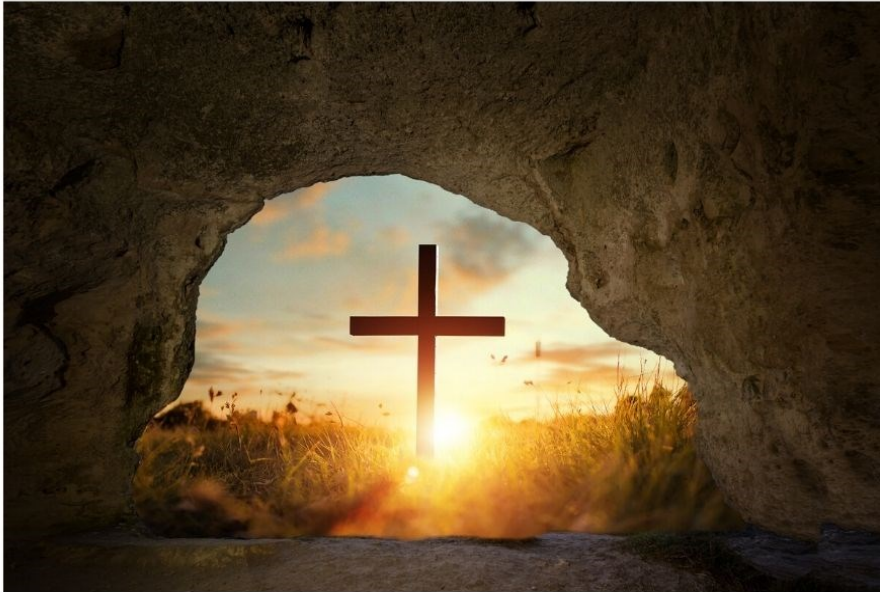




APRIL 2023 NEWSLETTER | WORSHIP SERVICE: SAT. @ 5:00 P.M. & SUN. @ 9:30 A.M.

# Connections

Connecting People @ First UMC



**FOR I KNOW THE PLANS I HAVE FOR YOU," SAYS THE LORD. "THEY ARE PLANS FOR GOOD AND NOT FOR DISASTER, TO GIVE YOU A FUTURE AND A HOPE."**  
JEREMIAH 29:11

Happy April everyone! As we celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ this month, remembering how death has been defeated, and how you and I can have new life in Christ. I feel it is analogous to the situation we find ourselves in. We held a church conference on March 18 and voted with 72% majority to become part of a new church in four locations, Mitchell, Morrill, Henry, and Scottsbluff. Just as the Lord led us to this decision, I believe the Lord has a plan for our future. One that will be meant for good and not for disaster, to give us a future and a hope.

Our former church was wonderful, and I know you have all loved your church, loved each other, loved our worship, and you loved the impact we made in our community. But like people, all churches have a life span. They are born, they grow, they plateau, and then they decline, and eventually die. I believe the closing of the First Christian Church in Scottsbluff is an eye opener to us. This once active, vibrant and fruitful church closed its doors for good just a few weeks ago, offering evidence that churches have life spans; that we can't keep doing the same things we are doing and expect it will one day be enough to bring the change and the growth in which we had hoped.

## CHURCH EVENTS

- April 2 - Palm Sunday
- April 6 - Maundy Thursday-Seder Meal @ 6pm
- April 7 - Good Friday - Service @ 7pm
- April 9 - Happy Easter
- April 15 - CPR @ 9am
- April 19 - Senior Lunch @ noon
- April 23 - Youth Talent Show @3pm
- April 30 - Confirmation



With our new church still in its embryo stage, I wonder who we will become. I believe we have some critical work to do together. Mission and vision, strategies and goals lie just around the corner. We will need to be aware of the necessity to not fall into the same old rut of familiarity. We must be bold, we must cast our eyes on the church God wants us to become. What does that look like? I believe we must break the mold of the past. We must be a church that is appealing to the unchurched, those who have drifted from the church, and to those who are unaware of God's mercy, grace, and love. It's going to mean that we question everything we do. Why do we do it this way, and what does it say to our visitors, to families, and to those who are unaccustomed to the life of faith?

We are in exciting times, that's for sure. But it's also kind of scary, if we are honest. We are creatures of habit, we love the familiar, and often are hesitant to engage in something new. I want to give you assurance that even as we focus on church growth, and on new ways of being the church, we will not neglect the flock. We want to love God and each other, and that means ministering to the needs of each one in the pew, as well as loving those who do not yet have a relationship with Christ. I ask that you extend grace in the process, knowing we will make mistakes. But we'll learn from those mistakes and be better for it. I trust that God does have a plan for our future. Not a plan meant for harm, but a plan meant for good. One that leads to our future with hope. May it be so.

With hope, keeping our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith.

*Pastor Craig*

## CPR Training Class

On Saturday, April 15th, from 9am to 11am, the Scottsbluff First United Methodist Church Wellness Council will be hosting a CPR training class that is free to anyone who would like to attend. The class will take place in Fellowship Hall and will be taught by Regional West education coordinator Dallas Schaffer, with assistance from members of the Scottsbluff Fire Department. There is no charge for the class, but there will be a \$17 fee if you wish to obtain a CPR training card. There will be a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board by the church office, or you can call the church to get signed up if you wish to attend. Everyone is welcome, but anyone under 12 years of age will need to be accompanied by an adult. Mouth to mouth resuscitation is no longer required for certification and the focus is mostly on chest compression only. This training will also allow you to learn how to use the church's automated external defibrillator (AED). This is a great opportunity to learn a skill that could potentially save a life.

## SEDER MEAL

The Seder Meal will be at 6 pm on Thursday, April 6. The program itself is quite the experience. We will sit at tables in the fellowship hall and it will be an interactive experience. The mood of the Seder is one of joyous celebration, with full voices and good cheer. Yet moments are also reserved for somber reflection and silence. Passover is, indeed, a "solemn" occasion, but mostly in the sense of having a deep spiritual significance and of being prepared for with great care. We who eat this Passover must be willing to laugh as well as to cry, to enjoy fellowship with one another, and to participate with fervor. Besides the ritual foods, we will have a complete meal of roast beef, mashed potatoes and gravy, green beans and dessert. Cost is \$10/person and \$30/family. I encourage all ages to come experience the Seder. Sign-up by the office.



## STEPHEN MINISTRY CARING CORNER

### SERVING DILIGENTLY!

Look for opportunities around you, and trust the Holy Spirit to provide all you need to help others. Romans 12:9-13 reminds us that: "Love must be sincere...Be devoted to one another in love...Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. Share with the Lord's people who are in need...."

God sends opportunities every day to positively impact lives around us. Stephen Ministry at FUMC is one of those opportunities. Stephen Ministry offers a proven and effective way to organize, equip and supervise a team of congregation members-called Stephen Ministers-to provide high-quality, one-to-one, Christ-centered care to people in the congregation and the community experiencing life difficulties. As a lay caring ministry, it functions as an extension of the pastoral care ministry and helps carry out the mission of the church by:

- \*Equipping God's people for the work of ministry
- \*Providing Christ-Centered care in difficult times
- \*Helping people identify, develop, and use their spiritual gifts in meaningful ministry.
- \*Deepening people's faith and helping them grow as disciples.
- \*Growing as a caring Christian community.

Stephen Ministers use their unique spiritual gifts and talents to help those experiencing difficult times in their lives. We look forward to expanding this vital ministry to all four church locations. Together we can make an important difference. Stephen Ministers are compassionate people who know how to serve others in times of life's ups and downs; glorifying God during the ups and trusting him during the downs. Please contact any of the Stephen Leaders: Barb Ropp, Julie Schaff, Megan Massey or Marg Dredla; any of the Stephen Ministers, or Pastor Craig so we can share more information about how you can become an important part of this church ministry.

### SENIOR LUNCH - WED. APRIL 19

Sign up for Senior Lunch on April 19 at 12 Noon.

Our program will be Raylene and Dawson Iasillo. They will be helping give some tips on your cell phones---Androids or Iphones. They are NOT technicians, but are pretty knowledgeable and can give some good tips for us. If you have questions, drop them off in the church office ahead of time. Sign up by the church office.

## MERGER INFORMATION

Administrative Councils from all four churches will comprise our transition team. We met for about 2 hours in the Parlor on Sunday, March 26, at 2 pm with approximately 24 people present. We introduced ourselves, sharing the location we attend, and something we have seen other churches do that interest us. A few of us slipped into the nostalgia of the past, but for the most part, we were forward thinking. There was an exciting energy in the room as we worked on our mission, vision and values for our new church. The mission, vision, and values are statements that define an organizations purpose, direction, and expectations. We looked at several statements from larger United Methodist Churches and then arrived at the following:

Our Mission: Make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

We value and promote:

- Spiritual growth and belonging
- Bible Centered connections
- Loving Hospitality
- Dedication to tangibly serving and caring for all generations.

We took home a list of 51 potential names for our new church from suggestions made at town hall meetings and plan to narrow that list to six at our next meeting. At that time we will poll our membership and narrow it to three, and then poll again to arrive at our new name. We are making plans to have a joint kickoff worship service for our new church around the 1st few weekends of July. Our initial thought is to have it in the open air pavilion at the Trails West location south of the zoo. We will celebrate with worship, a BBQ, games for our youth, and rent the pool as well. We have a lot of work that will need completed before that first worship service, and feel it is necessary to meet every week. Our next meeting will be at 2 pm, Sunday, April 2, in Mitchell.

# Outreach

Spring is in the air! April always gets me in gear of my garden planning. I am excited to hear all about your garden plans. In Outreach we have had a busy couple weeks with our Potato Bake and hosting Lenten Luncheon, which was a big success!

Have you been able to keep to what you gave up for lent this year?

I am also very excited to see what new and wonderous things are coming our way with the Merger. One church in four locations should bring great ideas in Outreach!

We also have been thinking of our kitchen and if you have spent any time in there you have too. We've decided to give it a Shower on Earth Day April 22. What this means is that there will be a list posted in fellowship hall with what the kitchen needs and anyone is welcome to get these items for it.

For Mother's Day in May will be our annual tomato plant contest, get ready you green thumbs!

Thank you all for doing such a wonderful job with our Martha and Mathew calls. Next up for team leader is Judi Facnelli so be ready to receive calls from her.

We are also in need of bags of Easter candy to fill several 100 plastic eggs for Kids First. Please drop bags off in Fellowship Hall by the bunny.

Let's get ready and pumped for this merger to take us to new and exiting places! Remember you are loved by Him.

## YOUTH TALENT SHOW & DINNER

On Sunday, April 23, at 3:00pm, we will be hosting our annual Talent Show, featuring the kids in our church. We have singers, dancers, tumblers, piano players, joke tellers and much more. We will have refreshments as well. Come have a great afternoon out and support the kids in our church!

## YOUTH DATES TO REMEMBER SPRING 2023

**April 23** – Talent Show, 3 pm

**April 30** – Confirmation Service

**Sunday, May 7** – Graduating Seniors Recognition Sunday

**Wednesday, May 10** – Last Week for Youth Group/ Suppers for this school year

For more information: Missi Iasillo Phone: 225-2527 or [miasillo@aol.com](mailto:miasillo@aol.com)

## Admin. Corner

- The newsletter deadline for the May issue is April 16th.
- Easter Lily forms are available in the church office. Last day to purchase Easter Lilies is April 2nd.
- If you have a change in your address, phone number or email, please let the office know.



Robert Pahlke.....	2
Karen Murphy.....	3
Dr. Kathy Bosch, Rebecca Shriver.....	4
Steve Larson, Dan Clark.....	5
<b>Gary Rein, Della Clodfelter.....</b>	<b>6</b>
Gary Powell.....	9
Joi Phelps.....	10
Al Metcalf.....	11
<b>Harriett Aden, Tom Ferguson, Dan Windhorst.....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Fred Lockwood.....</b>	<b>13</b>
Kathleen Johnson.....	14
<b>Linda Newberry.....</b>	<b>15</b>
Al Banghart.....	16
Jack Massey, Kaleb Mack,	
<b>Rachel Peterson.....</b>	<b>17</b>
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Gary Cannon, Chris Johnson.....	22
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<b>Bob Krantz.....</b>	<b>29</b>

## April Mission Outreach

The Chuckwagon Church is the Mission Outreach project for the month of April and has been for many years.

The church is located on East Overland and serves around 200 people each Sunday morning at a free pancake breakfast - which is followed by a 10:15 worship service.



They are in need of pancake mix (the kind that only needs water added) and syrup.

In addition, they can use Ramen noodles, spaghetti and spaghetti sauce, and canned food.

Donations can be placed in the outreach bin in Fellowship Hall.



# April 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						<b>1</b> <b>Communion</b> 5:00 Sat. Night Worship
<b>2</b> <b>Communion</b> <b>Palm Sunday</b> 9:30 Worship 10:30 Bible Study, P	<b>3</b> 9:30 COOL Committee 1:00 UWIF Mtg 6:30 Monday Night Bible Study, L	<b>4</b> 10:00 Rose Bible, WH 6:00 Stephen Ministry	<b>5</b> 5:30 Supper 6:00 Kidz Club 7:00 Choir	<b>6</b> <b>Maundy Thursday</b> 6:30am UMM 6:00pm Seder Meal	<b>7</b> <b>Good Friday</b> 7:00 Good Friday Service	<b>8</b> 5:00 Sat. Night Worship
<b>9</b> <b>Easter</b> 8:00 Easter Breakfast 9:30 Worship	<b>10</b> 9:30 COOL Committee 6:30 Monday Night Bible Study, L	<b>11</b> 10:00 Rose Bible, WH 12:00 Lenten L 6:00 WWIP, L	<b>12</b> 11:30 Free Sack Lunches 5:30 Supper 6:00 Kidz Club 7:00 Choir	<b>13</b> 6:30am UMM 1:30 BINGO 5:00 Soup Kitchen@ Presby.	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b> 9:00 CPR Training 5:00 Sat. Night Worship
<b>16</b> <b>Newsletter Deadline</b> 9:30 Worship 10:30 Bible Study, P 11:00 Finance	<b>17</b> 9:30 COOL Committee 1:30 Caring Circle 6:30 Monday Night Bible Study, L	<b>18</b> 10:00 Rose Bible, WH 6:00 Stephen Ministry	<b>19</b> 8:00 Kids First Board, L 12:00 Senior Lunch 5:30 Supper 6:00 Kidz Club 7:00 Choir	<b>20</b> 6:30am UMM 11:00 Outreach	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b> 5:00 Sat. Night Worship
<b>23</b> 9:30 Worship 10:30 Bible Study, P 11:00 Ad Council 3:00 Youth Talent Show	<b>24</b> 9:30 COOL Committee 6:30 Monday Night Bible Study, L	<b>25</b> 10:00 Rose Bible, WH 5:00 SPPRC, W 6:00 WWIP, L	<b>26</b> 11:30 Free Sack Lunches 5:30 Supper 6:00 Kidz Club 7:00 Choir	<b>27</b> 6:30am UMM 9:00 Newsletter Folding, L	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b> 5:00 Sat. Night Worship
<b>30</b> 9:30 Worship Confirmation Sunday 10:30 Bible Study, P						

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(See John 20:1-18)

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WELL PLAYED