

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 2023

*Winter in Duluth
too long?*

*Don't let it get
you down.*

*There are
always snow
angels.*

**First United
Methodist Church**

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

Photo by Anne McCarthy



Our First Family

A gift to light the church for the week of February 19 was made by Wendy and Peter Williamson, in memory of Richard Peterson. The gift will also support the handbell program.

Music Notes

Something New for Lent

You've always heard it said, "What are you giving up for Lent?" But this year, do something different: TRY SOMETHING NEW FOR LENT! Our Sanctuary Choir Director, Derek Bromme, invites you to join the choir for Lent. You don't have to be a trained singer—in fact, if you sing in the shower, you're our kind of person. We've got great people who are able and more than willing to help you "learn the ropes," and we always have a lot of fun! You are invited to come to most or all of the six Wednesday choir rehearsals and sing in church on the six Sundays in Lent, culminating with our joyful Easter Sunday singing. After that you can continue singing with us if you want to (and we bet you will!), but there are "no strings attached" to this offer.

Our choir rehearses on Wednesdays from 5:10-6:10pm and prior to Sunday worship from 9-9:30am. If you're interested, contact Derek at dbromme@css.edu or 218-590-0087 (phone or text). We're excited about having you join us!

On the Journey With You



In February I preached a sermon on the story from Mark 9:14-25. A man with an ill son comes to Jesus and asks Jesus to heal him, "if he is able." Jesus answers, "If you are able!—All things can be done for the one who believes." Isn't this really a universal truth? To approach anything in the spirit of hopelessness is to make it hopeless... to approach anything in the spirit of faith is to make healing and hope and meaning a possibility. The

tension within us is the sense of the possible, struggling with the curse of the impossible.

The father's response to Jesus has been repeated over and over ever since: "Lord, I believe... help my unbelief." The man proclaimed, "I BELIEVE," not as one who had all the answers, as he himself admitted when he added, "Help my unbelief." Even in the midst of his very real unbelief... he believed. **"Lord, I believe... help my unbelief."**

The truth of that matter is what we BELIEVE determines how we BEHAVE.

"I BELIEVE... HELP MY UNBELIEF!" The father's reply to Jesus tells us a whole lot about the nature of faith. It is a paradoxical statement, but not really contradictory. The man showed a measure of faith by bringing his son to Jesus in the first place. He took action, even in his unbelief.

Most of us, at least some of the time, are a mixture of faith and doubt. This man came to Jesus not because he had perfect faith and trust in him, but because he was so desperate he was willing to try anything... even Jesus! And Jesus did not chide him, nor did he turn him away. "I believe... help my unbelief!" isn't a bad prayer for any of us at any time.

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: **March 15**
Submit to connect@fumcduluth.com



fumcduluth.com

There are tides of the spirit. The sea of faith ebbs and flows. Sometimes it seems easy to believe... and other times much easier to doubt or fail to live out our beliefs. We are all of us strange mixtures of faith and unfaith... belief and unbelief. And the challenging truth is that sometimes we boldly proclaim that we believe... and yet our words and actions are not always in line with what we proclaim to believe.

Lord, I believe... Help my unbelief:

Lord, I believe You call us to forgive others... Help my unbelief when I am unwilling to let go of grudges and pain.

Lord, I believe You call me to care for your creation... Help my unbelief when I am unwilling to learn about creation care, or to sacrifice using straws or plastic bags.

Lord, I believe children are a treasure, and we have a Biblical mandate to care for them... Help my unbelief when no matter my view on immigration, I rationalize it is okay for children to be separated from their parents at borders or remain silent at such great injustice.

Lord, I believe You have entrusted me with resources and are counting on me to generously share what I have... Help my unbelief when I hoard my resources and am not willing to generously and sacrificially share.

Lord, I believe all people are created equal and are worthy of justice and love... Help my unbelief when I get uncomfortable, even angry, when the topic of inclusion gets brought up over and over again, challenging my own privilege.

Lord, I believe You invite me to give up control and any sense of entitlement... Help my unbelief when I insist my way is the right way and demand others see, behave, and believe like me.

Lord, I believe we are to talk to one another with respect and truthfulness... Help my unbelief when I turn a blind eye and deaf ear to those who lash out against others and play games with truth.

Lord, I believe You call us to be careful of the words that come out of our mouths... Help my unbelief

when I spread gossip, criticize, and hurt feelings and reputations with my words.

Lord I believe that You are always with me, and ultimately I will be okay... Help my unbelief when I am afraid and am filled with worry and hopelessness.

LORD, I BELIEVE... HELP MY UNBELIEF! Lord – may our beliefs, values, and theology be reflected in our words and actions. Let's each of us take personal inventory of that. And let's be confident that God is working in us in our beliefs and in our doubts.

On the journey with you! ~Pastor Jeanine

Worship in March

Worship Sunday at 10am live in our Sanctuary, online on YouTube at 10am, or anytime afterward on YouTube. If you have missed past services, you can see them all at youtube.com/channel/UCA47ISATrUxyV7xJ8b4cWww or simply by going to YouTube and searching "First United Methodist Church Duluth MN."

March 5: Holy Communion and 2nd Sunday of Lent.

Message: "Jesus Taught Us... Forgiveness Frees and Saves"

March 12: 3rd Sunday of Lent (Daylight savings time begins)

Message: "Jesus Taught Us... Don't Lose Heart"

March 19: 4th Sunday of Lent

Message: "Jesus Taught Us...The Power of Humility"

March 26: 5th Sunday of Lent

Message: "Jesus Taught Us... Don't Overreact"

Faith Forum

9:00-9:45 Sundays in Fireside Lounge

March 5: Union Gospel Mission.

March 12: FUMC member Jana Picotte shares her faith journey.

March 19: Carol Donahue on surviving the death of an adult child.

March 26: Is Amazon our friend? Come with thoughts.

From Our Faith Community Nurse



Greetings everyone! I thought that this month, I would give a few updates on dementia and Alzheimer's disease .

Alzheimer's is the most common cause of dementia, a general term for memory loss and other cognitive disabilities serious enough to interfere with daily life. Alzheimer's disease accounts for 60-80% of dementia cases. Dementia is caused by damage to or loss of nerve cells and their connections in the brain. Depending on the area of the brain that's damaged, dementia can affect people differently and cause different symptoms.

In Alzheimer's we know that there is a buildup of amyloid plaques in the brain which interferes with cell function and eventually leads to cell death. These amyloids can build up over 20 years before any signs of cognitive impairment appear. Alzheimer's is a progressive disease. It can progress from some interference with daily activity, to more pronounced problems, to not being able to care for oneself at all. Treatments currently rely on medications that can slow the progress at each stage of the disease.

In most cases, dementia occurs sporadically, is not directly caused by a single gene, and has no clear pattern of family inheritance. However, in a minority of cases, Alzheimer's disease and some other types of dementia can be directly caused by an inherited gene mutation.

Monitoring and managing your blood pressure, cholesterol, and blood sugar levels are essential for good brain function, and not controlling high blood pressure in mid-life leads to increased risk of dementia in later age. Are you having any memory loss or is your thinking not right? If so, there could be many reasons besides dementia or Alzheimer's that are causing your loss. Your medications, prescribed or over the counter, could be causing your problem. Your medications should be reviewed at least once per year to see if any adjustments need to be made.

Thirty-four percent of people past 85 years old have Alzheimer's. Two thirds of the people living with Alzheimer's are women.

According to a new study, people who regularly eat a lot of highly processed foods and drinks, like cheeseburgers, chips, fried chicken, sausage, pizza, biscuits, and sugary sodas are at increased risk of developing dementia.

Berries, fish, and leafy green vegetables are three of the best foods that fight memory loss. There's a mountain of evidence showing they support and protect brain health.

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Do you like cinnamon? Cinnamon reduces tau proteins and beta amyloid plaques. It was mentioned throughout the Bible as a one of the most important spices to have.

The earlier a diagnosis of memory problems is made, the sooner you can avail yourself of proper treatment to improve brain function.

There are medications at each stage of Alzheimer's that can help symptoms. A new intravenously drug called Aducanumab is in trial at Mayo, and works by removing the plaques. The effectiveness has been mixed.

Another drug, Lecanemab, may be available this year. In trials it has shown to reduce cognitive decline by 27%. Other drugs are also in trials.

The Alzheimer's Association in Duluth has a wealth of information for those who need support. They also have care consultants who will answer your questions, and an e-newsletter with the most recent information on care and support.

On the COVID front, more cases are popping up. Please wear a mask if you have a cold or find yourself in a crowd of people or on a plane. If you know someone that's homebound and has not received the COVID vaccine, a Health Department nurse can come to the house and give the vaccine.

Here is the link for COVID procedure for isolation: [cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/isolation.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/isolation.html)

Blessings, ~Linda Wiig

Overview of Our Annual Meeting

On Sunday, February 12, after worship, in a filled and energetic social hall, while eating doughnuts, and enjoying coffee...

- Ron Berkeland opened with a beautiful prayer.
- We looked at our membership roles, giving thanks for our 18 new members. We did not take in new members through confirmation this year, but look forward to welcoming 14 confirmands to membership this coming April. We baptized seven children. We prayed and gave thanks for the eight members of our congregation who died last year. Ninety-three people were taken off the membership role—most all of them have not been a part of our congregation for 10-25 years (some had died, many moved, and some we don't have contact information for). There was a computer program challenge "glitch" that had not caught the inactivity for the past many years. Contact our membership secretary, Nancy Eaton, if you have any questions.
- We enthusiastically renewed our annual affirmation of Kelby Werner and JoJo Coffin-Langdon's candidacies for ministry.
- Our worship attendance for 2022 (averaged on a 52-week basis) was 245 online (this assumes only one viewer per viewing device, and there are often more than one person watching on a single device) and over 119 in-person. This totals at least an average of 364 participants each week. Online worship is enabling greater participation. In 2019 when we were in person only (before the pandemic), our average weekly attendance was 263. Our 2021 average attendance was 361 (which included the Hope and

Hillside UMCs online with us for part of the year).

- A financial report was given by finance chair Teri Tangen. Teri's report was an expression of gratitude and praise. We ended 2022 in the black. Total income at year end was slightly over budget. Total expenses at year end were slightly over budget (due mostly to an increase in the cost of utilities). We ended the year with a positive net income. A copy of the year-end Profit and Loss is in the church office. In 2022 an audit was performed by SmithSchafer. We have received our audit report and the finance team will respond to it. There were no recommendations that were a surprise.

- Cindy Hedlund and Pastor Jeanine led the Nominations report. We elected leadership: Anita Zager, Linda Harper, and Janet Yardley to the Nominations team; Maryjane Burdge as vice chair of Staff Parish Relations Committee (SPRC) and Jeri Werner to the SPRC; Dave Johnson, Jeanne Carroll, Marlene Berntson, and Greg Leiviska to the Trustees; John Meredith to the Finance Team; Brandon Veale, Laurie Johnson, and Will Montz to the Foundation; Ellen Hill, Tony Hauschildt, Lee Cutler, and Connie Adamec as at-large members of the Church Council; Laurie Johnson to the Hospitality Team; Kaitlin Montz to the Mission and Social Justice Team; and Tess Enroth as a lay pastor (and one other person considering). In all we have about 155 individual people serving on teams.

- Pastor Jeanine gave a brief update on the situation of the Global United Methodist Church (for more information, ask her for a handout, where she outlines all the events).

- Scott Hedlund led a time of questions and reflections.
- Lay leader Jim Wheeler thanked the congregation for their continued participation, support, and positive energy.

Family News

Coppertop Youth News

Youth Group and Confirmation

6:30-7:30pm Wednesday nights

- **Wednesday, March 1** – Confirmation
- **Friday, March 10–Saturday, March 11** – Confirmation Retreat
- **Wednesday, March 8** – Youth Group – Board Games
- **Wednesday, March 15** – Youth Group – Press My Luck – St. Patrick's Day theme
- **Wednesday, March 22** – Youth Group – stoles/gym
- **Wednesday, March 29** – Youth Group – TBA

Tubing – Friday, March 10

All 6th–12th graders are invited to go Glow tubing at Spirit Mountain from 5:30-8pm on Friday, March 10. The cost is \$30. RSVP with Pastor Cynthia by Sunday, March 5.

All-Church Winter Retreat – Camp Amnicon, March 24-25

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For more information see the Camp Amnicon display ad below. Pastor Cynthia extends the invitation to any teens who want to go without their parents. She will personally be your chaperone for the event!

Summer Mission Trip – Save the Date

All 6th–12th graders are invited to participate in the summer mission trip June 13–15. The details are still being worked out, but we are looking at going to Feed My Starving Children and Valley Fair as part of the trip. If you have interest in this, please talk to [Pastor Cynthia](#).

Super Bowl Trivia!

Congrats to our winners, Grace Abbott and Nathaniel Bateman!

Happy Birthday to Will Carolan, Nora Davis, and Emily Sapyta.



**All-Church Camp
Amnicon
March 24-25**

Join us for a time of rest, rejuvenation, relaxation, and worship at the beautiful Camp Amnicon! We will be staying in the Alleluia Lodge! Come to the lodge any time after 3pm on Friday, March 24. We will plan on leaving Saturday at 3pm.

The Camp will provide lots of beautiful space to hike, snowshoe, play games, do puzzles, and take saunas. There will be time to sing with Cynthia and her guitar, sit by the fire, and chat with friends! Bring toiletries, along with bedding and pillows for twin-sized beds. There are two bunk houses and 26 beds.

Camp is \$40 per person (\$120 per family). Scholarships are available to anyone in need. Questions? Please contact JoJo Coffin-Langdon, 218-251-4388. Sign up for camp with the form found in the church office or at forms.gle/Lsvhrt5pvdSF2ppR6

Children's Ministries News

Children's Ministries will continue offering fun and educational Sunday School programming throughout March. On Sundays, we leave right after the children's message so kids have age-appropriate Christian education and parents can worship without distractions.

Wednesday Night Programming

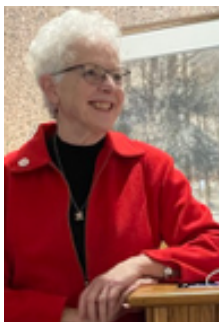
We have something for everyone from 5–7:30pm. A light sandwich supper can be purchased at church for \$3 per person.

Looking Ahead

- Easter Egg Extravaganza – April 9
- Vacation Bible School – July 17–21

From the Welcome Desk

by Mary Giese, Director of Welcoming and Hospitality



Hello Friends,

Our annual meeting was excellent, and it was wonderful to see how many were welcomed to positions within the leadership of FUMC. Some positions are elected and some are volunteer for committees and/or work areas. I heard that 155 people, at least, are included in leadership, committees, and work areas, and all are important and appreciated. There are so many good things happening, and we all have an opportunity to invite and welcome others to come and see if First United Methodist Church might be a good fit for them.

The Seven Wonders

A relative shared the Seven Wonders of the World with my husband, Kent. When I told him I wasn't sure what to put in the Welcome column for March, he said, "Why don't you share the Seven Wonders of the World? I think it's beautiful." I don't know who to credit for the words, but want to share them with you.

A class of students were asked to list what they considered to be the Seven Wonders of the World. There was some disagreement—Egypt's Great Pyramids, the Taj Mahal, the Grand Canyon, the Panama Canal, the Empire State Building, St. Peter's Basilica, and China's Great Wall received the most votes from the students.

While gathering the votes, the teacher noticed that one student, a quiet girl, hadn't turned in her paper yet. So she asked the girl

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Lent/Easter Mission Project

This year our focus will be on the Union Gospel Mission (UGM), which has been changing lives in the Northland since 1922 through food, shelter, and hope. They serve lunch Monday–Friday and dinner Monday–Thursday for those needing physical, relational, and spiritual sustenance. In addition to the meal program, UGM operates the Martin Inn. Located upstairs of the dining hall, the Martin Inn provides low-income transitional housing. Short-term residents are connected to resources to secure permanent housing options. They are also offered needed personal items (hygiene items, clothes) and spiritual resources.

Two from FUMC are greatly involved and invested in UGM: Karen Alseth, who is the Board Chair, and Jana Picotte, who is the Development Coordinator, oversee UGM's volunteer program in addition to collaborating on special events and fundraising efforts. You will hear from both of them during this Lenten season.

Katie Hagglund is a Duluth native who joined UGM as Executive Director in September 2022. With a background in management, social work, marketing, and political advocacy, Katie is committed to leading UGM into their next 100-year chapter. We will also hear from her during Lent.

UGM doors are open to every guest without prejudice, and UGM is committed to being a welcoming environment to anyone entering their doors. Aside from sharing the name with other organizations around the country, they have no affiliation with any other UGM and are truly an independent entity.

We will be collecting needed items for the Union Gospel Mission to give people in need. Please bring these items to church:

- | | |
|--|---|
| • Hand and foot warmers | • Deodorant (both men's and women's) |
| • Shower toiletries (i.e., shampoo, conditioner, body wash, shaving gel, razors) | • Menstrual products (i.e., tampons, pads, PH-safe wipes) |
| | • Reusable shopping bags |

Our Lent/Easter financial offering will be split 50% to the ministry and mission of the UGM and 50% to the ministry and mission of our congregation. Please mark "Easter Offering" on your check or giving envelope.

We hope you will give a financial gift, and/or donations, and certainly pray for UGM. It makes a difference!

RJAC Book Recommendation

Richard Wagamese (1955-2017), an Ojibway from the Wabaseemoong First Nation in northwestern Ontario, was recognized as one of Canada's foremost First Nations authors and storytellers.

The following is an excerpt from his book, *Embers: One Ojibway's Meditations* (Douglas & McIntyre, Canada, 2016), p114:

"Me: What's the greatest teaching in life?

Old Woman: You have to make your own moccasins.

Me: You're kidding, right?

Old Woman: No. You make them from the hide of your experience, all the places you have walked. You sew them with the thread of the teachings, the lessons embedded in all the hard miles. You stitch them carefully with the needle of your intention – to walk the spiritual path – and when you're finished, you realize that Creator lives in the stitches. That's what helps you walk more gracefully."

I got busy learning to sew.

Each page of *Embers* is a concise and beautifully written meditation on topics including stillness, harmony, trust, reverence, persistence, gratitude, and joy. Wagamese shares his poetic meditations, which give the reader insight into Indigenous wisdom, spirituality, and connections to creation.

Book review submitted by Racial Justice Action Committee member Marian Flammang

Coming to the Coppertop: the Great FUMC TP Challenge!

On March 12, the FUMC Sustainability Committee will host "The Great FUMC TP Challenge." Why? There are significant differences in the eco-friendliness of different toilet papers. In fact, the Natural Resources Defense Council 2022 recently released its current assessment, [nrdc.org/media/2020/200618-20](https://www.nrdc.org/media/2020/200618-20), ranking toilet papers from "A" to "F" in terms of eco-friendliness. Many of us probably use one of the poorly-rated toilet papers, often because we assume it will "perform" better than a top-rated (normally recycled paper) toilet paper.

We invite you to put your toilet paper to the test! Drop by the sustainability table in the church Narthex (outside the Sanctuary) after church on Sunday, March 12 to examine and feel a variety of different toilet papers and vote on your favorite! We'll announce the results in church on Sunday, March 19. Can you identify your toilet paper, or will you prefer an eco-friendlier variety? Take our test and see!

—Welcome, continued from page 6

if she was having trouble with her list. The quiet girl replied, "Yes, a little. I couldn't quite make up my mind because there are so many." Her teacher said, "Well, tell us what you have and maybe we can help." She hesitated a little, and said, "Then I think the Seven Wonders of the World are:

1. to Touch; 3. to See; 5. to Feel; 7. to Love.
2. to Taste; 4. to Hear; 6. to Laugh;

The teacher was startled, and the room was so quiet that you could have heard a pin drop. The quiet girl challenged them to think a little differently and reminded us that the things we overlook as simple and ordinary are often the MOST wonderful, and we DON'T have to travel far and wide just to experience them.

Slow down... to touch, to taste, to see, to hear, to feel, to laugh, and to love.

See you in church. And remember, we are the church with a welcome for everybody, always! ~Mary

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What Is Lent and Why Does It Last Forty Days?

Lent is a season of forty days, not counting Sundays, which begins on [Ash Wednesday](#) and ends on Holy Saturday. [Lent comes from the Anglo Saxon word lencten](#), meaning "lengthen," and refers to the lengthening days of spring. The forty days represent the time Jesus spent in the wilderness, enduring the temptation of Satan and preparing to begin his ministry.

Lent is a time of repentance, [fasting](#), and preparation for the coming of Easter. It is a time of self-examination and reflection. In the early church, Lent began as a period of fasting and preparation for baptism by new converts and then became a time of penance by all Christians. Today Christians focus on relationship with God, growing as disciples, and extending ourselves, often choosing to give up something or to volunteer and give of ourselves for others.



Fasting by limiting food and drink, accompanied by prayer and devotional reading, is an important spiritual practice to draw closer to God. Photo by congerdesign, courtesy of Pixabay.

Sundays in Lent are not counted in the forty days because each Sunday represents a "mini-Easter." This is why you will see the designation "Sunday in Lent" rather than "Sunday of Lent" in the naming of these Sundays. On each Lord's Day in Lent, while Lenten fasts continue, the reverent spirit of Lent is tempered with joyful anticipation of the Resurrection.

This content was produced by "Ask the UMC," a ministry of United Methodist Communications.

UMCOR Response to Earthquakes in Turkey and Syria



A little girl is rescued in Gaziantep, Turkey after a series of earthquakes hit Turkey and Syria on Monday, Feb. 6, 2023. (Credit: International Blue Crescent)

By Susan Clark
ATLANTA
(February 9, 2023)

A 7.8-magnitude earthquake struck southern Turkey at 4:17am on Monday, February 6, 2023, the most powerful

earthquake recorded since 1939. In the hours that followed, at least 78 aftershocks were reported, followed by a second earthquake of 7.5 magnitude.

The earthquakes and aftershocks also impacted northwest Syria, where 4.1 million people depend on humanitarian assistance. Syrian communities, many of them women and children, are simultaneously facing an ongoing cholera outbreak and extreme winter weather, including heavy rain and snow.

Thousands have been killed in both countries, and deaths continue to rise as rescue crews seek survivors in collapsed buildings. The humanitarian response is struggling to ramp up to meet the need among the devastation and winter weather.

UMCOR's longstanding humanitarian partner, International Blue Crescent (IBC), has multiple offices and project sites in Turkey. In IBC offices, people fill the halls as they seek shelter, warmth, and a hot meal. With the devastating damage to roads, transport, and infrastructure, IBC has received hundreds of families in its Kilis Community Center for shelter, warm items, and hot meals since the first hours Monday morning. Kilis is serving as a major hub for coordination and relief efforts, including for cross-border response into Syria.

UMCOR has released initial solidarity grants to IBC and Forum for Development Culture and Dialogue (working in Syria) to help provide tents, heaters,



IBC staff serve meals to earthquake victims at Kilis Community Center. Photo: Courtesy of International Blue Crescent

blankets, warm clothes, ready-to-eat meals, and first-aid kits to those who have been displaced. UMCOR staff members are also in touch with other partners in the region. Additional updates will be provided as more information becomes available.

Please join UMCOR in prayer for the many people affected by these devastating earthquakes, including the rescue crews seeking survivors and those caring for the injured and displaced.

Support relief and recovery efforts for this and other international disasters by donating to [Advance #982450 here](#).

Susan Clark is the chief communications officer for Global Ministries and UMCOR.

About UMCOR and the General Board of Global Ministries of The United Methodist Church

Founded in 1940, the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) is the global humanitarian relief agency of The United Methodist Church. A part of Global Ministries, UMCOR works in more than 80 countries worldwide, including the United States and its territories. The agency's mission, grounded in the teachings of Jesus, is to alleviate human suffering with open hearts and minds to all people. Working in the areas of disaster response and recovery, sustainable development, and migration, UMCOR responds to natural or civil disasters that are interruptions of such magnitude that they overwhelm a community's ability to recover on its own. Learn more about UMCOR by visiting www.umcor.org and by following UMCOR on [Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#).

Justice Ministries



Stabilization, Food Distribution and Housing Services, Congregational Outreach, Advocacy, and organizing the largest service safety net in Duluth for those experiencing homelessness

CHUM member congregations are core to who it is as an organization. Congregations in Duluth are what began CHUM, and now it is made up of 40 fantastic congregations! CHUM gives us opportunities to:

- Give expression to our faith through activities that respond to the needs of the poor and disenfranchised
- Strengthen the community by building strong relationships
- Bring about systemic changes that benefit the marginalized and dispossessed.

A few weeks ago, CHUM was featured in the Duluth News Tribune [in this article](#). It outlines more of the issues they are facing and is a great read.

CHUM Shelter Expansion FAQ

The plan to add two levels on top of the existing building will cost \$4.3 million. The recent \$2 million federal grant is a great starting point for this project, but will cover just half the cost. CHUM needs your help to advocate for state funding. Minnesota's \$17-billion budget surplus is aimed at projects just like this! chumduluth.org/advocacy

Of course they will need to raise a lot of money to complete this project. Financial contributions are more than welcome and can be done safely and securely on CHUM's website, chumduluth.org.

CHUM Is Growing!

The need for services has grown, and CHUM is looking for staff to support their guests: Shelter Support Staff, Family Coaches, a Director of Housing Services, a Community Engagement Coordinator, and an Early Childhood Program Assistant. [Job Openings](#).

CHUM Is Proud to Support:



Stepping On Up will change the response to homelessness in Duluth and move people from being unsheltered to living in Shelter-Next facilities (four of them, each sheltering 25 persons, providing access to needed stabilization services, and allowing barriers to be addressed); and then into ultra-affordable housing (200 of them) where they can build a community that can make stability, employment, and self-sufficiency possible.

steppingonupduluth.org

Stepping On Up chosen for statewide "Search for Shelter" design

Over the course of a week in February, teams of volunteer architects, landscape architects, and interior designers convened in Minneapolis to develop plans for several shelter and housing projects around the state. Included was the first of Stepping On Up's "Shelter Next" projects that will add 12-25 temporary shelter beds in an existing church building.



Search for Shelter is an annual initiative of the Minnesota Chapter of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) to help "local and regional affordable housing organizations envision beautiful, innovative design solutions for projects that previously existed only in written form." CHUM is excited to be working with AIA

Minnesota in the coming weeks and look forward to sharing plans soon for the first Phase II project!

Advocacy

Lobbying is an important part of advocating for issues that impact our community. When you lobby a government official, you are attempting to influence decisions they make that affect you, your neighbors, our community, our state, or our country.



A great way to support shelter expansion and Shelter-Next facilities is to advocate for funding on the state and local levels. Learn how at chumduluth.org/advocacy.

Chum's local-level priorities include an increase in shelter capacity, construction and preservation of affordable housing, healthcare and educational equity, and identifying actions to dismantle structural racism in Duluth.

They need Shelter Capital to expand shelter and staffing capacity.

They need funding for Stepping On Up.

They need funding for affordable housing.

Ask our legislators to support the Pathway Home Act (HF444 & SF388) which provides:

- \$150 million for Shelter Capital in one-time funding (Phase II)
- \$40 million in 2024/25 and \$70 million in 2026/27 for Emergency Services Program grants (Phases I –III)
- \$25 million in 2024/25 and \$40 million in 2026/27 for Homeless Youth Act grants
- \$9 million for Transitional Housing Programs (Phase III).

If passed, they can use these funds to:

- Create Shelter-Next housing for people following their release from treatment, corrections, or chronic homelessness. (Phase II)
- Provide training opportunities for people experiencing barriers so they can have stability and independence, and attain employment and self-sufficiency (Phase III).

Reconciling Ministry Network



First United Methodist Church is part of the Reconciling movement, joining with a global family that is now over 45,000 people strong.

That's 45,000 people committed to LGBTQ+ justice in the United Methodist Church and the world. Everything you do for justice counts.

Your heart for change.
Your voice for justice.
Your support.
Your advocacy.
Your late-night phone calls with a queer child.
Your hard talks at church.



Together, Reconciling United Methodist congregations accomplish what no one person or organization can. We are a force for love and in service of a Church that celebrates all of God's children. Thank you for your witness and ministry – for everything you do for LGBTQ+ justice and inclusion! rmnetwork.org/donate



First United Methodist Church

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