



First United Methodist Church
Sunday, February 23, 2025

Please be aware that our services are livestreamed, and any adults and/or children participating in musical groups, children's messages and liturgist roles will appear on camera.

A nursery for children age 5 and under is on the lower level, and will include a Bible lesson. Sunday School for children K-5th grade will be held in the upper level Children's Lounge following the Children's Message. Please pick up your kids in the Lounge after worship.

Prelude *The 99* Mac Powell
Tapestry; Leah and Corey Hulst, directors

Welcome and Announcements Pastor Jeanine Alexander

*** Call to Worship** Geoff Bell
One: May our lives witness to Christ's love,
All: and our words bring reconciliation.
One: May our thoughts be of peace,
All: and our touch bring healing.
One: May our actions count for justice,
All: and our faith be a sign of hope.
One: May all we do be an act of worship.

*** Hymn** *It's Me, It's Me, O Lord* UM Hymnal #352

Children's Message Pastor Jeanine Alexander

Children 5th grade and under may leave for nursery and Sunday School following the Children's Message.

Hymn *Jesus Loves Me* UM Hymnal #191, v. 1-2

Morning Prayer Pastor Jeanine Alexander

Call to Confession

One: Like the prodigal son, we have each left God and pursued our own way. Let us, also like the prodigal, return to God and confess our sin.

Prayer of Confession

All: Merciful God, you love us with a profound, extravagant, prodigal love, and you generously give to us all that you have. Yet so often we fail to appreciate you or to respond in gratitude to your love. Like the younger brother, we choose our selfish ambition rather than receive your wise counsel. We pursue the pleasures of this world, believing that they will make us happy, only to discover that we're left with poverty of both soul and spirit. Sometimes, like the elder brother, we hold ourselves aloof and apart, judging others and withholding compassion and mercy. Neither of these brothers understood that their truest treasure lay in their relationship with you – and that is our sin as well. We ask for your forgiveness and your grace, merciful God, for the sake of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Assurance of Forgiveness

One: Yet while we are still far off, God sees us and is filled with compassion. God runs toward us to put embracing arms around us and give us the kiss of welcome and grace. Friends, believe the good news: in Jesus Christ, we are forgiven and given new life! Amen.

Prayers of Joy and Concern

One: God who seeks us.

All: Hear our prayer.

Jesus' Prayer

Loving God, Sacred One, Blessed be your name. May your kingdom come, your dream arrive, your purpose prevail, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us the wrongs we have done, as we forgive those who have wronged us. Help us steer clear of temptation and protect us from evil. We trust you in this, for the kingdom, its power and its beauty, are yours forever. Amen.

Scripture Reading

Geoff Bell

Luke 15:1-6, 25-32

One: Now all the tax collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to Jesus. And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, "This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them." So he told them this parable:

All: "Which one of you, having a hundred sheep and losing one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the one that is lost until he finds it? When he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders and rejoices. And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and neighbors, saying to them, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost.' ...

One: "Now his elder son was in the field; and when he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing. He called one of the slaves and asked what was going on. He replied, 'Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf, because he has got him back safe and sound.' Then the older brother became angry and refused to go in. His father came out and began to plead with him.

All: "But he answered his father, 'Listen! For all these years I have been working like a slave for you, and I have never disobeyed your command; yet you have never given me even a young goat so that I might celebrate with my friends. But when this son of yours came back, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fatted calf for him!'

One: "Then the father said to him, 'Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and has come to life; he was lost and has been found.'"

Offering Our Gifts

Pastor Jeanine Alexander

* Hymn *Dear Lord, Creator Good and Kind*

UM Hymnal #358

Verse 1: Choir Verses 2-4: Congregation

Sermon *Looking at the Prodigal #4: Our Elder Brother*

Pastor Jeanine Alexander

* Hymn *Grace Alone*

The Faith We Sing #2162

Benediction

Pastor Jeanine Alexander

Pastor: In a world of death and alienation, we have been remade into a community of reconciliation.

All: We will proclaim the Good News as Christ's ambassadors of hope.

Pastor: Rejoice! Throw a party! Welcome the lonely, the lost!

All: We will sing and dance, laugh and celebrate. We will invite everyone.

One: New life is a gift from God, a gift through Jesus Christ.

All: Thanks be to God!

Postlude "Benedictus" from *The Armed Man: A Mass for Peace*
Sanctuary Choir; Derek Bromme, director

Karl Jenkins

*A prayer for peace during these challenging times.
Sung in Latin. Translation: "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, Hosanna in the highest."*



Announcements



*to fill out the **Connect Cards** each week. Keeping attendance and making sure the church has your current contact information is an important part of church records. **On the back of the card**, is a list of ministry opportunities, where your help can make a difference! These will change often, so check them each week and please sign up where you can.*

***Guests:** Welcome to First United Methodist Church. We are so glad you are worshipping with us today! Please stop by the Welcome Desk in the Narthex; we have a packet and small gift for first-time visitors.*

Join us for coffee and doughnuts in the lower-level Lakeview Social Hall following the worship service.

*Faith Forum is held Sunday mornings from 9-9:45am in the Fireside Lounge. Next week, **March 2**, "Speaking Truth to Power." Mark Harvey will lead a discussion of Rev. MaryAnn Budde, the bishop who spoke at the presidential inauguration.*

*The next "Explore FUMC" class will be held after worship **today!** Get some coffee downstairs and meet in the Fireside Lounge. This is the only session needed to join the church. There is a sign-up sheet in the Narthex if you're interested in joining the church or just finding out more about FUMC.*

Next Sunday is Communion Sunday. You are invited to bring a donation of food or money for the CHUM Food Shelf. This way, when we come to the communion table to be fed spiritually, we are also feeding our neighbors who are physically hungry. The Food Shelf cart will be available for donations; if you make a financial gift, please note "Food Shelf" in the check memo or on the envelope, and make checks out to FUMC. Thank you for loving our neighbors in need.

***Sound Technician Position Available.** Our current sound technician, Tommy Kishida, will be leaving his position next month, so the church will be hiring a new sound technician. Duties include setting up sound equipment and operating the sound board for Sunday morning worship services and Wednesday evening worship band rehearsals. Candidates with prior sound mixing experience are preferred, but we are willing to train promising candidates with no formal experience mixing sound. Days off can be arranged as needed. If you or someone you know might be interested in this position, please contact Technical Coordinator Alex Flinner at tech@fumcduluth.com.*

Ash Wednesday (March 5) schedule: children's music groups (JAM, JAM Jr., Ringtones and Class Ring) will rehearse as usual; there are no other children's activities that night. Rehearsals for Cast in Bronze and Tapestry are cancelled. The Sanctuary Choir will rehearse at 5:10 as usual, then have time for supper before singing at

the 7pm Ash Wednesday service. A Soup Supper for everyone will be from 6-6:40. The Ash Wednesday service begins at 7pm in the Sanctuary.

*Mark your calendars for **Silent Movie Night** with live organ accompaniment. See and hear what it was like to experience a silent movie back in the 1920s! Renowned theater organist Jelani Eddington will accompany the classic silent movie "Safety Last!" in our Sanctuary on **Friday, March 7** at 7:00pm. "Safety Last!" is a romantic comedy starring Harold Lloyd and includes one of the most famous images from the silent film era: Lloyd clutching the hands of a large clock as he dangles outside a skyscraper above moving traffic. This is an event for the entire family. Admission to the concert is free, with a suggested donation of \$20. A reception will follow the movie.*

WLSSD has asked that we no longer compost paper towels in the restrooms, due to possible needle contamination. Paper towels may still be composted in the kitchen.

***Conversation with Church Friends:** A group is meeting over Zoom every second and fourth Tuesday at 10am to catch up with each other and talk about what comes up that day. If you're interested in joining the group, contact Pamela Brown at pamela.brown@reliabilitysolutions.us*

***CHUM's Expansion Extravaganza** will be held **Thursday, February 27**, at 5pm at Clyde Iron Works (2920 W. Michigan St., Duluth). This mid-winter night of fun and celebration will feature hors d'oeuvres, cash bar, and silent and live auctions to raise funds for CHUM's operating budget and shelter expansion. For reservations or to volunteer, contact Pastor Jeanine (pastor@fumcduluth.com) or Sarah Maddy (shmaddy@outlook.com).*

***Guest WIFI Network:** FirstUnitedPublic. Password: Public2022.*

***Thank you** to the Livestream Team for making the online service possible.*

Music reprinted and broadcast under OneLicense #A-704169, CCLI License #388862 and CCS WORSHIPcast License #12033. All rights reserved.

[Ways You Can Help Your Church and Community](#)

***Sign up to bring soup** in a crockpot for Ash Wednesday, Wednesday, March 5. There is a signup sheet in the Narthex.*

***Meals on Wheels** is in dire need of volunteers to deliver meals to elderly, homebound members of the community. Routes take between one and two hours, start to finish. Volunteer one or more days a week, as often as you like. Contact Sarah Kumfer with AEOA's Senior Nutrition program at 218-727-4321.*

***Ways to give to support your church:** give online at fumcduluth.com or use the QR code OR text COPPERTOP to 73256 OR mail to FUMC, 230 E. Skyline Parkway, Duluth, MN 55811.*

