



Morita Truman, Pastor

THINK ON THESE THINGS

Philippians 4:8

I disappointed a friend today. We've been trying to find a time to talk (she's in another state and another time zone) and I thought a window of opportunity was opening today. But as is often the case on a Sunday, the window slammed shut. She texted to let me know I had disappointed her.

I love my friend and we have the kind of friendship that we can say those things to one another, but it broke my heart to know I had hurt her. I've been second guessing myself, wondering how I could have done better, what I could have changed. And bottom line, I can't change it, but I can strive to be more intentional next time, to not let windows slam shut.

It led me to think about the moments in our faith story when we read that Jesus felt exasperated with friends and followers - when he had to explain something one more time, when they expected their way to be his way, when they wanted him to rain down fire on enemies, when they denied him, or betrayed him, or ran away. Was he disappointed? Was he hurt? The after the fact records we have indicate he showed patience, readiness to explain one more time, and of course we assume kindness. But he had moments, moments when he asked his friends "couldn't you stay awake?" He turned over tables in the temple, frustrated with the corruption he witnessed. He spoke in parables that challenged his followers to see what and who was right in front of them - the poor, the outcasts, those who lived with pain, the stranger. And then he told them again, because they just didn't get it. I would suggest of course he felt all of that.

The coming days of Holy Week and Easter will invite us to be in the story, to feel it. Not to read like we've read it before, but to take it out, explore it, hold it, sit with it, consider it as if it's the first time. To hear and read the stories and consider their significance in our context, what their meaning is for us today.

It may hurt. We may feel broken. But there is healing in cherished belonging. You are seen. You are loved. May we immerse ourselves in the passion of celebrating the Easter story. I'm so grateful to be 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 Prayer

Saturday, April 5

5:00 pm Mead Chapel

Pastor

Rev. Morita Truman

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."



First
United
Methodist
Church

Welcoming

Rising Up



Liz Emis, Minister of Education

Last month, we began confirmation classes with about seven youth, their families, and their mentors on Wednesday evenings. Before we started, we held informational sessions with mentors and families, allowing a chance to connect, ask questions, and eat pepperoni pizza.

Two children – Tyler and Christopher – are brothers. Tyler is in 7th grade, the year our church enters into conversation with youth about being confirmed in the United Methodist Church. Tyler made it clear he intends to be confirmed, but what made this moment so special was how intent his younger brother Christopher was in his decision. One year before he is eligible, and he's emphatic! He **will** be confirmed in 7th grade.

Now yes, he needs to gather with his classmates in a year, receive a mentor, wonder and wander through our lessons and gathering events, AND be given time for discernment before standing up on Confirmation Sunday 2026. But, when you know what you want, you know what you want. Christopher wants to RISE.

And that's the theme I chose when writing our confirmation curricula: Rise Up. Youth desire and develop best when they have opportunity to play with expanded independence and agency. When I think back on that time in my life, all I wanted was for my father to stop timing my phone calls and let me wear those skinny heels to the school dance. I wanted freedom, the freedom to grow into myself on my terms.

And that's natural. It's something every caregiver encounters. And that's part of what the church is – a caregiver. We guide, but do not impose, and we learn as much as we teach. It's our role to empower people to become their best selves. These youth are being asked to consider rising, committing to vows that include responsibility, and we have a responsibility to them to consider them equals. Should a confirmand choose to be confirmed, they are accountable to us, and we *are accountable to them*. We rise up together.

I wonder if this Lent and this Easter, in this wilderness season of turmoil and fear, how we're individually and collectively practicing accountability alongside our autonomy. How are we holding others accountable and holding ourselves accountable to one another? To those we've never even met. The cross shows us what happens when we don't embrace accountability. Resurrection Sunday shows us the path to rising up.

Jesus of Nazareth died forsaken and abandoned by all he loved and who loved him. Violence, abandonment, and despair, however, gave way to liberation and the birth of a fresh start when he showed us another way – a nonviolent way, a way of relationality and love.

Our hope is that this year's confirmands form bonds as they navigate the confirmation learning process. We've designed this season so they become accountable to one another, and the church demonstrates it is accountable to them. Our prayer is that community expand and deepen. So on Sunday, June 8th, no matter what decisions they made, these youth stand proud of their decision and we stand and clap for their maturity. Decisions require us to rise, and our confirmands are about to show us how to do it. May we take a lesson from them, and rise up ourselves.

Peace, Salam, and Shalom,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'JZS'.

Become a NEW MEMBER!

If you'd like to talk about membership or ways to connect and become involved with our many ministries, please call Morita or email her at morita.truman@fumcomaha.org





First UMC is Showing Up!!

In these challenging times, members of First UMC are finding ways to show up for God's beloved community: specifically resisting efforts that are weakening our democracy! We all have gifts to offer! To get current information on what you can do, check regularly our *Ripples of Hope* website that provides weekly actions you can take!

bit.ly/RipplesofHope2024

Love Thy Neighbor: On our way to \$50,000.

Thanks to your generous giving to immigrants and refugees, we've set our sights higher. The Love Thy Neighbor campaign surpassed its goal of \$25,000, and you can help us reach the next level of \$50,000.

Here are examples of what your donation can do:

- \$50 buys a parenting class for an unaccompanied child's guardian
- \$250 pays the utilities for a refugee family
- \$500 fee for DACA and work permit renewal
- \$1,500 pays the rent for a refugee family



Use the QR code here to donate online. Go to the funding drop-down box and choose "Immigration Love They Neighbor" OR Write your check to FUMC, with Love Thy Neighbor on the memo line.



Stitch'n Sisters

Stitch'n Sisters donated 7 quilts to Camp Fontanelle for cabin bunks. Shown above are Nancy Coziahr, Jane VanHorn, Camp Fontennell Assistant Director, and Jane Young.

Acting

Please remember in prayer these members of our Church Family:

Nev Fredrickson, Kym Kurth, Tim Ivins, Marvin & Suzanne Morgan, Dean Pierce, Laura Pierce, Terry Joseph White, Lucy Wood.

Sympathies - to the family of Juanita Edwards who transitioned to new life.

Please follow these 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.

MOVIE GROUP

Tuesday, April 8, 6 pm

in-person at FUMC Ada Mead Hall & Zoom

MICKEY 17

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

Contact

Bonnie Wallace

bonniewallace59@gmail.com

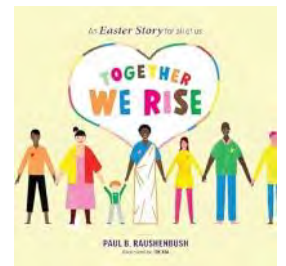
for more info or to receive ZOOM link!



A WONDER-ful Egg Hunt

Eggs, Candy & Trinkets OH MY! You BELONG at this all-ages Egg Hunt! Bring your baskets for an age & stage-based hunt ensuring all ages collect a big haul! BONUS: Find a golden egg, bring it to Ms. Liz & receive a prize! Every family will go home with a copy of *Together We Rise: An Easter Story* by Paul Raushenbush!

**Palm Sunday
April 13 - 9:30 am**



FOODBANK
FOR THE HEARTLAND

We want to thank all of our wonderful volunteers who came on Tuesday to the FoodBank! We boxed 182 backpacks which will feed 1,456 children. We joined volunteers from Saint Wenceslaus Church. Our next FoodBank opportunity will be **Saturday, June 7th, from 9-11:30.** We encourage our youth and adults to join us.



Taizé Prayer

1st Saturday of the month

5:00 - 5:40 pm

Mead Chapel

In Person (enter door 11)

April 5

This 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!





WILD WORSHIP OMAHA



MARCH 20TH, 2025
KICK-OFF SERVICE



The first Service of Wild Worship Omaha held at Standing Bear Lake is in the books, and it was a howling success. Pun intended. It was colder than we would have wanted, but that didn't keep this pack of wonderful humans from experiencing the beauty of an emerging spring from beneath new fallen snow. The Wild Worship facilitators got there early to make sure the spot was not too mushy from the freak blizzard the day before and were quickly cut by the cold wind, so they decided to pivot to a warmer more easily accessible spot near the playground. Nearly 20 people braved the cold and wind to gather in community, sing, pray, wander, and do a little howling to embrace the Wild in each of us and we can't wait to do it again. Hopefully in warmer weather, but this is Nebraska during climate change, so warmer could mean a heat index over 100 and that is also less than ideal. We will take what we are given with Wild abandon, embrace each day as a gift, and thank God for the rising sun each morning.



Cass Opal opened the service with a short welcome and explanation of the book, Church of the Wild by Victoria Lorz, before leading into a shared call to worship with Rev. Juniper Meadows by giving gratitude to the directions around us, above us, below us, and within us. We opened to the Mystery of Life, the Creator, the Source of All That Is, that is between and within all things. Rev. Juniper Meadows from 2nd Unitarian had her guitar handy and blessed us with the chance to sing Holy Now by Peter Mayer together before we read The Peace of the Wild Things by Wendell Berry. Cass shared a sacred story, Juniper shared some folklore, and together they called us to Wander.

Wandering in this sense is simply that, wandering. It has no specific purpose or direction. It calls and pulls you in many different directions. Sometimes it is a bird. One woman grieved over a tree split by the storm and wished it peace on its new journey. Another was taken by the vibrating of the water made by the wind cutting across it..



Yet another was amazed by all the bird tracks in the snow. Like little interconnected roads made by dozens, if not hundreds, of tiny feet. Our leader Cass found a little grove of trees with branches that encircled her like a cathedral and there she let her joy envelop her in childlike wonder. Juniper stayed and played music before helping our littlest member collect trash from the surrounding area working with the next generation to steward our home.

A howl called us home. Yes, a howl, we said 'pun intended'. We cut the wandering short due to the cold and called people back after 15 minutes, instead of 45, with a howl. Cass started the howl, and each person carried it forward to all our wanderers to call them back until the whole group was howling together. If you ask Cass, that moment was her joy for the week because it was fun and connectional in a way that cannot be truly explained without being felt. Laughing and joyful we were called back to hear a poem and sacred story from Juniper before ending in love with a benediction. It was a lot of fun, despite the frozen toes, and we truly cannot wait to see you in April with our WONDER-ful Wednesday kids at Fontanelle Forest!! To follow the event Visit: <https://www.facebook.com/share/18jrgBkg5e/>

If you want to watch the service, you can scan the QR code below. Don't forget to Like and follow us on our Facebook and Instagram pages. If you want to sign up for the Wild Worship Omaha newsletter you can register by visiting bit.ly/JoinWildWorshipOmaha.



*With Love & Gratitude,
Your Wild Worship Facilitators;
Cass Opal & Rev. Juniper Meadows*



Inspiring

CELEBRATION OF SOULFUL HEALING



Health, Healing, and Spiritual Formation has partnered this year with the Eco Team to host "Celebration of Soulful Healing" on April 27, 2025. Registration will begin at 12:45 with the program running from 1:15 to 4:30 pm. The overall theme is "The Healing Power of Nature." The keynote speaker is Jill Primak from Nature Explore. Her message will be

based on the book *The Nature Fix* by Florence Williams. Come learn "why nature makes us happier, healthier, and more creative." There will be 2 break-out sessions as well as vendors presenting such topics as container gardening by the Big Garden, feeding and identifying wild birds by the Wild Bird Store, plants native to Nebraska and pollinator gardens on the FUMC grounds, and information about opportunities for walking and bike riding. The event is free although goodwill donations will be accepted. Join us at FUMC Omaha, 7020 Cass St., Omaha



MEDICAID MEDICARE SOCIAL SECURITY
 FAIR ELECTRICITY LANDS RESOURCES PROTECTION
HANDS OFF!
 A PUBLIC CANCER MERGERS IN ENERGY

Join us for a sign making party - 12 pm, April 5 at FUMC Omaha in the Parlor. Enter Door 11.

MASS MOBILIZATION SATURDAY, APRIL 5 1 - 3 PM

Memorial Park, Dodge St. & S. Happy Hollow
In Omaha: <https://www.mobilize.us/>




DIVISIBLE

Date: April 8th, 2025
Time: 6:30-8:30 pm
Where: Omaha Conservatory of Music
 7023 Cass St. Omaha, NE

Register for FREE tickets:
<https://bit.ly/OmahaRedlining>

The Omaha RedLining Documentary



FRIDAY, APRIL 25TH 2025
TERRARIUM BUILDING



FRIDAY, MAY 30TH 2025
RESIN ART - ADULTS ONLY




SCAN ME To register

Click here to **LEARN MORE**

Supporting



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

You can also email Lynne Elwood

lwood2@gmail.com to be added to our prayer chain.

We are here for you!

Clair Cares Food Pantry

Volunteers Needed!

Next Opportunity for Volunteering

April 17 & 18

Clair Memorial UMC | 5544 Ames Ave.

Contact Judy Prenzler

Prenzler@cox.net for info



ECO Team

According to ReFED, in the United States, people waste 92 billion pounds of food annually, equal to 145 billion meals.

We throw away over \$473 billion worth of food annually.

Shockingly, we waste 38% of all the food in America.

Methane emissions from landfills, especially those related to food waste, contribute significantly to climate change. The U.S.

Environmental Protection Agency estimates that wasted food is responsible for 58% of landfill methane emissions to the atmosphere.

At FUMC, we have been faithfully composting for years with many families bringing their food scraps as an "offering" to church!! Now we get to bring even more items! Find the green composting waste container on the east side of the building. **Anything that used to be living can go into the container** -Paper napkins, chicken bones, grease and fat, old veggies, last week's casserole, and more.

Compostable bags are a good way to get your food waste to the church, but an ice cream bucket works, too (just don't put the plastic container into the compost.) All of this waste gets turned into great soil, some of which we use for our gardens.



www.hillside.solutions



COMPOST

PRE & POST CONSUMER

Food

Fruits / Vegetables / Dairy / Meat / Bone / Fat
Shells / Bread / Juice / Coffee Grounds / Egg Shells



NON-RECYCLABLE

Paper

Paper / Towels / Napkins / Straws / Pizza Boxes
Coffee Filters / Wet or Soiled Paper + Cardboard



Compostable Serviceware

BPI CERTIFIED OR 7 PLA  Single-Use Cups / Utensils / Take-Out Packaging



Yard Waste

Grass / Leaves / Sand / Dirt / Plants / Branches



More

SEE EXTENDED LIST

www.hillside.solutions/compostclub

No Plastic / Metal / Glass

United Women in Faith Reading Program

Each year United Women in Faith (UWF) curates a Reading Program. There's something for everyone—the Reading Program is available for adults, youth, and children. Books can be read individually, or you can form a group. Selections include both fiction and non-fiction.

I am currently reading [The Seed Keeper by Diane Wilson](#). It is novel about an indigenous woman from Minnesota and her life as an orphan, wife, mother, widow, journalist and a gardener.

Contact me if you would like to form a book discussion for [The Seed Keeper](#) or if you have any questions about the Reading Program, contact Lynne Elwood at lwood2@gmail.com or (402-980-9043).

The 2025 UWF Reading Program catalog is available for download at <https://uwfaithresources.org/prodDetail.cfm?productID=11990>



United
Women
in Faith

Challenging

Building a Culture of Generosity

A call was issued—coats of all sizes needed for refugee families who are connected to the community. Distribution taking place through the Creighton Clinic. The response was amazing! Many stores in town were completely bought out of their stock and in the end over 300 coats were collected and distributed. Considering that recently the temps hovered around zero, imagine the impact of that generosity.

An invitation was issued—come to a Souper Bowl lunch, eat great food, vote for your favorites, and make donations for children’s ministry. We had a large crowd stay and share in food and fellowship. When the donations were counted, over \$1800 was raised for programs for children. We see our children every week, and we can imagine the impact of that generosity.

Those are just two examples of how generosity based on gratitude is at the heart of who we are at First!

Your generous gifts to both the church and to the First UMC Foundation make it possible for us to consider all the needs that are before us and all the needs that are coming in the future. The Trustees have priced what it would cost for new window installation throughout the building, and a team is working on the question of replacing the HVAC system and how we deliver heating and cooling to all of our spaces. Next steps are being planned; watch for details in the coming months.

Remember when you make an offering or donation you can give through the offering plate, request a direct deposit from your account, or use the online giving via this QR code or on the church’s website. The drop down menu will have a list of options for your giving.

Donate Here

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



bit.ly/FUMCOmahaGiving

FUMC Finance Report

Kate Fiandt, Finance Chair 2025

The Budget approved by the Church Council for 2025 included \$973,370 in income and \$973,161 in expenses. The budget for pledges is \$735,000, an increase of \$35,000 over 2024. Thanks to all of our generous pledgers.

February 2025 pledges received to date- \$288,553(some members paid entire year) - 39% of annual budgeted pledges.

As of February 28, 2025, our total income is 31.6% of what we budgeted. Our expenses are 16.4% of what we budgeted. We would expect income and expenses to be at 16.7% at this time of the year.

A copy of the church budget approved by the Church Council in February is available upon request. Please notify Kate Fiandt or the church office if you would like a copy.

We give thanks for the generosity of our members and friends.

First
United
Methodist
Church



Return Service Requested

7020 Cass Street
Omaha, Nebraska 68132-2601

 HOLY	 LY	 WEE	 EK
Palm Sunday April 13th, 2025 10:50 am the Sanctuary	Maundy Thursday April 17th, 2025 7:00 pm the Sanctuary	Holy Friday April 18th, 2025 7:00 pm the Sanctuary	Easter Sunday April 20th, 2025 10:50 am the Sanctuary

streamed online at www.facebook.com/FUMComaha