

THE MESSENGER

March 2024

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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

Newcastle, WY 82701

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REVEREND CALVIN HILL

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



PASTOR'S MESSAGE: SEASON OF LENT

Pastor Calvin Hill

We are still journeying through Lent, and it may resemble long passages of life where it seems like God is not accompanying us along the way. We wrestle with questions of "God where are you?" or "Why me Lord, what wrongs have I done?"

A reminder during this month is that Lent is a season of penitence, where we walk towards righteousness, and affirm our relationship with God. In Psalm 51:1, we read, *"Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy, blot out my transgressions."* These words from David are asking in a prayerful way for cleansing and pardon after the conversation of prophet Nathan, who came to him concerning Bathsheba. The Psalm of David is a reminder of the many shortcomings of righteousness we may have in front of God, and how sin by action and inaction make us fall short of righteousness.

Therefore, our journey still should be of deep reflection, a personal assessment of our shortcomings, and a humble and honest desire to be made whole so we have a clean heart before God come Easter morning. This gives an authentic reason in sharing David's prayerful request of, *"Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me (vs. 10),"* as though we, too, are resurrecting with Christ to be complete and made righteous.

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PASTOR'S MESSAGE

(Continued)

So, our wrestling is to fulfill an appeal, like the one of David: *"[God] You desire truth in the inward being; therefore, teach me wisdom in my secret heart. Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow (vs. 6, 7)."* Let's face the facts: desiring truth is not as easy as some make it seem. Truth is, in most cases, dangerous; and we would rather it not surface. But it does lead towards wisdom as it sinks deep into our hearts; and, at the right times, surfaces to maintain our righteousness. The purge comes, maybe not with hyssop, but through the faith and wisdom gained. The removal of shortcomings and the continuation of cleanliness comes from Scripture reading, prayer, fasting, alms, and true fellowship with God.

Then on Easter morning, we shall sing and praise God for our own resurrection.



"40 FOR LENT" CAMPAIGN

For Lent, give 1 non-perishable item a day (40 items) or \$1 a day (\$40) to B.R.E.A.D. Put items in the tub in the church narthex or take items to B.R.E.A.D. at 627 Pine Street, M-TH between 9:30am-1:00pm. Mail financial donations to P.O. Box 384.

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

The World Day of Prayer is an international ecumenical Christian laywomen's initiative. Its motto is "Informed Prayer and Prayerful Action," and is celebrated annually in over 170 countries on the first Friday in March. Join together to pray on March 1; pray especially for peace around the world.



SPECIAL OFFERING

FUMC is so blessed to have many members who give generously to support the special offering each month! In January and February, a total of \$18,095 was donated for capital improvements! Of that amount, \$15,000 was designated to purchase new furnaces when needed, and \$500 was designated for the youth Sunday School room. In addition, donations at the Ash Wednesday Service totaled \$338, which was designated for Outreach.

The Finance Committee thanks everyone who donated generously to these special offerings. The weekly special offering for March is designated for the Ministerial Association for the work they do to assist those in need.

Prayerfully consider your contribution to the monthly special offering.

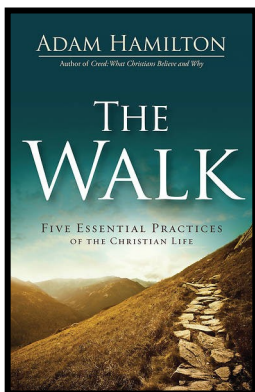
A SPECIAL THANKS

The Finance Committee and members of the Administrative Council extend a special thanks to Carol Nicholls, Betty Petranek, and Norma Shelton for their time and effort in conducting a very comprehensive audit of the church's financial records. You ladies are awesome!

NEW ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL STUDY

Submitted by Pastor Ron Sample

Adult Sunday School participants will engage in a six-week study using the book, *The Walk*, by Adam Hamilton.



March 3 - April 7

8:45-9:45am
Church Parlor

In *The Walk*, Adam Hamilton focuses on five essential spiritual practices that are rooted in Jesus' own walk with God and taught throughout the New Testament. Each of these practices is intended as part of our daily walk with Christ while also being an essential part of growing together in the church.

In each chapter, Hamilton explores one of these practices, its New Testament foundation, and what it looks like to pursue this practice daily in our personal life and together in the life of the church. Deepen your walk with Christ as we explore the five essential practices of worship, study, serving, giving, and bearing witness to our faith.

FUMC SUPER BOWL PARTY

Submitted by Judi Wackerbarth

The Family Ministries committee held a Super Bowl Party in the Fellowship Hall on Sunday, February 11. We gathered together in fellowship with a banquet of food and decorated cupcakes in the KC Chiefs and SF 49ers colors.



There were 49er fans and there were Chief fans; but more importantly, there were FUMC Newcastle fans! As the game on the TV proceeded to garner many cheers and a few groans, the commotion was all in fun and laughter. However, we missed a few of our Church family; so please join us on Sunday, March 17, at 4:30pm in the Fellowship Hall for a Soup & Sundae Supper and a "wearing of a bit of green" Saint Patrick's Day Party.

P.S. The Chiefs won!

CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES

Submitted by Carl Sundstrom

Children's Sunday School continues each Sunday. Since we restarted Sunday School, we have met *every Sunday since November 2022!* Many thanks to Bette Sample, Jim Hutchinson, and Donna Sue Vorrath for this achievement! Thanks also to Reverend Hill for his unwavering support!

The Sunday School made valentines for the church members and passed them out after Sunday Service on February 11.

We are revisiting the Story of Noah, with a focus on a story about Noah's wife calming the animals on the arc during a storm as an example of how we should treat each other with love and care.



The older children who have expressed an interest have started learning the seven concepts, which they need to understand to participate in communion. These lessons will continue in break-out sessions during Sunday School.



Our list of volunteers is growing, and we are looking forward to opening a second classroom for the older students. Rosemary has visited the classroom. Myra and Sheri are scheduled to visit so they are familiar with the activities when they start helping!

Please note: There now is a sign-up sheet for volunteers on the bulletin board in the foyer. We will soon schedule help in the classrooms based on the responses received.



ALTAR FLOWERS/LILIES/POINSETTIAS

Submitted by JoAnn Fassbender



The church has two programs where flowers can be given in memory or in honor of family members and friends. The first program is for Altar Flowers. A donation is made for the person/persons being honored, and the name(s) will be listed in the Sunday Bulletin. Checks are payable to FUMC with the word "flowers" in the memo line. Donations are used to help maintain the church yard. To participate in this program, please contact JoAnn Fassbender at 746-2994.

The second program is for Easter Lilies and Christmas Poinsettias. A notice will be in the Sunday Bulletin notifying church members to call the church office if they want to have an Easter Lily and/or a Christmas Poinsettia in memory of a family member or friend. Like the Altar Flowers, a donation is made for the person/persons being honored, and the name(s) will be listed in the Sunday Bulletin. Checks are payable to FUMC with the word "flowers" in the memo line.

TRUSTEES FOCUS ON MORE PROJECTS

Submitted by Carl Sundstrom

The Board of Trustees met February 6. Many items were discussed. The new vacuums have been delivered. The cross and flame should be painted and ready for installation in April or May.

The list of signers for the Trustees' savings account has been updated. The Administrative Council approved the list on February 21.

The status of the parsonage inspection was reported. The correction of noted deficiencies is underway. CLT has been contracted to replace the carpet in the basement with ceramic tile. Area rugs will be provided instead of carpeting.

Progress on the classroom renovations was discussed. The firewall has been constructed, and work is underway to paint and replace the flooring in the other room.

The office copier lease is being renewed at a lower monthly rate; a new machine will be provided. Deb Mills, Carl Sundstrom and Audrey Knight discussed the needs of the church with the Marco representative and removed some features of the previous contract which have not been used. The cost per copy will remain the same.

The Trustees voted to pay for the new furnace and plumbing repairs in the men's room in the basement. Summit Plumbing and Heating has been contracted to replace missing ductwork below the stage, to replumb the upstairs restrooms to make hot water available in them, and to install a new faucet on the outside of the church to allow the removal of the hydrant by the main entry, which will facilitate remodeling the women's restroom downstairs.

The Trustees are reopening the project to light the cross and are seeking a bid from a sign company that specializes in that work.

The Trustees next meeting will be March 5.

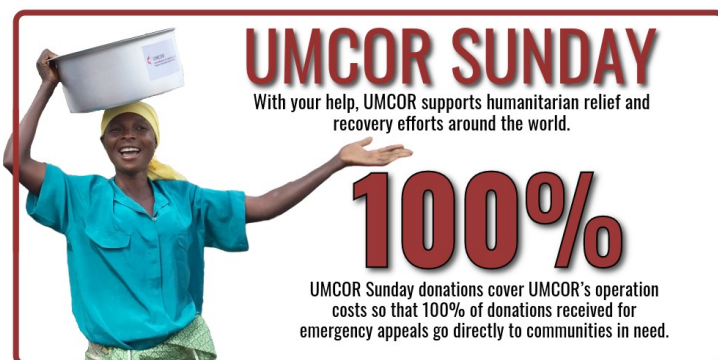
UMCOR SUNDAY OFFERING

March 10

This Special Sunday is a denomination-wide celebration designed to raise awareness and support for the ministry of The United Methodist Committee on Relief – otherwise known as UMCOR. The UMCOR Sunday offering underwrites administrative costs of UMCOR to ensure 100% of gifts given for humanitarian response and recovery go directly to communities in need. These gifts ensure UMCOR can respond swiftly to disasters around the world and represent hope and healing to those most vulnerable.

Make checks payable to FUMC and put UMCOR in the memo line.

NOTE: UMW will match up to \$1,000 of congregational giving to the UMCOR Sunday offering.



UMCOR SUNDAY
With your help, UMCOR supports humanitarian relief and recovery efforts around the world.

100%

UMCOR Sunday donations cover UMCOR's operation costs so that 100% of donations received for emergency appeals go directly to communities in need.

March

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- 1: World Day of Prayer
- 5: Trustees Meeting, 6pm, Church Parlor
- 6: UMW Meeting, 9:30am, Fellowship Hall
- 6: GiGi's Closet Open, 9am-1pm
- 6: Adult Bible Study, 6pm, Church Parlor
- 10: Daylight Savings Time
- 10: UMCOR Sunday (special offering)
- 10: Finance Committee Meeting, 11:30am
Church Parlor
- 10: Grief Support Group, 2pm
Church Parlor
- 11: Media Ministries Committee Meeting
6pm, Church Parlor
- 13: GiGi's Closet Open, 9am-1pm
- 13: Adult Bible Study, 6pm, Church Parlor
- 17: Family Ministries St. Patrick's Day
Soup and Sundae Supper
4:30-7:00pm, Fellowship Hall
- 19: First Day of Spring
- 20: GiGi's Closet Open, 9am-1pm
- 20: Administrative Council Meeting, 6pm
Church Parlor
- 24: Palm Sunday

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- 27: GiGi's Closet Open, 9am-1pm
- 27: Adult Bible Study, 6pm, Church Parlor
- 28: Maundy Thursday Soup & Pie Supper
6pm Fellowship Hall
- 29: Good Friday
- 31: Happy Easter!
- 31: Easter Sunrise Service, 6:30am at the
Cemetery; breakfast to follow at
the church

BIRTHDAYS/ANNIVERSARIES*

- 1: Sheri Hill
- 2: Norma Shelton
- 3: Kelly Wood
- 6: Gabe Hoover
- 7: JoAnn Fassbender
- 8: Sarah Gregory
- 11: Lisa Darlington
- 17: Frances VanBuren
- 18: Glenn Riggs
- 21: Lynda Russell
- 23: Wilbur Costa
*Harvey and Kathy Dummer
- 24: Jeane Sack
- 30: Audrey Knight



UMW SUPPORTS OTHERS

Submitted by Chris French

The United Methodist Women (UMW) met on February 7, with nine women in attendance. Betty Petranek gave the devotion prior to the business meeting.

In January, an audit of the financial records was conducted; all information was found to be accurate.

UMW will host a Spring Benefit Luncheon on Friday, April 19, from 11am-1pm. Area churches will provide salads and desserts; UMW members will provide casseroles. The free-will donation for the meal will be donated to the Weston County Health Services Foundation for their staff scholarship program.

SAVE THE DATE: The "Christmas in Wyoming" Bazaar will be held Saturday, November 23. All women of the church are encouraged to make items for this all-important event of our church.

UMW discussed and approved the following mission projects: Totes of Hope (\$1500), B.R.E.A.D. (\$800 for Lent), Bookmobile (\$300), WCSD#1 Lunch Program (\$1,500), and Public Health Program Promotion (\$350). In addition, UMW will continue its quarterly pledge of \$600 to FUMC.

All women of the Church are invited to the next UMW meeting on Wednesday, March 6, at 9:30am in the Fellowship Hall.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Volunteers are needed to take items from GiGi's Closet to the Corner Stone Rescue Mission in Rapid City. Call the church office (746-4119) to volunteer.



EASTER SUNRISE SERVICE AND BREAKFAST

Sunday, March 31
Greenwood Cemetery
and Fellowship Hall
6:30-8:30am

Begin your Easter celebration at the Sunrise Service. Bring your own chair and blanket. Then enjoy a delicious breakfast of eggs, bacon, and pancakes in the Fellowship Hall.

HAPPY EASTER!

CHURCH INFO

Office Hours: 8am-noon M-TH

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Radio: Sunday Service at
10am on KASL

