

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 2024

*Look for these
musical events in
July at FUMC*

*Northern Lights Music
Festival Chamber Music
July 13 at 3:00*

*Big Wave Dave and
the Ripples
July 15 at 6:30
FUMC Parking Lot*

**First United
Methodist Church**

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



Our First Family

Minnesota Quilter of the Year!
FUMC member Helen Smith Stone's quilts were on display at the DECC last month, along with many others. What a huge accomplishment for Helen to being named Minnesota Quilter of the Year! A well-deserved honor!



The top right monarch quilt is Helen's



From Your Deacon



Throughout this summer as we've focused on renewal and our baptismal vows, I have found myself looking at some of our liturgy with new eyes. Especially this week, I've found myself reciting part of the congregational response that we often use following the baptism ritual when the pastor asks the church family an important question:

Will you nurture one another in the Christian faith and life, and include these persons now before you in your care?

And the congregation responds, in unison:

With God's help we will proclaim the good news and live according to the example of Christ. We will surround this child with a community of love and forgiveness, that she may grow in her service to others. We will pray for her, that she may be a true disciple who walks in the way that leads to life.

Friends, that's a very audacious promise, is it not?

What does it mean to be a community of **love and forgiveness**?

We probably all have some ideas about what that would look like, sound like, and feel like. But I think, as a church community, it requires us to assume positive intent, to hold one another accountable without shaming or blaming, and maybe to be flexible about what we prefer when we are considering changes that are central to our purpose.

I am constantly amazed at the health of this congregation. You are so good at welcoming one another, supporting one another, allowing grace when mistakes are made, and enjoying one another's

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Next First Family deadline: **July 17**

Submit to connect@fumcduluth.com



fumcduluth.com

company. It's that kind of community of love and forgiveness that helps us fulfill the rest of our baptismal response; when we do this well, we live according to the example of Christ, our lives proclaim this good news, we grow in service to God and to others, and we become more faithful in our walk of discipleship. This is a gift we can give to ourselves and to one another. And in the process, we are a counter-cultural gift to the world, living in the love of Christ, and bringing hope and healing to a world that is in need. May it be so for all of us!

Together in the love of Christ,
~Rev. MaryAnne

Family Fun Night

Calling all families with kids going into grade 5 and younger (elementary and preschool ages)! On Monday, July 29 from 5:00-6:30pm, you are invited to a casual evening with other families for an easy dinner (pizza, watermelon, lemonade) and games. Weather permitting, we'll be outdoors. This is a social event designed to let the kids have some fun together while the parents get to know one another better. Watch for a sign-up soon, or call the church office to register. Let us know if you have any special dietary needs or restrictions.

**Strikepoint is asking
for donations to help
with their Japan tour.**

*For the story and a way to
contribute, go to*
Hamamatsu 2024
givemn.org/organization/Strikepoint-1

Security Changes Coming

Your Church Council and Trustees are starting a process in which we evaluate various ways to keep our building safe throughout the week and also on the weekends. Given that our lower levels are filled with pre-schoolers on weekdays, we are especially cognizant of our responsibility for security.

To that end, starting in mid-July, we will ask our East and West Door greeters to lock those lower level doors on Sundays shortly after 10am, and we will post signs asking those who arrive later than that to enter via the main entrance, facing Skyline Parkway.

This is an ongoing discussion, and it's likely that various practices will change as we learn more and refine our procedures. The goal will always be to balance our need for safety with our core value of hospitality and welcome. The Council and the Trustees will use the coming weeks to do more analysis, and as they continue to complete this process, they pledge to communicate clearly and often as changes occur.

July Worship Schedule

There are three ways to participate in worship:

- 10am, live in our Sanctuary on Sundays. (We hope you choose this one when you can—there is something wonderful about being in person with others.)
- 10am livestreamed service on Sundays as worship is taking place
- Anytime afterwards on our [YouTube channel](#).

July 7: Service of Holy Communion – Rev. Luke Nelson will provide our sermon, entitled “Who Does That?” (This sermon was recorded at the Minnesota Annual Conference in late May, and it was excellent—guaranteed to provoke your thinking.) Luke currently serves as pastor at Spirit of Hope UMC in the Twin Cities.

July 14: Rev. Cindy Yanchury preaches on a New Testament text in response to Rev. Nelson's comments from the previous week. Cindy is a retired Deacon who has served for many years at several churches and has a background in the military.

July 21: Our own Brandon Veale – brings a word on “Imagining Vain Things,” reflecting on world peace and the start of the Olympics. Stick around after worship for some ice cream treats and special fellowship time.

July 28: We return to the study of Ephesians, – as Rev. MaryAnne digs into what it means to be rooted and grounded in love. PLUS: We will enjoy the return of our own Bassoon Trio!

From the Welcome Desk

by Greg Leiviska



Greetings from the Welcome Desk

As the new Welcome Director, I would like to say how excited I am to be a part of this church. I have been worshipping here off and on since the closure of Chester Park Church but have become more of a regular attendee since the end of COVID restrictions and my retirement from almost 40 years in healthcare and healthcare management. I became a member here last year and now serve on the

Board of Trustees as well as work in the church office on Wednesday and Friday mornings

When Chester Park closed, I wasn't sure the Coppertop would be the right fit. I was afraid that I wouldn't feel the same close-knit family feeling of a smaller congregation. I was pleasantly surprised to find the same atmosphere here. This congregation truly lives up to our mission and vision statements.

The Mission of First United Methodist Church is to be a place where we

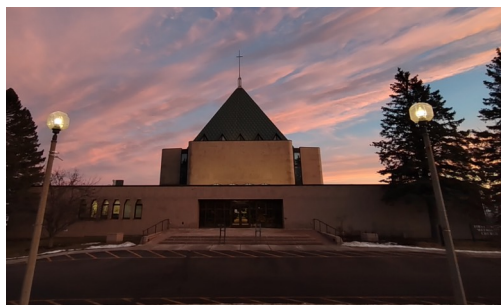
- Welcome all people;
- Are guided by the teachings and the unconditional love of Jesus; and
- Are inspired to participate as faithful disciples of Christ.

The Vision of First United Methodist Church is to be a fully inclusive Christ-centered body of faith, vitally engaged in ministries, seeking justice and wholeness for our community by

- Following the teachings of Jesus;
- Seeing the face of Christ in all whom we encounter;
- Being the presence of the Gospel in the community;
- Equipping and empowering ministers of the Gospel;
- Being a practicing and prayerful people of faith;
- Living as a people who believe that God calls us to hope and healing; and
- Honoring diversity as we seek to minister in unity.

I look forward to meeting new (and old) friends, and am truly thankful for each and every member of this congregation for the love, compassion, and inclusiveness that is shared on a daily basis.

~Greg Leiviska
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New Members

We warmly welcome these new members to our church family.

Diane and Gary Fortney

Diane enjoys gardening, singing, swimming, and ancestry, and Gary enjoys playing pickle ball, various sports, collector cars, and coins.



Both Diane and Gary are retired and make their home in Duluth. They have two children, Douglas Fortney and Jessica Glander.

They chose FUMC because their daughter worships here, and they love the music ministry and inclusiveness of the congregation.

They are transferring their membership from Forbes UMC in Proctor.

Safe Haven Shelter

Safe Haven Shelter, a local shelter for domestic abuse survivors, is collecting used cell phones and their chargers to give to their clients who need to be able to discreetly reach 911 emergency services. They work with a Florida company to refurbish and repair old phones.

If you have phones and chargers to donate, please bring them to Safe Haven's Resource Center at 414 W. 1st St., Duluth, between 8am and 4pm, Monday-Friday.



From Our Faith Community Nurse

by Linda Wiig



Happy Summer to All!

Many of us will be fortunate enough to take a vacation this summer, but remember to be kind to your bodies. Taking an active role in keeping our bodies and our relationships healthy is a way to demonstrate stewardship and to thank God for the life he has given. Taking care of ourselves not only benefits us but also our

loved ones and our community. Health is really a personal and social responsibility.

When traveling, please be kind to yourself and try to maintain a sleep schedule that fits your natural sleeptime. I have found as I have aged, my natural bedtime is now between 9:30 and 10:30. In my younger days I could easily stay up until midnight. Having a routine is very beneficial. Put away the cell phone, no TV on in the bedroom, make sure you have a quiet dark room, avoid caffeine and alcohol prior to bedtime, and don't eat late.

Still, have a great time! On your vacation, or staycation, experts recommend 20 to 30 minutes of exercise at least three times per week. For older individuals, moderate and low-impact activities to try are walking, yoga, biking, swimming, and maybe even pickleball.

Yoga is a great way to begin an exercise program. You could take a class! There are many types of yoga, even chair yoga. The coordinated movement found in yoga can be beneficial to our brains by reducing anxiety and depression. Getting into a group also helps to improve your social connections. If a group isn't for you, there are always online classes. You will need to investigate what type of yoga is best for you. You will also need to know what your limitations are and then match your body to the best type of yoga. For example, Soma Yoga, which uses slow gentle movements, can be good for chronic pain, increasing your flexibility and healing. But, of course, all chronic pain should be assessed by your provider prior to beginning any exercise program.

For those of you who experience some knee pain: every pound of weight a person loses reduces the load on your knees three to six fold. So eat healthy and lose a few pounds if you are overweight.

Have fun, be safe, exercise, get your rest, and breathe in nature, as it can nourish your body, mind, and soul. To quote a few lines from the poem by Denise Moreland, "Noticing God:"

"I am the healing warmth of sunshine.

I am in the serenity of the sunset... the meandering river.

I am in the playfulness of birds, the depth of the sea, the restfulness of sleep.

I am in every smile, the refreshment of water.

I am the life energy that nourishes.

I am inside of you and all around you. Be gracious as you live in grace and know profound peace."

Blessings,
~Linda

Save and Share the Date for the Coppertop Bazaar

We are excited to begin planning for the 2024 Coppertop Bazaar (formerly the Craft, Book, and Bake Sale). Our planning team would like to extend an invitation to you to participate in our 2024 event scheduled for **Saturday, November 9, from 9am. to 2:30pm.**

We hope you will seriously consider joining us on November 9. It was the wonderful quality and variety of crafters' items that helped make the sale a success in past years, and we expect that to continue.

VENDOR NOTE: Crafter-baked goods, raffles, or catalog order sales will not be allowed. Be watching for a letter in July containing detailed information to secure your spot. We hope to see you in November!

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact team members:

Karen Alseth, 218-390-3045,

kadal319@msn.com;

Larry Ehresman, 218-260-9577,

LDETackle@aol.com.

LED Lighting Project Update

by Geoff Bell

After church on the afternoon of Sunday, June 23, a group of almost a dozen of us, ranging in age from 2 to 80+, met to begin the next important step of the LED project—cleaning the lenses (light covers). We began in the church’s Hillside Room. If you don’t have kids, you may not even be aware of the Room, but it is heavily used both by the preschool and by FUMC’s Sunday school program. Therefore it’s a high-priority space, in terms of both how much the lights get used and how much we value youth.

There was both a lot of serious work AND a lot of laughter and great fellowship. By the time we were done, the room was SIGNIFICANTLY brighter, even without the new LEDs being installed. That’s the difference cleaning away over 50 years of grime and dirt can make!

If you want to join us in the future, please contact Geoff Bell, Kelsey Hanson, or Alex Flinner (via the church office). We can add you to future cleaning meetings.

What Does it Mean to Be a Climate Justice Congregation?

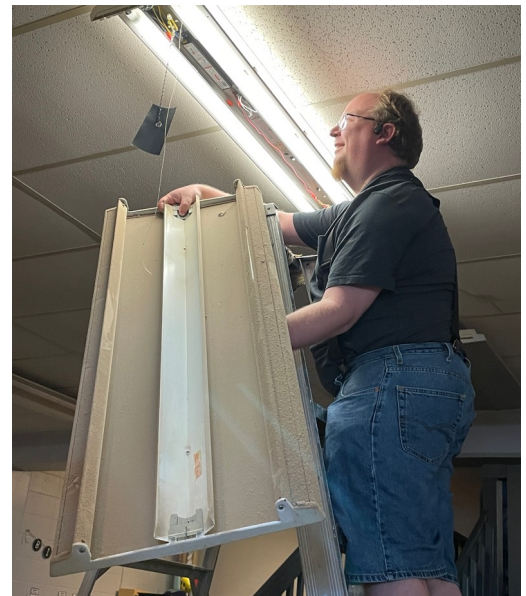
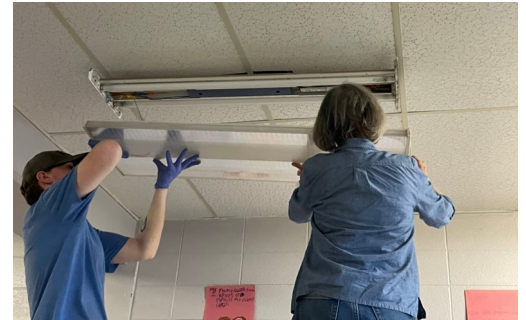


Our congregation has recently been certified as a Climate Justice Congregation (CJC) by Minnesota Interfaith Power and Light. With this we join only 34 other certified congregations in Minnesota. In the near future, you will be seeing the CJC logo on some church communications. You might ask then: What does it mean to be a CJC? The short answer is, taking climate action that is informed by our Christian values.

In saying this, we are recognizing that climate change is not only a scientific problem but also a moral problem. In this way of thinking, science and faith are seen not as in opposition, but as complementary. While science can describe the physics of climate change and possible mitigating actions, faith can tell us what are the right and just ways to act in response. In Genesis we are called to be good stewards of creation. In Matthew we are called to be just stewards—that is, stewardship that serves the “least of these.”

It is a sad fact that those least responsible for climate change, the poor and children, bear the heaviest weight of climate change. As a CJC we are committing to addressing not only the effectiveness of environmental action but also whether an action is the right and Christian thing to do.

~Charlie Orsak, Sustainability Committee



EarthKeeper

by UMC EarthKeeper Naomi Yaeger

Join Plastic Free July 2024



This July, I invite you to join Plastic Free July, by refusing single-use plastic. Plastic Free July, a registered not-for-profit in Australia, highlights the global issue of plastic pollution, but plastic pollution knows no boundaries.

If you are reading this, you've probably already cut down on your use of plastic. Maybe you feel bad when you use one-time-use plastic because there is no alternative. Don't lose heart; I encourage you to keep plugging away.

Here are some actions for Plastic Free July 2024:

- Dental Care: Seek alternatives to plastic toothbrushes, packaged toothpaste, and dental floss.
- Sanitary Items: Opt for plastic-free alternatives during your period.
- Soap: Replace liquid soap with bar soap to avoid single-use plastic.
- Shaving: Switch from disposable razors to reusable ones.
- Cleaning: Use DIY cleaners with baking powder, vinegar, and lemon to avoid single-use plastic packaging.
- Plastic Drink Bottles: Despite progress, plastic bottles and caps remain the top items collected in beach cleanups globally. Refusing drinks in plastic bottles is a major step in cutting down on plastics.

I've switched to cardboard-packaged dental floss, but I found it difficult to decline a dental goody bag with a small plastic-packaged sample at a recent checkup. Instances like these remind us to plan ahead and stay committed. Every year one billion plastic toothpaste tubes end up in landfills, taking forever to biodegrade. My daughter uses toothpaste tablets stored in a glass jar, a practice I aim to adopt.

While some of these acts may seem inconsequential, every small change creates awareness and encourages further improvements. Stay mindful, especially as projections suggest a potential tripling of plastic waste by 2060.

In 2020 dozens of major companies joined the U.S. Plastics Pact, signaling a commitment to minimizing plastic waste. Signatories included General Mills, Nestlé, Kraft Heinz, and Coca-Cola, as well as retailers like Walmart and Target. Packaging and materials suppliers also signed. Their goals included phasing out plastic straws and cutlery; recycling or composting half of their plastic packaging; and making sure 100% of plastic packaging would be reusable, recyclable, or compostable—all by 2025. But now they are pushing the goal to 2030.

Let's continue pressuring major brands to reduce plastic use.

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

2024 Conference Highlights

By: Christa Meland

This column is about condensing two full days of worship, discerning, and celebrating into a succinct report for your congregation. Here are some highlights:

Theme: Drawing from Isaiah 43:1, the theme of this year's Annual Conference is "Jesus. Redeemer." We gathered to be reminded what it means to be named and claimed by Jesus for the sake of our mission. We explored how to live together, anchored in our identity as Christ followers who are inspired to live with hope, possibility, and purpose.

Bishop's Episcopal Address: On a trip to Scotland in 2019, while Bishop Lanette was stepping onto a bus, the driver instructed her to "mind the gap" between the platform and the vehicle. "I believe God has uniquely positioned the United Methodist Church in Minnesota to be trailblazers as we mind the gaps of society," she said. We can mind the gap of justice and reconciliation work. We can mind the gap of the least of these so that people will have their basic human needs met. It is up to us to mind the gap that separates the kingdom of

—continued on next page

heaven from what we are experiencing here on earth.

Milestones in Ministry: At a beautiful worship service at Hennepin Avenue UMC in Minneapolis, Minnesota United Methodists honored and thanked 14 clergy entering retirement, and they celebrated one pastor ordained as a deacon, three commissioned as provisional members, one recognized as a provisional member from another denomination, one recognized as an associate member, and six authorized to serve as local pastors in the congregations and ministry areas in which they are appointed.



Staying Power: In a powerful sermon based on Isaiah 43:1-2, Rev. Cindy Gregorson pointed out that God tells us not to be afraid, not if but *when* we encounter deep waters or raging rivers or walk through fire. God knows how scary it can be when our world starts shifting, and the tug between the comfortable and the unknown happens to all of us all the time. If we are going to be able to go the distance, we need to stay in love with God, because that is where our staying power comes from, she said. She told those gathered, “You are called. You are beloved. You are precious in God’s sight. You can do this hard thing, whatever your hard thing is, because you are not doing it alone. God is with you, God is for you, God has got you.”

Living Into Our Baptismal Vows: As this year’s Conference Preacher, Rev. Luke Nelson delivered a sermon urging us to live into our baptismal vows. He reminded attendees that they are created in the image and likeness of God, and that God claims us and is with us, always. We are set aside for one sacred purpose: to share God’s love with the world. But we don’t do it alone; we are in this together.



He reminded those gathered that when we are baptized, our congregations also vow to be a community of love and forgiveness for us. “United Methodism is a feast entrusted to us not only to set the table for the world, but for you to taste and see that the Lord is good,” he said.

Love Offering:

Conference members, on behalf of their churches, gave more than \$103,000 to the 2024 Love Offering: 30% will go to a new trauma care center in Ukraine; 30% will go to immigration legal support in partnership with Volunteer Lawyer Network; 30% will go to special programming aimed at reducing trauma at Emma Norton Services’ new Restoring Waters facility; and 10% will go to Volunteers in

Mission scholarships, which support first-time mission trip participants. You may continue to donate throughout 2024 at minnesotaumc.org/donate.

Legislation: Hundreds of voting members in attendance at Annual Conference approved the majority of legislation under consideration, including

- moving from five to four districts as of July 1, 2024
- a resolution that denounces the increase in hate crimes in the U.S., calls on the Minnesota Conference to partner with others on this concern, and calls on Minnesota congregations to commit to actions to increase learning and speak out
- a resolution that opposes Israeli apartheid, calls on the U.S. government to make U.S. funding conditional upon Israel dismantling its apartheid system, and urges United Methodists to listen to Palestinian voices
- the establishment of a Conference Board of Lay Ministry to equip and enable lay persons to be in mission and ministry in all aspects of life.



Northern Lights Music Festival Chamber Music Concert Coming to FUMC



The Northern Lights Music Festival will present a concert on Saturday, July 13 at 3:00pm at First United Methodist Church, 230 E Skyline Parkway in Duluth. Featured on the program will be some of the great chamber music polished and performed at the Northern Lights

Music Festival held each summer on the Iron Range.

The repertoire on the program includes piano trios by Johannes Brahms and Arno Babadjanian, Café Music by Paul Schoenfield, and works for solo piano. Performers will include musicians representing Indiana University, Rowan University, the University of Nebraska, and the University of Cincinnati. A freewill donation will be taken.



The FUMC June Photo Album



Cast in Bronze Year-end Dinner



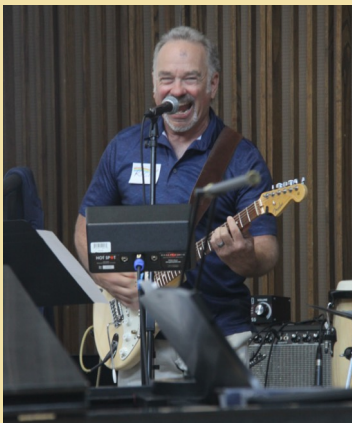
Nancy and Sue, working at the Area 7 Handbell Festival in La Crosse



Anita, receiving a piece of music commissioned in her honor, which was then played by the select handbell group behind her.



Showing off Strikepoint's new display



Bill, Nancy, Sue, Anita, and Shari, along with 300 of their closest friends, at the Area 7 Handbell Festival in La Crosse





Summer Fun at First

CHUM Rhubarb Festival

Saturday, June 29
Holy Rosary
parking lot.

Ways you can help:

- 1) Donate rhubarb
- 2) Tuesdays in June: help prep rhubarb and strawberries in the church kitchen
- 3) Wednesdays in June: make pies and jam in the church kitchen
- 4) Rhubarb Week June 24-28: make and bake pies, crisps, and other goodies; box and transport pies

Email anitazager@gmail.com to volunteer.

Big Wave Dave and the Ripples

Monday, July 15 • 6:30pm
(Raindate: Monday, July 29)

Join us for a rockin' concert in the parking lot! Big Wave Dave has been such a hit in previous years that we asked them to come back again. A "Room at the Table" food truck will be on site beginning at 5:30. Chairs provided, or feel free to bring your own. Freewill offering will support CHUM.

Ice Cream Treats following worship Sunday, July 21

Strikepoint Concert

Sunday, August 4
7pm

Strikepoint will be leaving this week for the 21st International Handbell Symposium in Hamamatsu, Japan, and will be representing the U.S. in a special concert there. Let's give them an enthusiastic send-off and enjoy some of the music they'll be sharing with the world! Admission free; \$18 suggested donation.

Outdoor Worship Service

Sunday, August 25
10am

Our worship band, Tapestry, will lead morning worship in our parking lot overlooking our glorious lake. We'll celebrate Pastor Jeanine's return from renewal leave. Following worship, we'll have a picnic and a concert by Tapestry.



**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 15

(rain date July 29)



6:30 - 8 PM

**Freewill donations will cover
concert expenses and support CHUM.**

Chairs available, or bring your own!

Room at the Table food truck beginning at 5:30.

Activities for children.



First United Methodist Church

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