

# Connect

May 2023



Morita Truman, Pastor

## THINK ON THESE THINGS

*Philippians 4:8*

I remember the confirmation experience from my youth. It consisted of two whole Wednesday afternoons meeting with the pastor and a group of my church friends after school, then on the next Sunday we all stood at the front of the church and said yes. I don't remember asking a single question - how could there have been time in what might have amounted to 4 hours?

Today's confirmation classes are different and as we witnessed our young people stand and make a statement of faith in worship, with our new bishop present, I had and have such a sense of hope. Violet Bandow, Kellan Malik, Jameson Malik, Lyla Mayle, Phoenix Mayle, Zeke Mayle, Carson Husbands, Teddy Wiberg and Alex Nelson are amazing young people. So are Brody Busing, Jones Busing, Vida Harper, and Devin Klug, who said not now.

Since the first of January, these young people have gathered to learn, to lead, to teach, to question. On April 16, 9 of the 13 stood before the church and vowed to participate in the life and ministries of First. What we didn't say was "confirmation is over." All our lives are a journey of confirming what we believe, what we know, what we question, who we question, how we act, where we act. We never stop learning and discerning where God is leading us. We never stop confirming what it is we believe and how we share that with the world. With these young people, with all of you, it's a privilege to be on the journey together.

I hope you get to know all of our confirmation participants - to learn what makes each of them unique and special. We had siblings. We had cousins. We had 'cradle' Methodists and those who have just found their way here. Our young people are a beautiful rainbow of abilities and faith and we are blessed to have them.

On the journey with you,



## Worship Schedule

### Sundays

8:30 & 10:50 am In-Person  
(10:50 am service streamed)

[www.fumcomaha.org/live](http://www.fumcomaha.org/live)  
[www.facebook.com/fumcomaha](https://www.facebook.com/fumcomaha)

### Taizé Worship

Saturday, May 6  
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."*



# Welcoming

## God's Love Has No Borders



In mid-March, I traveled to McAllen Texas with a group of 35 clergy and laity from the Great Plains Annual Conference (Nebraska and Kansas). The purpose of the trip was to learn about the realities immigrants and people living at the United States-Mexico border face. Our four days were packed with information, from meeting border patrol agents to learn about the work they do, to meeting with an organization called La Posada who houses immigrants as they await jobs, placements, or changes in their immigration status. We also worshiped at El Buen Pastor in Edinburg, Texas where we were welcomed with delicious tamales. We also got to spend a day in Mexico visiting some of the United Methodist ministries in the area.

One impactful moment was going to part of the border wall and writing with chalk on the wall. *This portion of the wall separated Texas from Texas.* Witnessing this reality made me think more about the border wall and call into question: is this for security or is this to instill fear in others? One line we continued to use on the trip is "God's love has no borders." This simple reminder is what I hope we continue to achieve in our churches and world. To break down the borders of our own hearts and learn to love one another more authentically. I found being with a diverse group of people from the Great Plains made me hopeful for the future of the church as we work to make everyone feel welcome. How will you continue to show "God's love has no borders?"



If you are interested in hearing more about the trip and discussions on immigration, on Sunday, May 21 at 9:35am in the Commons, I will give a presentation about my trip.

In loving-kindness,

Maddi



## CAMP Fontanelle

Join us for any or all of our service days to help get the site ready to welcome campers and staff for the 2023 summer season.

April 15th, 9 am | May 6th, 9 am - Come when you can, leave when you must!

Questions? Contact 402-478-4296 or email Ryan, [rsiver@greatplainsumc.org](mailto:rsiver@greatplainsumc.org) **Lunch Provided!**

## MOVIE GROUP

Tuesday, May 9, 6 pm  
via ZOOM!

### LIVING

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

Email Bonnie Wallace at [bonniwallace59@gmail.com](mailto:bonniwallace59@gmail.com) for more info and to receive ZOOM link!



## WE ARE LIVE STREAMING ON OUR WEBSITE!

Since 2020, we have shared the 10:50am service on Facebook Live. Now, we are streaming on Facebook and our FUMC Website. At 10:50am on Sundays, you can watch the worship service live by going to:

**[www.fumcomaha.org/live](http://www.fumcomaha.org/live)**

You do not need an account to watch on the website.

You can also watch worship from previous weeks.

If you have any questions please reach out to the church office

Tai Chi with Jan Dixon will no longer be meeting at FUMC or on Zoom.  
**Thank you to all who participated!**

## Update From the Legislature



FUMC members have been actively contacting our state senators urging them to NOT support bills that harm women, children and youth. Among the hundreds of bills, there are ones to consider **supporting**. Your voice is important! The following bills are related to public education in Nebraska. To learn more about current bills that can affect public education, go to <https://www.nsea.org/action>. Contact your state senator with a request to support either or both of these bills. To contact your state senator, go to: [ne-braskalegislature.gov](http://ne-braskalegislature.gov) The last scheduled day for this session is June 9th.

LB 585 amends current law for the purposes of providing schools greater flexibility in providing more comprehensive behavioral and mental health training that focuses on suicide awareness and prevention, which is required annually.

LB 630 directs the State Department of Education to develop a model dress code and grooming policy that facilitates an inclusive and positive learning environment while complying with any applicable health or safety law, rule, regulation, ordinance, or resolution. Such model policy shall not: target, disproportionately impact, discriminate, or be applied in a discriminatory manner against any students on the basis of race, religion, sex, disability, or national origin. Nor shall such policy prohibit a student from wearing attire, including religious attire, natural and protective hairstyles, adornments or other characteristics associated with race, national origin, or religion; or require a student's hair be permanently or temporarily altered.



United  
Women  
in Faith

UWF District meeting date  
Correction and Reminders

Please note the date for The  
Missouri River District UWF

meeting was incorrect in the April Connect. It is **Saturday, April 29th not Sunday, April 23rd**. It will be in Hooper, NE from 12:30 to 4:00. *Please contact Ranita Lilyhorn if interested in car-pooling* [rl3frog@gmail.com](mailto:rl3frog@gmail.com).

Reminder: UWF General Meeting Thurs May 4th, 10 am, room 112. The speaker will be Jan Van Horn from Camp Fontanelle.

"Love  
out  
Loud"

Youth Pride  
JULY 14TH

Pride Parade  
and Festival  
JULY 15TH

Heartland  
Pride  
2023

## Pride Committee Meeting

Monday, May 1st, 2023  
6:30 PM in Room 111

If you are interested in joining the  
Pride Committee, or you are just  
wanting to help out in any way,  
please contact:  
[Maddi.Baugous@FUMCOMaha.org](mailto:Maddi.Baugous@FUMCOMaha.org)  
or [Cass.Opal@FUMCOMaha.org](mailto:Cass.Opal@FUMCOMaha.org)

## Archives!

What the heck are church archives? Essentially, they are the history records of the church. This includes: membership, baptisms, marriages, funerals, financial records, and other items for all groups and organizations.

As the current Archivist of First United Methodist Church, I have come to the conclusion that I need help. If you have skills in computers, calligraphy, research, transcription, photography, to name a few; you are wanted and needed. If you love going through pictures you are needed. If you have organization skills, welcome aboard.

Looking for hours that will work for the church and those interested in working on the archives. Let me know what works for you. If you have an interest in either learning more about the archives, helping, or serve on an advisory committee, contact Mark Schulze at [schulze.nasc@gmail.com](mailto:schulze.nasc@gmail.com) or at 402-451-6308.



# Acting

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

**For Continued Healing:** Kay Bain, Jim Eisenhardt, Dave England, Vern Ingram, Chad McBride, Marvin & Suzanne Morgan, Millie Plumb, Marlys Richardson, Deborah Mabry-Strong, Barb Winfield, Terry Joseph White

**Sympathies** to the families of Marilyn Webner, mother of Bob Dalziel; of Frank Wright, David Dow's brother-in-law; of Alice Pickett, sister of Loren Mullins. Our prayers are with all these in a time when their loved ones have transitioned to new life.

**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 before contacting Lynne or the church.

## Clair Cares Food Pantry Volunteers Needed!

**Next Opportunity  
for Volunteering:  
May 18 & 19**

Clair Memorial UMC | 5544 Ames Ave.

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



## 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!**

## Taizé Worship

1st Saturday of the month  
5:00 - 5:40 pm | Mead Chapel  
In-Person

(enter door 11)

ALL  
ARE  
WELCOME

Inspired by the Taizé ecumenical community in France, the Taizé Prayer Service has spread around the world because of its unique style inviting people into a deeper experience of God's love. The service includes song, short readings, spoken prayers and silence. The beautiful chapel and the use of candles add to the meditative nature of the service.

The service is an opportunity to open our hearts and minds, to listen and to rest in Divine Presence. It is a spiritual practice. **YOU ARE WELCOME!**

## Youth Sunday Sunday, May 7, 2023

We'll also be taking time that Sunday to honor our graduating high school seniors.

For more info Contact Chris Marshall 402-660-7932 or

[Chris.Marshall@fumcomaha.org](mailto:Chris.Marshall@fumcomaha.org)

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

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

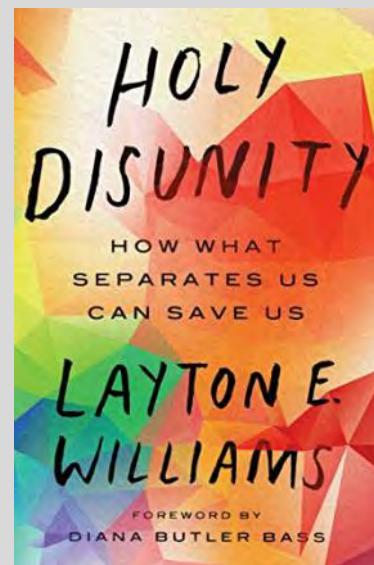
Bruce Deines ([brucedeines@gmail.com](mailto:brucedeines@gmail.com)) or  
Mike Rosenthal ([Mike.Rosenthal577@icloud.com](mailto:Mike.Rosenthal577@icloud.com))

# Inspiring

## Immigration News

First United Methodist Church has been involved in providing food boxes to refugee families, shelters, and halfway houses for many years. The boxes are prepared every Wednesday and Sunday of the year from produce donated by Whole Foods and organized through Community Produce Rescue. Dave Dow, who picks up the food on Wednesdays, has been involved in this project for almost eight years and Karlene and Dennis Kingery have helped him sort it for over five years. The three of them also deliver the boxes on Wednesdays.

Receiving food on Wednesdays are four Karen families, one each from Guatemala and South Sudan, a family from Mexico seeking asylum sponsored by the OASN (Omaha Area Sanctuary Network), one to Carole's House of Hope, and one to an Afghan family of 10, sponsored by St. Pius X Church. On Sunday, another group sorts food and a box is delivered by Sue and Alan Shuler to an Afghan family that First United Methodist sponsors, one by Dave to Carole's House of Hope, and several to other groups and organizations.



Book Club beginning May 23  
Tuesdays at 7pm on Zoom.

We will be reading the book "Holy Disunity: How What Separates Us Can Save Us" by Layton E. Williams.

Meeting Dates:

05/23, 05/30, 06/13, 06/20, & 06/27

If interested, email Maddi by May 16th.

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



## BLACK VOTES MATTER TOUR

June 25 - July 2, 2023 | Youth and Adult Tour | Seven Days, Eight Cities

Tulsa, OK (new this year), Memphis, TN, Jackson, MS, Birmingham, AL,  
Selma, AL, Montgomery and Tuskegee, AL, Atlanta, GA

- There is no cost for youth participants. Staff and chaperones are fully vetted and a registered nurse is on board the bus and with the group at all times.
- For adults the cost is \$1800 for a double occupancy room, \$2300 for a single. This fee includes transportation, hotel w/breakfast, fees paid to all venues and tour stops. It does not include lunch and dinner.

In the words of Preston Love, Jr., tour founder and director, "The focus is to teach inspire, and educate African American history and experience, to transform participants through the experience to engage in community, and to learn history, respect history, and go make history."

Pastor Maddi Baugous will be participating in this year's tour. Clear your schedule, make the time to take part in one of the most important trips you will ever make. To sign up: <https://4urban.org/4-pillars/youth-learning-tour>



# Supporting

## Eco Team



Eco efforts at FUMC are a community effort!

April 16th, thanks to the *Stitchin' Sisters*, everyone who enjoyed the fellowship meal was gifted with a colorful cloth napkin to use during the meal AND take home to reuse several more times before laundering (avoiding those single-use paper napkins!). Table centerpieces offered eco prizes ranging from reusable coffee mugs to vegetarian cookbooks, from shampoo bars to air cleaning spider plants. The vegetarian lasagna was provided by *Table Grace* cafe which "rescues" leftover produce from grocery stores. This gathering was a celebration of the completion of our Lenten Eco calendars!



Although the Eco team is a major organizer of climate related efforts at FUMC, various individuals and groups are also doing their part to care for God's good creation! Thanks to the *Foundation* for providing funds to purchase an industrial wood chipper, David Dow who sorts through and collects all our paper for recycling

and all those who bring their compost to church each Sunday and many more unseen eco heroes who are caring for our earth home! Our next big project is to put in a water retention garden at the end of the southwest drive. Thanks to those who donated to this during the Alternative Mall. Stay tuned for more details!

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## News from OTOC

Thirty years ago, FUMC Omaha was a founding member of Omaha Together One Community (OTOC), a faith-based, grassroots organizing entity seeking to address systemic justice needs of its member institutions. Through OTOC, our institution extends its outreach and power to make a positive difference in the world. Please read below for news about OTOC's recent work.

### OTOC LEADS: Nebraska Coalition to Advocate for Immigration Reform & State Investments that will Enrich, Grow and Prosper Our Communities

Omaha Together One Community (OTOC) leaders have been engaged with diverse business, agriculture, healthcare, labor, education, and immigrant leaders to advocate for meaningful immigration reform as the means to solve Nebraska's workforce shortage. We conducted almost 80 individual statewide meetings and hosted nearly 200 leaders at five large group meetings on this issue in Nebraska during 2022. Nebraska's employers and community leaders consistently said they need and will welcome immigrants looking to contribute their talents to our workforce and grow and enrich our communities. We have also heard that immigrants need certainty and to be valued in their workplaces and communities. Consistently, leaders agreed that Nebraska's workforce shortage will be solved only with meaningful immigration reform, and we need a broad-based coalition to meet that challenge.

After an exciting opportunity to share our work with U.S. Secretary of Labor, Marty Walsh, in Lincoln he said enthusiastically, "I want to applaud you on this because I've never seen this kind of a coalition anywhere else in the whole country!" Sec. Walsh also validated the strength of an "economic strategy" and advised us to "go big" on immigration reform.

We are now convening four workgroups (state, federal, public relations, legislative) which will consist of a diverse team of leaders working to identify, research, and propose specific strategies which will be reviewed by a Steering Committee composed of organizational leaders. We anticipate a state-wide full throttle effort emerging from this common agenda in 2023.

If you are interested in learning how OTOC works cooperatively with other institutions to effect positive change in our community, please contact Kevin Graham, Deb Romberger, Carol Beaty, Denise Bowyer or Mary Spurgeon. We would love to share!



# Challenging

## Building a Culture of Generosity

It seems that at every turn there is a special “ask” that comes from the pulpit or in the newsletter, or simply in the course of a day in the life of a church. The six special offerings of the United Methodist Church that take place in a calendar year. The fellowship meals with a basket for donations for the Immigration team, for the craft group to make blankets, a donation for the wonderful Celebration of Soulful Healing that enables us to open our minds and hearts to the ways the spirit moves among and in us. Soon there will be reminders about the needs of UMCOR after storms and natural disasters — that our dollars can help rebuild homes and lives. Every ask has a need and a purpose and when we live with a culture of generosity, there is always something that is offered. It also means reaching out with our service, with our hearts, with the faithful work of our hands. When we know what we have, it becomes easier to share and the members and friends of First UMC Omaha do that so well.

Thank you for your faithfulness! See the article below to discover where we are in our annual giving to date. If you have questions regarding your giving, please contact our church office.

Ways to give include: mail a check to the church or make a donation in the offering plate. Direct deposit through your bank or financial institution. You can give 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). Every gift matters!

**Donate Here**

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



SCAN ME

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## FUMC Finance News

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

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

Average monthly pledges needed to meet our budget of \$650,000 in pledge income = \$43,765

Jan 2023 pledges - \$156,519.17 (some members paid entire year) 24.0% of annual budgeted pledges received.

Feb 2023 pledges - \$55,835 (some members paid entire year) 31.98% of annual budgeted pledges received

Mar 2023 pledges - \$39,070.17 (some members paid entire year) 38.68% of annual budgeted pledges received

As of March 31, 2022, our total income is 35.63% of what we budgeted. Our expenses are 24.51% of what we budgeted. We would expect income and expenses to be at 25% at this time of the year. Our income is higher because of prepaid pledges. Our expenses are close to expectations.

On April 11, The Church Council approved a revised budget. A new line item for our cleaning service as added to the budget. The amount for 2023 is \$40,000. The \$40,000 was subtracted from the compensation budget for part-time custodians. The overall budget totals were unchanged from the budget approved in January.

A copy of the church budget revised by the Church Council in April 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.

PLEASE NOTE that giving statements for the first quarter of the year were mailed on Monday, April 24. If you did not receive yours, please contact the church office and request the information.

First  
United  
Methodist  
Church



7020 Cass Street  
Omaha, Nebraska 68132-2601

Return Service Requested



Mark Kurtz, Director of Music Ministries

## News about Summer Choir from Mark Kurtz

Summer is often a time for vacations, and our Chancel Choir has certainly earned some time away, having sung in many services over the past season. So, we are continuing our annual tradition of Summer Choir!

**♪ Beginning Sunday, June 4, and going  
through Sunday, August 27 ♪**

Summer Choir will rehearse at 10:00 a.m. on Sundays and sing at the 10:50 service. It is a chance for anyone, whether or not they have sung with the choir before, to participate. We rehearse only the music for that Sunday, so there is no need to come every week or to feel that you will have "gotten behind" if you miss several weeks in a row. Simply come on the Sundays that you would like to, take some vacation when you need to, and join in with the Summer Choir to experience and share the joy of music!

For more information, contact [Mark.Kurtz@fumcomaha.org](mailto:Mark.Kurtz@fumcomaha.org)

