



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.

July 2022



**Big Wave Dave
and the Ripples**

Both Happening in July!

STRIKEPOINT

Handbell Ensemble

In Concert

**First United
Methodist Church**

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





Our First Family

Dear Coppertop Community,
Wow! Thank you SO MUCH for your love and generosity for Harbor House! We are extremely blessed and thankful for the donations and continued support!
All our love,
~Chelsea and HHCS Staff

Thank you to all the people who volunteered on June 4 to polish all 19 octaves (233 bells) of our bronze handbells. We had 17 show up for the three-hour session. There may also have been some food involved.
~Bill Alexander

Thank you, Positively 3rd Street Bakery!
An extra special shout-out to Teresa and the bakers at Positively 3rd Street Bakery for generously donating their time and ingredients to make pie dough for us this year so we could complete our pledge of 250 pies for the CHUM Rhubarb Festival.



Thank you and blessings to all who helped us meet our pledge of 250 pies for the Rhubarb Festival. We had over 30 volunteers ages nine to over 80. From generous rhubarb patches to makers, bakers,

On the Journey With You

I am writing this the day after our Blessing of the Animals service that took place in our church parking lot (see attached photos). It was a wonderful evening. It had rained throughout the day, but about an hour before the service, the sun came out and the weather was perfect for the event. About 55 people and 20 animals gathered for the event.

This year we had a special twist: the Superior Police Department, the Duluth Police Department, and the St. Louis County Sheriff's Department each sent a police dog and handler. We had the opportunity to watch a demonstration of a police dog at work and to pray for/bless the animals and their human partners in their work to serve and protect us. Every animal present (plus pictures of pets people brought) was blessed and received a certificate of blessing. It was fun to meet the beloved pets of our community and to see how much they and their humans love each other.

The animals of God's creation inhabit the skies, the earth, and the sea. They share in the human existence and have a beautiful part in human life. God, who confers gifts on all living things, has often used the service of animals or made them reminders of the gifts of salvation.


Animals were saved from the flood and afterwards made a part of the covenant with Noah (Genesis 9:9-10)... The paschal lamb recalls the Passover sacrifice and the deliverance from slavery in Egypt (Exodus 12:3-14)... A giant fish saved Jonah (Jonah 2:1-10)... Ravens brought bread to Elijah (1 Kings 17:6)... Animals were included in the repentance of Nineveh (Jonah 3:7)... Animals share in Christ's redemption of all God's creation. We therefore invoke God's blessing on our animals with whom we share the earth. As we do so, let us praise the Creator and thank God for setting us as stewards over all the creatures of the earth.

First Family

First United Methodist Church
230 E. Skyline Parkway, Duluth, MN 55811
218-727-5021 Info@fumcduluth.com

Pastor: [Jeanine Alexander](#)
Editor: [Bill Alexander](#)

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

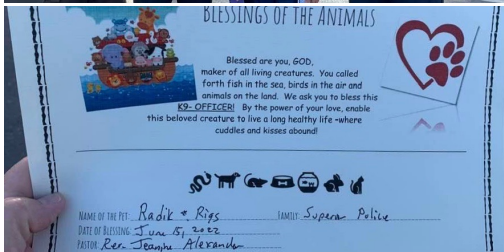


fumcduluth.com

In Genesis 1:20-25, God said, “I command the ocean to be full of living creatures, and I command birds to fly above the earth.” So God made the giant sea monsters and all the living creatures that swim in the ocean. God also made every kind of bird. God looked at what had done, and it was good. Then God gave the living creatures a blessing—God told the ocean creatures to live everywhere in the ocean and the birds to live everywhere on earth. Evening came and then morning—that was the fifth day. God said, “I command the earth to give life to all kinds of tame animals, wild animals, and reptiles.” And that’s what happened. God made every one of them. Then God looked at what had been done, and it was good.

Thank you, God, for the gift of animals and the blessings they bring to our lives. May we care for this blessing with deep love and gratitude.

On the journey with you!
~Pastor Jeanine



Worship in July

During July we will continue to worship in person in our Sanctuary every Sunday at 10am AND online on YouTube every Sunday morning at 10am. The service can also be watched anytime after 10am Sunday morning. The service on YouTube is a livestream of the service happening in the Sanctuary. Please make worship a summer soul destination this year!

July 3 – Holy Communion. Pastor Jeanine will continue our MythBusters Revisited series by exploring the saying, “God Won’t Give You More Than You Can Handle.”

July 10 – Pastor Jeanine will lead us in a sermon on anger, and we will welcome new members.

July 17 – Our own Geoff Bell will share the sermon with us, and Pastor Jeanine will lead worship.

July 24 – Rev. MaryAnne will share a sermon on prayer, and Pastor Jeanine will lead worship.

July 31 – Pastor Jeanine will continue our MythBusters Revisited series by exploring the saying, “God Said It... I Believe It... That Settles It.”

Announcements During Worship

If you have an announcement you wish made in worship, please let me know and I (or the person making the announcements) will be happy to make that announcement (and you can email it to the church for inclusion in the weekly email). If you/your group want to share about a ministry you are a part of, a social justice concern, or an opportunity you wish to invite others to participate in, you/your group are welcome to do that as part of our offering time. You could do that in person or by making a video (we can help you create a video). The offering time is a perfect place to highlight areas of ministry and living out our faith—our lives are offerings to God. Let me know if you/your group want to share at the offering time, and we will happily and joyfully get that scheduled. Wouldn’t it be great if every Sunday a group or individual shared at the offering time about ministry that is happening!



From Our Faith Community Nurse

This month I will touch on some vision problems which can affect many of us, especially those who are over 50. It is important that older individuals have regular eye exams to identify problems early.

A common problem which crops up is cataracts. People need to be aware of the symptoms of cataracts, including painless blurring of vision, difficulty reading, faded or yellowing of color, poor night vision, cloudy vision, and even double vision. Cataracts are usually removed from both eyes by laser when the cataracts are "ripe" for removal.

A very common problem is dry-eye syndrome. This occurs when the tear gland does not produce enough tears. You can experience burning, itching, and discomfort. In some cases, it can even cause vision loss. It is common in post-menopausal women. Eye fatigue and sensitivity to light can also occur. To help dry eyes, moisture added to the air in homes could help. Also position computer screens below your eye level, stop smoking, use artificial tears, and consider wearing wrap-around sunglasses.

Macular degeneration is usually age-related. The macula is the central portion of the retina. Macular degeneration can be wet or dry. Wet degeneration is caused by leaky blood vessels, and damage can lead to rapid vision loss in the central portion of your eye. The dry type is associated with the aging process. The macula thins over time, leading to gradual loss of central vision. People can see peripherally and do not become totally blind. Treatment is aimed at slowing the process or stopping damage to the retina. Macular degeneration can affect people of any age, even children.

The Macular Degeneration Foundation website is www.macular.org. A book titled *Eat Right for Your Sight*, by Jennifer Trainer Thompson and Johanna M. Seddon, is available to help maintain as much sight as possible from macular degeneration. It has information on what types of foods to eat, as well as recipes.

Retinal detachment is when the retina is pulled away from its normal position. Small detachments may not cause symptoms, but people can experience flashes of light in one or both eyes, floaters, or a dark shadow in the center or on the sides of your field of vision. Symptoms such as these are an emergency. Seek help! Prolonged detachment can lead to large tears and risk for permanent vision loss or blindness. Common causes are age and eye injury.

Take care of your eyes, wear sunglasses and large brimmed hats, and eat foods high in carotenoids, flavonoids, vitamin C, and D3. Get regular eye exams and take action if you experience any symptoms of retinal detachment.

I hope your July is fun, safe, and healthy. Best Regards, and Blessings to You, ~Linda Wiig

Youth News

A HUGE Thank You

to everyone who supported our Mission Trip in June! It was a huge success and we couldn't have made it happen without the support of the whole church. If you missed the last Sunday in June worship service, go to YouTube and watch it. We presented a video of the trip.

Youth Wanted

VBS/DAY CAMP Counselors - July 18-22

VBS is the week of July 18-22 at the Coppertop. We need teen counselors to help play with and guide the elementary kids this week. 6th-12th graders are invited to volunteer. We will spend our mornings at the church and the afternoons will be field trips in the community. It's going to be a blast for all! \$10 to sign up. Text or email Cynthia if you can help!

Camping at Camp Amnicon - August 19-20

You're not going to want to miss this fun, 24-hour camping experience. We will camp in platform tents, play games, have a campfire, swim in the river, make forts, and tell spooky stories. \$40 per person covers food and transportation. Scholarships are available. Text or email Cynthia if you would like to go. Deadline to register and pay is Sunday, August 7.



Music Notes

Dr. Derek Bromme Hired as Our New Sanctuary Choir Director



We welcome Dr. Derek Bromme to our FUMC music staff! Derek is a familiar face in our congregation, as he has played handbells with Strikepoint and provided beautiful trombone accompaniments for quite some time. He will begin on August 1 as our new Sanctuary Choir Director. New and returning choir members will be blessed by his knowledge, his skill, his commitment to making quality music, as well as his great sense of humor. If you have ever thought about singing in our choir, this would be a great time to join!

Strikepoint to Play Two Concerts in the Duluth Area

We hope you are planning to come to Strikepoint's Summer Tour Homecoming Concert at 7pm on July 16 at FUMC. It has been three years since the last tour concert in 2019, and it feels so good to them to be back on the road, playing for people again. If you are unable to be there on the 16th, they will also be playing at the Hermantown High School Auditorium on July 9 at 7pm.

FUMC Ringers Participate in Handbell Festival

Lots of ringing occurred during the weekend of June 10-12 at the Area 7 Handbell Musicians of America 2022 Festival Conference held at the DECC.

Cast in Bronze did a wonderful job participating in the festival— attending classes, playing in the massed handbell group of 200 handbell musicians, and playing on their own with a solo selection in one of the festival's mini concerts. They also joined with Northern Bell Chimes, from Our Savior's Lutheran Church in Duluth, to play "Vasylyna's Tears," written in honor of the Ukrainian people, who continue to struggle for their freedom under a government that refuses to heed their cries. Vasylyna is a common Ukrainian woman's name—she weeps for her lost countrymen.

Strikepoint was invited to be the featured ensemble and play the opening concert of the festival at the DECC's Symphony Hall.

Area 7 Chair Anita Fraundorf, a long-time member of Cast in Bronze and director of Northern Bell Chimes, was a gracious festival host.

The massed and divisional ringing was conducted by world-renowned directors Cathy Moglebust and our own Bill Alexander. They were inspiring and dynamic conductors as they led the handbell musicians and shaped the music to be performed in the final concert.



Annual Conference Summary

By Christa Meland, director of communications for the Minnesota Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church.

Photos by David Haines



Wondering how to condense two full days of worship, discerning, and celebrating into a succinct report you can bring back to members of your congregation? Here are some highlights to consider sharing:

Theme: Drawing on Psalm 23 and John 10:10-11, the theme was “Jesus: Healer.” We are a people and a world in need of healing beyond our doing. God invites us to come sit by still waters, and to allow God to restore our soul. At this annual conference, we explored some ways in which we have seen or experienced God’s healing, and ways in which we are providing hope and healing to a hurting world.

Bishop’s Episcopal Address: In his Episcopal Address to the Minnesota Conference, Bishop David Bard reminded us of the biblical story of Jesus healing a boy possessed by a demon (Mark 9:14-29). In this story, the pain and suffering are real, and so is the healing. If we’re to let such stories speak to us, we need to grapple with their challenges in the context of lives where healing doesn’t happen or doesn’t happen the way we may want it to. Perhaps for us as a conference, he said, our way into the future is to follow Jesus on a healing journey where our souls are made large, our hearts capacious, our minds expansive, where we can hold together creatively spaciousness and direction, clarity and complexity, and where cure is care and being steeped in the love of God as we know it in Jesus, the grace of God, God’s dream and desire for the world.

Rev. Yolanda Williams, next column, was this year's worship coordinator; newly commissioned Rev. Nancy Ellis is to her left.

Looking back and ahead: Attendees spent time celebrating [some of the things our conference has accomplished](#) over the past year, and attendees shared with each other their own hopes and dreams and

which step God is calling them to take in living and offering the abundant life movement to all. Many of their hopes and dreams, which



they entered into an app and were shown on-screen, focused on love, connection, unity, being bold, diversity, inclusion, and growth.

Milestones in ministry: Attendees participated in the Service of Licensing, Commissioning, and Ordination at which [19 clergy were recognized for milestones in ministry](#). They also remembered 22 clergy and spouses who have died within the past year. At the end of the two days, attendees also recognized and gave thanks for 18 retiring clergy who have together contributed 496 years of faithful service.

Diversity and inclusion legislation: Annual Conference members overwhelmingly approved four pieces of legislation focused on diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). One charges the conference to contract with an outside auditor, who has experience in DEI work, to perform an equity audit of human resources at the conference level in order to increase equity in hiring practices, employee compensation and procedures, and employee recruiting and retention at the conference level. Another charges the Cabinet to prioritize the recruitment of candidates of color

and LGBTQIA+ candidates for open positions in order to create a more diverse conference leadership team. And a third stipulates that the conference's part-time racial justice organizer position will be made into a full-time, director-level position on the Extended Cabinet by January 2023. Meanwhile, voting members approved by a margin of 339-36 a piece of legislation that calls for the Minnesota Conference to hold a storytelling space before the 2026 Annual Conference that would allow Minnesota United Methodists to tell stories that resulted from the Book of Discipline policy stating that homosexuality is incompatible with Christian teaching.



Rev. Lee Miller leads communion, with Revs. Hope Hutchison (left) and Riva Tabelisma (right) assisting.

Discontinuing and disaffiliating churches:

Attendees voted to ratify the terms of disaffiliation agreements made between the conference Board of Trustees and three local churches that have discerned that their path goes a different direction from the Minnesota Annual Conference. In 2019, an amendment was added to the United Methodist Book of Discipline allowing churches to

disaffiliate through December 2023 over disagreement about human sexuality. "We have sharp disagreements about the shape of ministry, but we can trust one another to God's grace," Bishop David Bard said after the disaffiliation votes. Meanwhile, attendees gave thanks for the ministries and legacies of faith of five churches that have closed over the past year.

Sermon by Rev. Bruce Kronen: Rev. Bruce Kronen, who serves Pilgrim UMC in Plymouth and was randomly selected as this year's conference preacher, talked about some of the times he's been privileged to watch Jesus' healing and recounted a story in which a family's vehicle flipped over on a vacation after the dad fell asleep at the wheel; an 18-month-old child was trapped under the vehicle for 45 minutes, and still lived. That baby, he revealed, was his daughter. "Jesus can heal us in ways we don't even understand we need healing," Kronen told those gathered. The question, as Jesus asked in John 5:6, is: Do we want to be whole? "May all of us come with an answer to that question...with a humble, open heart that says, 'Yes, Lord. Have your way with me,'" Kronen said.

Love offering: Conference members, on behalf of their churches, also gave \$27,206 to the [2022 Love Offering](#), which will address food insecurity by supporting three Minnesota United Methodist food ministries, and assist those in need in our nation and world by supporting Red Bird Missionary Conference in Appalachia and Volunteers in Mission trips. Our congregation gave \$1,400.

From the Welcome Desk



Hello! Have you looked at the church gardens in the past couple of weeks? Things are going and growing. I

know the good Lord appreciates the time and effort that our gardeners spend taking care of our little corner of the earth. I also know the volunteer gardeners are appreciated for all the hours they spend planting, weeding, deadheading, watering, and maintaining the gardens. Not only do these fine people take care of the gardens, but they are great ambassadors for our church. As people come to enjoy the view and the gardens, our volunteers often share information and offer to take pictures so all that are visiting can be in the picture. Many invitations welcoming them to Sunday worship have been shared as well.

We welcome **Carolyn Schroeder**, FUMC member and member of the Duluth Monarch Buddies, to share about FUMC's Butterfly Garden. Our garden is a certified Monarch WayStation, certified by Monarch Watch at the University of Kansas in Lawrence.

Church Butterfly Garden

In the coming weeks you'll notice tall green plants with large leaves in the butterfly garden. These are NOT weeds, but wonderful, very

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**First United
Methodist**

The Coppertop Church on the Skyline
230 E. Skyline Parkway • Duluth

SUMMER AT FIRST

SAVE THE DATES!

JUNE

Blessing of the Animals
Wednesday, June 15 • 7pm

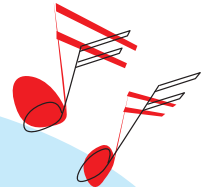
Bring your pet to receive a blessing.
The Superior Police Department
K-9s will be present to receive
a blessing also.



JULY

Big Wave Dave and the Ripples Concert
Monday, July 18 • 6:30pm
(Raindate: Monday, July 25)

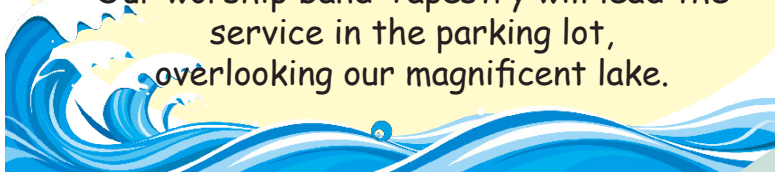
Join us for a rockin' concert in our
parking lot! A food truck will be onsite
for supper beginning at 5:30.



AUGUST

Outdoor Worship Service
Sunday, August 14 • 10am

Our worship band Tapestry will lead the
service in the parking lot,
overlooking our magnificent lake.



AUGUST

All Church Family Camp
Friday-Saturday, August 19-20

Time to relax and connect with God and
your church family at Camp Amnicon.
Email Jojo (families@fumcduluth.com)
for info & to register.



More details on all events
will be available soon.

Lennon-Berini Scholarship

Attention College Students:

The 2022 FUMC Lennon-Berini Scholarship is here!

In the 1950s two young men, John Lennon and Joe Berini, served as First Methodist staff members and worked with Duluth youth, particularly in the Central Hillside area. To commemorate their work, a scholarship fund was developed in 1985.

Subsequent contributions have helped to sustain the fund and have allowed for the presentation of 105 scholarships totaling \$120,190. The Lennon-Berini Scholarships for 2022 will be \$2,000 each.

The criteria for qualifying as an applicant are:

- 1) Be a member of Duluth's First United Methodist Church
- 2) Have completed two full years of college
- 3) Be pursuing a people-centered career

Application forms will be available on the church's website July 1, 2022. **They will need to be fully completed and turned in by 4pm July 22, 2022.** Incomplete applications will not be considered.

Applicants will need to compile all materials (including completed application form, transcripts, recommendations, and candidate statements) into a single electronic file and send to Terry Wallin, Chair/Trustee of the Lennon-Berini Scholarship committee, at teto62@charter.net.

The committee members are planning to award the scholarships during the August 28, 10am Sunday worship service at First United Methodist Church.

Persons interested in contributing to the Lennon-Berini Scholarship Fund, please seek out Terry Wallin, MaryAnne Korsch, or Marilew Barnidge.

[Link to 2022 Lennon-Berini Scholarship Application:](#)



**Duluth Superior Pride Festival
2022**

Saturday, September 3, 11am–7pm
FREE

**Celebrating our 36th anniversary in Duluth's beautiful panoramic
Bayfront Park!**



—butterfly garden, continued from page 7
important plants.

These plants are common milkweed and are critical for monarchs, our state butterfly. Milkweed is the ONLY plant on which monarchs will lay their tiny eggs, usually on the underside of the leaves. After four to five days, baby caterpillars will hatch out. The only food they will eat is milkweed leaves. The caterpillars will go through five stages of growing and shedding their skin, which lasts a total of 10-14 days. They form a magical chrysalis and grow inside for another 10-14 days. Then the best part happens: an adult monarch butterfly emerges! If you've ever witnessed this, count yourself lucky. It is truly one of nature's most breathtaking moments!

For more details, please ask Mary or Kent Giese or Carolyn Schroeder. You can also go to monarchwatch.org for everything you ever wanted to know about monarchs! Enjoy!



EarthKeeper

Take the Plastic-Free July Challenge

By Naomi Yaeger

UMC EarthKeeper

I challenge you to make two new changes this month regarding your personal use of one-time-use plastic. The month of July includes a challenge. It's named Plastic-Free July. The motto for 2022 is, "Turn the tide on plastic waste, one choice at a time." Plastic-Free July is a registered not-for-profit in Australia, but plastic pollution knows no boundaries, especially in the ocean.



I was dismayed when I read that plastic production, consumption, and pollution levels have increased exponentially since the 1950s. I've seen that.

If you've ever seen those Facebook memes that say, "Tell us how old you are without telling us how old you are," I could say, "When I was a kid, applesauce, spaghetti sauce, ketchup and mustard, and juices were packaged in glass jars." Not only that, but my parents' generation purchased meat wrapped in butcher paper.

We can't recycle our way out of this problem, because plastic can be recycled only about one time before it's no longer useful, and we are using plastic packaging exponentially.

Here are some changes I successfully made this year:

- I started using toilet paper that isn't wrapped in a plastic film. It's called "Who Gives a Crap."
- I use bar shampoos and containers rather than those packaged in plastic bottles.
- I use deodorant made by a local cosmetic company where I can return the glass and metal containers.
- Rather than take the sample dental floss contained in plastic, I tell my dental hygienist, "Thank you, but I'm going to purchase dental floss packaged in cardboard or glass."
- Terry and I like to host parties; I strive to find decorations not made of plastic.

The Bible warns us not to be wasteful; isn't using one-time-use plastic a form of waste? If you drink Pepsi products, see Greenpeace's World Refill Challenge, and also visit [PlasticFreeJuly.org](https://plasticfreejuly.org).

Do you feel a call to care for creation? Join the FUMC sustainability committee, learn more about becoming an EarthKeeper at umcmission.org/EarthKeepers, or contact Naomi at sun_dog_press@yahoo.com, 218-591-5277.

We Are a United Methodist Reconciling Congregation



First UMC, along with the Minnesota Annual Conference, continues to remain with The United Methodist Church and continues our long-standing commitment to the full welcome and inclusion of all people.

Reconciling Ministries Network (RMN) equips and mobilizes United Methodists of all sexual orientations and gender identities to resist evil, injustice, and oppression in whatever forms they present themselves. Since 1984, RMN has been working with local congregations "to advance justice and inclusion for all LGBTQ+ people in The United Methodist Church and beyond." <https://rmnetwork.org/>

Reconciling Ministries Network Connects Us



A letter from Pastor Britt Cox

Dear friend; greetings in the name of our Creator God:

I recently received a phone call from a beloved child of God searching for a welcoming faith community in Chicago. There isn't a month in my years of ministry when I don't receive messages reaching out with this kind of courage and persistence to find a faith community that will honor, affirm, and reflect the belovedness of LGBTQ+ people.

As a pastor, I find it healing to be

able to share with those courageous callers the names of Reconciling Ministries and pastors around the world. As the United Methodist Church remains uncertain about its future, I know that these Reconciling Ministries and pastors will continue to provide connection and hope.

This experience has come full circle for me. I have been on the other end of that phone looking for a United Methodist Church where my wife and I would be fully welcomed, supported, and integrated. In 2007, Reconciling Ministries Network came into our lives when I responded to my calling into ministry as a queer person in the UMC. RMN made sure I wasn't on that journey alone: they connected me with a church where my faith journey could be supported and I could grow in my pastoral identity; RMN fostered my friendships with other LGBTQ+ people across the United Methodist connection so I could have a support system in the years ahead; and RMN invited me into a movement.

The vital support that RMN is able to provide is possible because of your generosity and participation in the movement towards justice in The UMC. As our denomination steps into a new future, RMN is a trusted and faithful voice in shaping the Church that people are seeking and needing today. To move toward that prophetic and hopeful vision, please consider giving a financial gift that reflects your gratitude and hope for the future of our Church.

May God use all our efforts of finances, prayers, and letters to continue making a difference through RMN. For what is and what is to come, thank you!

God's peace,
~Rev. Britt Cox

United Methodists React to End of Roe v. Wade

By Jim Patterson

June 24, 2022 | UM News



United Methodists with varied views on the abortion issue were alternately stunned and satisfied after word came down from the Supreme Court that *Roe v. Wade* would no longer be the law of the land.

"I think we're in a very, very sad and difficult time," said the Rev. Kennetha Bigham-Tsai, a veteran General Conference delegate from Michigan who is also candidate for bishop in the North Central Jurisdiction. "I know that some will be celebrating this... We are already a fractured country; this is going to fracture us more."

The Supreme Court released the 5-3-1 [opinion](#) on June 24, but a leaked version of the ruling in May had already made the likely decision apparent. The final opinion "hewed closely" to the leaked version, according to Politico. Justice Samuel Alito wrote the majority opinion.

The *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* decision, which overturns the landmark *Roe v. Wade* ruling the high court made in 1973, gives the go-ahead to states to formulate their own policies on abortion. Some have already done so in anticipation of the ruling. Texas last year effectively outlawed abortion after the sixth week of pregnancy and allows almost any private citizen to sue anyone who helps a pregnant women terminate her pregnancy.

"Technically, somebody who rapes you could financially benefit from that (under the Texas law)... because of this ability for anyone to sue whoever might assist a woman in some way in seeking an abortion," said the Rev. Rebecca David Hensley, a deacon in the North Texas Conference and a PhD candidate in religious studies in a joint program at Iliff School of Theology and the University of Denver. She also teaches as an adjunct professor at Iliff.

Harriett Jane Olson, top executive president of United Women of Faith, said, "The banning of abortions will not end abortions.

"Rather, women of financial means will travel to areas where abortion remains safe and legal," [she said](#), "while many poor and working-class women and girls will resort to unsafe procedures that could cost them their lives, which happened too often prior to the

—continued on page 13

Stepping On Up

How do we as Christians respond to the addiction epidemic?

The Harm Reduction Model has been widely recognized as effective. Not only that, but this approach falls squarely into Christian teaching. Jesus accepted strangers and outcasts with compassion, meeting them where they were, without expecting them to clean up, shape up, or get themselves together before coming to him for help. Harm reduction lies at the heart of the Stepping On Up plan to address the needs of our chronically unsheltered neighbors in Duluth. It starts with safe space and non-judgmental assistance.

As a community of loving acceptance, First UMC is uniquely poised to support this ground-breaking plan.



Stepping On Up Phase 1 – Immediate Response for Unsheltered Duluthians: Authorized Outdoor Living Zones with Street Outreach
\$300,000.00



Goals:

Address pressing concerns around neighborhood/park safety and sanitation; Allow for inreach and continuous access to services; Provide for basic shelter from the elements through the summer and fall months; Reduce harm caused by substance abuse; Decrease violence and calls for emergency services.

Action plan:

- Develop two to four capacity-controlled (ten persons each max) scattered sites where people are allowed to set up a tent or sleep in a car. Garbage, sharps disposal, and basic hygiene facilities provided.
- Establish basic guidelines on sanitation and violence, allowing for a harm reduction approach to substance use.
- Enroll medical, mental health, substance use, and housing providers to do onsite inreach.
- Develop non-intrusive peer- and community-led safety and clean patrols with guest input. Make sure that the public knows these sites are available.

An authorized outdoor living zone does not prevent or end homelessness. It can be challenging to manage, and carries many of the same risks of dispersed, unsanctioned sites. It should be viewed as a temporary, emergency harm reduction response within a broader strategy toward permanent housing. Some people cannot or will not accept even this level of engagement, which will require a mixed response of enforcement and referral to Community Intervention Group (in the case of camps that are disruptive or unsafe) and letting people be and making referrals to outreach (in the case of individuals, couples, or families that are camping quietly and respectfully out of sight).

In addition to authorized living zones, there is an urgent need to add street outreach staff to engage and assist unsheltered homeless people to access services.

- Fund two additional positions for a minimum of two years. (Estimated cost: \$50,000 salary + \$15,000 benefits per position)
- Community Safety Sanctioned Sites: Well-being checks and control of number of tents or cars permitted per site.
- Non-sanctioned sites: Enforcement action with 48 hours' notice, and contact with street outreach and mental health unit as necessary, as per current policy. Cost: 2 full-time equivalents; porta-potties; garbage disposal; tents and sleeping bags; medical/resource tent.

Additional information: <https://steppingonupduluth.org/5-year-plan>

Roe decision.”

The Rev. David F. Watson, academic dean and vice president for academic affairs at United Theological Seminary in Dayton, Ohio, and an ordained elder in the West Ohio Conference, said that “Regardless of what federal or state laws regarding abortion may be, the role of the church does not change. We are to protect life, stand up for the most vulnerable, care for those in need, and support families.”

The United Methodist Church’s [official position on abortion](#) in the Book of Discipline states, “Our belief in the sanctity of unborn human life makes us reluctant to approve abortion. But we are equally bound to respect the sacredness of the life and well-being of the mother and the unborn child.”

The Book of Discipline’s Social Principles go on to assert, “We recognize tragic conflicts of life with life that may justify abortion, and in such cases we support the legal option of abortion under proper medical procedures by certified medical providers.”

The Rev. Paul T. Stallworth is pastor of Whiteville United Methodist Church in North Carolina and editor of [Lifewatch](#), the newsletter of the Taskforce of United Methodists on Abortion and Sexuality. The organization is an unofficial advocacy group that has long organized a worship service to coincide with the annual March for Life that protests *Roe v. Wade*. Rev. Stallworth claims “The Supreme Court’s ruling is in harmony with The United Methodist Church’s historical values.”

“Through the centuries, the church has taught that the least of these include the unborn child and the mother of the unborn child,” Stallworth said. “These are folks who are very vulnerable, very open to manipulation, abuse and so on... I think a part of this also has to do with the church being engaged in ministry towards those who are threatened by abortion.

“That would mean assisting the women themselves,” he said. “Also, it could mean being in assistance to crisis pregnancy centers that would help the women. I think that’s very important to do.”

[A statement](#) from United Methodist Board of Church and Society decried the high court’s decision and emphasized that the church recognizes there are tragic situations that may necessitate abortions.

“Today’s decision unleashes severe consequences and threatens access to care for every community, and specifically Black, Brown, Indigenous, and low-income communities,” it stated. “This decision comes at a time when many states are already moving to restrict access to quality care and comprehensive health care services like family planning, birth control, and the expansion of Medicaid. These restrictions deny the basic right to lifesaving care that everybody has the right to access and receive.”

Likewise, [a statement from the United Methodist Commission on the Status and Role of Women](#) said that the ruling was likely to be more of a burden for less wealthy Americans and is also a setback for women’s equality.

“By reducing a woman’s rights, our class structure is further divided, contrary to our belief that all women and men are created equal,” said the statement. “We grieve this injustice.”

Harriett Jane Olson, of United Women in Faith, called on “federal and state legislators to act to protect the lives of women and girls by codifying their right to privacy, to legal and safe contraceptives, and, in tragic conflicts of life with life, to abortions. State-coerced motherhood—like state-coerced sterilization — undermines women’s ability to carefully discern and follow God’s calling in their lives.”

“As we look through the lens of Christ at the hurting world around us, we can’t help but to reflect on the heartfelt plea of John Wesley, ‘to do no harm,’” said Greg Arnold, top executive of the churchwide Commission on United Methodist Men. “While the Supreme Court’s decision to overturn *Roe* is lauded by many as an effort to honor the sanctity of life and therefore ‘reduce harm,’ the lives of so many women have been potentially placed into the path of harm.”

For the complete version of this story, [Roe v. Wade, UM News](#).

SUMMER AT FIRST - KIDS' & TEENS' EDITION

SAVE THE DATES!

JUNE, JULY & AUGUST: FAITHFUL FRIDAYS

for kids entering grades K-5
June 10 & 24; July 8 & 22; August 26
9 - 11am



Bible stories, snacks, time to play and connect
with your church friends.
Call Jojo to sign up: 218-251-4388

JULY: VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

for kids entering grades 1-5
Monday-Friday, July 18-22 • 9am-3pm

Arts & crafts, Bible stories and outdoor games, plus field
trips around the area! \$50 per child (\$10 discount for
multiple children). Contact Jojo to register and pay
(families@fumcduluth.com).

Teens: we need YOU to be counselors!
Contact Cynthia or Jojo.



More details on all events
will be available soon.

STRIKEPOINT

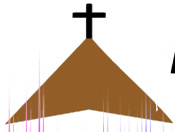
IN CONCERT

July 16, 7:00pm

FUMC Sanctuary

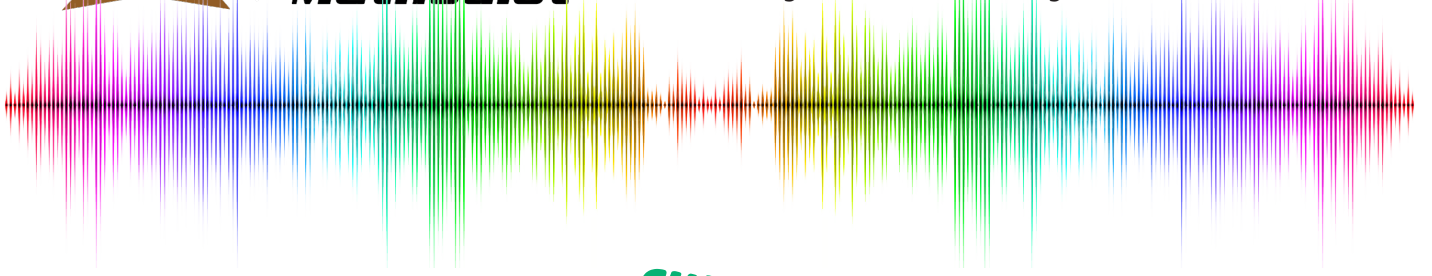


Free Admission • Suggested Donation: \$15



**First United
Methodist**

**The Coppertop Church on the Skyline
230 E. Skyline Parkway • Duluth**



**SUMMER PARKING LOT CONCERT
AT FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**



MONDAY, JULY 18

(raindate July 25)



6:30 PM

Chairs available, or bring your own!

Freewill donation to benefit the CHUM Food Shelf

Food truck onsite beginning at 5:30



First United Methodist Church

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