

# First Family

August 2024



## STRIKEPOINT

*What a Year!*

First United  
Methodist Church

230 E. Skyline Parkway  
Duluth, MN 55811  
[www.fumcduluth.com](http://www.fumcduluth.com)

*We welcome all people... are guided by the teachings  
and unconditional love of Jesus... are inspired  
to participate as faithful disciples of Christ.*





## Our First Family

A gift to light the church during the week of August 4 was given to celebrate the birthdays of Richard Gurske and his brother Ray. The gift will also benefit the FUMC Doughnut Fund.



**Condolences** to the family of Rollie Strand. Rollie passed away on July 8. A Celebration of Life service was held on July 27.

Rollie's daughter, Katie is a documentary filmmaker. She plans to create a documentary about her dad and would love to include your stories. To be a part of this project, please contact Katie:

[kmstrand@gmail.com](mailto:kmstrand@gmail.com) or  
[katiestrand.com](http://katiestrand.com)

### The July 28 worship service



included a very special event, the wedding ceremony for Judy Sage and Allen Anway. Congratulations, and thank you for sharing your wedding with those in attendance and online.

**Thank you** to everyone who donated and attended concerts to support Strikepoint's tour to Japan and the International Handbell Symposium. We all feel loved, cherished, and humbled by your generosity.

~Bill Alexander

## From Your Deacon

I admit it - I'm a little bit of a Metho-nerd. Which means, among other things, that I keep track of what's going on in our denomination across our entire connection—not only in our own Annual Conference, but across our region in the North Central Jurisdiction (10 annual conferences) and General Conference (our world-wide denomination.) In mid-July, the North Central Jurisdiction of the UMC met in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, to learn and grow together. Since there were no bishop elections this quadrennium, there was more time to focus on how we, as people called Methodist, can more fully live into our call to bring hope and healing into the world.

Bishop Lanette Plambeck was the preacher for the opening worship of this gathering. She confessed that she is an "edge-walker" - someone who is called to live on the edges where two cultures meet and integrate. She described this concept as similar to the biological concept known as the ecotone: a place where two diverse environments come together and new life grows. An ecotone forms a beautiful, rich, and vibrant environment, unique unto itself.

According to Bishop Lanette, Jesus was the edge-walker of all edge-walkers; he was uniquely called to walk between the Kingdom of God and the people of the earth. Jesus showed us how to live as God's beloved community within a culture that was deeply antithetical to God's system, a system based on love, mercy, justice, and peace. The ecotone that was born from Jesus' ministry was, and is, the church. The church lives between the culture of the world and the culture of God's dream for the world—two very different environments.

Being an edge-walker requires an interesting set of skills. Robert Putnam (author of *Bowling Alone* [2000] and *The Upswing* [2021]) produces evidence that as we have become more socially isolated, we risk our own well-being AND the well-being of the social fabric of our country. His remedy is that in addition to nurturing

## First Family

### First United Methodist Church

230 E. Skyline Parkway, Duluth, MN 55811  
218-727-5021, [Info@fumcduluth.com](mailto:Info@fumcduluth.com)

Pastor: [Jeanine Alexander](#)

Editor: [Bill Alexander](#)

Next First Family deadline: **August 21**

Submit to [connect@fumcduluth.com](mailto:connect@fumcduluth.com)



[fumcduluth.com](http://fumcduluth.com)

connections with others with whom we are similar, we need to become skilled at developing relationships with people *unlike* ourselves – get comfortable as an edge-walker, if you will, in order to restore balance and order in society.

As Christians, our baptismal vows ask us to “resist evil, injustice, and oppression in whatever forms they present themselves.” To me, that feels an awful lot like being an edge-walker. We live within a flawed system that holds endless promise, and the hope that comes from Christ gives us a method and a purpose as we work to make a difference.

In what way are you an edge-walker?

Together in the love of Christ,  
~Rev. MaryAnne

PS: You can hear Bishop Plambeck’s sermon here:

[NCJ 2024 Front | NCJ United Methodist Church \(ncjumc.org\)](#)

## Big Wave Dave Concert Report

**Thank You For Your Generosity!**

The Big Wave Dave and the Ripples concert in our parking lot on July 15 was a big success! We had a great crowd and, after concert expenses, over \$2,300 was donated to the missions of CHUM. It was a beautiful evening to support a very important cause.



## August Worship Calendar

**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](#).

**August 4: We will celebrate Holy Communion** this month with a musical liturgy, led by our own Riley Hinnencamp. You may bring an item for our local food shelf, to support those in our community who need physical sustenance. In the evening, all are invited to our Sanctuary for a 7pm concert as we prepare to send Strikepoint off to Japan for the International Handbell Symposium.

**August 11:** How are we imitators of God? Join us as we look at Ephesians chapter 4 to unpack this question, especially pertinent during this time of division in our country.

**August 18:** We will wrap up our look at the book of Ephesians as we think about what it means to “put on the whole armor of God.” Is God really sending us into battle?

**August 25: Join us for outdoor worship**, with Tapestry leading the music, as we welcome Pastor Jeanine back from her 12-week renewal leave. She will share some of her most meaningful “Lessons from Leave.” After worship, plan to stay for a picnic (all food is provided!) and a Tapestry concert! Activities for kids will be available.

## Rhubarb Report

*submitted by Anita Zager*

FUMC's contribution to this year's CHUM Rhubarb Festival was:

- 207 strawberry/rhubarb pies
- 220 scones (Thank you to Paul Sapyta, Kevin Peterson, and the crew at Room at the Table!)
- 115 coffee cakes
- 60 jars of jam
- 35 large pans of rhubarb crisp

This all happened because over 50 volunteers donated their time, and we had super rhubarb wranglers this year! How much rhubarb did we use? **About 600 pounds!** We even donated extra rhubarb to First Lutheran!

We also want to give a big shout-out to SuperOne, who helped by contributing ingredients.



## From Our Faith Community Nurse

Do you use plastic containers to store food? Do you cook food in plastic containers in the microwave or oven? Do you use a type of plastic container in your microwave or oven even when the container says it's oven or microwave safe? Do you drink water or any other beverage from plastic bottles? These practices are not recommended. Plastics contain phthalates which are toxic chemicals. In *Consumer Reports (CR)*, February 2024, a report of a study done in January 2024 tested foods for these chemicals, and found almost all foods contain phthalates which are linked to reproductive birth defects and cancer.

The study tested 85 name-brand food products, and all products but one contained phthalates.

Do you remember when it was identified that BPAs were found to be in baby bottles and spill-proof cups? BPAs are plastic additives that are known as bisphenols. They were used to make hard clear plastic and to coat the inside of metal cans. The problem of BPA is that it disrupts the endocrine system and can act like a hormone or change the way hormones act. Exposure can occur in utero, infancy, or puberty, with different effects. Studies are ongoing to see what levels of exposure produce life-changing effects.

When BPAs met with public outcry, many companies finally did quit using BPA, but they just substituted in BPS and BPF. According to a study done at the University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston, these two alternatives, at low exposure, can disrupt cell functioning. With phthalates, the growing awareness of potential harm and increased use in other plasticizers have increased. According to Dr. Landrigan of Boston College, we as consumers "have little or no information on these substitutes. Here in the U.S., chemicals are allowed to come on the market with little premarket safety testing."

These types of chemicals are widespread in the majority of our foods. One good outcome of the *CR* study was that bisphenols were detected in 79% of foods, such as meat, veggies, fruits, and fast foods, along with cans and foil, but the levels were much lower than when they last tested in 2009.

Researchers say it is very difficult to know in what quantity these plasticizers can cause harm. According to Ami Zota, ScD, an environmental health sciences professor at Columbia School of Public Health, a well-studied phthalate called DEHP has been linked to insulin resistance, high blood pressure, early menopause, and reproductive issues at levels well below limits that have been set by American and European regulators. Thus, some regulated limits have been set but do not reflect current research.

Our food needs to be made safer. The food industry, including the packaging, fast food restaurants, supermarkets, and chemical companies, need to regulate more thoroughly.

This is a huge problem and the FDA is part of that problem. A few ways to mitigate your exposure to these chemicals are to avoid plastic food containers, but if you do use them, don't put hot food in them, which could lead to leaching. Just like plastic beverage containers, if they get hot, they can leach. Limit fast food consumption, eat fresh foods and minimally processed foods, choose wood, stainless steel and silicone for kitchen tools, and use water bottles that are made of glass or steel.

All we can do is try to limit our exposure and pressure the industry to change their ways.

Blessings,  
~Linda Wiig

## Ruby's Pantry Volunteers Needed

 Summer is flying by, as it always does! Amid sun, rain, vacations, and downtime, Ruby's Pantry Coppertop continues to help those needing a supplement to their grocery budget. FUMC has adopted the months of August and December to help loading grocery carts with food and placing food into guests' vehicles. This is a great family, club, community, and service activity.

On Thursday, August 15 from 4–7pm, 10-15 volunteers will be needed. Closed-toe shoes are required.

There is a sign-up sheet in the church Narthex. If you have any questions or are willing to help, contact Sue Kurth at [susanwkurth@gmail.com](mailto:susanwkurth@gmail.com) or at 218-260-9274.



# From the Welcome Desk

by Greg Leiviska, Director of Welcome



Greetings from the Welcome Desk!

I hope you all had an enjoyable July 4th holiday. Mine was filled with attending parades, spending time with my family, and visiting with old friends from my hometown. I am always

amazed that no matter how many years have passed, old friends remain. We may have a few more wrinkles and gray hair (or no hair) but the value of the friendship remains unchanged. It is much like that at the church. We may have come from different economic backgrounds, have different social, cultural, or political views but the church remains the foundation of our community of faith-minded friends. We can count on each other for support through difficult times as well as celebrate happy occasions. The church's strong foundation grounds us and brings us together. As the summer too quickly fades, I hope you take the time to foster your relationships with God, family, and friends.

Blessings, ~Greg

# Memorial Fund Committee Changes Gibson Scholarship Application Date

The Memorial Funds Committee has elected to change the dates to apply for the Ardath Gibson Scholarship to November. The scholarship will be awarded in December before students return to college.

To be eligible to apply for the Ardath Gibson Scholarship, the applicant must be a member of First United Methodist Church (or someone who has family who are members), must declare a major in physical sciences, engineering, pre-med, or business. The Ardath Gibson Memorial Scholarship Selection Committee will have discretion in determining if the applicant's studies meet these criteria. To apply, one must have a GPA of 3.0 or above.

The First United Methodist Church's Memorial Funds Committee, which oversees the Ardath Gibson Scholarship Fund, encourages all individuals who meet the criteria to apply.

There will be a formal announcement in the October edition of *First Family* detailing the criteria, the application process, and the award date. Stay tuned.



**First United Methodist**

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

## Summer Fun at First



**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.



# Sing In the Vote

## An Interfaith Flash Choir

I am hoping that your congregation has singers willing and able to encourage the public to help democracy flourish by voting through a Flash Choir that will sing at some upcoming Duluth/Superior events.

This is a non-partisan opportunity to support democracy and the right to vote.

We need singers, guitar players, fiddlers, and others to help accompany the group.

- Music in folders will be provided
- This is a multigenerational group and all ages are welcome
- Rehearsals will take place at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Duluth (835 College St).
- Rehearsals will be at 7pm on **Thursday August 15 and Thursday August 29**
- Events we are considering singing at are:
  - Saturday August 31**  
Bayfront Pride Festival
  - Saturday September 7**  
Duluth Harvest Festival
  - Saturday September 21**  
Chester Bowl Fall Fest

The selections we hope to sing are:

- ["People Have the Power"](#)
- ["Bread and Roses"](#)
- ["This Land Is Your Land"](#)

Please share widely and encourage your congregants to come!

In Peace and Hope,

~Karen Bauman

# The FUMC July Photo Album

Pictures from Day Camp—photo credit, Naomi Yeager



Strikepoint, Big Wave Dave and the Ripples Concert, and more





# Bill Alexander Announces Retirement from Strikepoint

by Rev. MaryAnne Korsch

In the early months of 1984, a new idea was bubbling in the mind of Bill Alexander. Bill had already assumed leadership of FUMC's handbell program with a growing number of youth enjoying a new way to make music in worship. Several adults had persuaded Bill to start a group for them, too, because "Why should the kids have all the fun?" With increasing demand for these groups to play at weddings, funerals, and private events, another group was formed—this time with only ten players and no conductor, a concept that was relatively unheard of at the time. By the time summer had arrived, they were ready to attend their first regional handbell festival. That group became Strikepoint and a year later, they attended their first national handbell festival. It seemed only logical that in 1986 they would set out on their very first tour... to an international handbell symposium... in Japan! Would it be possible?

Well, yes, it was possible. And the rest, as they say, is history.



In the past 40 years, Strikepoint has become a premier handbell ensemble, known across the world as being musically advanced, technically sophisticated, creative, accessible, and fun. Much of this reputation

has to do with Bill's leadership, and he has now decided that he will complete his tenure as "player/

coach" of Strikepoint at the conclusion of this year's summer tour (coincidentally, to another international symposium in Japan), while remaining as director for Cast in Bronze, Class Ring, and the Ringtones in our handbell program. Current Strikepointer Derek Bromme will step into Strikepoint's leadership in the fall.

As you might well imagine, this was not an easy decision to make. Bill has devoted many thousands of hours and developed hundreds of musicians during his years with Strikepoint. The summer tours alone required logistical planning that rivaled a highly detailed military operation. (Well, maybe not quite, but close!) Through it all, the music selection, concert set-up, recording sessions, uniform trouble-shooting, flat-tire-fixing – Bill has remained steadfast in his commitment to high quality handbell music in a fun environment. Current and former ringers all have stories to share about Bill, his devotion to the world of handbells and his heart for his fellow musicians. Ask any one of them and be prepared for a great conversation.

You will have a perfect opportunity to recognize Bill's commitment to handbells at the Coppertop at Strikepoint's upcoming concert on Sunday, August 4, at 7pm in our Sanctuary. The group leaves for Japan on August 8th and returns on the 19th. Your presence will be a wonderful gift for Bill and the entire group as they prepare to represent the United States in Hamamatsu.

Thank you, Bill, for touching the lives of our congregation and people around the world with your music!

~MaryAnne

## Save the Date for this Fall's Roast Beef Dinner



First United Methodist  
THE COPPERTOP CHURCH DULUTH, MN

230 E. Skyline Parkway  
Duluth, MN 55811  
218-727-5021

**FALL ROAST BEEF DINNER • THURSDAY, OCT. 3 • 4:30-6:30PM**

*Roast beef, mashed potatoes and gravy, corn, coleslaw, dinner roll, and a homemade apple dessert!*

**\$15**  
PER MEAL

**DRIVE-THROUGH PICKUP ONLY**



# Back to School Mission Project

Our Mission Team is again collecting items for teachers from our congregation who will need school supplies for their classrooms in 2024-25.

Your donations are needed and welcomed! This is a way for us to bless our teachers as they prepare for a new school year, and to show our support for the hard work they do, day in and day out. Please see the attached list of special requests. Your participation in this project is deeply appreciated! Teachers will be able to pick up supplies beginning on August 25.

## SCHOOL SUPPLY LIST FOR TEACHERS

This year we are blessing students by helping teachers. Please bring school supplies of all kinds to church by Sunday, August 25 and put at the communion table at the front of the Sanctuary. Teachers will be able to come and get supplies on Sunday, August 25 and anytime afterwards.

In addition to general school supplies, here are items requested from teachers in our congregation

- Crayola Crayons (24)
- Pencils
- Crayons
- Snack size baggies w/zippers
- Notebooks
- Kleenex
- Sandwich baggies w/zippers
- Folders
- Gallon baggies w/zippers
- Expo markers (dry erase, broad/chisel tip)
- Ticonderoga pencils - tons or bulk!
- Headphones - simple and not earbuds - children use for listening to books on laptops
- Wash cloths (to use for dry erase boards)
- Expo markers in black or dark colors for kids' vertical thinking (via Building Thinking Classrooms in Mathematics)
- Elmer's glue bottles
- Stickers (small/reward chart size)
- Crayola markers-wide and thin-multi color packs- prefer the 40 packs
- 3 oz Dixie™ cups
- Bright colored copy paper
- Crayola colored pencils-multi color packs
- Sharpie Permanent Markers
- Kleenex
- Double Sided Tape
- Flair Pens
- Flair Pens – all the colors
- Expo Markers
- Anti Bacterial wipes
- Trays for turning in papers
- Stickers
- Baby wipes
- Pencils
- Modeling Clay
- Uncoated white paper plates - snack and dinner size
- Black Pens
- Individually wrapped snacks (many requests for this item)
- Goldfish Crackers
- Colored Pencils
- Play Dough
- Graham crackers
- Markers
- Quality paper towels
- Granola Bars
- Loose Leaf Paper
- Clear packing tape
- Fruit snacks
- Glue Sticks
- Honey Graham Crackers
- Gift cards: Michaels, Target, Amazon, Super One, Walmart, Walgreens
- Black Sharpies
- White or kraft medium size handled gift bags (for Valentine card bag decoration)
- Granola Bars
- Hand sanitizer
- Smarties candies
- Juice Boxes
- Disinfectant wipes
- Plastic letters/numbers for preschoolers
- Fruit snacks
- Black Sharpies
- Learning resource toys for ages 4-6
- Pre-sharpened Pencils
- Ear buds
- Fidget Toys



# EarthKeeper

by Naomi Yaeger, EarthKeeper

## The History and Impact of WLSSD: A Reflection

On a recent Tuesday night, my husband and I attended an event at the Main Library in downtown Duluth to learn about the history of WLSSD, waste, and recycling. WLSSD stands for the Western Lake Superior Sanitary District, a special-purpose unit of government created by the Minnesota Legislature in 1971 to address serious environmental pollution problems in the lower St. Louis River Basin.

### The Solution to Pollution is Dilution... NOT

Before WLSSD's establishment, the St. Louis River was heavily polluted, with photos showing a gross, sludgy river, due to byproducts from the steel, paper, and lumber industries. The mentality then was "the solution to pollution is dilution," leading to significant environmental degradation.

### History of Disposables

Emma Pardini, Environmental Program Coordinator, led an engaging session encouraging us to view historical inventions like plastics and disposals with curiosity, not judgment. She traced the shift towards disposability back to the 1950s and '60s, showing ads promoting disposable products as modern conveniences. This aimed to reduce domestic work as more women joined the workforce, with plastic seen as a way to reduce waste by providing visible, hygienic food packaging.

### What is Waste

Emma asked the audience to define waste and name one living thing that doesn't



produce waste. She emphasized, "Anything that we don't want anymore, that doesn't serve us anymore, is considered waste." In nature, one organism's waste is often another's resource. Duluth's dump on Rice Lake Road was filled in 1999 and became the Rice Lake Road Materials Recovery Center. Visitors can only take items if they leave something, such as appliances, construction debris, electronics, or household junk. Some audience members called the center "My Walmart."

### Current Landfill is in Superior and Will be Full in Two Years

Currently, Duluthians send much of their waste to the landfill in Superior, estimated to be full within two years. WLSSD incinerated solid waste for a while, but this released pollutants and caused costly fires. They soon realized that incineration was not a viable solution. The event highlighted the importance of understanding historical contexts and cultural shifts to appreciate the complexities of current waste management challenges.

### Use Your Frustration to Think Up New Solutions

Remember, when you're frustrated, take a moment to consider why previous generations did things the way they did. Use that understanding to inspire new solutions. That's what WLSSD has been doing for over 40 years.

Learn more at [wlssd.com](http://wlssd.com)  
Naomi is a commissioned EarthKeeper with the United Methodist Church.  
Contact her at [sun\\_dog\\_press@yahoo.com](mailto:sun_dog_press@yahoo.com) or 218-591-5277.

**STRIKEPOINT**

Tour to Japan Begins August 8  
International Handbell Symposium, August 12-18,  
Representing the United States and HMA in the  
International Charity Concert, August 16.

**Our Final Concert before  
The International Symposium**  
August 4, 7:00pm  
First United Methodist Church  
230 E. Skyline Parkway Duluth, MN  
(the Coppertop)

Bill Alexander, artistic director, [bill@strikepoint.com](mailto:bill@strikepoint.com) [www.strikepoint.com](http://www.strikepoint.com)

# Registration For Children's Activities

In an effort to be able to offer the best children's programming possible, we are asking to have you fill out the form below and get it to the church office as soon as is practical. You can mail, email, or deliver the form.

## Registration for 2024-25 First United Methodist Church Activities

Child's name \_\_\_\_\_ Birthdate: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent 1:** \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Text? Y  N  Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent 2:** \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Text? Y  N  Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent 3:** \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Text? Y  N  Email: \_\_\_\_\_

### Additional emergency contact:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Text? Y  N  Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_

My child has these allergies: \_\_\_\_\_

My child is related / connected to other FUMC members: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Other things the church should know about my child: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

My child  may  may not appear in photos, videos or livestreams.

I give permission for my child to participate in programming and activities at First United Methodist Church.

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



# 2024 Fall Roast Beef Dinner

Thursday, October 3

4:30–6:30pm

## Sign Up to Volunteer:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0F4CA8A82CA4FFC61-50318582-fall>

or call the church office at 218-727-5021,

or sign up at the Roast Beef Dinner table in the Narthex

Sunday mornings in September

- The dinner will be 100% drive-through.
- We will not be making chocolate chip cookies or cutting apples (apples will come pre-sliced from our supplier).
- Tickets will be available for sale in advance in the church office and on Sunday mornings.

## Opportunities to Help

**Wednesday, October 2, 9am–noon, or noon–3pm**

– **Apple Dessert Day**

- Bake apple dessert
- Put foil in to-go containers

**Thursday, October 3, all day – Dinner Day**

- 7:30–10:30am – trim beef, prepare coleslaw, wash dishes
- 10:30–4pm – wash dishes, put rolls in bags, prepare drive-through outside, help where needed
- 1–4pm – cut apple dessert and put in to-go containers
- 2–6:30pm – meat cutter, potato maker, gravy maker, corn maker, dishwashers

- 3:30–5:30pm – deliver meals
- 3:30–5:30pm – serving line crew (1st shift)
- 5:30–7:30pm – serving line crew (2nd shift) and cleanup
- 3:30–6:30pm – directing traffic
- 3:45–6:30pm – drive-through order takers, car delivery volunteers, youth runners
- 4–6:30pm – dishwashers
- 6:30–8:30pm – dishwashers
- 6:30–8:30pm – cleanup crews (kitchen; drive-through serving area, inside and outside), volunteer room, roast beef dinner closet organization

*If you show up at different times, we welcome you and will find a job for you!*

## Other ways to help

- Post fliers around your work and neighborhood (available at church office).
- Facebook, email, word-of-mouth—invite friends to dinner via direct invitation and social media.
- Prayers—pray for a God-filled and successful event.

## This is a fundraiser

- Please purchase a meal before or after your shift. (Youth will enjoy dinner compliments of FUMC)
  - We have something for everyone—ALL ages can participate!
- All volunteers: Please park on the west (day-care) side of the building.

## Thank you!

For additional information contact Cindy Hedlund at 218-348-2634 (text or call), email at [schedlund@gmail.com](mailto:schedlund@gmail.com), or contact the church office at 218-727-5021.



## First United Methodist Church

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## Ministry Team

**Pastor** – Jeanine Alexander  
[pastor@fumcduluth.com](mailto:pastor@fumcduluth.com)

**Deacon** – Rev. MaryAnne Korsch  
[maryanne.korsch@gmail.com](mailto:maryanne.korsch@gmail.com)

**Director of Operations** – Sandy Smith  
[admin@fumcduluth.com](mailto:admin@fumcduluth.com)

**Faith Community Nurse** – Linda Wiig  
[nurse@fumcduluth.com](mailto:nurse@fumcduluth.com)

**Communications Director** – Bill Alexander  
[connect@fumcduluth.com](mailto:connect@fumcduluth.com)

**Director of Welcome/Office Assistant** – Greg Leiviska  
[welcome@fumcduluth.com](mailto:welcome@fumcduluth.com)

**Director of Music Ministries/Organist** – Velda Graham Bell  
[music@fumcduluth.com](mailto:music@fumcduluth.com)

**Director of Handbell Ministries** – Bill Alexander  
[bill@strikepoint.com](mailto:bill@strikepoint.com)

**Sanctuary Choir Director** – Derek Bromme  
[dbromme@css.edu](mailto:dbromme@css.edu)

**Tapestry Directors** – Leah and Corey Hulst  
[rockinhduluth@gmail.com](mailto:rockinhduluth@gmail.com)

**Director of Children's Music** – Beth Brophy  
[musickids@fumcduluth.com](mailto:musickids@fumcduluth.com)

**Technical Director** – Alex Flinger  
[tech@fumcduluth.com](mailto:tech@fumcduluth.com)

**Administrative Assistant** – Nancy Eaton  
[info@fumcduluth.com](mailto:info@fumcduluth.com)

**Bookkeeper** – Shevan Weerasinghe

**Sound Technician** – Tommy Kishida

**Nursery Coordinator** – Abbi Adamec

**Custodians** – Chris Robinson and Kevin Simich