

THE MESSENGER

December 2023

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

23 N. Seneca Avenue, P.O. Box 579

Newcastle, WY 82701

Office 307-746-4119

REVEREND CALVIN HILL

Our mission statement: *Passion for Christ, Compassion for all.*



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THE GREATEST GIFT

Pastor Calvin Hill's Message

It has come upon us, the month of December and stories of Christ along with many family gatherings will be told. Some of us may recall past gifts--gifts that we may be grateful for and some we wish never to receive again.

One year, I remember seeing all the boys in the mission school receiving truck toys, little army play sets, and farm animals. I got a pair of wool socks! I was like, 'I can't play with these socks!' Disappointed, I watched the boys play with their new toys. I even asked if they would let me join with them, but I didn't get to. So, I just watched. Then one day, it was cold out and the boys had to run into the dorm and change their shoes and socks. I had my gifted wool socks on, and all the boys wanted me to play with their toys until they returned. Oh, was I happy! It was a graceful moment, and I played for hours that morning. My gift not only warmed my soles, but it melted my soul with joy. My socks became a blessing.

As we get ready for celebrating Christ's birth, let us not forget the gift much of the world seems to disregard, *"For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."* (Isaiah 9:6)

God is with us, 'For a child has been born for us.' This is the greatest and most truthful gift of Christmas. We do not need to work towards God; rather in Christ, God comes to us.

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THE GREATEST GIFT

(Continued)

Remember, God pursued you and continues to do so. God is not distant; God dwells among us in our homes, in prayer, and in worship. God is with us (Immanuel).

Secondly, God has not forgotten us. When Christ came, he became a *'Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.'* In the Christmas story, we see God turning His attention to His promises and acting on them to fulfill His word—wonderfully counseling us when in need, being a Mighty God when trials seem overcoming, protecting every time we need a Father, and bringing much needed Peace during chaos.

Finally, God understands us. When Christ came, He came into a broken world—a world of suffering and sin. He became fully human and experienced the full range of human emotions, desires, sorrows, and joys. As *'human of sorrows'* (Isaiah 53:3), Christ understands our pains. He is not indifferent from the experiences and emotions we experience. He can honestly say, "I get it, I understand." So, whatever you are going through, know you are not alone. God understands.

The gift is that God invites us to come and receive His grace to help us in our weakness *'For a child has been born for us.'* May this be a blessed Christmas to your soles, so much so that you melt the souls of others.



CHRISTMAS COMMUNITY TEA

"Jesus is the Reason"

**Friday, December 1
Corpus Christi Catholic Church
11am—1pm**

Finger sandwiches and cookies will be provided by area churches. Everyone is invited to participate in this time of Christian fellowship!

Merry Christmas!

OPEN POSITIONS

The Nominations Committee is looking for individuals to fill the following positions:

- Lay Leader
- Finance Committee Chair
- Sunday School Director
- Sunday School Teachers

Visit with Pastor Hill to learn about the duties of each of these positions, and prayerfully consider how you can become more involved in the life of our church.

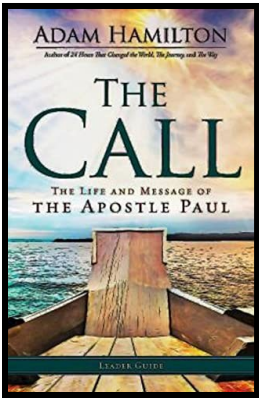
THANK YOU NOTE

We are deeply grateful to everyone who helped in any way for the Celebration of Life for Garrett Tysdal. We are truly blessed to live in such a caring and generous community.

Harold and Dana Tysdal
Micah, Kyla and Josiah Popma
Lorraine Davis

ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL BEGINS STUDY OF APOSTLE PAUL

Submitted by Phyl Sundstrom



Adult Sunday School participants have begun a six-week study of Apostle Paul using the book, *The Call: The Life and Message of the Apostle Paul*, by Adam Hamilton.

November 19 - December 24

8:45-9:45am
Church Parlor

“The Apostle Paul’s writings have shaped the lives of one-third of the world’s population ...second only to Jesus in his influence on Christian faith, ...his witness defines what it means to follow Jesus Christ.” The study shares Paul’s story and message, creating an understanding for our own lives and for our world today.

Led by Pastor Ron Sample, the adult Bible study sessions begin with a video narrated by Adam Hamilton, followed by group discussion.

TRUSTEES ADDRESS OTHER PROJECTS

Submitted by Carl Sundstrom

Our two big projects for the year—the soffit, fascia and gutter repair and the roof replacement—are now complete and final insurance checks for the roofing project have now been received. However, there is a long list of small projects that we hope to complete this fall.

Due to the increased cost of services and materials, we have requested a budget increase to \$7,500 for the 2024 fiscal year.

Our insurer, Church Mutual, has been faced with pressure from their insurers to bring down costs; and they have been forced to delete hail and windstorm coverage from our 2024 property coverage. Our policy has been renewed for 2024 with those exceptions, and our Church Mutual Account Manager is presently shopping for replacement coverage for us.

Since the Trustees announced the removal of the shed, we have had someone volunteer to take it.

An inspection will be made of the structure of the old steeple and abandoned ductwork in the west wing of the church.

The Trustees are working on replacing the furnace for the north end of the basement. This is the oldest furnace in the church, and it has quit working. It has been modified over the years, and a recently discovered error on one of those modifications is a potential hazard. We hope to have the work completed soon.

CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES

Submitted by Carl Sundstrom

Sunday School attendance continues to increase. On November 5, we celebrated having 20 children and youth—the greatest number since we reinstated Children's Sunday School!

We are currently studying what the Bible tells us about love. Lessons have focused on The Great Commandment; The second Greatest Commandment; and, most recently, Corinthians 1:13, "Love is patient, love is kind..."

We are planning to open a second classroom as soon as possible! Opening a second classroom will make age-appropriate instruction available to both groups of students and alleviate the crowding in the classroom we are often seeing!

While that is great news for our Church and our children's program, it also **MUST** be viewed as a call for more teachers! The United Methodist Church requires **TWO** adults in each room, and currently we cannot staff the second room! Prayerfully consider committing to help. Ideally, we should have three adults for each age group so we can schedule a rotation that allows the adults to attend worship service as well.

ATTENTION KIDS

(ELEMENTARY THROUGH MIDDLE SCHOOL)

NEED A CHRISTMAS GIFT
FOR YOUR MOM, DAD,
GRANDARENTS?



ANNOUNCING:

NO MONEY NEEDED

CHRISTMAS SHOPPING DAYS



AT

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
23 NORTH SENECA 746-4119

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 9

9:00 am—12:00 pm

FOR KIDS ONLY

LOTS OF COOL GIFTS TO CHOOSE FROM



COME SHOP and BRING A FRIEND!

UMW HAS BUSY MONTH

Submitted by Chris French

The United Methodist Women (UMW) met on Wednesday, November 1, with thirteen women in attendance. Chris French gave the devotion on "Blessings." November was a busy month of activities:

- Signed and sent Thanksgiving cards
- Finalized plans for the "Christmas in Wyoming" Bazaar
- Decided to make goodie bags for residents of the local manor and assisted living facility
- Decided to provide a goodie tray for nursing staff prior to Christmas
- Obtained volunteers to provide sandwiches, cookies and a centerpiece for the Christmas Tea
- Discussed the Thanksgiving Dinner and Kid's Shopping

NOTE: Officer elections will be held at the next UMW meeting on December 6.



“CHRISTMAS IN WYOMING” BAZAAR REPORT
Submitted by Norma Shelton, Bazaar Committee Chair



The 2023 “Christmas in Wyoming” bazaar was a wonderful event for our church family and community. A heartfelt “thank you” is extended to the members of our faith community who helped make this a successful event—those who helped with setup/cleanup, those who prepared the delicious soups and pies, those who contributed items to the various booths, those who volunteered their time to work at the bazaar, and those who purchased items and drawing tickets. The United Methodist Women, along with the Bazaar Committee, truly appreciate everyone working together on this event.

BOOTH INCOME:

Sewing	694.80
Cards/Dishcloths	330.00
Plants	342.00
Holiday	1,037.50
Baked Goods	1,993.50
New 2 You	741.80
Kitchen/Lunch	855.00
Silent Auction Baskets	805.00
Quilt Drawing	371.00
Total*	\$7,170.60

*The Total shown above includes pre-sales at the Fall Festival and donations received.

QUILT DRAWING WINNER

JoAnna Akers

SILENT AUCTION BASKET WINNERS:

Picture (\$20)	Amanda Sharpes
Christmas Tea (\$50)	Sandi Shook
Handmade Cards (\$100)	Dana Tysdal
Reindeer & Sleigh (\$100)	Anna Logan
Apples (\$50)	Jack Curtis
Star Lap Throw (\$130)	Kyla Popma
Frosty (\$65)	Ellen Butts
Christmas Entertaining (\$35)	Deb Jorrey
Kids (\$75)	Sandy Martin
Bear’s Life (\$45)	Sandy Martin
Faith Garden (\$45)	Sandy Martin
Comfort (\$50)	Sandy Martin
Winter Soap (\$40)	Sandy Martin

UMW, and the Bazaar Committee Members, extend a special thanks to the youth who helped in the New 2 You rooms, assisted at the main church and basement entryways, served food and drinks, bussed tables, and helped with cleanup. Your help was very much appreciated!



THANKSGIVING DAY DINNER

Submitted by Maxine Groner

We were thankful for all who were able to come and celebrate the day with us. Many came because they weren't able to be with friends or family couldn't come because of the weather. A lot of acquaintances were made, and it was a great day to celebrate what we were thankful for. Thank you to all who cooked food and all who helped to get it served. May you each be blessed in the coming year.



SPECIAL OFFERING

The Finance Committee thanks everyone who donated generously to the weekly special offering in November, which was designated for the church benevolence fund. A total of \$467 was collected for this special offering.

For December, the weekly special offering is designated for staff gifts.

Everyone is encouraged to show appreciation for our pastors and church staff by giving generously to this special offering.

Merry Christmas

Christmas Eve Candle Light Service

December 24th, 7pm
First United Methodist Church

COME & JOIN US!

We invite you to celebrate the most beautiful time of the year with us! Come and enjoy good music and Christmas ambiance and make this Christmas unforgettable!

For unto us
a savior
is born

23 N SENECA, NEWCASTLE
WWW.FUMCNEWCASTLE.COM

CHURCH INFO

Office Hours: 8 am-noon M-TH

Pastor Calvin Hill:
406-845-8135
rev.chill.dine@gmail.com

Administrative Assistant:
Audrey Knight
307-746-4119
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Web: www.fumcnewcastle.com

Facebook: @FUMCNewcastleWY

Radio: Sunday Service at
10 am on KASL





CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- 1: Christmas Community Tea, 11am-1pm
Corpus Christi Catholic Church
- 3: Advent Begins
- 3: Finance Committee Meeting, 11:30am
Church Parlor
- 5: Trustees Meeting, 6pm, Church Parlor
- 6: UMW Meeting, 9:30am, Fellowship Hall
- 6: GiGi's Closet Open, 9am-1pm
- 9: Kid's Shopping, 9am-noon
- 10: Christmas Cantata & Bell Choirs, 2pm
Crouch Auditorium
- 13: GiGi's Closet Open, 9am-1pm
- 13: Administrative Council Meeting, 6pm
Church Parlor
- 17: Poinsettia Sunday
- 20: GiGi's Closet Open, 9am-1pm
- 24: Christmas Eve Service, 7pm
- 25: Christmas Day
- 25-
28: Office Closed
- 31: New Year's Eve

BIRTHDAYS/ANNIVERSARIES*

- 2: Barb Riggs
Elaine Wilcomb
- 7: Connie Hyatt
- 11: Geoff Knight
- 13: Paul Sharpes
- 14: *Rod and Betty Petranek
- 15: *Dan and Vanita Epperson
- 18: Joan Borgialli
Kara Lenardson
- 19: Tyler Bartlett
Gary Clarke
- 20: Ayonna Hunter
Tracy Ragland
- 23: Glenn Zerbst
- 24: Mike Johnson
*Paul and Amanda Sharpes
- 25: Brenda Clarke
Aurora Hunter
- 26: *Tim and Pam Bertsch
- 28: Julie Day-Sharpes

