

From the Pastor...

When I was growing up, it seemed that the only requirement for being a 'good Christian' was going to church for an hour or two every Sunday. If you wanted to do more, that was great, but the bare minimum seemed to be weekly attendance.

When I became a pastor, the advice given me was 'love the people and preach God's Word.' As long as I had compassion for the members of the congregation and had a relevant message to preach every Sunday, I was 'good.'

But times change and so do people. Now schedules are busier and worship isn't the only thing that calls for our attention on Sunday mornings. In the last several decades worship attendance in mainline denominations has declined, at least in the United States.

In this new world we find ourselves feeling more like missionaries than simply church-goers. The decreased attendance in our worship spaces gives us increased opportunities to share Christ's love in new and interesting ways. We can start conversations with friends about matters of faith and offer prayer when they are going through rough times. We can start conversations with something as simple as asking "How can I ask God to bless you today?" and see where the conversation goes. Most people are still receptive to prayer even if they no longer have a faith community home.

Another way that we work as missionaries in our world is by getting the love of God out of the church and into places in the community that need our help. We're already doing that with the backpack program for children, where at Wyoming Elementary we fill some children's backpacks with food to help them get through the weekend. A group of 6 of us are going to become Reading Buddies for the first and second graders at Wyoming Elementary starting in January.

In January we begin a new sermon series called How Jesus Saves the World from Us, looking at Jesus' call to radical discipleship and ways of doing church in new and interesting ways that help us grow in our faith and get the message of Jesus' love out to the world.

The world just isn't the same as it was 'back then.' Our church is seeking to find new ways of showing Christ's love to others in a practical way.

God's,
Holly



Our sanctuary generously filled with Joy Bell's gifts and groceries awaiting pickup.

Joy Bells Joy!

Thanks to everyone who helped with the Joy Bells Ministry this year. We collected \$988 from the Christmas Tea plus other donations to cover the cost of the meals given to the 22 families we helped this year. We were also pleased to provide gifts to all the children of these 22 families. We got joy-filled hugs from some of the Moms and many grateful thank yous from the others when they came to claim the gifts for their families. Way to be the grace of God made tangible through these gifts of joy!



**HAPPY
NEW
YEAR**

January Celebrations

Birthdays

1-01 Tom S.
1-02 John K.
1-03 Lois J.
1-05 Katherine O.
1-11 Kayla B.
Johnny K.
Marcus W.
1-14 Steve T.
1-15 Ben P.

1-16 Dorothy Be.
1-17 Pat K.
1-18 Axie T.
1-19 Jessa E.
1-26 Dorothy Bi.
Evelyn S.
1-29 Ann S.
1-31 Jane D.

Anniversaries

1-03 Gary & Chris S.
1-07 Dave & Holly A.



* If you do not see your special date, please let the office know!



Santa's Helpers' Grand Evening

Though small in numbers, this year's Santa's Helpers' night was full of fun. Thanks to all who put in the time and energy to make this event a great time for the kids and a great break for the parents: Lois, Jane, Donna, Janet, Carole, Nancy, Dan and Santa!



BeFriendHer's Christmas Tea

Thank you to all who helped make our annual Christmas Tea an afternoon to remember! The freewill offering helped pay for the food baskets for the Joy Bells families. Thank you!



Christmas Pageant

Thanks to all who participated in and facilitated this year's Christmas Pageant! It was a joy to celebrate the coming of the Christ Child with our pageant on Sunday, December 18. Our kids and adults did such a great job!

Happy New Year!

J C K C O L C I J B
J Q A E H S T A H C
B A L L O O N S O D
R S F E E U C N J P
G E L B A N F F Y A
N M K R C E D A S R
I I Y A T A D A E T
N D Y T M I R F R Y
N N I I L E L D W D
I I O O W E S O S L
G G H N C E N I H O
E H N T V S N H O C
B T I F A M I L Y N
C O U N T D O W N G
N S E I R O M E M H

BALLOONS
BEGINNING
CALENDAR
CARDS
CELEBRATION
CLOCK
COLD
CONFETTI
COUNTDOWN
FAMILY

HATS
HOLIDAY
JANUARY
MEMORIES
MIDNIGHT
NEW
NOISEMAKER
PARTY
REFLECTION
SNOW

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! 2 Cor. 5:17

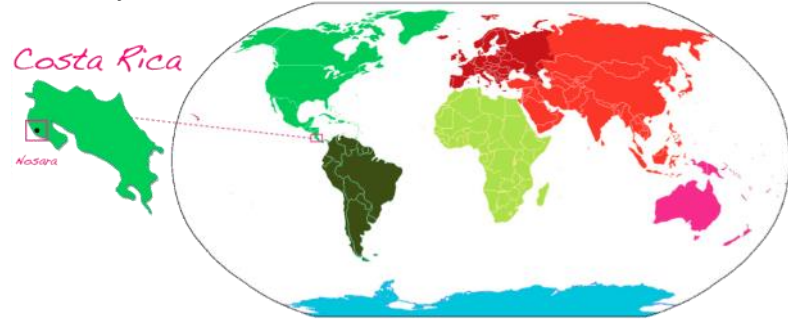


New Pathways Training

A training session for New Pathways Hosts will take place sometime in January. This will be a refresher course for those who have already had the training and is especially important for those who have yet to be trained. Linda R. will be our trainer. Our next week for hosting New Pathways guests is January 29-February 5.

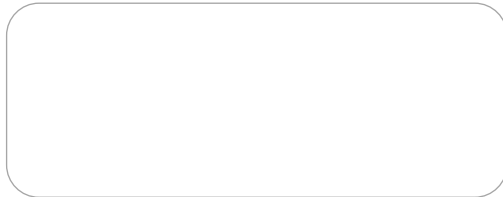
Mission Trip to Costa Rica

As Dave and Jan prepare to lead a mission trip to Costa Rica, please continue to pray for them, for their team, and for the leaders of Strong Missions who hosts their time in Costa Rica. We pray that the school supplies we collected last fall will be a blessing for those who receive them. The team will be leaving in January for two weeks of mission work. May God bless their ministry!



To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven.” Ecclesiastes 3:1

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Happy New Year
May the Lord
Bless
and keep you and make
His face to shine upon you
and give you peace

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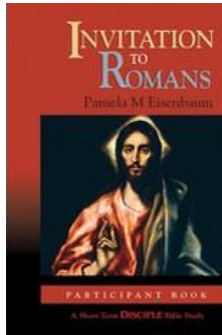


Wyoming United Methodist Church Messenger



Christmas Offering

Our UMCOR Christmas Offering to the United Methodist Committee on Relief exceeded \$5025 which is the most we've given in recent memory. Much of UMCOR's current relief effort is focused on the people of Haiti as they deal with the aftermath of Hurricane Matthew. Congratulations to Wyoming Church for your extravagant generosity!

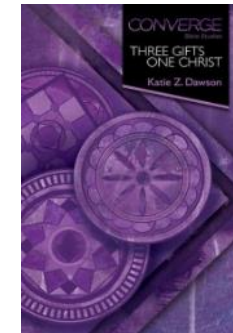


Men's Bible Study

Men's Bible study begins Monday, January 9, studying Disciple Bible Study: Invitation to Romans. There is still room available if you would like to join! Through our eight sessions together we will be exploring how people have interpreted Romans through the ages as a way of exploring the history of Christianity itself. Our study will compare Paul's words in Romans with what theologians like Augustine, Luther and Calvin say in trying to understand Paul in their time. We will be meeting at 7pm on Monday evenings. Please get a copy of the Participant Book from the office and read the Introduction and Chapter One before the January 9 meeting.

Women's Bible Study

Women's Thursday Evening Bible Study, using Converge: Three Gifts, One Christ, begins Thursday, January 19 at 7 pm and will meet weekly through Thursday, February 9. The study will take us through the three gifts from the magi—gold, frankincense, and myrrh—and explore how these gifts reflect three of Christ's roles—Jesus as high priest who sacrifices himself for us, as the prophet who calls us into the Kingdom, and as the Messiah who triumphs over evil and sets us free. We will begin the study together on the 19th, no need to read ahead. If you are interested in joining the study, please sign up in the nook by Sunday, January 15.



2017 Annual Church Conference

On Sunday, January 29 we encourage you to stay for a potluck meal following worship. After the potluck we will have a meeting to pass the budget for 2017, accept the reports of our church ministry teams, and elect new leadership for 2017. We will celebrate how God has been working through the members of Wyoming United Methodist Church in the past year and look forward to all that 2017 promises to hold. You are invited!

Worship Services in January

In January we begin a new sermon series called How Jesus Saves the World From Us, based on a book by the same name by Morgan Guyton. Christianity has always been about being saved. But what Christians need saving from most today is the toxic understandings and behaviors many of us have been practicing. We will look at how we have been lulled into comfortable but confining Christian ruts and how we can turn around to a radical way of justice for the world. This series will also encourage us to go deeper in our relationship with God.

January 1

Questions You've Always Wanted to Ask
Matthew 2:1-12

January 8

How Jesus Saves the World From Us: Why Worship?
Genesis 2:15-3:13

January 15

How Jesus Saves the World From Us: Let It Breathe
Acts 2:1-4

January 22

How Jesus Saves the World From Us: Take Risks
Psalm 139:1-12

January 29

How Jesus Saves the World From Us: Embrace Mystery
Matthew 22:34-40