

HELLO

August

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**More Than Just Sunday
August 2024**

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

Pastor's Message

I've been thinking a lot about hope lately. Hope is what keeps us connected. Hope is what moves us forward. Hope is what gets us up in the morning. Hope is what brings us joy. And I think hope sometimes hurts. Actually, I think hope often hurts. Hope is the crack in our armor that makes us vulnerable to pain and heartache, especially in the short term. What I mean by that is it can feel like hope is setting us up. We get excited and hopeful about something and then it doesn't happen or plans go awry and we are left holding the bag of disappointment, sadness even anger. So our human response is to become cynical and to expect the worst. Then, when something bad happens we aren't blindsided by the hurt. But when we do that we lose the joy of life as well. If there isn't hope, then how do we keep moving forward? How do we experience joy?

This is where hope in something bigger comes into play. This is when we must remember that we don't just live hopeful that the next concert, the next relationship, the next job will bring us joy; we live our lives with our hope firmly planted in God. As followers of Jesus we are placing our hope in the ways and will of Jesus. When we place our hope in something bigger than ourselves it puts life back into perspective. It reorients us to the path of Jesus, to the way of Love and that will never disappoint. Hope in the love of Jesus is hope that doesn't set us up because hope in Jesus is hope in all that is good, loving and renewing. With Jesus on our side, how can we not live each day filled with hope? It is my prayer that Romans 15:13 is true for each and every one of you. "May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope."

Pastor Mel



Coffee Hour

9:00 a.m., Fellowship Hall

Worship Service

10:00 a.m., Sanctuary or Facebook

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

<https://masoncityfirst.com/>

641-423-4905

Rev. Melanie Greengo

Senior Pastor

Birthdays and Anniversaries

- 1 Dylan & Hayley Alitz, Mark & Lori Alitz
- 2 Susan Worman
- 3 John & Beth Alverson, Denise Brooks, Sophie Montgomery
- 4 Sebastian Brock, Gary Kostka
- 5 Warren & Lyla Hamand, Karen Christensen, Kyan Gutierrez, Brandon Repp, Crystal Ressler
- 6 Holly & Jesse Byre, Brian & Mary Snell, Betty Franzen
- 7 Sydney Dotson
- 8 Jason & Patti Eden
- 9 Emily & Todd Halfpap, Kelly & Erik Hogan, Jan & Harold Schipper, Marcus Lunning, Nathan Repp
- 10 MacKenzie & Jared Peterson, Michael Clough, Ethan Hannam, Mary Holmes, Kari Lebrand, Brooke Onder, Judy Robinson
- 11 Sarah & Alex Mariner, Bob & Dodie Tanner, Jacon Langhoff
- 12 Lance Johnson, Summer Leibrand
- 13 Deb & Brian Bentley, Sherri Anderson, Alexis Lichty, Brooke Lichty, Kaitlin Younker
- 14 Sirena Bemis, Danika Menke, Lisa Nelson, Bob Tanner
- 15 Brooke Anthony, Sherri Platts, Randy Strait
- 16 Bryan & Sethanne DeGabriel, Ron Jenkins, Jeff Kehm, Alicia Runge, Hannah Schriever, Carol Tinkey
- 17 Neil Hershey, Ben Holt
- 18 Mike Eppens, Penny Finneman, Brittanie Lucas, Judy Mathes
- 19 John & Dea Ellen Birtwistle, Aleya Alitz, Danielle Clark, Ross Herrig, Kyla Lichty, Sophie Parker, Mary Wendel-Baker
- 20 Autumn & Lucas Hefty, Arlo & Dianne Stoltenberg, Mike Kohler
- 21 Barbara & Larry Eide, Tyler & Jackie Newell, Eldon & Betty Siemers, Jenna Bronson, Kayla Halfpap, Si Morehouse, Eldon Siemers
- 22 Sethanne DeGabriele, Ethan Pruisman,
- 23 Linda & Stephen Duvall, Kresley Calahan, Zoe Hugo, Joe Hunt, Martin Nel
- 24 Jayden Harris, Xavier MxWilliams, Ben Taylor
- 25 Gayle & David McCourt, Marilyn Broers, Esther Hubacher, Dori James, Michael Lyman, Abby Zieman
- 26 Jane Fischer
- 27 Paul & Charleen Harris, David & Sherlyn Klatt, Chris Clark, Jennifer Thompson
- 28 Laura Opperman, Dennis Thoms
- 29 Melissa & Kayla Solberg, MacKenzie Nolte
- 30 Barbara Eide, Jack Harty, Isabelle Harty, Cary Morehouse, Bobbi Sue Stalker
- 31 Randy & Jean Christensen, Coleen Lohrbach



Have you ever met a Turkey Vulture before? They are one of the coolest raptors in Iowa. Perhaps you have seen the large birds simply gliding on the air currents above Mason City, sometimes just circling around? Turkey Vultures don't have an easy time taking off in flight, but they are experts in the air once they sail up high. Turkey Vultures are 2 ½ feet tall and have a 6-foot wingspan, they are giant and glorious!

Often times Turkey Vultures are considered ugly or gross by human beings. By nature of their duties in the realm of nature, they are frequently misunderstood. Turkey Vultures eat carrion, dead carcasses, as their main diet source. They have bald heads and long legs, all in aiding them from getting their feathers dirty, doing their messy jobs. They have strong stomachs, with powerful stomach acids which help them to digest and be immune to diseases and parasites that would be harmful to the environment and humans if not controlled. They prevent the spread of carcass spreading diseases such as anthrax, tuberculosis, and rabies. Without these beautiful creatures, we would see a rise in uncleanness and sickness due to the build-up of animal carcasses. God has planned everything out so perfectly on earth, so it keeps its checks and balances.

As human beings, sometimes we judge the worthiness of other creatures AND other humans by their looks, behavior or how well they fit into the world WE have created. We forget that God designed everyone for the benefit of GOD'S planet. From owls to woodpeckers, snakes to ladybugs, possums to foxes and of course every type of human being – they all have a purpose, and all have a place here. They, too, are doing God's work, lest we forget.

The next time you see a vulture flying high above you, remember that they are doing important work, an assignment from God, and remember that YOU are too. We were all created for a special reason, and we ALL have significant contributions to make to this world to celebrate the glory of God. May you all be blessed.

– Lori Elbermawy, Christian Administrator. (Photo by Lori Elbermawy, June 2024)

From Scott's Desk:

VOLUNTEER CHOIR Opportunities

If you would like to participate, simply be in the sanctuary by 9:30am on the Sundays below. At that time, we will sing through the piece a few times and then sing it as the anthem on August 18.

Beyond Praise Rehearsal: August 7, August 21, 5:15 pm

SPECIAL MUSIC

There are still a couple of open Sundays (August 25 & Sept. 1) to be filled during the summer months. If you or someone you know would be interested in sharing your/their gifts, we would love to have that worship enhancement. Please contact Scott Blankenbaker for more information.

First UMC T-shirts

The new First United Methodist Church t-shirts are now available! We will be taking orders until August 15th, and the sign-up sheet as well as the design mock-up are at the back of the sanctuary. Prices start at 18.50 for adult S-XL with prices going up slightly for larger sizes. Our intention behind the shirts is to be able to volunteer in the community as a cohesive unit, embracing the love and kindness of Mason City First. Please place checks written to FUMC memo line: *T-shirts* in the offering plate, as well as putting cash in an envelope from the pew with your name and marked *T-shirts* in the offering plate. Or stop by the office and drop off cash/check. Please remember to fill out the sign up sheet with your name(s) and size(s) as well! Thank you everyone!

- Lori Elbermawy

Exciting changes are coming to the church website! New office manager and webmistress extraordinaire, Jade, is making some website improvements, including a new calendar of events, a prayer chain request form, and revamped news section. Check the website periodically to see what's new and what's happening here at First United Methodist Church.
<https://masoncityfirst.com/>



Sermon Series:

COMING SOON TO A PULPIT NEAR YOU:

6-week Sermon Series titled:
"Yes. These stories really are in the Bible!"
July 14th- Aug 18th

Come and learn from our very flawed and very human ancestors in the Older Testament. Together we will explore some fascinating and often wild stories found in the Older Testament.

Aug 4- See what being Holy means through the eyes of Samson.

Aug 11- Learn how God turned around Elijah's ministry with a nap.

Aug 14- Let's explore Esther's story together! (There will be props, so come prepared!)

God's peace and love to you.
Pastor Mel Greengo

Supper Club

Supper Club will meet on August 22 at 5:15 pm at Pasta Bella. Please sign up on the sign up sheet at the back of the sanctuary by Sunday, August 18 so we have a head count.

MORE Than Just Sunday August 2024

First UMC Women

The Swaledale UMC Women are inviting First UMC women to their Tea Luncheon on August 10th at 2 p.m. Their special guest will be Becky Litterer who will be discussing plants and spiritual gardening. Please RSVP to Linda Fessler at 641-998-2921 by August 5th.

Mason City Elementary School Mission Project

For the months of July and August, the congregation is invited to join our United Women in Faith in a Mason City Elementary School Mission Project. We have learned there is a need right here in our own community for several things. Financial Gifts are also welcome with a memo note of "school project".

New socks (boys and girls)
New underwear (boys and girls) - sizes 6 to 12
Toiletries - e.g. child's toothbrush, soap, shampoo

Items may be placed in the labeled grocery cart in the entry. Thank you for your donations and supporting local children!

Beth Alverson

Quarter Tube

The new Quarter Tube designation is for the Red Bird Mission. This mission aims to improve the lives of people in the rural mountains of Southeastern Kentucky through programs such as food assistance and spiritual education.

Have you considered using the Prayer Chain?

Pastor Judy spoke of the Prayer Chain on Sunday, June 30th.

I personally have entrusted the Prayer Chain several times over the years. I find it rewarding and heart-warming to know others are praying with me and lifting my situation to God thru prayer.

Prayer does work!

All of our church family, please remember the Prayer Chain is a blessing to us.. Ask for prayer when you, a family member, or a friend are in need, no matter what the situation. It is confidential.

Laree Morrise



The following dates are still available in August to sponsor a radio broadcast:

August 4
August 11

Sign up to sponsor a radio broadcast by sending an email to office@masoncityfirstumc.org or calling 641-423-4905.

The cost to sponsor a Sunday is \$80. Thank you!



Well, summer is almost over - but why not celebrate?

Come join us for our "That's a Wrap!" gathering on Wednesday, August 21st from 5-7 p.m. and help us wrap up summer with some fun. We will be serving wrap sandwiches, chips, lemonade, and a dessert at 5 pm. Then at 6 p.m. we will have the pleasure of hearing local musicians Bob Grant and Sid Bohls play us some good ol' gospel music - vocals and guitar. Bring your own lawn chairs, bug spray and be ready for a good time.

This will be outside on the front lawn of the church. (Free will offering/no charge) All are welcome to attend! RSVP for food purposes - call the church office or sign up sheet in the Narthex.

- Lori Elbermawy, Christian Administrator

A Call for Help

Friends, As many of you know, my family and I spent about two weeks out of the country on vacation. It was a wonderful time to visit friends and relatives in Europe and Africa. It was also a tough time for us as we kept watching devastating photos of the flood that affected several homes and places of worship in northwest Iowa. My family and I continue to pray for our district as we recover from this devastating situation.

Now that we are back, we want to extend our heartfelt gratitude to all the first responders, and volunteers including clergy and laity for coming together to support one another during these challenging times. We would especially like to acknowledge the support and tireless efforts of Rev. Catie Newman, our disaster coordinator, Rev. Melissa Drake, the Dean of Cabinet, and Rev. Katie Dawson, the Assistant to the Bishop, to help Camp Clear Lake District while I was away.

As your District Superintendent, on Sunday, July 21, I had the opportunity to attend worship at Grace United Methodist Church in Spencer, IA, a community that was severely affected by the recent flood. I would like to take a moment to invite you, my friends, to join me in extending our mission field to Spencer, IA and be the Body of Christ in action. The journey towards full recovery for Grace United Methodist Church will be long and costly. The picture I shared with you depicts the extent of the damage caused by the flood. The church's basement was filled with water, and currently, there is no electricity in the building.

In my conversations with Rev. Michael Slininger and Gary Small, the Chair of the Board of Trustees, it became clear that Grace UMC needs our spiritual, manual, and financial support. At this moment, the church is in urgent need of financial assistance to facilitate the process of deep cleaning and restoration. Once they have the necessary funds, they will open their doors to volunteers who can help with the recovery efforts.

If you or your congregation (s) feel moved by the Spirit of God to contribute, I kindly request that you write a check to **Grace United Methodist Church** and include "**Flood Recovery 2024**" in the memo line.

Mail your donation to:

Grace United Methodist Church
311 2nd Ave W
Spencer, IA 51301-4127

Friends, in the middle of our political, theological, and racial differences, let us continue praying for all the communities that were affected by floods, tornadoes, or any other natural disasters. Thank you for your dedication and willingness to contribute to the recovery efforts.

In Christ,

Rev. Dr. Michel Lundula, DS.

MORE

Than Just Sunday

gardenersworld.com



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

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