

**May 2023**

**Worship Service:**

**Sat. @ 5:00 p.m.**

**Sun. @ 9:30 a.m.**

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# Connections

Connecting People @ First UMC

**Let us hold tightly without wavering to the hope we affirm, for God can be trusted to keep his promise. Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works. And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of his return is drawing near.  
Hebrews 10:23-25**

April [snow] showers bring May flowers! May greetings to all of you! If you're like me, you are looking forward to the beauty of spring: the grass greening up, the flowers in bloom, days getting longer and warmer, and enjoying more sunshine while you work or play outdoors. Spring is one of my favorite seasons of the year as the dormancy of winter is over and new life is popping out all over the place.

I trust your April went well. At the church this past month we had many opportunities to gather together as God's people, to motivate one another to acts of love and good works. We celebrated holy week and Easter, remembering Christ's journey to the cross as he laid his life down for our sins. We had a beautiful celebration of the resurrection, with a full house of people who renewed their hope in Christ. The power of the resurrection, the fact that Jesus overcome the grave, changes everything. We are the church together, and we face the future with hope in the resurrection, the possibility, no, the certainty, of new life in Christ. That's even more true for us today as we move into a new season, a new life together as God's people. As hard as it is for us to journey through holy week, remembering the death of Jesus on the cross, it is just as challenging for us to move into a new beginning as a merged church. There is pain involved in this new life process. Jesus' death on the cross was not easy to observe. And in many ways, merging the four churches of Scottsbluff, Mitchell, Morrill and Henry/Lyman into one new church in four locations can be very similar. There is pain and grief involved. Before we can get to our Easter morning as a new church, we have to go through our Good Friday moments with each church.

One of my favorite verses is 2 Corinthians 5:17 which says, "... anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!" In order for the new life to begin, we have to let go of the old life. Maybe you are looking at our 'old life' as the church and don't understand the necessity to let go and begin again. Churches are like people in this way:

## CHURCH EVENTS

- **May 8 - 12** - Teacher Appreciation Week
- **May 10** - Last Kidz Club
- **May 11** - Kids First Graduation @ 6:30 p.m.
- **May 14** - Happy Mother's Day
- **May 14** - Senior & Youth Recognition @ 9:30 a.m.
- **May 17** - Senior Lunch @ noon
- **May 28** - 50 & 75 Year Member Celebration
- **May 29** - Memorial Day (office & Kids First Closed)
- **May 31** - Stop the Bleed Class

We are born, we grow and thrive, we plateau, and then we begin to die, and eventually we give up our spirit, and we reside with the Lord. It's sad when we lose loved ones. It hurts to say goodbye. Much like we look back at the lives of our loved ones and we cherish the times we have had together, I can see us doing that as a church family as we look over the life of our church. We long to go back to the earlier times when life was in its prime and linger there a bit longer. But we know we can't go back. We cherish the life of our loved ones and promise to let their lives impact our own. We acknowledge the good things they have done, the example they set for us, and we even vow to ourselves to live more like them. I think we do the same with the church, we treasure the impact we have made and we retain our memory of how to do things well.

I invite you to consider the life of our church. We plateaued some time ago. We are trending downward. We have failed to maintain our membership. We are losing members due to their passing on to glory faster than growth through new members. But the good news is that something can be done to change the course. It is our Easter moment. Out of the old, new life can begin. This is the hope of our endeavor to merge our four churches into one church. The hope is that we can begin again. With a new name, and renewed mission of "Making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world," and a renewed vision of being a church that is connected to Christ and empowered by the Spirit of God to impact our communities with God's love, new life will begin and we will find ourselves back on the course of a thriving church with measurable growth.

One of the things I do when I meet with a family as we prepare to celebrate the life of a loved one, is to ask them to tell me the stories. I invite them to think back to the powerful impact their loved one had on them. Tell me the things you will never forget. I think it is very appropriate to find ways for our church to do the same. Think back on the impact our church has had on your life. What are some moments you will never forget? Tell me the events that have changed your life, causing you to say, "This moment touched my life, it impacted my faith, it helped make me who I am today." I think it would be helpful if we found a way to share these stories with each other. If you have pictures or memorabilia, that you would like to share, or if you have a story that you want to tell, I invite you to the fellowship hall before worship begins. We will meet every Sunday during the month of May from 8:45 to 9:15 to share together the impact First United Methodist Church has had on your life and the life of your family. This will not be a time to consider the next chapter, but to reminisce over the past life of our church. In meeting together we will share in our grief and give God thanks. My hope is that you will take the time to remember together. Don't bear your grief alone. Come, let us share with one another. I look forward to spending this time with you.

Grace, Peace, and Love,

Pastor Craig

## 50 & 75 Year Members

We will be celebrating something AMAZING on May 28th. We will be celebrating people who have been members for 50- and 75-years. We will be celebrating with cake and punch.

If you were confirmed in 1948 or before, we would like to share your 75th anniversary with you. If you were confirmed in 1973 or before, we will celebrate your 50th anniversary as a Methodist.

Raylene has sent out letters to the members that we have in our records with these dates. If you didn't get a letter or are close to your special day, please let Raylene know as we want to honor your long time service in His work.

## Stop the Bleed Class

We are hosting Stop the Bleed training Wednesday, May 31 at 5:30 p.m. At 5:30, we will have free pizza and then the training will begin. In a STOP THE BLEED course, you'll learn three quick techniques to help save a life before someone bleeds out: (1) How to use your hands to apply pressure to a wound; (2) How to pack a wound to control bleeding; (3) How to correctly apply a tourniquet.



# Become a Stephen Minister



**SERVE \ \ HELP \ \ GROW**

Becoming a Stephen Minister in our church is a life-transforming experience—an opportunity to serve God, help others, and grow in faith.

Stephen Ministers are congregation members equipped and commissioned for caring ministry. They come from many different backgrounds, ages, and walks of life, but all have one important thing in common: a heart for bringing Christ's healing love to hurting people.

In short, Stephen Ministers are people like you—caring Christians who want to make a difference in the lives of those going through difficult times. A Stephen Minister walks alongside a hurting person to provide one-to-one, emotional and spiritual care—listening, empathizing, encouraging, helping process feelings, and connecting the person with God's love. Serving in this role is an opportunity to put your spiritual gifts into action and touch people's lives in powerful ways.

Stephen Ministers provide care for care receivers, people in the congregation or community who are experiencing difficulties in life, such as grief, job loss, divorce, major illness, spiritual struggles, and so on. In the midst of challenging times, receiving care from a Stephen Minister can make a significant difference.

Stephen Minister training is an engaging, interactive experience that fully equips you to provide high-quality, Christ-centered care to people who are hurting. Stephen Ministers often say that their training was life-transforming—helping them to grow in faith and learn relationship principles and skills that deepened and enhanced all the relationships in their life.

Prayerfully consider becoming a Stephen Minister and being part of the fall class. Contact any Stephen Minister or member of the Stephen Ministry Leadership Team: Barb Ropp, Megan Massey, Julie Schaff or Marg Dredla for more information about this valuable Ministry.

## SENIOR LUNCH – WED. May 17

Sign up for Senior Lunch on May 17 at 12 Noon. Our program will be a surprise, but will be sure to Make You Laugh!! This will be our last luncheon until the Fall. Sign up by the church office.

## Outreach

Spring is here! Doesn't the sun just rejuvenate you? There's just an extra skip in our step isn't there? Soon the flowers around the church will be just so bright and beautiful. Speaking of bright and beautiful, what a bright and beautiful future we have in store for us as one church in four locations! This has been another year of being blessed by a wonderful Easter, and I hope that you all enjoyed your time with your family and friends. Our annual WNCC Choir Fundraising Brunch was a huge success, and many thanks to all who contributed in some way. For now, we have decided to put a pause on Bingo Day. Everyone will be notified when we pick it back up, so stay tuned.

April's Mission is the Chuckwagon Church. They need pancake mix (the kind you just add water) and syrup. They could also use some ramen noodles, spaghetti, spaghetti sauce and canned food.

April 22nd is the day we decided to have a shower for our kitchen. In the fellowship hall, on the bulletin board you will find little umbrellas with items of what is needed or wanted for the kitchen. There is also the link to the Amazon wish list. You do not have to get the item from Amazon, however please let Sonia (Outreach) know that you got it elsewhere or go on to Amazon and there is an option that you can click that states you got it elsewhere. Here is that link: [https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/dl/invite/7z2WtPT?ref=wl\\_share](https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/dl/invite/7z2WtPT?ref=wl_share)

Upcoming in May we have our annual Mother's Day tomato plant giving, with a little friendly competition.

We need goodies for fellowship so all you wonderful bakers please feel free to load us up! Our Card Ministry is a blessing. I know I have enjoyed all the beautiful cards I've received. Starting July 1st, the cost of stamps is going up to 66 cents. This is a huge cost for just one person. We are asking for donations whether it be on stamps or monetary.

I hope you all enjoy each other and God Bless.

# Merger Update

There is a lot of excitement and energy as we gather in various locations to discuss plans to become one church in four locations. Our transition team is made up of approximately 25 people largely from the Administrative Council from each of the existing churches. We have formed our mission statement, which really speaks into the desire to create something new and grow our church. Our mission is "To 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 will be polling our congregations in May on their choice for our name. Polls will include the polling person's name and will be available both in person and online. Anyone who feels connected to our church will be able to participate in the poll. The transition team narrowed the list from over 50 names down to the most popular four.

The four names the transition team has determined we will choose from are:

- Disciples UMC
- Faith UMC
- New Vision UMC
- Vine UMC

While all the names presented had possibilities, these four overwhelmingly had the most support.

Our transition team served as our leadership and nominations committee and has completed (for the most part) the leadership team for our new church. We will have it available for review and seek your approval at our next charge conference in June.

We were granted \$10,000 from our Great West District to go toward expenses as we complete our work of becoming one church in four locations. We appreciate the gift and thank our District Superintendent and district leadership team for the support. We intend to apply for additional funding from our Great Plains Conference.

Our next meeting is at 2 pm, on May 7<sup>th</sup> at the Henry/Lyman church.

## Online Giving

It's easy to forget cash or your checkbook or maybe you would just like to use a credit card. But, even if you've left both behind you can still support the church's mission and beyond by using your smartphone. Simply visit the church's donation page (<https://www.firstumcsb.com/give/>) for multiple ways to give. An easy way to get started is to simply scan this QR code, which takes you directly to our giving page.



You'll find that Vanco giving options such as online giving, mobile app and text to give are secure, fast and easy to use.

1. With text giving, members and guests can contribute to funds by simply entering 844-928-0313 and the amount you wish to donate, then press send. Follow the prompts, first time users will need to set up a profile.
2. Vanco Mobile app is free. Download this app and search Scottsbluff or use our code UM7RJY. Once again follow the prompts, you will need to set up a profile.
3. The last way to online give is through our website, <https://secure.myvanco.com/YNNB/home>. From your Vanco Online account, you can review your giving history, manage recurring donations and update payment information.

No matter how you choose to give, donations received through these convenient options will help us sustain our programs throughout the year. Thank you for all you do to support our mission.



## May Mission Outreach

**Potter's Wheel Ministries** is the mission outreach for the month of May. This entity was established in 1989. It is non-profit, non-denominational and non-government funded – existing solely by God's grace and the generosity of the community.

Potter's Wheel began as a jail/prison and sober living ministry offering men housing, accountability, group meetings and Bible study in order to transform their lives. This is still one of the main reasons they exist. They also minister in our community through a Food Pantry and Family Services. Their distribution center is home to a food pantry and houses the donations that supply goods for Family Services and the Thrift Store.

For May, please bring donations of canned goods and non-perishable food items to help restock their food pantry. All donations should be placed in the Outreach Bin in Fellowship Hall. Potter's Wheel also accepts financial donations and volunteer help.



Thank you for your prayers, calls, cards and texts following my recent encounter with my table saw. Pastor Craig, Elaine and I certainly enjoyed and appreciated you coming to see us. Your compassion, care and prayers are wonderful. This has been a journey which was not on our to do list.

Being part of this church family is truly a blessing!

Bob Pile

Thank You Everyone that helped with the Easter Sunday Brunch to make it a very successful event. We couldn't have done it without you. You are Amazing.

Martha and Mathew Team Leader

Judi Facinelli



Talon Cheek, Jim Schaneman.....1  
Joan Stear.....2  
Caitlyn Lastovica, Rick Wallace.....3  
Missi Iasillo.....5  
Janet Gardner, Lauren Newell.....6  
Helen Wigert.....11  
Gina Cannon.....12  
Patty Gritzfeld, Renate Scott, Richard Shultz.....13  
Larry Martin.....15  
Emily Erdman.....18  
Gary Hutzel.....19  
Jamisyn Howard.....20  
Shirley Ruff, Rojean Sweeny.....22  
Sharon Mensing, Patrick Newell.....23  
Ron Howard.....25  
Sandra Cardiff, Joseph Schumacher, Ruthie Stowell.....26  
Linda Redfern, Don Osborn, Ann Huntington.....27  
Jenell Eckerle.....29  
Sandy Massey, Grady Beaudette.....31

## YOUTH DATES TO REMEMBER SPRING 2023




Sunday, May 14 – Youth Recognition Sunday during Worship Services

Senior Recognition Sunday during Worship

Wednesday, May 10 – End of Year Celebration!!! Last Week of Wednesdays until Fall

For more information: Missi Iasillo  
Phone: 225-2527 or miasillo@aol.com

# May 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 9:30 COOL Committee 1:00 UWIF Mtg 6:30 Monday Night Bible Study, L	2 10:00 Rose Bible, P 6:00 Stephen Ministry	3 5:30 Supper 6:00 Kidz Club 7:00 Choir	4 6:30am UMM	5	6 <b>Communion</b> 5:00 Sat. Night Worship
7 <b>Communion</b> 9:30 Worship 10:30 Bible Study, P	8 9:30 COOL Committee 6:30 Monday Night Bible Study, L 	9 10:00 Rose Bible, P 6:00 WWIP, L	10 11:30 Free Sack Lunches 5:30 Supper 6:00 Kidz Club Last for the Summer 	11 6:30am UMM 5:00 Soup Kitchen@ Presby. 6:30 Kids First Preschool Graduation	12	13 5:00 Sat. Night Worship
14 <b>Happy Mother's Day</b> 9:30 Worship Senior & Youth Recognition 10:30 Bible Study, P 11:00 Trustee	15 9:30 COOL Committee 1:30 Caring Circle 6:30 Monday Night Bible Study, L	16 <b>Newsletter Deadline</b> 6:00 Stephen Ministry	17 8:00 Kids First Board, L 12:00 Senior Lunch Last for the Summer	18 6:30am UMM 11:00 Outreach	19	20 5:00 Sat. Night Worship
21 9:30 Worship 10:30 Bible Study, P 11:00 Finance	22 9:30 COOL Committee 6:30 Monday Night Bible Study, L	23 5:00 SPPRC, W 6:00 WWIP, L	24 11:30 Free Sack Lunches	25 6:30am UMM 9:00 Newsletter Folding	26	27 5:00 Sat. Night Worship
28 9:30 Worship 50 & 75 year celebration 10:30 Bible Study, P	29 <b>Office &amp; Kids First Closed</b> 	30	31 5:30 Stop the Bleed class			

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## FOOD DONATION

**Potter's Wheel**  
**MINISTRIES**  
*Transforming our Community...  
One Life at a Time*



POTTER'S WHEEL MINISTRIES IS THE MISSION OUTREACH FOR THE MONTH OF MAY. THIS ENTITY WAS ESTABLISHED IN 1989. IT IS NON-PROFIT, NON-DENOMINATIONAL AND NON-GOVERNMENT FUNDED - EXISTING SOLELY BY GOD'S GRACE AND THE GENEROSITY OF THE COMMUNITY.

Please bring donations of canned goods and non-perishable food items to help restock their food pantry.

## The Back Pew - Jeff Larson



This is the day the Lord has made.. so get up mommy so we can play. **Ps 118:24**