

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 2023



**First United
Methodist Church**

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

Photo by Miriam Alonso



Our First Family

December 18 Baptisms

Adelynn, Brooke, and Owen Larson; and Aiden Davis were baptized on December 18. What a sight it was to see all four of them, with their family members, standing around the baptismal font.



Adelynn



Aiden



Brooke



Owen

On January 15, our organist, Velda Graham Bell, will lead us on a walking tour of the church pipe organ. Yes, you can actually walk inside the organ! Who knew? Meet in the Fireside Lounge at 9am.



On the Journey With You

I will be starting the new year with a lot of gratitude in my heart. I want you to know that I love being your pastor and sharing life and ministry with you. I love our people, the ministry we do together, and what we stand for. You and our church are deeply important to me. I always want to be there for you when you need or want a spiritual companion on the journey. Our congregation is large enough where I don't always know who needs connection. Please never hesitate to let me know if you would like time with me. Also, if you know of someone who can benefit from a personal connection from their pastor, please let me know.

Here are some thoughts for you to ponder at the start of the year:

• "How far you go in life depends on your being tender with the young, compassionate with the aged, sympathetic with the striving, and tolerant of the weak and strong. Because someday in your life you will have been all of these."

George Washington Carver

• "So may the New Year be a happy one to you, happy to many more whose happiness depends on you!"

Charles Dickens, *The Chimes*

• "God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference."

Attributed to Reinhold Niebuhr, Lutheran theologian (1892–1971)

• **The Lord's Prayer**—pray it every day—re-watch the sermons on it from September and October 2022 on YouTube. This prayer reflects all the major themes from Jesus' ministry and teachings. Remember that the Lord's Prayer is more than a prayer—it's a vision to strive toward—a call to action—a road map for the life of faith—our guiding compass.

• Read **Romans 12**, which gives great practical guidelines for how God wants us to live. I love reading it in *The Message* paraphrase of

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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: **January 18**

Submit to connect@fumcduluth.com



fumcduluth.com

the Bible.

- ***The Gift by Mary Oliver***

Be still, my soul, and steadfast.

Earth and heaven both are still watching,

Though time is draining from the clock

And your walk, that was confident

and quick, has become slow,

So, be slow if you must, but let the heart still play its true part.

Love still as once you loved, deeply and without patience.

Let God and the world know you are grateful

That the gift has been given.

I am looking forward to another year of relationship, ministry, and spiritual growth with you.

On the journey with you,

~Pastor Jeanine

All-Church Conference

We will be having our annual meeting to elect leadership, take action on membership, hear the financial report, and have a time of connection on Sunday, February 12 at 11:15am following worship. We will either livestream or Zoom the meeting. Watch your weekly email for information. All church members and friends are invited to participate.

MLK Day

Martin Luther King activities–FUMC:

Monday, January 16

- Breakfast 7:30-9:30am, FUMC's Lakeview Social Hall
- Gather for March at Washington Center, 10am
- Rally at DECC at noon

This year's theme is "Keep Moving Forward." Please join us!

Contact [Jojo Coffin-Langdon](#) if you are interested, 218-251-4388.

Worship in January

Sunday, January 1, 2023:

10am in-person worship. We will participate in an interactive Wesleyan Covenant Service to begin a new year.

10am, a shorter-than-typical pre-recorded service will premiere on YouTube, which you can also watch anytime after. It will include a New Years message and music. This is pre-recorded worship (what we did during the pandemic) rather than livestream in order to give our livestream team a needed Sunday off to restore their energy.

January 8–February 5: Sermon series to start the year: "Being Created Anew."

God calls us to fully be ourselves and to know that we are fully and completely accepted and loved by God. Our calling is to fully and completely accept and love ourselves and others. Church needs to be a place where we can be open, honest, and real, and invite others to do the same. We will take steps in that direction in this sermon series:

- **January 8:** Being Created Anew #1–Deep Authenticity
- **January 15:** (Human Relations Sunday): Being Created Anew #2–Filling the Void Inside
- **January 22:** Being Created Anew #3–Dealing With Failure
- **January 29:** Being Created Anew #4–Dealing With Insecurities
- **February 5:** Being Created Anew #5–Dealing With Criticism

On Communion Sundays

Every communion Sunday (typically the first Sunday of the month), we ask that you to bring a donation of food or money for the CHUM Food Shelf. That way, when we come to the communion table to be fed spiritually, we are also feeding others who are physically hungry. The Food Shelf cart will be available for donations. If you make a financial donation, please note "Food Shelf" in the check memo or envelope, and make checks out to FUMC. Thank you for loving our neighbors in need.

Faith Forum Resumes

Faith Forum resumes at 9am Sundays in the Fireside Lounge.

January 8, Guest speaker Julie Ahasay will lead us in a discussion of Ann Patchett's essay "My Year of No Shopping." Copies of the article will be available in the Office after January 4, but it is not necessary to have read this NYT piece before the discussion.

Come share thoughts on how we spend our money and on needs vs. wants, just in time to examine your New Year's resolutions.

January 15, Velda Bell will lead us in a walking tour of the church organ. Meet in the Fireside Lounge at 9am.

From Our Faith Community Nurse

Each year in the United States, on average, an estimated 5 to 20 percent of the population can be infected with the flu, and more than 200,000 people may be hospitalized during a flu season.

While flu can make anyone sick, certain people are at greater risk for serious complications from the flu, causing hospitalization or even death: older people; young children; people with chronic lung disease (like asthma and COPD); diabetics (types 1 and 2); people with heart disease, neurologic conditions, and certain other long-term health conditions; and pregnant women are especially at risk.

Flu seasons are unpredictable and can be severe. Please get vaccinated for the flu, COVID-19, and pneumonia, if appropriate.

Common symptoms of a cold include sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, sneezing, and cough.

Common symptoms of the flu include fever and/or chills, headache, muscle pain or body aches, feeling tired or weak, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, sneezing, cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, vomiting, and diarrhea.

Common symptoms of COVID-19 include fever and/or chills, headache, muscle pain or body aches, feeling tired or weak, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, sneezing, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, vomiting, diarrhea, and change in smell or loss of smell and taste. If you have symptoms, call your health care provider and get tested.

As you can see, many symptoms overlap, so the best thing to do is tell your health provider your symptoms to receive a course of action, especially if you are in a high-risk group.

Masking is still very appropriate if you're with a crowd of people, especially on a plane, bus, subway, or train. Please stay home if you have symptoms.

As we go into the New Year, let's all take all the actions we can to prevent the spread of viruses. Then we can be assured that each one of us has done what we could to prepare ourselves and others for additional outbreaks.

As Kent Nerburn has said, "We are not all called to be great. But we are all called to reach out our hands to our brothers and sisters, and to care for the earth in our time given." Let us all strive to help one another as so many of you do. It is with gratitude that I am a member of this church and here to serve. Thank you all.

Upcoming classes through Essentia for advance care planning:

Here are some classes online you can register for through
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www.essentiahealth.org click for classes and events. It is to your advantage to become familiar with advance plans. If you have any further questions, please feel free to see me.

The classes are Wednesday, January 11, 2–3pm; and Monday, February 13, 12–1pm. For more information, you may call Wanda Paulsen, BA, RN, 218-786-1310.

Blessings, ~Linda Wiig

FUMC Directory Update

Early in this new year our Church Directory will be finalized and ready to print. It's important to have all information current and correct in our database, a huge task. Many confirmed their information when photos were taken, and others have responded to earlier requests for updates. We thank you for that. If you have not confirmed your information (names of family, address, phone numbers, and email), you may receive a call or email to verify that. Please take the initiative to call the church 218-727-5021, or email info@fumcduluth.com with your information as soon as possible. If you do not want your information in the directory, that is okay; we need to know that as well. Please help us finalize the long-awaited and anticipated directory. We appreciate your help, understanding, and patience as we work together. Thank you.

RJAC to Meet

Racial Justice Action Committee will meet after church on January 22. Everyone interested in racial justice work is welcome.

"Making Sense of the Bible" Class

Bible classes will be held on Wednesdays, **January 18 and 25, and February 8 and 15** from 6:30–7:30pm in Fireside Lounge.

Childcare will be provided for infants and younger children. 2nd-5th graders may join the Tweens group that meets during this time, and middle school kids may join the youth group.

Sessions will be led by Pastor Jeanine.

Anyone who wants to understand how to make sense of the Bible is welcome to attend. No prior Biblical knowledge or experience is necessary.

The "Making Sense of the Bible" class is an honest discovery about the Bible, beginning with

- fundamental questions such as:
- How and when was the Bible written?
 - Who decided which books made it into scripture and why?
 - How literally must we read it?
 - Is the Bible ever wrong?
 - How do we deal with things the Bible says that we don't agree with or can't be God's will?
 - How do we balance the humanity and divinity of the Bible?
 - How do we make biblically sound decisions about social and controversial issues?
 - How does the Bible connect me with God?

You can sign up for the "Making Sense of the Bible" class on the sheets at church, by calling the church office, or emailing Pastor Jeanine. pastor@fumcduluth.com

Children and Youth News

Children's Ministries

Wednesday night programming will resume January 4 and will kick off with Happy New Year fun and games! Sunday School will resume on January 8.

Youth Ministries

The Youth Event – January 21.

All middle school and high school kids are invited to Hillside UMC for an afternoon of fun, featuring a hip hop concert, service project, large group game, inspirational message, and pizza lunch on Saturday, January 21 from 10am–3pm. Invite a friend and connect with other area youth. Cost is \$30 per person and scholarships are available. RSVP to [Pastor Cynthia](#) by January 8 if you want to come, or if you know of someone who might.

Martin Luther King March and Rally

Middle school and high school youth: we know racism still exists, so let's show our support together on Monday, January 16 and **Show Up!** There is no school that day, so let's meet at the Washington Center at 10:30am and march to the DECC for the noon rally with our community. Let [Pastor Cynthia](#) know if you want to go.

From the Welcome Desk

Welcome to the New Year, everyone! As we start this new year, my wish is that we become more intentional about our welcome to visitors and any others we haven't gotten acquainted with. William Butler Yeats said it best, "There are no strangers here: Only friends you haven't yet met." I love to hear people say they feel comfortable and included at our church. A very special thank you goes to all door greeters and table greeters on Sunday mornings. You offer a welcome place to everyone who comes.

Our Fine Arts Committee over the years has also made our building and Sanctuary a wonderful, welcoming place. Most recently, many hands and hours of time created a beautiful setting for all services and programs during the Advent and Christmas season. Thank you, Fine Arts Committee, for your time and willingness to share as you brighten the church and inspire peace and warmth for all who gather in the Sanctuary for any and all occasions. Thank you also for the imaginative and creative ways you decorate for us.

If you want to help or be involved in any way with Fine Arts, reach out to [Tina Farrell](#). When you see these fine Fine Arts committee members or volunteers, please share a thank you with them.

Remember, we are the church with a welcome for everybody, always! ~Mary Giese, Director of Welcoming and Hospitality

Reconciling Ministries Network News



- The U.S. Senate has passed the Respect for Marriage Act, enshrining marriage equality in federal law and granting protections to same-sex and interracial couples. Amen!
- [294 Texas Annual Conference churches have now disaffiliated from The UMC](#) because they wish to pursue more explicit LGBTQ+ exclusion. Other Texas churches are still in discernment. To the LGBTQ+ people, God's beloveds, in these churches and elsewhere in Texas watching this news unfold: this is not what the kingdom of God looks like.
- With Love and Gratitude to Rev. Beth Richardson



We give thanks for the ministry and career of Rev. Beth Richardson, who just retired from her role as the director of prayer and worship life at The Upper Room.

Rev. Richardson, alongside Mark Bowman, co-founded the Reconciling movement. Her courage, wisdom, and compassion served as a foundation for the progress we've made in the last 40 years. We are deeply indebted to her for the justice she has made possible.

Says Bishop Karen Oliveto, "Beth loved a Church that didn't know what to do with her. Yet, she knew herself to be a child of the Church, a person of sacred worth, made in the image of God. And when the Church refused to admit these truths, she kept finding a way to remain in ministry to serve this Church.

"She inspired so many of us to do the same. Thanks to her work as co-founder of the Reconciling Ministries Network, she made sure LGBTQ people and their allies had a safe home."

Reconciling Ministries Network envisions a transformed Church that ensures justice, equity, and dignity for all of God's children in their diverse intersecting identities. Reconciling Ministries Network is committed to intersectional justice across and beyond the United Methodist connection, working for the full participation of all LGBTQ+ people throughout the life and leadership of the Church. rmnetwork.org

United Methodist News

The long-awaited United Methodist General Conference, twice delayed by the COVID-19 pandemic, is now scheduled for April 24–May 4, 2024 in Charlotte, North Carolina.

Deep divisions over homosexuality and LGBTQ inclusion continue after the contentious 2019 General Conference resulted in strengthened bans on the ordination of "self-avowed practicing" gay clergy and the officiating of same-sex weddings. In early 2020, a plan to allow for an amicable split of the denomination was announced by a diverse group of church leaders. But pandemic-related delays have kept the plan from being considered.

Meanwhile, a breakaway traditionalist denomination, the Global Methodist Church, has formed, and many traditionalist churches have sought to exit The United Methodist Church. A UM News tally shows that 1,314 churches have been approved for disaffiliation. The United Methodist Church has about 30,000 congregations in the U.S.

General Conference is the top policy-making body of The United Methodist Church. The assembly meets at the beginning of each quadrennium to consider revisions to Church law and adopt resolutions on current moral, social, public policy, and economic issues. The 2024 conference is expected to attract about 5,500-7,500 people with delegates from Africa, Europe, Asia, and the U.S.

umnews.org/en/news/3-church-disaffiliations-blocked



"People of faith working together to provide basic necessities, foster stable lives, and organize for a just and compassionate community."

Providing emergency shelter, food, and street outreach throughout Duluth.

The Annual Homeless Community Vigil was held at Duluth City Hall on December 24 at 12pm. Deb Holman led this memorial service for people experiencing homelessness who died in the past year. It is always a somber event, but please stand in support of those facing poverty and struggle.

2022 Street Outreach Dinner: It was a night of generosity, love, and community. Many local businesses and individuals in our community donated auction items which sparked very enthusiastic bids! Those in attendance heard from a great speaker who shared the need for community support to stop the rising numbers of people living in places unfit for human habitation. The night ended with an opportunity to give to the Street Outreach Program. And due to everyone's generosity, the set goal was exceeded, with \$60,000 in support!

CHUM Food Shelf Most Needed Items: Canned pears, fruit cocktail, pineapple, mandarin oranges, chicken noodle soup, cream of mushroom soup, peanut butter, tuna, Spam, Spaghetti-Os, chili, stew, chunky soups, pasta sides, Rice-a-Roni, ramen, cold cereal, and pork and beans. In addition, financial gifts allow CHUM to purchase more for your money.



Laundry Love: Having a consistent and available opportunity for volunteers isn't always easy. But CHUM has found another great way for folks to support their mission and connect with each other. Come alongside people who are struggling financially by assisting them with their laundry. Laundry Love partners with groups and local laundromats in cleaning clothes and linens for low-income or no-income families and individuals. [Learn More](#)

Second Saturday happens on January 14 from 9am to noon at Pilgrim Congregational Church, 2310 E 4th Street. Stable housing is foundational. Having a home impacts our ability to learn, maintain health, and to work. Come learn about shelter and affordable housing needs and concerns in our community. CHUM will teach those attending how to share your values and priorities with legislators, county commissioners, and city officials via email, phone calls, letters, or whatever works for you! Folks with years of advocacy experience will be here to support those new to the experience.

CHUM welcomes anyone, of any age, who wants to learn how to create a more just and compassionate community!

Welcome CHUM Director of Operations Amber Sadowski. She brings years of nonprofit experience, as well as a wealth of community volunteer experience, serving her faith community, the Rotary Club, and the Duluth School Board. As Director of Operations, she will support the Executive Director by implementing plans, managing staff, and monitoring key parts of the organization.



We need more people who are passionate about serving our community



- Visit chumduluth.org
- Check out CHUM's part-time, full-time, and internship opportunities
- Join the CHUM mailing list
- Register for Second Saturdays or Laundry Love
- Volunteer your special talents, fun ideas, or just your two arms and legs!



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Ministry Team

Pastor Jeanine Alexander

pastor@fumcduluth.com

Sandy Smith

Director of Operations

admin@fumcduluth.com

Pastor Cynthia Coffin-Langdon

Director of Youth Ministries

PastorCynthiaCL@gmail.com

Jojo Coffin-Langdon

Director of Children and Family Ministries

families@fumcduluth.com

Linda Wiig

Faith Community Nurse

nurse@fumcduluth.com

Bill Alexander

Communications Director

connect@fumcduluth.com

Mary Giese

Director of Welcoming and Hospitality

welcome@fumcduluth.com

Velda Graham Bell

Director of Music Ministries

music@fumcduluth.com