



Morita Truman, Pastor

THINK ON THESE THINGS

Philippians 4:8

At the beginning of August, I did something I have never done in my ministerial career — I was gone for consecutive Sundays. It was a strange experience for me. I was in an airport on the second Sunday and heard an announcement that a Catholic mass was available and I wondered if I should offer to set up a Protestant service somewhere in the

terminal. In the meantime, it was a gift knowing that our associate Maddi Baugous had Sunday mornings well in hand. I know her messages were a blessing.

My vacation wasn't quite what I expected. I celebrated birthdays and baptisms with my two great-greats and had time with family but the hospitalization of another family member changed the tone. I spent a lot of time doing pastoral care with my family. Did laundry, cooked, and cleaned. Took out recycling. Made a veggie tray for a birthday party. Babysat with the most adorable 1-year-old. Provided transportation. Fed a cat and emptied a litter box. Waited in the hospital. Listened to a 3-year-old talk about dinosaurs. Said thank you.

Why this report of my time away? This month our church's Time and Talent card comes into your homes. It is the beginning of our stewardship program that takes place each fall. On the card you will see a list of some of the ways we share in ministry at First Omaha. You don't have to check everything, but check **something**. Pray about the gifts you have to share, the gifts and talents you possess, and indicate your willingness to do something **more**. If there is something you think of that's not listed, indicate that on the line that says "other." My list above is hopefully a reminder that ministry comes in many ways. God works through us in the ways we make ourselves available.

Being the church together requires all of us. Our membership vow is to support the church with our prayers, presence, gifts, and service. That may take us out of our comfort zones, but even better it takes us into a holy zone of reaching out, of being Matthew 25 people: Jesus says when you did these things for any of my siblings, you did it for me.

I'm on the journey with you,



Worship Schedule

Sundays

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

www.fumcomaha.org/live
www.facebook.com/fumcomaha

Taizé Worship

Saturday, September 2
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 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."



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Welcoming

Paid Sick Leave for Nebraskans

FUMC, as a member of OTOC, has joined a coalition of organizations and advocates to start a ballot initiative campaign to guarantee that all Nebraska workers can accrue paid sick leave. The United Methodist Social Principles state, "We support measures that limit the length of both the workday and workweek and endorse policies that guarantee every worker paid time off, including but not limited to sick time..."

In Nebraska 35.5% of employers provide no paid sick leave for full-time employees. 86.4% of part-time employees have no paid sick leave. More than 95% of job seekers indicate that paid sick leave is at least somewhat important when weighing benefits.

Policy Details:

The paid sick leave policy would require employers with less than 20 employees to allow their employees to accrue up to 40 hours of paid sick leave in a year and employers with more than 20 employees must allow accrual of up to 56 hours of paid sick leave in a year. Part-time employees would earn 1 hour of sick leave for every 30 hours worked.

Mental and physical health needs are covered and taking leave to care for someone else is protected too.

There are strong protections against a business punishing an employee for using their sick leave (threatening their job, deducting points, writing them up, etc). This signature collection runs from now until July of 2024.

We will need full participation. Over the next weeks, in the Gathering Place, we will have sheets for your ballot signature, and sheets to volunteer for signature collections. There will be a training on signature collection on Tuesday, August 29, at 6:30 pm in the Gathering Place.

Please look for more information on this initiative. If you'd like to volunteer or need more information, email Maddi maddi.baugous@fumcomaha.org for more information!

PAID
sick **LEAVE**
FOR NEBRASKANS

MOVIE GROUP

Tuesday, September 12, 6 pm

in-person at FUMC & Zoom

Barbie

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

Email **Bonnie Wallace** at bonniewallace59@gmail.com

for more info and to receive ZOOM link!



Taizé Prayer

1st Saturday of the month

5:00 - 5:40 pm |

Mead Chapel

In-Person (enter door 11)

Next Service September 2

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!



FUMC 2024 Commitment Campaign



It all starts with God's generosity, God's generosity to and in the world, to and in us. "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth..." Christians, and others, are called to reflect on God's generosity and how that generosity has affected our lives. A common response to generosity is gratitude, defined as a feeling of appreciation by a recipient of another's kindness. A common response when feeling gratitude is being more generous. Gratitude and generosity are interconnected – one leads to the other – they are cyclical. Gratitude comes from a place of abundance, and leads to generosity from a place of abundance.

A Commitment Campaign team is working to fill our fall campaign with opportunities for spiritual growth, gratitude, and success. Members of our team include Morita Truman, Carol Beaty, Barb Bredthauer, Sheran Cramer, Marj Phillips, Steve Ruppert and Joellen Zuk.

The theme of our First United Methodist Church (FUMC) 2024 Commitment Campaign is Gratitude & Generosity. We hope to focus on all we are grateful for at FUMC in this campaign (our staff, vision, inclusion, missions, worship, education, children and youth, outreach, music, and hospitality). Our focus is also on how we can respond generously to support all of those ministries.

We desire that all who contribute to FUMC do so as a spiritual practice, as a practice of gratitude. We know that giving leads to spiritual maturity. As Morita shared in last month's *Connect*, we have a spiritual need to give – to show gratitude for what God is doing in our lives.

The kickoff for our Commitment Campaign takes place at a forum on Sunday, Sept 17, at 9:30 a.m. in the Commons. You will have the opportunity to learn more details about the campaign, our church finances, and our budget process. We hope that all of you will attend. You will learn that our Commitment Campaign includes two phases.

In the first, each member and friend - adults, youth, children - are invited to complete a Time and Talent card to indicate ways you would like to give of your time to the church. Giving of your time is a tangible way of expressing gratitude. It is a meaningful way to connect with staff and others at the church and get to know them better. *Every gift of time matters.*

For the second phase, we have set two goals for our Commitment Campaign:

- Increase the total amount pledged by 10% (\$65,000)
- Increase the number of pledgers by 10% (14 new pledgers)

Please consider how you can help us reach our goals. Every gift matters.

Here are ways you can participate:

- Attend worship weekly and hear the testimonials from members and friends about the impact generosity and gratitude has had on their lives.
- Pray for our campaign; daily, weekly, any time you spend time in prayer.
- Commit to making a pledge to God through this church on Commitment Sunday, October 29, by returning a pledge card in worship, using the QR code, or contacting the church finance office.

I am grateful for being a member of this astonishing congregation, for more than 30 years. I cannot imagine worshiping anywhere else. I am connected to so many of you in worship and in mission to others. I know that God has called me to be here and to be generous with my talents and my financial support to ensure that FUMC continues to thrive and share God's love in the world.



Carol Beaty, FUMC Finance Chair

Acting

Please remember in prayer these members of Our Church Family:

Jim Eisenhardt, Juanita Edwards, Lisa Ellis, Dave England, Karen Heimuli, Jerry Meis, Marvin & Suzanne Morgan, Millie Plumb, Marlys Richardson, Deborah Mabry-Strong, Barb Winfield, Terry Joseph White, Coyner Smith, Roger Freeman

Sympathies to families that have had loved ones transition to new life: Lynne Elwood (brother Mike Elwood), Colleen Dickman (aunt Anna Kay Swanson)

Birth: Congratulations to Colleen & Annette Dickman on the birth of granddaughter Haddlie Louise Farley.

Submit your prayer requests to: Lynne Elwood at 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.

NURSERY VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Love children? Safe Gatherings approved? Our church member, Ashley Bandow, who has been leading the nursery initiative on Sunday mornings is stepping back from that responsibility. If you can assist with child care on Sunday mornings for a time, please call the office.

Clair Cares Food Pantry Volunteers Needed!

**Next Opportunity
for Volunteering
September 14 & 15**

Clair Memorial UMC | 5544 Ames Ave.

**For Information on Volunteering,
Contact Judy Prenzler at 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

or call 402.556.6262 x1002

Maddi Baugous

Maddi.Baugous@fumcomaha.org

or call 402.556.6262 x1006

You can also email

Lynne Elwood

lelwood2@gmail.com

to be added to
our prayer chain.

We are here for you!



Throughout the summer weeks we have experienced Camp Rainbow - providing students in our community and within the Omaha area an opportunity to attend Rainbow Factory for mornings or full time this summer, a change from previous years. Our camp

focused on our country's National Parks system, with the last week celebrating Great Sand Dunes National Park. Throughout our time learning the topography, fauna, flora, and animals of our parks system, students engaged in corresponding crafts and spent their days in our nature center with park ranger gear. As always, we are grateful to the church's Mow Crew for maintaining the grass around our nature center that enables us to fully realize our space outdoors. **Our new school year began on August 17.** We are at full capacity and staffed with some wonderful new additions: Ms. Barbara Ruigh has joined our staff for the new year while Mrs. Ashley Bandow takes over our Twos Program. We are looking forward to a wonderful year of learning with our students!



Inspiring

ECO TEAM NO NEED FOR RANGE ANXIETY ANY MORE!!

So says Eric Williams at our August 20th all church forum about electric vehicles!

Electric vehicles and battery capacity have come a long way in a few years. They are cheaper, quieter, lower maintenance, better for the planet AND the battery range is now around 300 miles so folks don't have to have range anxiety any more!

One of the areas the FUMC Sustainability Master Plan directs our attention to is active transportation; how we get ourselves from one place to another in the "greenest" way. Along with learning more about electric vehicles, we also learned from Spencer Pereira about the safest cycling routes around town and the benefits of taking the Omaha Rapid Bus Transit (ORBT).



If you missed the forum or if you want to learn even more, stop by the church on **Saturday, September 23, 12:00 pm - 4:00 pm**. See, touch and sit in the driver's seat in a variety of electric vehicles on display. Not just automobiles, but electric-assist bicycles, too! Our FUMC Eco Team



is hosting the Nebraska Sierra Club and Nebraska Electric Vehicle Association's 4th Annual Omaha Area NDEW (National Drive Electric Week) show. The vehicle display will be in the parking lot on the east side of the church, and visitor parking is on the north side. Presentations and tabling will be in the Commons adjacent to the EV display area.

For more information:

driveelectricweek.org/event?eventid=3954

Roam'n Methodists

National Music Museum (NMM) in Vermillion SD

Friday September 8, 2023

cost \$15 for guided tour.

We will be visiting the newly remodeled National Music Museum. *Spanning hundreds of years of culture, the NMM's 15,000+ instruments range from priceless Italian violins to celebrity guitars, from organs to orchestration, from harps to harpsichords, from dombaks to didgeridoos, from Les Paul to Sgt. Pepper, from Stradivari to Elvis. With its extensive archives of instrument-related materials, and offering the only graduate degree in musical instruments in North America, the NMM has been an epicenter for musical-instrument research.*

We also have an opportunity to attend a free concert by **Yvonnick Prené Quartet**, professional jazz musician, bandleader, composer, and educator. He is one of the most unique and innovative harmonicists on the scene today.

contact Mike Rosenthal to register for this event.
(mike.rosenthal577@icloud.com or 402-599-3715)

Archives Notes

Several people have asked me who donated various items, what is the meaning of the windows, and other similar questions. In the coming months we will be publishing information on the stained glass windows in this church as well as other religious symbols you may or may not have seen around the church.

It was the conscious decision of the builders of this church to not place plaques by each window or gift given. They are all on pages of the memorial book in the narthex of the sanctuary. Since then some items have been marked and almost all items have been identified and credited in the archives.

Willit Architectural Glass, most recently of Winona, Minnesota, created our windows and restored them after the tornado in 1975. (Several men came out of retirement to do that restoration). They recently closed and sent us all the files they had on our windows, contracts, communications and drawings, etc. (Originally the lancet windows in front were to be directly behind the altar).

I hope you enjoy these posts and know we are planning to eventually have all this information assembled in a small booklet in our pews. ~ Mark Schulze

Supporting

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OMAHA INVITES YOU TO JOIN OUR

TRUNK OR TREAT COMMITTEE

Trunk or Treat was a screaming success last year and we are excited to try and top both the numbers and the activities so we need your help!

We are forming a committee to help plan Trunk or Treat this year. You can help plan, provide a trunk, help make community connections. We can't do it without your help!

Sunday, October 29,
2023 from 3-6pm

If you are interested in volunteering your trunk or joining the committee please contact Fran Sillau at Fran.Sillau@fumcomaha.org or 402-556-6262x1008.

2nd Annual Fiercely Inclusive Feast

and Sunday School Round-up

Sunday, August 27th

12:00-2:00 PM

The Front Lawn

Join us for our Fall Fiercely Inclusive feast. We will have food, a bounce house, and will replenish our stock of 'Fiercely Inclusive' shirts, so wear comfortable clothing you don't mind getting dye on. Bring your family, neighbors, and friends and join us for a fantastic feast!

For more information or to volunteer to help put on the meal reach out to Cass Opal at Cass.opal@fumcomaha.org

Nebraska Sierra Club & Nebraska Electric Vehicle Association's 4th Annual Omaha Area NDEW Show Saturday, September 23, 2023

We're back in person! See, touch and sit in the driver's seat in our variety of electric vehicles on display. Not just automobiles, but electric-assist bicycles, too!

Come attend the Nebraska Sierra Club and Nebraska Electric Vehicle Association's 4th Annual Omaha Area NDEW Show. The Eco Team at First United Methodist Church is hosting our 2023 event. Green Bellevue is also a sponsor. The vehicle display will be in the parking lot on the east side of the church, and visitor parking is on the north side. Presentations and tabling will be in The Commons room adjacent to the EV display area. Events start at Noon and end about 4 PM.

Come meet the many enthusiastic EV owners who will be displaying their vehicles. Restrooms will be available inside.

Registration information found in the link below.
<https://driveelectricweek.org/event?eventid=3954>



SIERRA CLUB
NEBRASKA CHAPTER



Ministry Fair

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 10

9:35-10:35 AM | THE COMMONS

Browse booths: Committees
Ministries | Small Groups
Hospitality | Mercy & Justice
Spiritual Practices
Children & Youth | Faith Studies
& More!

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Challenging

Building a Culture of Generosity

This month we highlight a different kind of generosity that takes place at and through First United Methodist Church.



The North Omaha Area Health Center has selected First United Methodist Church to be the recipient of the **2023 Community Health Legacy Award**; a recognition of the church's history of addressing social justice issues. These ministries begin with our earliest memories—taking an anti-slavery stand, supporting Chief Standing Bear, providing transportation to polling locations, outreach to marginalized communities, and the collaborative work of creating OTOC (Omaha Together One Community) as a faith based coalition for community organizing. Recent collaborative endeavors include Medicaid expansion, rent reform, and advocating for policy that made payday lenders unwelcome in the community. The work continues to modern day with Covid 19 testing sites, forums on affordable housing, inclusion of the LGBTQ community, and connection and advocacy for immigrant families.

The award will be presented at the annual **Champion of Change Luncheon** on **Wednesday, September 13**, at the Scott Conference Center on the UNO campus.

We have purchased a table that seats 10. If you are able to purchase your ticket for \$75.00 we would accept that donation, but don't want anyone to not attend due to cost. If you would like to attend please contact the church office as soon as possible. Individual tickets are also available for the same price of \$75.

FUMC Finance News

FUMC Finance Report

Carol Beaty, FUMC Finance Chair

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

The Budget approved by the Church Council for 2023 included \$872,050 in income and \$996,681 in expenses. The budget for pledges is \$650,000. As you can see, if we have all the expenses that were budgeted, we would need to use church reserves to make up the difference. We currently have about \$350,000 in reserve.

Average monthly pledges now needed to meet our budget of \$650,000 in pledge income = \$41,366

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.
Apr 2023 pledges - \$32,751.17 (some members paid entire year) 43.92% of annual budgeted pledges received.
May 2023 pledges - \$86,164.17 (some members paid entire year) 56.98% of annual budgeted pledges received.
June 2023 pledges - \$31,464.27 (some members paid entire year) 61.82% of annual budgeted pledges received.
July 2023 pledges - \$46,862.92 (some members paid entire year) 69.03% of annual budgeted pledges received.

As of July 30, 2023, our total income is 66.61% of what we budgeted. Our expenses are 56.40% of what we budgeted. We would expect income and expenses to be at 58.33% at this time of the year. Our income is higher because of prepaid pledges. Our expenses are close to expectations. With the numbers listed above, we may need to rely on church reserves, but pray with the church's faithfulness that will not be necessary.

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.

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7020 Cass Street
Omaha, Nebraska 68132-2601

Return Service Requested



KARAOKE ON THE LAWN

**FUMC Omaha &
River City Mixed Chorus**
invite you to
Karaoke on the Lawn:
Saturday,
September 2,
6:30 PM



RIVER CITY
MIXED CHORUS
LOBBY • OMAHA

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UNITED WE WALK

SUNDAY, SEPT. 10

3 - 6 PM

13136 FAITH PLAZA, OMAHA

Register at:

<https://www.trifaith.org/uww-2023/>