



More Than Just Sunday November 16, 2023

A Monthly Newsletter of First United Methodist Church, Mason City, Iowa

Pastor's Message

The holiday season is upon us. Christmas music has been playing for months and we are all ready to eat some turkey and then move right into the Christmas goodies without even taking a breath. Every year I tell myself that I am going to slow down, take it easy and enjoy the beauty and joy of the season. As of yet, I haven't been entirely successful.

There is always so much to get done, to see, to eat, to experience. I doubt I am the only one who has trouble slowing down during the holiday season. This year I am wondering if we can learn to appreciate the season and all the wonder it holds by paying attention to Mary's actions in the Christmas story. At the end of the story, we hear these verses in Luke 2:

"So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. **But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart.**"

The shepherds went in haste, but Mary, Mary treasured all that she had been told and pondered it in her heart. The verses don't tell us specifically to slow down, but from my experience, pondering requires a more measured pace. Pondering requires us to be present in the moment in order to experience the connections and beauty of the season.

It is my prayer that, as we await the arrival of Jesus, we take our time and ponder the love that permeates our Savior's birth. Let us take time to prepare our hearts for Christmas.

Merry Christmas, beloveds!
Pastor Mel



Merry Christmas
&
Happy New Year!

- **Coffee Hour**
9:00 a.m., Fellowship Hall
- **Worship Service**
10:00 a.m., Sanctuary or
Facebook Live
- **Radio Broadcast**
11:00 a.m., KCMR 97.9 FM



**"A Christian faith community to
further God's kingdom."**

First United Methodist Church
119 S Georgia Ave
Mason City, IA 50401
641-423-4905

Rev. Melanie Greengo
Senior Pastor



Birthdays & Anniversaries

1. Gabby Jimenez, Joyce Krukow, Coffy LaSalle
2. David Miller, Kathleen Minear, Mark Repp
3. Emma Hollander, Connie (David) Miller, Joshua Ressler
5. Dion Cody, Dwight Kehm
6. Brynlee Bruggeman
7. John Birtwistle, Rod Simmons
9. Justin Platts, Linda Wilmarth
11. Megan Hollander, Jean Inghram, Zachary Michel, Erin Thompson
12. Jim Coddington, Maleah True, Kyle Younker
13. Tyler Arndt, Blake Craw, Linda Duvall, Jane Goerd, Jack Phillips, Mary Snell
14. Jerry Braughton, Kingsley Morehouse
15. Don Chipman, Marlene Gross, Penny Koerber, Nicole Sluik
16. Aidan Thompson, Avery Thompson
17. Sheila Bash
18. Cathy Hrubetz, Victoria Lofing, Colton O'Hern, *Bill & Marlene Gross*
19. Angela Eppens, Linda Jensen
20. Greg Lewis
21. Jamison Diekhuis, Sydney Vogelgesang, *Nancy & Ron Kloberdanz*
22. Claire Reidel, Tom Stalker
23. *Kayde & Jared Sberal*
25. Larry Cline, Christopher Manues, Joseph Platts
27. Kameryn Nolte, Jerry Tieszen
28. Mick Baker, Ava Corcoran, Deb Metcalf, Christie Trebil, *Joyce & Steven Colombo*
29. Darlene Craw, Julie True
30. John Alverson, Karla Bennett, Sue Nauman
31. Barry Johnson, Alyssa Keane, *Jerry & Angi Bernhard, Madison & Seth Nelson*



Birthdays & Anniversaries

1. Jim Bissig, Matt Ressler, Toni Wymore
2. A.J. Hrubetz, Lisa Lofing
3. Matt Leibrand, *Sharon & Pete Koenigsfeld*
4. Ashley Lunning, Betty Jo Miller, Warict Nel, Dodie Tanner
5. Heather Hoffman-Turner
6. Ella May Anderson, Molly Hammervold, Charleen Harris, Autumn (Alitz) Hefty
7. Chandler Runge-Keller, Nebraska Senne
8. Cecily McWilliams
9. Lori Alitz, Isabelle Arndt, Collins Cody, Randy Nuehring, Kayde Sberal
10. Derek Thoms
11. Terry Hunt, Carly Miller
12. Carol Johnson, Harold (Skip) Schipper
13. Kevin Schultz
15. Korbyn Poulin
17. Bailey Badker, Reece Leibrand, Jacque Simon
18. Michael Brown, Adalyn Croissant, Hadley Croissant, Benjamin Lewis, *Chris & Karen Hannam*
19. Addalyn Lofing, Fran Ommen
21. *Bill & Leslie Burdick, Ken & Darlene Petersen*
22. Janelle Platts, Jessica Platts
23. Abby Lucas, Sarah Runge, Debbie Schlutz
24. Nada Davison, Frank Inghram
25. Charles Tidgewell
26. *Joe & Julie Hunt*
27. Wally Reidel, Ely Taylor
28. Linda Zillig
29. Ben Butler, Kathy Tyler, *Phil & Carol Johnson*
30. Dennis Gossweiler
31. Logan Hoffman-Turner



Honor a Loved One this Holiday Season!
Consider a Poinsettia and/or Donation to Church World Service (CWS) Blankets
Please print clearly



Presented by _____ Phone _____

In memory of _____

In honor of _____

Poinsettia Ordering Instructions:

_____ I would like to order _____ Poinsettia(s). Please attach check payable to First UMC or cash of \$18.00 per plant. **Submit payment along with this form to church office no later than Sunday, November 26.**

_____ I will purchase a Poinsettia myself and deliver it to the church. (Make sure your name is on the plant if you wish to pick it up following our Christmas Eve service.)

I will pick up my Poinsettia plant. _____ Please donate my Poinsettia plant. _____

Church World Service (CWS) Blankets:

_____ I would like to purchase _____ blanket(s) at a cost of \$10.00 each for a total of \$ _____. (Cash or check payable to FUMC.)



Come and Celebrate Christmas!

Sunday, Nov. 26 — Hanging of the Greens
11:00 a.m., Sanctuary

Everyone is welcome to come and help us decorate. We will then gather in Fellowship Hall for chili and cinnamon rolls!

Sunday, Dec. 10 — Carols and Cookies
2:00 p.m., Fellowship Hall

Please join us for a Christmas sing-along. We will gather in Fellowship Hall to sing favorite carols and enjoy some social time accompanied by sweet treats. Music Director Scott Blankenbaker will be joined by others and you in making music. A “give as you are able” freewill offering will go to the replacement fund for the sanctuary piano.

Sunday, Dec. 17 — Christmas Cantata
10:00 a.m. Service, Sanctuary or Facebook
11:00 a.m. Radio Broadcast, KCMR 97.9 FM

Our worship service on Sunday, Dec. 17, will center around the cantata “All Is Well,” featuring the Chancel Choir. This cantata tells the story of the birth of Christ from an outsider’s perspective through dialogue and a variety of song styles.

Wednesday, Dec. 20 — Here We Come A-Caroling!
3:15 p.m., Sanctuary

All are invited to join the Chancel Choir as we revive the tradition of spreading our faith and holiday cheer through music. We will meet at 3:15 p.m. in the sanctuary, have a quick practice and then head out to our destinations. No music reading required!

Sunday, Dec. 24 — Candlelight Service

5:00 p.m., Sanctuary, Facebook or KCMR 97.9 FM

We will hold our 5:00 p.m. candlelight service, which will include Holy Communion, on this special Sunday as we celebrate Christ’s birth. (There will not be a 10:00 a.m. service on Sunday, Dec. 24.) Our 5:00 p.m. service will also be available on our Facebook page and aired on KCMR, 97.9 FM. Music Director Scott Blankenbaker, along with guest musicians, will provide a musical prelude beginning at 4:30 p.m., so come early and enjoy!



Salvation Army Bell Ringing

First UMC has the following two dates for which we need volunteers to ring bells for the Salvation Army at Hy-Vee West (grocery door) this holiday season:

Saturday, Dec. 9 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Saturday, Dec. 16 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Invite a friend and sign up for an hour, or whatever time you are able to donate, to help with this worthy cause. Sign-up sheets are in the narthex, or contact the church office to add your name to the list of volunteers.

Join the United
Women in
Faith for a
Christmas High Tea



Cost: \$5.00

Reservations needed—
Call the church office
641-423-4905 by
November 29.

Come and enjoy finger
sandwiches, pastries
and desserts.

All are welcome !!



Thursday, December 14
6:00 p.m., Fireside Room

All are welcome to join us for Blue Christmas on Dec. 14 at 6:00 p.m. in our Fireside Room. We will hold an informal but reverent service focused on those who may not be feeling the joy of this holiday season. It could be because of grief, loss, death of a loved one or pet, divorce, estrangement from family or anything else. We will have dinner and fellowship afterward. The service will be led by Lori Elbermawy. This is a very supportive environment, and all are truly welcome to come and be surrounded with love. Please RSVP to lori@masoncityfirstumc.org or call the office at 641-423-4905. We look forward to seeing you.

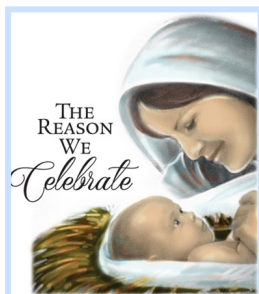


First UMC will be closed the following days:
Thanksgiving: Thursday, Nov. 23 & Friday, Nov. 24
Christmas: Friday, Dec. 22 & Monday, Dec. 25
New Year's: Friday, Dec. 29 & Monday, Jan. 1



As we begin the winter season, please refer to the following guidelines regarding whether or not the church office is open during the week:

- ⇒ If Mason City School District lets classes out early due to inclement weather, the church also closes and all evening church activities are cancelled.
- ⇒ If Mason City School District cancels school for the day due to inclement weather, the church also closes for the day.



The Perfect Gift

Do you stress about finding just the right gift for everyone on your Christmas list? Does it make the season more of a hassle than a joy? Pastor Mike Slaughter reminds us that Christmas isn't about perfect presents for people, as if it were their birthday — or ours. Christmas is about the perfect presence of Immanuel, God with us, through the birth of Jesus; it's his birthday, after all! In *Christmas Is Not Your Birthday* (Abingdon), Slaughter writes, "How funny that it can be so hard to find gifts that will please certain family members or friends — the people who seem to have everything — and yet it is so clear what the Lord of lords and King of kings wants for his birthday. God wants you — your time, your talent and your treasure — used in service to others."

New Family Area in First UMC Sanctuary



We love having children at our worship services! We are pleased that our sanctuary now has a family area with a soft floor, small table and chairs, coloring books, rocking chair, toys and a crib. Parents and grandparents are encouraged to bring the little ones in their family and enjoy this comfortable, relaxed space while worshipping with us.

Year-End Giving 2023

All final 2023 financial contributions must be received in the First UMC office by **8:30 a.m. on Thursday, Dec. 28, 2023**, to be included on 2023 statements. Donations received after that time will be reported on 2024 statements. Thank you for supporting Mason City First UMC!



Thursday, December 28 5:15 p.m., Rib Crib

The First UMC Supper Club will gather at the Rib Crib (455 Tiffany Dr., Mason City, IA) at 5:15 p.m., and all are welcome to join in this time of good food and fellowship. This event is open to all friends and family; church membership is not required. Please RSVP by Tuesday, Dec. 26, by placing your name on the sign-up sheet in the sanctuary or calling the church office at 641-423-4905.



Offering envelopes for 2024 are located at the back of the sanctuary for those who requested them. Please make sure and pick your envelopes up before the start of the new year.

Sanctuary Piano

First UMC is currently raising money for a newer piano in our sanctuary. Our current piano is 111 years old, needs extensive repair that would be very costly, and there is no guarantee that the repair would fix the problems. Phil Johnson has agreed to chair this capital campaign. Music Director Scott Blankenbaker has done extensive research and visited with others in the music business about possibilities. He found a reconditioned Steinway piano (photo below) at a music store in Minneapolis, played the instrument, and reported that it has a beautiful sound and is reasonably priced. The total cost to purchase this piano, including delivery, tuning, etc., is \$55,010.75. First UMC has an outstanding reputation regarding its music ministry. Talented musicians and great equipment provide the basis for this tradition to continue for years to come. In order to make this occur, we need the financial support of our members and friends. Together we can make this happen! Those wishing to make a contribution should make check payable to First UMC with "piano fund" noted in the memo line. Questions may be directed to Phil Johnson at 641-425-2396 or Lori in the church office at 641-423-4905. All support is appreciated!





Prayer Chain

Please call the church office at 641-423-4905 to submit a request to the confidential prayer chain. Call Rev. Melanie Greengo at 641-781-0264 if there is an emergency and need for pastoral care outside of office hours.

Prayers

Tim Jondal (father of Marcy Tempus' fiancé)
Eldon Siemers

All with unspoken concerns and prayers known only to God.

Thank You

To My Church Family—Thank you for the prayers, cards and voices of sympathy at the passing of my sister, Connie. The graveside service, led by Pastor Mel, was certainly peaceful and joyous with a message of hope and security, knowing that nothing can separate us from God. Many blessings to you all. —Mary Pattschull Church

A special thanks to the many volunteers who have stepped up recently to help with some of the ongoing projects at the church. Everyone's assistance is greatly appreciated!

- ◆ Ken Petersen and Troy Gobeli for painting the office hallway, and Ken & Darlene Petersen for hanging the pictures in the hallway.
- ◆ The unknown volunteer(s) who kindly removed the large tree branch by the church's back door.
- ◆ Jim Morrise and Don Chipman for the help with the boiler.
- ◆ Dave Platts and Gary and Carolyn Mott for helping with all of the yardwork.

Sympathy

Our sincere condolences to Bob and Phyllis Rodgers on the death of Bob's brother, Rodney Rodgers. Please keep the Rodgers family in your prayers.

Our sincere condolences to the family and friends of Shirley Roush, who passed away on Wednesday, November 8, 2023, at age 78. A visitation was held on Monday, November 13, at Major Erickson Funeral Home.



Radio Ministry Sponsors

11:00 a.m. Sunday – KCMR 97.9 FM

Nov. 19 – In memory of Howard Cooper's birthday on Nov. 21. —Coleen Lohrbach

Dec. 3 – In memory of my brother, Bill, who would have been 69 on Dec. 5. —Laree Morrise

Dec. 17 – In celebration of Sheila's birthday today. —Ken Bash

Sign up to sponsor a radio broadcast by sending an email to brenda@masoncityfirstumc.org or calling 423-4905. Cost to sponsor a Sunday is \$80. Thank you!

Available Radio Dates

Nov. 26, Dec. 10, Dec. 24, Dec. 31

Donations Requested for County Cousins

Our friends in Belzoni, Mississippi, need a helping hand recovering from the devastating tornado earlier this year. As part of the County Cousins annual trip to provide dolls and wooden toys for Christmas, we will also take any of the following donations (all items must be clean, in good condition and non-breakable):

- Beds and bedding
- Clothing for men, women and children – all sizes and types (sweaters, coats, summer clothing, etc.)
- Cooking utensils
- Curtains
- Maxi dresses (above the ankle)
- Unbreakable Christmas items
- Electric heaters
- Microwaves
- Small air conditioning units
- Bottled drinking water

Please place donations in a garbage bag marked for County Cousins and set on the stage in Fellowship Hall (behind curtain) **no later than Thursday, Nov. 30**. Financial contributions to assist in the purchasing of paper products, soaps and cleaners would also be greatly appreciated. Those wishing to donate should **make check payable to County Cousins** and submit it to the First UMC office. All support of this worthy cause is appreciated! —Nancy Klobberdanz and Ken Petersen



Children's Winter Clothing Drive

We once again have the opportunity to help our community elementary school children get through the winter months. We are asking for any of the following gently used items:

- Winter coats
- Snow pants
- Boots
- Hats, Scarves
- Mittens/Gloves
- New socks or underwear

Monetary donations are also welcome and we will do the shopping for you! Please make checks payable to First UMC and write "Missions" in the memo line. Clothing items may be placed in the cart in the narthex, **with the goal that we will deliver items to the school prior to Christmas break**. All donations are appreciated! —Missions Committee



MORE Than Just Sunday



WELCOME!

COME, LET US ADORE HIM

First United Methodist Church
119 S Georgia Ave
Mason City, IA 50401
641-423-4905

Rev. Melanie Greengo Senior Pastor
Lori Elbermawy Christian Administrator
Brenda Young Office Manager
Troy Gobeli Custodian
Scott Blankenbaker Director of Music
Lisa Nelson Accompanist
Betty Chipman Event Coordinator
Sue Simmons Security

Email: brenda@masoncityfirstumc.org
Website: www.firstunitedmethodistchurchmc.org
www.facebook.com/firstunitedmethodistchurchmasoncityiowa

