



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.

March 2021

What you can find
inside:

- Our First Family
- Pastor's Column
- EarthKeepers
- COVID Update
- FUMC Musicians
- March Worship

**First United
Methodist Church**

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

– March –

Hope • Promise • Rebirth





Our First Family

Dear Church Family,

Thank you for your prayers, cards, and condolences in Howie's passing into eternal life with Christ. You could say he now has his angel wings AND he is among the welcoming committee as well. Howie and I were totally blessed with being married 36 3/4 years. All those years were happy ones. We worked together as a team. He overcame many health challenges during the 36 3/4 years. This last challenge he had no strength to overcome.

I am assured he is with Christ and maybe fishing! Thank you all for your thoughtfulness. God is good. With Praises for Him,
~Barb Lundin

Carole J. Westlund, a lifelong Duluth resident, age 84, died at McCarthy Manor after a short illness. She was the daughter of Lawrence and Florence Sink Westlund,



formerly of the Riverside community. She attended FUMC and was a part of our driving ministry; Dave and other drivers picked her up from her home at McCarthy Manor on many Sundays to attend our worship service.

On the Journey With You

A Year of Unprecedented Difference: Thoughts on the Pandemic

by Kelby Werner

Believe it or not, we in America will soon pass the date which marks the one-year anniversary of the start of the pandemic at home. For those unaware, this date is March 11, and as you already know, this date signifies the time when there was much change in everyone's lives. Masks appeared, work and school were moved online, and isolation for the safety of friends, family, and fellow citizens became the norm. As the year moved along slowly, the tragedy of the pandemic rose with an increase in illness, job loss, and death. At the time of writing, the CDC reports that 482,536 fellow Americans have died due to complications from COVID-19. I know that we are all holding their families in prayer.

Throughout all of this change, there has been one word used consistently during this pandemic: "unprecedented." But now it has been a year, and we live in a world where the unprecedented is the precedent. It is important to remember that even in the darkest of clouds, there can exist a silver lining, and the COVID-19 pandemic is no exception. For example, the friendships that were created or renewed through use of the phone and internet. Our society's working world is set to shift, with the rise of teleworking meaning fewer commutes and people on the roads. In terms of knowledge gained, our leaders have learned what it takes to combat a pandemic and can use that knowledge for future threats. For churches in particular, there is an opportunity for a bright silver lining, our own church included. The move for churches to provide online worship means that churches are now set and primed to expand their ministry online through live-streaming. This means that an individual church's reach can now expand beyond its immediate area to a global scale. These are only a few examples of

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possible silver linings. Please take a moment to examine your own life and the good that, no matter how small, has come from this "unprecedented" time.

The Bible tells us in Hebrew 12: 1-3:

"Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart."

These verses show that Jesus also faced adversity and how he persevered when facing seemingly insurmountable odds. Jesus persevered, and because of that, the good that came out of his adversity was able to grow and eventually lead to the creation of the very church that I am writing for today! The end of this pandemic is in sight. We need to follow Jesus' example and persevere, continue social distancing, wearing a mask, getting vaccinated, and finish the race, taking the silver linings from this dark time and using them to create the future we want to live in.

On the journey with you,
~Kelby Werner
Office Assistant/Pastoral Intern

Worship in March

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

Sunday, March 7 Sermon: Love – The Cost and Impact
Holy Communion

Sunday, March 14 Sermon: Love – Means and Reveals All

Sunday, March 21 Sermon: Love – Brings Us Forward Together

Sunday, March 28 Sermon: Love – Brings Hope and Healing
Palm/Passion Sunday

When Will We Gather Again in Person for Worship?

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. We follow the Minnesota Annual Conference recommendations as well as our own COVID



policy in making these decisions. Currently Bishop David Bard and the Minnesota Annual Conference continue to recommend online worship. Your church leadership agrees with this recommendation.

At least through May, we will continue to do recorded worship. Should many people get vaccinated and numbers continue to drop, it is possible we could provide opportunities for small groups to gather together to watch YouTube worship at the church on Sundays in May. As summer arrives, we hope to offer some form of outdoor in-person worship and will likely move to livestreaming from our Sanctuary. No firm decisions have been made as we continue to respond to the situation at hand.

Thank you to all staff for making recorded worship so meaningful. A special thanks to Bill Alexander and Alex Flinner for filming and creating the worship videos each week. Thank YOU to the entire congregation for being flexible and keeping worship a priority. We believe we are having well over 300 people worship with us each week and are reaching people not only in the Twin Ports but throughout the United States.

Bazaar Thank You

This was a year of firsts for many organizations, and UMW was not alone in making a COVID decision to cancel our annual bazaar that has been in place for years. In thinking of how that would impact the areas of the community that serve women, children, and youth, the suggestion was made that we ask church members to make a monetary donation if they also could feel our concern. The congregation came through to the tune of \$2,060!

We thank you for answering the call for help. We have given \$1,950 in gifts to the organizations—just another example of how the people of the Coppertop walk in the footsteps of Jesus. Bless you all.

~The United Methodist Women of First Church

Welcome Sandy

Sandra (Sandy) Smith is our new office/finance manager, beginning her ministry with us on February 16. She has significant experience in day-to-day operations, accounting, database management, budgeting, marketing, staff supervision, website management, and property management. She is also a master gardener. Sandy and her husband live in Duluth and have two grown sons who also live in Duluth. Please welcome Sandy warmly. Her email address is admin@fumcduluth.com.

Thank You, Doug

After nearly ten years of directing traffic during the Ruby's Pantry monthly food distributions, Doug Buell is hanging up his hockey stick and retiring from this volunteer service. Your work has been greatly appreciated.

EarthKeepers

You Are Miraculously Made

by Naomi Yaeger
UMC EarthKeeper

When I was a girl, the first television advertisements for menstrual products upset many people. The public didn't think this should be mentioned on TV or at all, especially in mixed company. We had the "Modess... because" ad campaigns. Now, actress Amy Schumer is "turning question marks into periods," on the web and TV.

There is something called "period poverty." That is when a family can't afford menstrual products. In third world countries, girls drop out of school when their first period arrives. What did American women do years ago when they got their periods? Our grandmothers used fabric menstrual pads. Would that have been gross or embarrassing? It was just part of life.

Our mothers used manufactured pads they attached to a belt worn around the waist. Pads attached to panties with self-adhesive were considered a great improvement. They, and insertable tampons, were, and still are, an option.

Now many tampons have plastic applicators, which are immediately thrown in the trash. The packaging and the lining of pads is often plastic also.

About eight years ago my daughter discovered a reusable menstrual product branded "Party in My Pants." This is a woman-owned company that makes menstrual pads and liners. They are headquartered in Ashland, WI and make their products "with love." (partypantspads.com)

There is also a medical-grade silicone device called a menstrual cup. It is inserted near the cervix and catches the flow. There are different sizes of cups depending on the flow. The initial investment for one of these, like the Diva Cup, is \$30.

Think of the savings if you are spending \$10 a month on pads and tampons. That's \$120 a year. The cups and pads last at least 7-10 years.

Not only will you save money, you will be using less plastic.

To paraphrase Psalm 139:14:

You are amazingly and miraculously made. God's works are miraculous.

Thank You to Nancy Eaton

Nancy has served as interim Office Manager and is in the process of training Sandy Smith. Nancy's love for our church, and willingness to fill this important role on several occasions, is a wonderful gift. We are so thankful for her dedication to her church, her great skills, and her loving heart. Nancy, we love and appreciate YOU! Please join me in thanking Nancy!

~Pastor Jeanine

March FoodShare

The largest grassroots food and fund drive in the state, the Minnesota FoodShare March Campaign, brings together various community organizations, businesses, and faith communities to help stock nearly 300 food shelves statewide. During the 2020 March Campaign, more than \$21.5 million and over 7.4 million pounds for food shelf items were donated by Minnesota food shelves. To date, Minnesota FoodShare has distributed over \$18 million to March Campaign-participating food shelves via the Minnesota FoodShare FoodFund. One hundred percent of donations received by Minnesota Foodshare during the March Campaign go into the FoodFund and are distributed to March Campaign-participating food shelves. Minnesota FoodShare envisions a future where all Minnesotans have access to healthy food, and no one struggles with food insecurity. The March Campaign addresses these issues directly, and we invite you to join efforts and advocate for long-term solutions to food insecurity and poverty in our communities.

Please consider dropping off non-perishable foods at the church in

—continued on last page

From Our Faith Community Nurse

More Vaccine Sign-up Information:

New as of Feb. 18, the Vaccine Connector program has launched. You can access this site at [MN.gov/covid19/vaccine/connector](https://mn.gov/covid19/vaccine/connector) or call 833-431-2053.

When adults 65 or older sign up for the Vaccine Connector, they will be entered into the random selection process for the state's Community Vaccination Program sites operating in Minneapolis, Duluth, and Rochester. If selected, they will be told by text, email, or landline by the company that runs those sites, Vault Health.

Minnesotans will need to provide contact information, demographic data, medical history, and employment information to sign up. But as stated in the live presentation, the medical history really only requires your date of birth, but submitting more medical data, especially if you have underlying conditions, may move you up in priority.

Adults 65 and older who already registered through the COVID-19 Vaccine Pilot Program or the COVID-19 Community Vaccination Program do not need to re-submit their information.

Educators and childcare providers who already completed the Minnesota COVID-19 Vaccine Education and Child Care survey do not need to complete the Vaccine Connector form or re-submit their information.

On a positive note, the new information is that ALL Americans should be vaccinated by the end of July, due to the purchase of more vaccine. Let's hope for no more vaccine delays due to weather.

Please remember that even though you may have had your first dose of vaccine, you are **not** able to go without your mask and social distancing and hand washing. That first dose should protect you from more severe symptoms of COVID should you contract it. Your second dose (after about two weeks) should protect from five months to a year.

Please remember if you do get COVID symptoms and test positive, call your health provider to see if you are eligible to receive monoclonal antibodies.

As Psalms 46:1 says, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Prayer is a place of refuge and rescue when the world and its sorrows surround us."

Blessings to you in this time of Lent.

~Linda Wiig

Meet the Musicians

In an effort to keep us all connected and to let you know who has made and continues to make that beautiful music for worship, we are launching a limited "Meet the Musicians" series. Our musicians have been asked a series of questions in order to share information with you so you can get a better glimpse into their lives! Maybe, just maybe, you will be so overjoyed with some responses that you will just HAVE to join us! (If that is the case, contact Velda Bell.) Enjoy!

The musicians were asked these five questions:

1. What musical groups have you been a part of over the years (and for how many years) at the Coppertop and/or Chester Park?
2. Of what group(s) are you currently a member?
3. I enjoy these groups because:
4. Some of my best memories include:
5. Anything else you'd like to add/include?

Leah Hulst



- I've been with Tapestry since 2012 (?) and have sung with the choir on occasion over the years. I was also in the choir at Lester Park UMC, and with Corey and Rick helped start the praise band there as well.
- I am in Tapestry.
- I enjoy Tapestry because I love making music, and I love the people I make music with!
- Best memories include traveling and performing together for the UMC Conference.
- There is something magical that happens between musicians and listeners, and when done with love it's magnificent!

Tom Wiig



- The only group that I have been, and still am a member of, is the Sanctuary Choir since shortly after we joined the church in 1982. There have been some rather long gaps in attendance when my work was at its busiest, but I always came back. I think an interesting aspect to look at is the number of directors we have had over the years since I joined—Allen Downs, Ray Comstock, Mark Ankarlo, Katherine Green (one year fill-in music MFA from UMD, and Miss Minnesota; attendance in the men's sections went up during that year, ha ha), Chris Persons, Warren Friesen, Jim Olm, Mark Overland, Kay Strand, Richard Peterson, Ollie Houx, Mary Whitlock, and, of course, Mike Goodlet.
- I've always enjoyed these groups for the music and the friendship.

- Best memories include holiday services, special concerts, and singing Randall Thompson's "Allelulia" for Gene Halverson's funeral.

- My choral background goes back to beginning with a great high school director, good college experience, and membership in a wonderful choir in Omaha for five years from 1971 to 1976—The Voices of Mel Olson, when we performed four concerts a season with the spring concert always under a guest conductor (people like Norman Luboff, Roger Wagner, and twice with John Rutter). What a fantastic experience that five years was, doing mixes of masterworks and popular works.

"Music is to the Soul what words are to the mind."

Sue (Draxten) Marquardt

- I have been in the Youth Choir (3 years), Jr. High Bell Choir (3 years, before it had a cool name), High School Bell Choir (3 years, before it had a cool name), Strikepoint (original member, 14 years), and Cast in Bronze (3 years).



- I am currently in Cast in Bronze.

- I enjoy these groups because ringing bells is FUN! I enjoy making music and working hard, yet having fun and laughing with my friends.

- Some of my best memories include:
 - Traveling to Japan when I was 17 (don't do the math!): my first International Symposium at the base of Mt. Fuji; being in Nagasaki on the 41st anniversary of the atomic bombing; and meeting Toshiko, who first was my pen pal and now is my friend. She has visited me three times, once from Japan and twice after she moved to the US. I visited her in New York two years ago.
 - Traveling across the US and Canada (often in an un-air-conditioned van), Japan, and Great Britain, seeing many places, making amazing music, having incredible experiences, and

meeting so many wonderful people.

—Ringing at Pearl Harbor Naval Station on the Fourth of July

—Blowing the audience away in 1984 at our first concert at the Area Festival... 10 members and no director, which was unheard of at the time!

—Laughter, laughter, and more laughter.

- Those of you who have been around long enough may remember that I was an incredibly shy child and teenager. (To those of you who didn't know me then: I know! I know! It seems like I'm making it up! But it's true!) At the age of 12, I was strong-armed into joining the Jr. High Bell Choir, led by Bill Alexander, which ultimately led to being a member of Strikepoint and discovering how being a member of a group can change your life. As I created music and traveled with Strikepoint, my confidence grew. Now I am a teacher, speaking in front of people every day. I have taken leadership roles both in my professional life and my church life. If I hadn't been a part of the bell program at FUMC, I truly believe my life would be completely different. Thank you, Bill, for touching so many people and changing so many lives over the years. I love you!



First United Methodist Church

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Tom King Appointed to Love of Learning Award Committee

Dr. Thomas Wayne King, author, Wisconsin Writers Association board of directors member, and UW-EauClaire professor emeritus of communication sciences and disorders, was recently appointed by Dr. Dan Sandweiss, President of the academic honor society Phi Kappa Phi, to the national PKP Love of Learning Award Committee for the 2020-2022 biennium. King was originally inducted into Phi Kappa Phi at UW-Madison in 1969 as a junior-standing student, and is a life member of the PKP honor society. Tom was an active member of the UW-Eau Claire chapter of Phi Kappa Phi during his academic career on campus, and served one term as UWEC chapter president.

Tom and Debbi King live in Solon Springs, WI, and are active FUMC members. Debbi is also a life member of PKP, the oldest all-discipline academic honor society in the U.S., established in 1897. The PKP motto is "Let the love of learning rule humanity."

—March FoodShare, continued from page 5

the bins right inside the church doors, 9am-3pm Monday-Friday every week in March. Making cash donations is especially encouraged: with the help of partners, local food shelves can purchase up to \$7 of groceries for every \$1 donated. Thank you for caring for those who are hungry. If YOU need food, please talk with Pastor Jeanine, and we will see to it that you are well-stocked with healthy food.

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