Sunday School lessons include a lesson, some music with Cynthia, a sweet little video from the Whirl curriculum, and directions on how to do one's pamphlet. These lessons are designed to be able to do without parental assistance. Give it a try! Pamphlets are new in January. Don't forget to pick up your packet! The video will be delivered to your email box on Sunday morning, posted in the comments section of our Sunday morning YouTube service, and in Pastor Jeanine's weekly email. If you have not received emails from me but would like to, please let me know at families@fumcduluth.com.

~Jojo Coffin-Langdon

Racial Justice Action Committee

The Racial Justice Action Committee meets on the 3rd Monday of every month from 8-9pm. There is no commitment requirement to service on this ongoing committee. Come when you can, take a break when you need to. You are welcome as you are, and your presence is valued. Contact Jojo Coffin-Langdon at families@fumcduluth.com for questions or with a desire to be involved. "The Racial Justice Action Committee's mission is to be a bold witness in anti-racism work and to provide action steps toward individual and systemic racial justice."

For January, join me in the [21-Day Racial Equity Habit-Building Challenge](#).

~Jojo Coffin-Langdon

Mount Royal Round Up

CHUM will be the featured nonprofit in January 2021 for round-up at the register at Mount Royal Fine Foods. You can help CHUM this January by shopping at Mount Royal and rounding up your total at the register.



From Our Faith Community Nurse

Greetings to All

I'm sure that most of us around the world will be glad that this past year is over. Struggles, illness, loneliness, disappointments, separation, deaths, grief, unemployment, families and businesses on the brink, violence, racism, natural disasters, health care workers at their wits' end, loss of connection, and on and on. But then again, we may have also experienced a focus on those who are desperate and lonely, a show of compassion, or maybe we have evaluated our own goals and dreams, prayed more, discovered new personal abilities and the use of them, or connected with family members far and near even more often via our electronic devices.

Let us especially thank all those scientists who have collaborated around the world to work on a new mRNA-type vaccine, which promises hope to the world. The mRNA vaccines do not use live virus and the technique can be produced faster and be standardized. Let us also thank each and every one who has followed the guidelines of mask-wearing, staying home as much as possible, hand washing, and distancing. Let us all pray that those who do not follow these guidelines will do so. And let us pray for our Washington leaders to give out accurate information and inform us in a timely manner. Let us look to the New Year with more hope for a more effective treatment for COVID-19 and a vaccine that will help to stop the spread.

Don't be afraid to reach out for help if you need it. Share how you feel with a trusted friend or pastor. We can live with fear and still move forward. We can be kind to ourselves. I remember a passage from a Joyce Rupp book talking about how hope can be kept alive. She tells a story about a shepherd boy who had to spend a night on a mountain, and it was freezing cold. He had nothing but light-weight clothing on. He survived the night and returned to his village. The people were amazed that he had come through the ordeal and asked him how he had done it. He told them that he had seen a fire on another mountain and that fire triggered a dream that kept him warm. That fire gave him strength. Let us also experience that same fire to give us strength as we journey through this new year. Let us remember to take deep breaths always throughout the day, as this can help to induce a calmer mental state. Schedule a time for exercise. Walk outside whenever possible, do movement when washing dishes, or exercise your legs and arms while sitting watching TV. A saying attributed to the 15th Earl of Derby, Edward Stanley, is "Those who think they have not time for bodily exercise will sooner or later have to find time for illness."

Since we just celebrated the Gift of Jesus, how can each of us

continue to share the spirit of the season? Let us give thanks to the Lord and pray for those who struggle to find reasons for thanks. Stay safe, everyone.

Blessings,

~ Linda Wiig

Darlene Brown Honored

Longtime FUMC member E. Darlene Brown was honored in early December by UMD's Society of Prometheans, which recognizes fine arts alumni who have demonstrated the passion, commitment, and talent to achieve the highest levels of excellence in their art and profession. Darlene has been a loyal and enthusiastic supporter of theater and dance concert productions at UMD since the mid-1970s and is the longest-standing season subscriber for departmental performances on record. She has been an avid supporter of myriad student performers, designers, and directors, and an unofficial surrogate parent for many student performers whose own parents were unable to attend their performances. She continues to enjoy both the opening night soirées and meeting the casts at the post-performance receptions.

Health care workers:

We see you.

We thank you.

We're staying home for you.



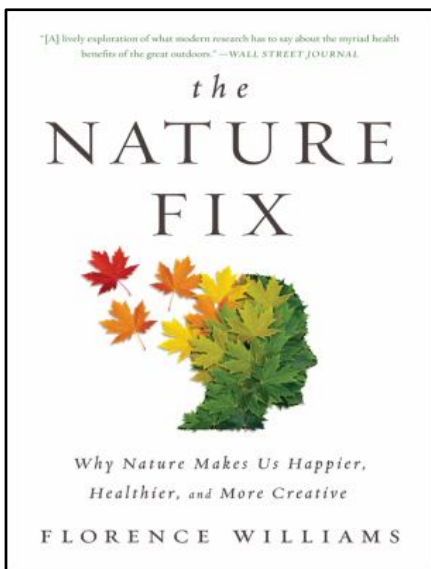
EarthKeepers–Nature

By Naomi Yaeger
UMC EarthKeeper

Spending time outside in nature can heal you, both physically and mentally.

During COVID lockdown, Terry and I took many walks with our dog. We noticed budding leaves and flowers, then spring arrived. In the summer, as Terry continued to work from home, we continued to walk. Soon autumn arrived. The same leaves, which were buds, were now turning yellow or orange or red, and falling.

In December I donated to the Nature Conservancy. With my donation they invited me to attend a nearby event. The closest one I could find was a Zoom presentation titled "Why Nature Makes Us



Happier, Healthier, and More Creative." The featured speaker is Florence Williams, author of *The Nature Fix*. She's also written several magazine articles such as "Is Your Noisy Neighborhood Slowly Killing You?" in *Mother Jones*, "Fight the Winter Blues, Find a Dose of Nature" in the *Wall Street Journal*, and "Take Two Hours of Pine Forest and Call Me in the Morning," *Outside Magazine*.

According to *Outside*, "Florence Williams travels to the deep woods of Japan, where researchers are

backing up the theory that nature can lower your blood pressure, fight off depression—and even prevent cancer."

The Japanese are seriously researching how "forest bathing" affects health. This reminds me of the Bible stories of Jesus spending time in nature when he had a big decision to make. I recall specific significant transitions in life when I've spent time in nature.

The COVID shutdowns spurred Terry, our dog, and me to walk nature trails near our home. We feel better after a walk.

Don't tell Terry, but he's getting his Christmas wish—walking sticks.

Learn the scientific reasons for feeling better with time in nature: read Florence Williams' *The Nature Fix*, or visit her website at FlorenceWilliams.com.

Welcome Desk

Happy New Year, everyone!

Are you familiar with umc.com? It is the website of the United Methodist Church denomination, not to be confused with our own local fumcduluth.com website, which is great. Just go to umc.com. It opens to "The People of The United Methodist Church." From there you can choose from "What We Believe," "How We Serve," "Ways We Grow," "Who We Are," "New To the UMC?," or "Donate." Each page is full of information and ideas.

We get to enjoy music every Sunday during online worship from our wonderful musicians here at FUMC. The umc.com website also has virtual music from the Worldwide Choir, with hundreds of UMC members from around the globe singing together. The Christmas medley was a blessing!

You can sign up for a bi-monthly e-newsletter, "United Methodist NOW — Inspiration for daily living." Do you have a question about our church? Check out "ASK the UMC." There is much more to explore, and all in all, this website has a lot to offer.

As this new year begins, please invite others to worship with us. When the time comes and we return to our building, it will be wonderful to welcome new faces that are already involved and active within our church family. Remember we are the church with a welcome for everybody, always.

~Mary Giese, director of Welcoming and Hospitality



First United Methodist Church

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From YouTube

2020



First United Methodist Church, Duluth, MN

Your music was the soundtrack that got us through the year! 2020 went off-script, but you didn't skip a beat when you uploaded 2087 minutes of YouTube content. Let's reflect on 2020 and celebrate the ways you kept fans grooving!

#MyYearInReview

You joined YouTube 272 days ago. From your first video upload until now, your fans have smashed that like button 368 times!

Your community's growing—they've left 3,330 comments and shared your videos 149 times.

2020 by the Numbers

You made 2020 your own. This past year, you gained 225 subscribers and 17,145 new views.

Viewers spent 364,428 minutes watching your videos in 2020!

368 likes in 2020? Way to end the year on a high note!!!

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