

# THE MESSENGER

February 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.*



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## PASTOR'S MESSAGE: TRUST IN GOD

Pastor Calvin Hill

It seemed that January dragged out longer than normal, and the cold weather rapidly surprised us all. Then this horrible crud--flu/cold mixed with Covid--increased a catastrophic feeling of optimism, where most of us may have asked, "Can we get a break?" And now, February is upon us--the month of "Love!"

When life gets difficult, how do you respond? Do you doubt God, wondering why adversity happens? Or do you seek God and try to understand your faith during times of adversities?

In 2 Corinthians 1:1-11, Paul and Timothy faced difficulties and persecution. They *"were so utterly, unbearably crushed that [they] despaired of life itself (vs. 8)."* But they chose to put their hopes in the Lord and trusted He would comfort and strengthen them.

Paul teaches, *"For just as the sufferings of Christ are abundant for us, so also our consolation is abundant through Christ (vs. 5)."* By his and Timothy's experience, Paul encouraged the Corinthian believers that they relied on God's strength during trials. Boosted by God's faithfulness and love, they held on to hope.

We all face difficult times in life; and when that happens, it is difficult to respond like Paul and Timothy. But if we try trusting in the Lord, even if the pain is unbearable, God's power is unmatched and available to everyone who believes.

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## PASTOR'S MESSAGE

(Continued)

Remember God promises never to leave or abandon you, (see, Deut. 31:6, Joshua 1:5, 9, Ps. 27:16, John 14:18). You can also pray asking God to help you understand and bring comfort. Remembering and praying helps us understand God's love and develops a great friendship. Asking God to help you feel his love and friendship is greater than any companion. In fact, you can pray to God asking for Him to bring valuable friends with whom you can laugh, pray, and live in abundance.

My hope is for each of us to use our experiences to rely on God's strength and faithfulness; and in doing so, we find what real love is all about. Having trust in God who gave to our sufferings His only Son, we may feel understood and loved.



Ash Wednesday marks the start of Lent, a period of time leading up to Easter morning, where we observe six weeks or 40 days of fasting, self-sacrificing, prayer, and almsgiving.

It is not only a time of fasting, self-sacrificing, prayer, and almsgiving; it is also a time of professing devotion to God.

You are invited to begin your journey of Lent at the Ash Wednesday Service on February 14, beginning at 6pm in the church sanctuary.

## FORTY DAY CHALLENGE

Wondering what to give up for Lent?

Take the challenge....."GIVE UP AND GIVE TO"

For each day of Lent, "give up" a non-perishable item to benefit the B.R.E.A.D. Office.

**One item per day for forty days = forty items!**

(you can even donate your chocolate)

This challenge is issued to individuals, groups and organizations, kids, Churches.



**Non-perishable food items:** canned goods, Macaroni Cheese, pasta, crackers, soup and soup mixes, peanut butter, jelly, cereal, breakfast bars, etc.

**Personal items:** Toothbrushes, toothpaste, deodorant, soap, combs, hair brushes, shampoo, tissues, toilet tissue, women's personal hygiene products, etc.



Take donated items to the B.R.E.A.D. office located at 627 Pine Street.  
B.R.E.A.D. hours: 9:30 am—1:00 pm, Monday-Thursday.

Mail financial donations to PO Box 384, Newcastle, WY 82701

Contact B.R.E.A.D. at 746-3542 to donate food and/or volunteer.



# **TRUSTEES TACKLE NEW PROJECTS**

Submitted by Carl Sundstrom

The Board of Trustees met Tuesday, January 2. The required walk-through inspection of the parsonage had to be postponed. That inspection is currently being rescheduled. We will complete the selection of flooring in the basement of the parsonage during the walkthrough.

The Trustees are considering a workday to complete the drainage project in front of the church as soon as the weather allows.

The Trustees approved the purchase of two vacuums for the church, one for each floor. Adam will select commercial vacuums that meet the needs of the custodians.

The Trustees inspected the recently vacated New-to-You rooms in the basement to determine what renovations will be necessary for use by Children's Sunday School and Youth Group.

An electrical contractor has been contacted about moving the controls for the stage lighting to the main floor to make them usable and remove them from the Youth Room where they would be a distraction.

In the Youth Room, we have started work on a required fire code upgrade with a fire wall/ fire door around the base of the spiral staircase, which will include stairway lighting. In addition, this room will receive a general cleanup and some painting.

Work is underway in the Sunday School classroom to replace the flooring, do some painting, and a general cleanup as well.

The next Trustees meeting will be February 6, 2024.

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## **CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES**

Submitted by Carl Sundstrom

In addition to the dedicated service from Donna Sue and Melvin, we are delighted to welcome Bette Sample back to Children's Sunday School!

The children's lesson topic followed Epiphany, with discussions about how long it might have taken the Wise Men to hear about the birth of Jesus and how long it might have taken them to arrive in Bethlehem. The importance of the Magi's visit was also discussed as were the gifts they presented to Mary and Joseph for Jesus.



Two new classrooms are being readied—one for an older group of students and one for a youth group. Work includes a fire wall and door in one room, new flooring and painting in the other, plus general cleanup.

Three additional people have volunteered to help with the program! We will begin discussing age and task preferences and begin scheduling so we can utilize the rooms as soon as they are ready.

# **TRUSTEES RECAP YEAR AND MAKE NEW PLANS FOR 2024**

Submitted by Carl Sundstrom

The Trustees have had a busy year! Our accomplishments include:

- Highlighting potential trip points on the sidewalks
- Leveling and reseeded low spots in the lawn
- Comprehensive maintenance on the lawn sprinkler system
- Planting the Memorial Tree
- Miscellaneous repairs throughout the church and parsonage
- Preparing the parsonage for the Hill's residency
- Staining the garage at the parsonage
- Replacing the reverse osmosis system at the parsonage
- Replacing a failed furnace
- Establishing a contingency fund for replacement of building systems as needed

And the two BIG projects:

- Removing the gutters and downspouts to replace dry-rotted fascia, replacing the fascia, painting all the exterior trim, reinstalling the gutters with the correct flashing, and replacing the downspouts as necessary
- Replacing all the roofing on the church, the parsonage, and parsonage garage including upgrading the roofing to Class IV hail resistant shingles

Our aspirations for 2024 include:

- Completing the renovation of two Sunday School classrooms (work is currently underway)
- Lighting the Cross and possibly renovating the sheathing on the steeple
- Replacing the flooring in the church parlor
- Replacing the flooring in the basement of the parsonage
- Repair and modification of an existing drain in the front of the church to remove excess runoff from the roof
- Installation of new heat trace in the gutters of the church and parsonage

Many of these tasks have been made possible by the continued generosity of the congregation through the monthly Special Offering Basket. The Trustees thank all who have contributed as we have been able to accomplish much more than usual!

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## **SPECIAL OFFERING**

The Finance Committee thanks everyone who donated generously to the weekly special offering in January, which was designated for capital maintenance (replenish funds used to purchase a new furnace).

The weekly special offering for February will also be for capital maintenance. Contributions will be used to support the work of the Trustees as they maintain and improve the church buildings and properties.

Prayerfully consider your contribution to the monthly special offering.



# UMW: ALL ABOUT MISSIONS

Submitted by Chris French

United Methodist Women (UMW) focused on mission projects within our church, our community, our country, and our world in 2023. Using the money were raised at the “Christmas in Wyoming” bazaar, profits from pecan sales, and very generous donations received throughout the year (including funeral services), UMW financially supported the following:

Church Pledge	2400.00	WCSD#1—Mental Health Services & Food Bills	1,000.00
UMCOR Sunday	1,029.00		
UMCOR Disaster Relief	2,900.00	WCSD#1—Gas for Bookmobile	300.00
Ministerial Association	766.25	Mother-Child Project	445.00
B.R.E.A.D. “40 for Lent”	800.00	VFW (poppies)	150.00
Totes of Hope	1,500.00	TruGreen Lawn Care	307.84
Public Health Education Supplies	311.43	Pastor & Staff Christmas Gifts	500.00

At our meeting on January 3, the women discussed and approved several mission projects for 2024. Additional projects will be considered throughout the year. UMW will meet again on Wednesday, February 7, beginning at 9:30am in the Fellowship Hall.



**GiGi's Closet**  
**OPEN**  
**Every Wednesday**

**Gently Loved Clothing available for Babies to Adults!**  
**All Free/No Cost for All | Come and See!**  
**First United Methodist Church**  
**23 N Seneca | 746-4119**  
**Basement Entrance (by the gazebo)**

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## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- 4: Finance Committee Meeting, 11:30am  
Church Parlor
- 4: Family Ministries Committee Meeting  
11:30am, Fellowship Hall
- 6: Trustees Meeting, 6pm, Church Parlor
- 7: UMW Meeting, 9:30am, Fellowship Hall
- 7: GiGi's Closet Open, 9am-1pm
- 7: Adult Bible Study, 6pm, Church Parlor
- 11: Transformation Sunday
- 12: Media Ministries Committee Meeting  
6pm, Church Parlor
- 13: Shrove Pancake Supper, 5pm  
Episcopal Church
- 14: GiGi's Closet Open, 9am-1pm
- 14: Ash Wednesday Service, 6pm
- 18: First Sunday in Lent
- 18: Family Ministries Potluck & Activities  
4:30-7:00pm, Fellowship Hall
- 21: GiGi's Closet Open, 9am-1pm
- 21: Administrative Council Meeting, 6pm  
Church Parlor
- 28: GiGi's Closet Open, 9am-1pm
- 28: Adult Bible Study, 6pm, Church Parlor

## BIRTHDAYS/ANNIVERSARIES\*

- 5: Leroy Dummer
- 13: Richard Epperson
- 14: Ann Cottrell
- 21: Irene Tunnell
- 22: Lucas Hunter
- 23: Don McColley
- 25: Allyssa Hunter
- 26: Nolan Costa
- 27: Rod Petranek
- 28: Judy Anderson  
Bill Russell

## CHURCH INFO

Office Hours: 8am-noon M-TH

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Radio: Sunday Service at  
10am on KASL

