

# Connect

April 2024



Morita Truman, Pastor

## THINK ON THESE THINGS

*Philippians 4:8*

He is risen indeed! We have walked through a Lenten journey filled with passion and faith. We move forward now as Easter people, aware of our connection to the Divine, called to be the hands and feet of Jesus in the world with the Christ spirit ignited within us. A special thanks to all who have participated in our worship services, in special events, in creating a space where we can celebrate the mystery at the core of our faith.

Speaking of mystery...although it's not really a mystery if we study science and astronomy, but did you know there is an eclipse coming on April 8? While Omaha will not be in the zone of totality, there will be a time when we can tell the sun is blocked from our sight. In 2017 I traveled to Geneva, NE to my first live viewing of a solar eclipse. I won't say it was life changing, but it was, well life and attitude changing. To feel my place in the creation, to be aware of how we are impacted by the cosmic events around us was humbling and inspiring. I've included one of my pictures from that day to share with you—the moment when the sun began to reappear showing the Easter moment lived out in the cosmos. The words from Psalm 8 kept ringing in my head and heart, "When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars that you have established; what are human beings that you are mindful of them, mortals that you care for them? Yet you have made them a little lower than God..."



In this coming month we will have the opportunity to worship and learn together as we witness an eclipse, a denomination changing General Conference, Earth Day, Celebration of Soulful Healing, meaningful worship and study together, and many more opportunities. We engage in this *because* we are Easter people—we have walked away from the tombs that would hold us and we walk into lives that are made new in Christ. It is my honor to walk with you.

*Morita*

## 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 Prayer

Saturday, April 6  
5:00 pm, Mead Chapel

### Pastor

Rev. Morita Truman

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### 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.

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### Church Office Hours

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

**FUMC building will be closed April 1st**

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*"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

## Drumming For Heart Health!

FUMC *Healthy Healing Ministries* is offering a cardio drumming class starting April 4th. Participants will meet every Thursday in April and May from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. in Ada Mead Hall (door #10 under the chapel). The group will exercise to cardio drumming videos on YouTube.

Each person is responsible for bringing their own bucket (\$15 at Target), exercise ball (\$20 at Dick's) and drumsticks (or wooden spoons, cut off dowels, etc) There is storage space to leave these items at the church.



Contact the FUMC office to register for the class... Space is limited so register soon!!

## CAMP Fontanelle

Join us for fun this summer!  
Many sessions available!

### Camp Sessions

June 10th through August 2nd

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

TO GIVE OUR STAFF TIME TO  
REST AFTER HOLY WEEK,  
OUR OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED  
MONDAY, APRIL 1ST



## MOVIE GROUP

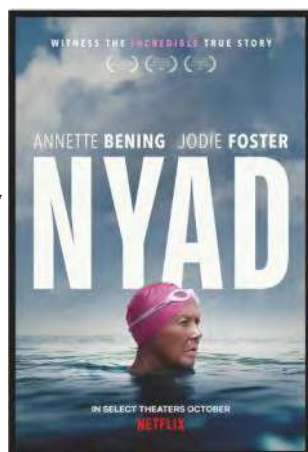
Tuesday, April 9, 6 pm  
in-person at FUMC & Zoom

### NYAD

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

Email **Bonnie Wallace**  
[bonniwallace59@gmail.com](mailto:bonniwallace59@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 Date April 6

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 TO JOIN!

## STAFFING CHANGES IN THE PRESCHOOL



The director of the Rainbow Factory Preschool, Alexandria Skoog, has submitted a letter of resignation in order to take a position out of state. "Miss Skoog," as she is known to children and parents alike, began working as a teacher in the preschool in August of 2016. She was instrumental in working through the time the preschool was engaged in online learning during Covid shutdown. She became the Preschool director for the school beginning in August of 2021.

We are so appreciative of the work and dedication Miss Skoog has shared with the children and families who are part of Rainbow Factory. Her last day in the preschool will be April 10. Members of the congregation are encouraged to write cards of appreciation and perhaps offer gift cards for her transition period.

## Salt & Light Team

I spent the early part of my life with rose-colored glasses. I had confidence in our elected officials and judicial process – in democracy itself. I believed in our system of checks and balances and our leaders working for the good of all. Okay, yes, I was naive! As I got older it became apparent to me that I was clueless and I needed to step up. Thankfully, I found FUMC. As I sat in church and listened to the sermons and enjoyed the music I thought, "Yes, this is what a church should be!" This church walks the walk! There are many opportunities to get involved to make a difference and be part of a community. I found my people!

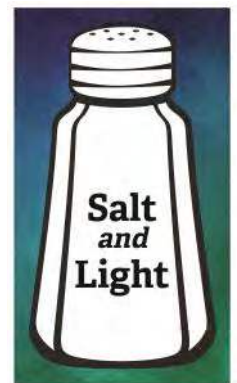
A reminder of that came when I went to the Women's March in D.C. with a group of active women from church - of course! As a school teacher, I made it known that I was going. I talked to my students (and teachers), just generally, about standing up for what you believed in and then acting. It's not enough just to complain. Guess what! I was given the cold shoulder and worse from teachers, at what I thought was my safe place – school. As hard as that was, I knew I continued to have a place with people who shared my values at FUMC. My goal is to read and learn as much as I can about how to help others through the political system, so I joined Salt and Light. And I'm so glad I did! I continue to learn a lot and meet amazing people. It really does take a village. Salt and Light, and other church members, have connections through a large number of nonprofits doing work in Nebraska. It is heartening to know there are so many people out there working for change. I've learned about myself and my ability to step outside my comfort zone, and FUMC and Salt and Light are a big part of that.



Laura Seyl

*Note: The Salt and Light team is encouraging congregational members to become informed about and get involved with the Protect Our Rights campaign which is a ballot initiative to protect abortion rights in the Nebraska State Constitution.*

*Learn how to join the campaign, endorse it, and support patient health and safety above political games at [protectourrights.com](https://protectourrights.com). Petitions for signing will also be available in the Gathering Place on Sundays in May.*



# Acting

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

Joan Clark, Juanita Edwards, Clif Ellis, Dave England, Nev Fredrickson, Claudia Hesselgesser, Jodie Johns, Tim Ivins, Marvin & Suzanne Morgan, Millie Plumb, Deborah Mabry-Strong, Coyner Smith, Barb Winfield, Terry Joseph White,

**Sympathies** to the family of Betty Phillips, Susan Davies' mother, who transitioned to new life. Our prayers are with her family.

**Congratulations** to Natalie McClellan and Patrick O'Malley on the birth of their son Murphy on March 5. Proud grandparents are Michael & Carol McClellan

**Submit your prayer requests to:** Lynne Elwood at [lwood2@gmail.com](mailto:lwood2@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? We would love to have you join us in the FUMC nursery. We will pay for your Safe Gatherings certification.

If you can assist with child care on Sunday mornings for a time, please call the office at 402-556-6262.

## Welcome to our Newest Members!

Bill & Susan Howard

Chase DeWitt and Adam Smith

Chad Primmer

We continue to invite new friends to join First United Methodist by profession of faith, transfer of membership from a UM or other denomination/congregation. Please call Morita or email her at [morita.truman@fumcomaha.org](mailto:morita.truman@fumcomaha.org) if you'd like to talk about membership.

## Clair Cares Food Pantry

### Volunteers Needed!

Next Opportunity  
for Volunteering  
April 18 & 19

Clair Memorial UMC | 5544 Ames Ave



For Information on Volunteering,  
Contact Dale Seyl at [dalseyl@gmail.com](mailto:dalseyl@gmail.com)



## 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

You can also email Lynne Elwood  
[lwood2@gmail.com](mailto:lwood2@gmail.com) to be added to our prayer chain.

**We are here for you!**



**FOODBANK**  
FOR THE HEARTLAND

Our next volunteer opportunities  
at the Food Bank in 2024 are:

Tuesday June 11th 1-3:30 pm

Tuesday September 10th 1-3:30 pm

Tuesday December 10th 1-3:30 pm

[foodbankheartland.org](http://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

## ECO TEAM

Inch By Inch, Row By Row, Gonna Make This Garden Grow!

Join the Eco team for a creation themed worship service on Sunday, April 21st!



**Inch by inch, row by row**

**Gonna make this garden grow  
All it takes is a rake and a hoe  
And a piece of fertile ground**

**Inch by inch, row by row**

**Someone bless these seeds I sow  
Someone warm them from below**

**Till the rain comes tumblin' down ~ Lyrics by John Denver**



Sunday, April 21, FUMC will be centering worship on God's good earth! Members of the Eco Team will be sharing in worship, celebrating some positive steps that have been taken in line with our Sustainability Master Plan and giving plants during the children's message and after services to all who want them!!

We've been enjoying quotes in our Sunday bulletins from *Braiding Sweetgrass* by Robin Wall Kimmerer. As you receive a little plant on the 21st, Kimmerer reminds us: "In some Native languages the term for plants translates to "those who take care of us."

And don't forget to stop by Earth Day: A celebration of our planet and a commitment to sustainability at Elmwood Park, Saturday, April 27, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. The community is celebrating 35 years of this annual event!! For more information, google Earth Day, Omaha, 2024.

## UNITED METHODIST GENERAL CONFERENCE APRIL 23 - MAY 3, 2024

After several delays due to the COVID-19 pandemic, The United Methodist Church is prepared to convene its General Conference from April 23 to May 3, 2024, in Charlotte, North Carolina. This meeting of delegates - equal numbers of clergy and laity - from around the world is where legislation will be considered that may impact the polity and governance of the denomination.

Officially, this next meeting is known as the 2020 General Conference because the worldwide body, which is the only group that can speak on behalf of the denomination, has not met since a special session in 2019 in St. Louis. The last meeting as a regular session came in 2016 in Portland, Oregon.

The long-awaited regular session set for spring 2024 comes after an era of disaffiliation of congregations related to concerns over human sexuality policies and full inclusion of LGBTQIA+ individuals in the life of the church.

### GREAT PLAINS DELEGATES:

**Clergy Delegates:** Adam Hamilton, Amy Lippoldt, Kalaba Chali, David Livingston, Cheryl Jefferson Bell, Anne Gatobu, and Mark Holland.

**Lay delegates:** Oliver Green, Lisa Maupin, Scott Brewer, Randall Hodgkinson, Dixie Brewster, Dan Entwistle, and Jesi Lipp.

Jurisdictional Conference delegates are non-voting attendees, who can step in as alternates when needed.

**Jurisdictional clergy delegates:** Eduardo Bousson, Ashley Prescott Barlow-Thompson, Stephanie Ahlschwede, Zach Anderson, Andrew Conard, Ashlee Alley Crawford, and Kurt Cooper. **Lay delegates** are: Shayla Jordan and Esther Hay.



# Supporting

## United Women in Faith

### Missouri River District Spring Meeting



The Missouri River District spring meeting will be at FUMC Omaha on Saturday, April 13th. The theme for the meeting is "Living Water." Carol Windrum is the guest speaker, her topic is "Clean and Available Water Resources." Here are the details:

- Coffee and check in is at 9:30 am. We will meet in the Commons area, door #4. Lunch will be served by FUMC-UWF. The meeting will conclude at 1:30 pm.
- Discussion of John 4:1-26, Jesus and the Woman at the Well.
- UWF updates and information.
- Communion and Offering to Epworth Family Resources.

Please register by April 8<sup>th</sup>, email [lelwood2@gmail.com](mailto:lelwood2@gmail.com) or by phone 402-980-9043. When you register, please indicate if you require childcare.

There is a \$15.00 registration fee payable on the 13<sup>th</sup>. This covers the cost of the lunch and morning coffee.

Any UWF members who would like to assist with the meeting either with providing food or helping to serve, contact Lynne Elwood, [lelwood2@gmail.com](mailto:lelwood2@gmail.com), 402-980-9043 or Ranita Lilyhorn, [rl3frog@gmail.com](mailto:rl3frog@gmail.com), 402-25-5641.

### Upcoming Events

May 2, General FUMC-UWF meeting at 10:00 am, Room 112. Guest speaker is Patricia Smith from the women's prisoner program, "Read to Me."

South Central Jurisdiction Quadrennial Event "Get Together," June 21-23, 2024 in St. Louis, MO. Details at [www.umwscj.org](http://www.umwscj.org) Contact Ranita Lilyhorn if you want to attend.

2024 Mission U, July 26-27, Grand Island, NE. The program is Welcome Home. We will explore how we can know God as a friend who welcomes us. Sign up at [www.greatplainsumc.org/umw](http://www.greatplainsumc.org/umw)

Save the date. Great Plains UWF Annual Meeting, Sept. 13-14, Grand Island.

At our March meeting, we discussed the possibility of holding a kitchen cleaning day in May. Contact Ranita Lilyhorn if you would like to assist us.

A colorful poster for a retrospective event. The background is a vibrant, abstract collage of patterns, including a bicycle, a large star, a tree, and the Eiffel Tower. The text is on a dark blue background on the left side.

**First You Dream**  
**A Retrospective**  
With Peggy Holloway, Family & Friends  
**Sunday, May 5th, 2024**  
**at 3:00 PM**  
First United Methodist Church ~ Omaha  
7020 Cass Street | Omaha, NE 68132

# Challenging

## Building a Culture of Generosity

As you are reading this newsletter, we will have already gathered to celebrate Easter — on one of the earliest dates it can occur. We have waved palm branches, broken bread together, washed feet, celebrated our children singing in worship, welcomed new and familiar friends alike, flown kites, hidden and found eggs on the front lawn, heard stirring music, and renewed our faith in the work of the church as the resurrected spirit of Christ in the world.

Our celebrations are filled with wonder and faith, hard work, and passion. All of this is possible thanks to two key points: the faithfulness of our members and friends and a belief of our members and friends in the work we are doing together. Our work matters and makes a difference in the world around us. We live in the spirit of the God who says, "See, I am making all things new!"

Last fall in our stewardship campaign we spoke of generosity and gratitude as key tenets of how we respond to the call of God to share our gifts. We invite you, at the end of this first quarter of the fiscal year, to consider how you are sharing your gifts—not just monetary, but the spiritual gifts with which you have been endowed. It takes all of us working together to build on the foundation that has been set for us. It takes all of us sharing our gifts to continue to build on the foundation of generosity that lies at the heart of Omaha First UMC.

Thank you for your faithfulness!

**Donate Here**

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



SCAN ME

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## FUMC Finance Report

Carol Beaty, FUMC Finance Chair

Here is the FUMC monthly report to the congregation written on Mar 15, 2024.

The Budget approved by the Church Council for 2024 included \$905,310 in income and \$930,919 in expenses. We include the reminder that if we have all the expenses that were budgeted, we will have to use church reserves to make up the difference. The budget for pledges is \$700,000, an increase of \$50,000 over 2023. Thanks to all who pledge, and who give, generously.

Average monthly pledges needed to meet our budget of \$700,000 in pledge income = \$58,333.

Jan 2024 pledges - \$223,757 (some members paid entire year) 32.0% of annual budgeted pledges received.

Feb 2024 pledges - \$34,467 (some members paid entire year) 36.89% of annual budgeted pledges received.

As of Feb 29, 2024, our total income is 32.45% of what we budgeted. Our expenses are 16.01% of what we budgeted. We would expect income and expenses to be at 16.67% at this time of the year. Our income is higher because of prepaid pledges. Our expenses are close to expectations.

A copy of the church budget approved by the Church Council in January 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 consider a generous Easter Offering.**

First  
United  
Methodist  
Church



Return Service Requested

7020 Cass Street  
Omaha, Nebraska 68132-2601

OTOC'S 15TH ANNUAL SPRING FUNDRAISER

*Celebrating Community!*

Date: Sun. April 28, 2024

Time: 4:00-7:30pm

Location: Omaha Firefighter's Hall, 6005 Grover Street



*Tickets on Sale Now*  
\$30 in advance (\$35 at the door)

Use this link <http://bidpal.net/otocaucaution2024>  
to purchase a ticket for you, a friend,  
or to be donated to someone else!

Please contact Carol Beaty 402-332-8215 if you have  
trouble registering or purchasing tickets.

Bidding on auction items will open on Saturday April  
20 and close at 6:30 on April 28, the night of the event.



# CELEBRATION OF SOULFUL HEALING

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Please enter doors #4 (east)

Sunday, April 21, 2024

## CELEBRATION SCHEDULE

1:00 - 1:30 Registration

1:30 - 2:00 Keynote Speaker

2:15 - 4:00 Workshops

All are welcome who seek to improve their own lives  
or those of people for whom they provide care.

\$10 suggested freewill offering to cover expenses



## KEYNOTE PRESENTATION

1:30 - 2:00 – The Commons

Speaker: Rev. Marcee Binder, Pastor Rockbrook UMC

## The Care of Mind and Body

## WORKSHOPS

(There will be 2 sessions – you may attend one workshop in each session)

The Alive Enneagram – *Jennifer Kuhl*

Holy Humor – *Morita Truman*

Journaling – *Marj Phillips*

Vibrational Sound Healing – *Jen Hebel*

Sacred Sounds for Body & Soul Healing – *Jane Florence*

Music Therapy – *Bridget Shevlin*



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