

# THE MESSENGER

November 2024

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.*



## PASTOR'S MESSAGE: ENLIGHTENMENT

Pastor Calvin Hill

Once when I was in my World Religion class at Garrett Theological Seminary, our professor told this story of a Zen master and a teacup: A scholar visited a Zen master to learn about enlightenment. As the master poured tea into the cup, he did not stop when the cup was full. As the tea overflowed, the scholar yelled, "Stop! The cup is full!" The master replied, "Like this cup, you, too, are full of your own ideas and opinions. How can I show you enlightenment unless you first empty your cup?"

We as Christians have similar themes of openness, humility, non-attachment and wisdom. Take Luke's story in Chapter 18, verses 9-14.

In this passage, Jesus tells a parable about two men who went to the temple to pray. The Pharisee stood by himself and prayed, "God, I thank you that I am not like other people—robbers, evildoers, adulterers—or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get."

But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, "God, have mercy on me, a sinner."

Jesus then says, "I tell you that this man (tax collector) rather than the other (Pharisee) went home justified before God. For all those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted."

(Continued on next page)

### IN THIS ISSUE:

- Pastor's Message
- Community Thanksgiving Dinner
- Youth Group Meets
- Special Offering
- Children's & Youth Ministries
- New Adult Sunday School Study
- Trustees Complete Projects
- "Christmas in Wyoming" Bazaar
- UMW Makes Plans
- Calendar of Events
- Birthdays & Anniversaries
- Church Information

## PASTOR'S MESSAGE

(Continued)

Like the Zen story and the parable of Luke, we struggle with teachings of self-righteousness and pride. These both prevent spiritual growth, while humility and openness to God's grace leads to justification and enlightenment.

My prayer is that we (God's people) attain humility and openness to the Holy Spirit so that practice would bring spiritual enlightenment and justification in these times of November.

Let us empty our cup of worldly attachments so God can fill us with His graceful enlightenments.

## COMMUNITY THANKSGIVING DINNER



Thursday, November 28  
FUMC Fellowship Hall  
Beginning at noon

Volunteers at First United Methodist Church will be hosting a FREE Thanksgiving Day dinner for the community. Turkey, dressing, potatoes and gravy, and beverages will be provided. Additional food items are welcome to complete this feast.

Everyone is invited to join in this time of fun, food, and fellowship!

**Happy Thanksgiving!**

## YOUTH GROUP MEETS

Submitted by Phyl Sundstrom

The First UMC, Newcastle youth group, UMYF, met on Sunday, October 20. Seven youth attended, sharing a meal and scavenger hunt, then discussing parts of the Sermon on the Mount in Matt. 5-6.

In September, the discussion focused on The Beatitudes from Matt. 5, and how they relate to Jesus's moral teaching in His sermon. In October we discussed The Lord's Prayer from Matt. 6. We talked about references Jesus makes to thoughts we should have about God, as well as references to personal guidance we seek when we say The Lord's Prayer. In both discussions, we focused on how the scriptures apply to our lives today.

UMYF will meet again on Sunday, November 17. Youth in grades 6-12 are welcome; youth may invite a friend, provided that friend has attended our church at least once. Please contact Phyl Sundstrom at 941-1251 with any questions or for more information.

## SPECIAL OFFERING

The Finance Committee thanks everyone who donated generously to the weekly special offering in October, which was designated for the Trustees. A total of \$325 was collected for this vital committee of our church.

The weekly special offering for November is designated for the local Ministerial Association, which provides assistance to those in need.

Prayerfully consider your contribution to the special offering this month.

# CHILDREN'S AND YOUTH MINISTRIES

Submitted by Carl Sundstrom

**BIG NEWS!** The Youth Group has started meeting. See the story elsewhere in the Messenger!

Our children and youth continue to learn and grow and serve the church. We are so fortunate to have Bette Sample lead such a diverse group in a relaxed setting for all!

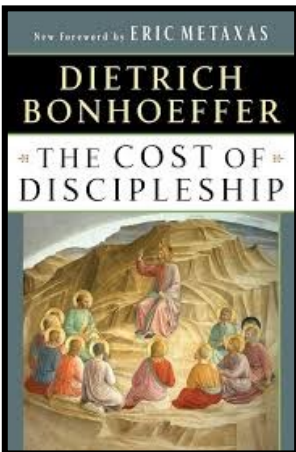
On Pastors' Appreciation Sunday, the children led the congregation in expressing appreciation for Reverend Hill and Reverend Sample with a presentation of some of the songs they sing in Sunday School. They also invited the congregation to join in a rousing sing-along of "She'll Be Coming 'Round the Mountain." Great fun for all!

Lessons presented in Sunday School include Daniel in the Lion's Den, and Samson and the Philistines.



## NEW ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL STUDY

Submitted by Pastor Ron Sample



Come join the Adult Sunday School class in a study using the book, *The Cost of Discipleship* by Dietrich Bonhoeffer.

One of the most important theologians of the twentieth century illuminates the relationship between ourselves and the teachings of Jesus. What can the call to discipleship, the adherence to the word of Jesus, mean today to the businessman, the soldier, the laborer, or the aristocrat? What did Jesus mean to say to us? What is his will for us today? Drawing on the Sermon on the Mount, Dietrich Bonhoeffer answers these timeless questions by providing a seminal reading of the dichotomy between "cheap grace" and "costly grace." "Cheap grace," Bonhoeffer wrote, "is the grace we bestow on ourselves ...

grace without discipleship .... Costly grace is the gospel which must be sought again and again, It is costly because it costs a man his life, and it is grace because it gives a man the only true life."

*The Cost of Discipleship* is a compelling statement of the demands of sacrifice and ethical consistency from a man whose life and thought were exemplary articulations of a new type of leadership inspired by the Gospel and imbued with the spirit of Christian humanism and a creative sense of civic duty.

## **TRUSTEES COMPLETE PROJECTS**

Submitted by Carl Sundstom

The Board of Trustees met October 1. Present: Carl Sundstrom, Lavonne Roberts, Sharon Roness, Melvin Costa, Adam McFarlin ,and Betty Petranek.

The Trustees will welcome additional committee members if any wish to join this fun, dynamic group!

Adam moved to accept the minutes of the September meeting as corrected, Lavonne seconded, motion carried.

The parsonage workday was successful, though the turnout was disappointing. The windows were caulked and the front door trim was scraped, sanded, and primed in preparation for the onset of winter weather. A downspout at the back of the house was relocated, and a concrete gutter was poured to direct water away from the foundation. Thanks to Adam, Jake, and Melvin who did the work. Thanks also to Lavonne and Harry who brought sloppy joes and chips and joined us for fellowship at lunch!

The Trustees ran new water and control lines to replace the temporary sprinkler lines on October 19. Weather permitting this line will be connected to the system this fall. Thanks go to Melvin and Adam again.

The sprinkler system was winterized on October 21.

Three of the four keys for the secure file cabinet in the office have been made and distributed. The fourth will be acquired when key blanks are back in stock.

The Trustees now have a sample of the lights for the cross and will set it up to verify it will work as expected.

The Cross and Flame have been delivered to Rev. Hill, who has agreed to paint it.

The Trustees will observe National Fire Prevention Month by reviewing fire extinguisher locations, evacuation procedures, and maps with the congregation. Fire drills will be held with the Children's Sunday School.

Sharon will reactivate the Audio Assistance devices in response to a request from a member, noting a technical issue with the sound system which may be overcome by seating arrangements.

Adam has acquired a dark bronze sealant to replace the failing seals on the front door.

The Trustees moved tables upstairs and onto the stage for the New 2 You area for the Bazaar. Contact Amanda Sharpes for information regarding donations to New 2 You.

The Trustees will meet on November 5 in the church parlor at 6pm.





---

## UMW MAKES PLANS

Submitted by Chris French

The United Methodist Women (UMW) met on Wednesday, October 2, with thirteen women in attendance. Phyl Sundstrom gave the devotion before the business meeting. At the meeting:

- JoAnn Fassbender gave a report about the Agape Feast in Upton that she, Lavonne Roberts, and Vanita Epperson attended.
- Amanda Sharpes shared information about the upcoming bazaar. She has tickets for the three drawings we will have at the bazaar.
- Phyl Sundstrom shared information about the Shoebox Project. A collection tub is located in the church narthex for donations of items to fill shoeboxes.
- Members discussed Christmas gift ideas for residents of the Weston County Manor and Mondell Heights.
- UMW purchased poppies for Veteran's Day; they will be distributed on November 10.
- UMW members will provide cookies for the First Northern Bank open house on Friday, December 6.

All women of the church are invited to our next meeting on Wednesday, November 6, at 9:30am in the Fellowship Hall.



## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- 3: All Saints Sunday
- 3: Daylight Savings
- 5: Prayer Team Meeting, 9am  
Church Parlor
- 5: Trustees Meeting, 6pm, Church Parlor
- 6: UMW Meeting, 9:30am, Fellowship Hall
- 10: Veteran's Dinner after Church Service  
Carry-in Dinner (Meat provided)
- 10: Shoeboxes Due
- 11: Veteran's Day
- 12: Prayer Team Meeting, 9am  
Church Parlor
- 13: Gigi's Closet Open, 9am-1pm
- 17: Setup for Bazaar after Church Service
- 17: UMYF, 5:30-7pm, Fellowship Hall
- 19: Prayer Team Meeting, 9am  
Church Parlor
- 20: Gigi's Closet Open, 9am-1pm
- 20: Administrative Council Meeting, 6pm  
Church Parlor
- 23: "Christmas in Wyoming" Bazaar, 9am-  
1pm, Fellowship Hall
- 24: United Methodist Student Sunday  
(special offering)
- 24: Christ the King Sunday
- 26: Prayer Team Meeting, 9am  
Church Parlor
- 27: Gigi's Closet Open, 9am-1pm
- 28: Thanksgiving Day
- 28: Community Thanksgiving Dinner at  
Noon in Fellowship Hall

## BIRTHDAYS/ANNIVERSARIES\*

- 2: \*Harold & Dana Tysdal  
\*Geoff & Audrey Knight  
\*Chuck & Patricia Bartlett
- 5: Tim Bertsch  
\*Tyrel & Becky Owens
- 7: Carol Cargill  
Kalyn Sims
- 8: Lenora Sundstrom  
Sally Hoover  
Mical Cox
- 9: Sharon Roness  
Nancy McFarland  
Ken Hunter
- 12: Jim Shelton  
Tammy Johnson
- 22: \*Dean & Tammy Johnson
- 24: Patricia Bartlett

## CHURCH INFO

Office Hours:  
8am-noon M-TH

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

Administrative Assistant:  
Audrey Knight  
307-746-4119  
fumc@fumcnewcastle.com  
admin@fumcnewcastle.com

Web: [www.fumcnewcastle.com](http://www.fumcnewcastle.com)

Facebook: @FUMCNewcastleWY

Radio: Sunday Service at 10am on KASL

