



## Worship Schedule

### Sundays

8:30 & 10:50 am In-Person  
(10:50 am service streamed)  
[www.facebook.com/fumcomaha](https://www.facebook.com/fumcomaha)

### Taizé Worship

Saturday, February 4  
5:00 pm, Mead Chapel

### Pastor

Rev. Morita Truman

### Associate Pastor

Maddi Baugous

### Receive "Connect"

E-mail Lorraine in the church office,  
[Lorraine.Dalziel@fumcomaha.org](mailto:Lorraine.Dalziel@fumcomaha.org) with  
your address and you will begin receiving  
the newsletter by e-mail or snail mail.  
If you know of someone who would like  
to receive our newsletter, let us know.

### Church Office Hours

8:30 am - 4:00 pm Monday - Thursday  
Closed Friday - Sunday

*"We are a United Methodist congregation of all sexual orientations and gender identities making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. We stand in solidarity with all who work against injustice and discrimination through peace and justice."*



Morita Truman, Pastor

## THINK ON THESE THINGS

*Philippians 4:8*

I have never been able to master the art of juggling — not with tennis balls or plates or anything else. I know it takes concentration, good eye-hand coordination, and lots of patience and practice. Maybe it's that last part that keeps me from achieving success.

If I know that, if I understand juggling is not my forte, then why do I seemingly attempt it in so many areas of my life? We come to February, the month of the year with the fewest days, and my calendar is packed with meetings, with worship services including Ash Wednesday on February 22, a book study to prepare for, a book study I'm participating in, the completion of year end statistics for the conference, should I go on? I know I'm not alone in this - I/we seem to do this year in and year out. Honestly, one thing I appreciated about Covid was the opportunity to slow down, although the trade off of a rampant pandemic was not worth it.

Fellow Oklahoman Will Rogers once said "If you find yourself in a hole, stop digging." It sounds simple, but if I have trained myself to stay busy and to complete tasks, putting down that shovel can be harder than I ever imagine. Maybe that sounds familiar.

For my role as a mentor working with Maddi in the Transition into Ministry program, I am reading a book titled *The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry* (that's not a typo, the book title purposely crosses out the word hurry). It is a challenge about slowing down, letting go, and making time for the things that matter. It is a challenge for me, I have so trained myself to fill the calendar to feel my worth. As we approach the Lenten season and the idea of giving up something I am spending time in consideration of how and when I can do that — give up something so I can focus on what matters.

I may never juggle plates...or dates...but if I begin to focus on that which really matters maybe I won't have to learn.

On the journey with you,

*Morita*

# Inspiring



**Maddi Baugous,**  
Associate Pastor

## The Start of February

In February we will start one of my favorite times of the year: Lent! Every year it creeps up on us and BAM, it is time for us to take time for reflection and renewed commitment to our faith. In this season that means I have prepared a Lenten Devotional based on our theme, the book *The Gifts of Imperfection* by Brené Brown. I will also lead a book study on this book. While we are starting these things this month, I'm also reminded February is Black History Month. I will admit, as a white person, I'm often unsure what to do during Black History Month. But I have discovered this month, like Lent, should be a time of reflection and a renewed commitment to the work of antiracism. This month is a time where I learn and also respond. If you too, are looking for how you can be an active participant this Black History Month, consider a few of these ideas:

- Attend an intercultural event happening in Omaha
- Journal about your racial history
- Read books written by people of color or read books to children which feature Black protagonists
- Go to Black owned businesses like Big Mama's, Best Burger, Black Bottom Biscotti, Okra, A Taste of New Orleans, or one of the many other places!
- Take the Implicit Bias test and address your own biases
- Tour the Great Plains Black History Museum

There are so many other things which could be added to this list. And February should not be the only month we are working for racial justice and equality. But may it be a start where we work together to find common ground and push ourselves outside of our comfort zones. And remember we are all on this journey together.

In Loving Kindness,

*Maddi*

## MOVIE GROUP



**Tuesday,**  
**February 14, 6 pm,**  
**via ZOOM!**

### WOMEN TALKING

Optional dinner before meeting at local restaurant, email for info.

Email Bonnie Wallace at

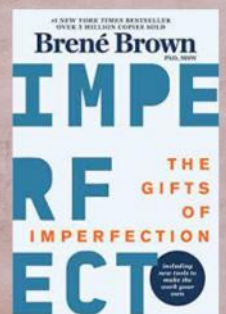
[bonniewallace59@gmail.com](mailto:bonniewallace59@gmail.com)  
for more info and to receive ZOOM link!

## THE GIFTS OF IMPERFECTION BOOK STUDY

THIS LENT WE ARE FOCUSING ON THE BOOK  
*THE GIFTS OF IMPERFECTION*  
BY BRENE BROWN.

THE BOOK FOCUSES ON BROWN'S  
RESEARCH TO LIVE A "WHOLEHEARTED" LIFE.

TUESDAYS AT 7PM VIA ZOOM  
STARTING FEBRUARY 28  
(FEB. 28, MARCH 7, 14, 21, & 28)



If interested please  
email Maddi ([maddi.baugous@fumcomaha.org](mailto:maddi.baugous@fumcomaha.org))  
by February 20

# Welcoming

## Report from Immigration & Refugee Action Team (IRAT)

Spate Two, Kor Ner, and their son Nehemiah, arrived in Omaha on July 24, 2019. They had been living in the Them Hin Camp in Thailand, where ethnic Karen (Kah-Ren) refugees have sought safety from Burmese military.

The immigration team at First UMC helped them get settled in an apartment north of 66<sup>th</sup> and Ames and have been instrumental in helping them learn English and adapt to life in America. Kay Peters and Carol Kloss McClellan have spent many hours helping them with English lessons and navigating necessary government papers. Myron Toews found a washer and dryer and Karlene Kingery delivers a food box every Wednesday.

In August of 2022 they were able to purchase their first home.

Nehemiah Htoo is in first grade at Pinewood School. Bless Htoo is three years old and was born a few months after their arrival in Omaha. See the photo above of the family.

Spate Two had finished grade 12 in the camp and worked in a hospital as a nurse. Kor Ner worked in the camp for 10 years helping older people in a rehabilitation setting. He had finished high school and attended college in the camp. They met in the camp and were married by a minister in 2015.

Recently Spate Two received a message from her family in Myanmar (parents, siblings, aunts and uncles) that the government had forced the families from their homes and had set fire and destroyed their rice fields. They fled from the village and are sheltering in mountains nearby. However, they then had no food for the winter. The First UMC Immigration team voted to send \$2400 to cover the needs for the 13 family members for the four winter months. The money was wired to a bank in Myanmar but fighting and gunfire made it difficult to get to the bank. Finally they were successful. See the two photos to the right: her brother and his family, and aunts with bags of rice. They are most grateful for our help in meeting their needs. They will be building a new dwelling in this area since they will not be able to return to their village.

Kor Ner works full-time at Tyson Foods in Council Bluffs and the family attends the Baptist Church that meets in the Mead Chapel at First UMC every Sunday from 10:30-12:30.

First United Methodist Church continues to be involved with them and other immigrant families and would be grateful for funds specified for the Immigration Fund to help them in adapting to life in Omaha.



### Registration for Camp Rainbow 2023 Summer Program

Summer will be here before we know it and we are excited to announce our extended summer programming! This summer, Camp Rainbow will run 11 weeks beginning the day after Memorial Day through the start of school! For children ages two to six, each week will feature a unique theme with associated crafts, snacks, and activities. You can pick and choose weeks or sign up for the entire summer! These camps are a wonderful opportunity for students to spend extended time in our beautiful nature center. Each camp is \$150 weekly and will run from 9 a.m. – 12 p.m. Monday-Friday. **Registration is on a first come, first serve basis, with registration opening February 1, 2023. Forms will be available in Miss Skoog's office or on the website in a fillable/printable PDF by February 1st!** <http://www.rainbowfactorypreschool.com/>





# Challenging

## Please remember in prayer these members of Our Church Family

**For Continued Healing:** Jim Eisenhardt, Dave England, Marilyn Hansen, Charlie Harper, Chad McBride, Marvin and Suzanne Morgan, Millie Plumb, Marlys Richardson, Deborah Mabry-Strong, Barb Winfield.

**Sympathies:** James Dias on the death of his sister Tamme, Sophie Wojcik and her family on the death of her grandfather, Rachel Lewis on the death of her grandmother, Barry Houston on the death of his sister, Paul Halverson on the death of his brother

**Congratulations:** to Cody & Amanda Brookhouser-Sisney on the birth of their daughter Olive Wren on January 20

**Submit your prayer requests to:** Lynne Elwood at [lelwood2@gmail.com](mailto:lelwood2@gmail.com) or call the church office at 402-556-6262.

*Please follow these brief guidelines when submitting a request for the Prayer Chain:*

- For yourself: Give a brief statement of the need - illness, grief, crisis.
- For others: Use names without describing the need. Give the first or full name and relationship - friend, brother/sister, spouse/partner, parent, child, etc.
- Get permission from the person to be listed on the Prayer Chain before contacting Lynne or the church.

## Clair Cares Food Pantry

### Volunteers Needed!

**Next Opportunity  
for Volunteering:**  
February 16 & 17  
5544 Ames Ave.

**For Information on Volunteering,**  
Contact Judy Prenzler at [prezler@cox.net](mailto:prezler@cox.net)

Please drop food off at FUMC, 7020 Cass St., Omaha  
during office hours 8:30 am - 3:00 pm Mon - Thurs  
(food donation container provided outside door #2)



## Save the Date

Please plan on attending UWF general membership meeting Thursday, March 2, 10:00 am in room 112. The program will be Prayer and Self-Denial and Installation of 2023 officers. We welcome all FUMC members, of all genders and non-members of FUMC.

We hope to see you there.



## PASTORAL CARE

*In these times, if you are in need of additional support, pastoral care, or there is an emergency, please reach out to:*

**Morita Truman**

[Morita.Truman@fumcomaha.org](mailto:Morita.Truman@fumcomaha.org)

or call 402.556.6262 x1002

**Maddi Baugous**

[Maddi.Baugous@fumcomaha.org](mailto:Maddi.Baugous@fumcomaha.org)

or call 402.556.6262 x1006

You can also email

**Lynne Elwood**

[lelwood2@gmail.com](mailto:lelwood2@gmail.com)

to be added to  
our prayer chain.

**We are here for you!**

## LIVING HOPE FOOD PANTRY

2919 State St

Monday - Friday | 10:00 am - 4:00 pm

**Volunteers needed for all days.**

Please call Living Hope Pantry at 402-614-7452

or contact Ron Alexander

at [rwalexander222@gmail.com](mailto:rwalexander222@gmail.com)

Drop-off Food Donations at FUMC

(food donation container provided outside door #2)

Please join Jan Dixon, Parish Nurse, on Mondays and Thursdays at 3:30 – 4:15pm in the Gathering Place for Tai Chi. This free class invites you to open your spirit, center your chi, and stretch out your soul. Tai Chi may help improve balance and is a great way to retain flexibility! Newcomers are always welcome. Please contact Jan Dixon for more information at [2dixons@cox.net](mailto:2dixons@cox.net).



## Nebraska Ecumenical Legislative Briefing Day

The Annual ELBD is just around the corner. This is a great day for learning and fellowship. The day is designed to be a non-partisan opportunity to learn about some of the bills that will be considered in the Nebraska Unicameral and how the action taken there has bearing on our lives. We are returning to our former design of gathering in person at Christ United Methodist Church in Lincoln on **Saturday, February 11** (8:30 fellowship and 9:00 worship led by Morita Truman and Marie Meyers.

There are brochures in the office. You can register online at <https://nelegisbrief.org/registration> or via mail by filling out the form in the brochure. Please register by February 4.

## FUMC's Alternative Mall is a Huge Success

The theme of our Stewardship Campaign this year was a *Developing Culture of Generosity*. That theme was not only demonstrated in the pledges made to FUMC for 2023 but certainly in the giving we received in our 2022 Alternative Mall which supports a variety of local non-profits and programs of our church. Gifts this year totaled \$10,780. *The breakdown is below:*

Together	\$1,740
Big Garden	\$ 805
Clair Cares	\$ 760
Living Hope Pantry	\$940
Raingarden	\$ 740
Immigrant Legal Center	\$ 1,015
Tender Loving Kindness	\$ 765
Omaha Area Sanctuary Network	\$ 710
Rainbow Factory Preschool	\$ 605
Union for Contemporary Art	\$ 540
North Omaha Area Health	\$1,805
Black & Pink	\$ 355

A big thank you to everyone who made a donation this year. Your gift makes a huge difference in our community.

## USHER and GREETER opportunities

We are actively seeking people to join the ushering team here at FUMC. This is a very important ministry of the church and our goal is to guarantee that all are greeted and feel welcome in our house of worship. Usher responsibilities include greeting and welcoming friends and guests as they walk into the sanctuary for Sunday service, distributing bulletins, and welcoming them with a smile. Ushers will also assist with offering duties during the service. Ushers are usually scheduled only one Sunday per month but with more volunteers, it may be less often. If you've never ushered before, not to worry as we can arrange hands-on training to make you feel comfortable. We welcome you to become a part of this fantastic ministry and service to our church.

If you have any questions or need more information, please contact Marj Phillips at [marjph@gmail.com](mailto:marjph@gmail.com).

We look forward to having you join either of our teams.

## Taizé Worship

Saturday, February 4  
5:00pm | Chapel | In-Person  
(enter door 11)

ALL  
ARE  
WELCOME

"Prayer in the style of Taizé" is often how the Taizé service is described. It's appropriate because of the variety of ways the Taizé service invites us to pray including chanting our songs, listening to scripture, centering on the candlelight, sitting in silence and speaking our prayers. The intention of the entire service is to deepen one's relationship with the Divine. While Taizé comes to us out of the Christian tradition, it is not limited to one religion or denomination. It connects us with a Cosmic Love that draws us into community with all others.



Please reserve these dates on your calendar if you are interested in volunteering.

Tuesday, March 21, 1-3:30 pm

Saturday June 24, 9-11:30 am

Tuesday September 19, 1-3:30

Tuesday December 12, 1-3:30

If you have a foodbank account, register online

[foodbankheartland.org](https://foodbankheartland.org)

or contact

Bruce Deines ([brucedeines@gmail.com](mailto:brucedeines@gmail.com)) or  
Mike Rosenthal ([Mike.Rosenthal577@icloud.com](mailto:Mike.Rosenthal577@icloud.com))

# Supporting

## Eco Team



Eco Team is pretty "chipper" about 2023!!

Thanks to a collaboration with our building manager (shout out to Bob Dalziel), the Foundation and our mow crew, the Eco Team is happy to report that our waste removal that goes to the landfill has now been reduced by well over 50%! That's because we have a new industrial chipper! This chipper shreds branches that in the past have been hauled to the landfill. Now the mulch from the branches will be used to protect the base of trees and in flower beds on our property! When we work together, we get things done!!



### THANK YOU!

**RECYCLING** Thank you to those who brought your polystyrene for recycling to the church over the holidays!

**RAIN GARDEN** We want to thank those who gave a holiday gift of cash for our rain garden! \$740 is now available to help establish this garden which is scheduled for spring. Rain gardens capture and hold rainwater and allow that water to soak slowly into the ground instead of going into the sewer system.

### INVITATION

**LENTEN PRACTICE of CREATION CARE:** The Eco Team is inviting members of the congregation to adopt a practice of doing one small thing for the planet each day during Lent (February 22 to Easter, April 16th) To that end, we will provide a daily calendar with ideas for action. Stay tuned for more details in the weekly bulletin.



If you've never been to the **Celebrating Community Auction**, you can expect good food, great company, and a grand auction with over 300 items like, trips, experiences, gift cards, unique art and more!

These items are generously donated by friends of OTOC. If you or someone you know would like to donate an item to the auction, please contact Carol Beaty at [cabeaty@cox.net](mailto:cabeaty@cox.net) or 402-332-8215.

*Stay tuned for more information to come on ticket sales and auction donations.*

Omaha Together One Community [www.otoc.org](http://www.otoc.org)

If you or someone you know would like to be a sponsor for this event, please contact Denise Bowyer at [dbowyer@aillife.com](mailto:dbowyer@aillife.com) or 254-716-2464.

### Sponsorship Opportunities

Platinum Sponsor (\$2,000.00) | Gold Sponsor (\$1,000.00) | Silver Sponsor (\$500.00) | Bronze Sponsor (\$300.00)



## FELLOWSHIP MEALS IN FEBRUARY

February 5, 12 - 1:00 pm, the Commons — **Breakfast at Lunch**

Hosted by the FUMC Craft group to raise funds to purchase fleece to make blankets for the Youth Emergency Shelter (YES). Contact [Lorraine.Dalziel@fumcomaha.org](mailto:Lorraine.Dalziel@fumcomaha.org) for more information on joining our Craft Group.

February 12, 12 - 1:00 pm, the Commons — **Soup and Bread buffet**

Hosted by the Immigration team to raise funds to support our ongoing efforts with immigrant families.



# Acting

## Giving

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As we continue to build a culture of generosity we recognize people make donations in many ways. Some write checks or even still use cash! Others have made arrangements to use an automatic withdrawal from their bank on a regular basis. We are now utilizing a QR code. Each week in the bulletin, in our newsletter, around the building, you will see a QR code you can scan with your phone. Once opened, there will be a drop down menu that appears which will include Sunday offering, special events like the children's challenge for Heifer Project, for fellowship meal fund-raisers, even for memorials for beloved friends who have transitioned to new life. If you have never used a QR code, feel free to contact the church staff for instructions!

We give thanks for the continued generosity of our faithful members and friends. If you have questions regarding your giving, please contact our Finance Director, Noni Cambridge, at [Noni.Cambridge@fumcomaha.org](mailto:Noni.Cambridge@fumcomaha.org)

### Donate Here

Scan the QR code for  
one-time or recurring  
donation options



You can still mail a check to the church or make a donation in the offering plate,. There are also donation options on our website:

[www.fumcomaha.org/giving](http://www.fumcomaha.org/giving), or on our Facebook page: [www.facebook.com/FUMComaha](https://www.facebook.com/FUMComaha)

## FUMC Finance News

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### FUMC Finance Report Carol Beaty, FUMC Finance Chair

Here is the FUMC monthly report to the congregation written on Jan 15, 2023.

Although we have not yet closed the books on 2022, great progress was made in December 2022. We had income of over \$90,000. Some of this was income for our 2022 budget. Some was for pre-paid pledges directed to 2023. Some supported special projects including the Alternative Mall, music program, youth, Immigration, memorials and our Christmas collection. We are grateful for every one of you who contributed to the church in the 2022 fiscal year.

The Christmas Eve offering of close to \$4,000 was gifted to the Rainbow Factory Pre School.

The Church Council approved the budget for 2023 at the meeting on January 10. We were able to give church staff an increase. The budget approved is a deficit budget which means that it includes more expenses than income. The finance team and church council felt comfortable doing this as we have a healthy reserve. However, it will be important for us to develop increased sources of income in the coming year so that we can return to a balanced budget in the future. The budget is available upon request. Please notify Carol Beaty or the church office if you would like a copy.

We give thanks for the generosity of our members in these challenging times.

We will be resuming the passing of the plate in the near future. We added a QR code to the bulletin, giving folks the opportunity to donate if they do not carry cash or a check book. Both strategies should increase our visitor donations. Any ideas on increasing church income are welcome.

### Mark Your Calendar for Sunday April 23<sup>rd</sup>

Health Healing and Spiritual Formation will be hosting *Celebration of Soulful Healing*  
on Sunday April 23, from 1:00 - 4:30 pm. *More information to follow.*

First  
United  
Methodist  
Church



7020 Cass Street  
Omaha, Nebraska 68132-2601

Return Service Requested

**Wow! Omaha is so fortunate to have *Front Porch Investments* working on affordable housing!  
FUMC members are encouraged to join their efforts to show up, stand up and speak up!**

On Sunday morning, January 15<sup>th</sup>, Meredith Dillon, Executive Director of *Front Porch Investments*, spoke at the Salt and Light Forum on Affordable Housing. *Front Porch Investments* creates opportunities to implement successful housing solutions by maximizing public and private resources, bringing together community partners and historically excluded voices. Using this framework, it addresses affordable housing needs, housing justice and racial equity and ending homelessness through advocacy, policy and organizing. In the Omaha-Council Bluffs area there is a significant gap between the number of affordable housing units available and the need for such housing. HUD defines affordable housing as requiring no more than 30 percent of household income for rent or mortgage payments. In our area one in four households exceed that guideline.

Members of First United Methodist Church can be part of this effort. We can educate ourselves on the issue of housing insecurity and the ways it affects our community in terms of health education, and job accessibility. *Front Porch's* website (<https://omahafoundation.org/about/supporting-organizations-and-affiliates/front-porch-investments/>) is filled with information and a link to Omaha's Affordable Housing Plan. You can sign up for a free newsletter to stay abreast of current issues including the five bills regarding affordable housing that are being introduced in the Nebraska legislature this session. Contacting state senators to voice support can be effective as can contacting city council members when city housing plans are submitted. Donations to *Front Porch* are always welcome including to their current effort to research the way we talk about housing issues.

