

From the Pastor...

A year ago I passed out a coin that had on one side "Matthew 13 The parable of the sower" and on the other side "100 acts of kindness, encouragement and witness." I've had two members of the congregation tell me about their year with that coin in their pockets, one telling me that it inspired him to keep track of his acts of kindness, encouragement and witness and he was able to track at least 129 acts of kindness this year, even though he's sure there are some that he missed. In any event, it spurred him to try to do something kind every day.

The other person told me that it inspired him to do good in his community and when he shared that story with another person and showed them the coin, they asked if they could have the coin and, of course, he said, 'yes.' I heard the story because he was wondering if I had any spare coins lying around and within the week I was able to give him a second coin.

I tell you this, not so we can look back at the year and see how far we've come (though that is a good pursuit, too) but to share with you that many of us are walking the walk and talking the talk and we are out in the community doing good for others, without asking for acknowledgement. Some of us are continuing on our volunteer efforts to make the world a better place through our work with Care Crew North or Lakes Center for Families and Youth or Fairview Hospital or Wyoming Elementary or the many other places that we can donate our services.

To all of you who tirelessly volunteer, I want to say 'Thank you.' Your work doesn't get unnoticed, especially by those you help and most importantly by God. You make a difference in the lives of others, and it counts!

To those who are looking for a place to make a difference in the lives of others, we would be happy to put you in contact with people who are already making a difference in the community in the hopes that you can partner with them to make the world a better place.

Many fun worship and fellowship opportunities are coming to church this December. We hope that we can see you at many of them. Please see the calendar and the rest of the newsletter for these opportunities.

Also, during this season of advent, be sure and take time to give thanks to God for all that you've been given and take time for yourself to rest and renew.

God bless us all,
Pastor Holly

Bringing Christmas to the Community

Jan F. and Pastor Holly will be representing our church at a Christmas Carol Sing-Along at Haven Homes Senior Housing Community on December 12. Acting on the premise that most people like to sing Christmas Carols (regardless of singing ability) and that not everyone who likes to sing Christmas Carols gets a chance to attend a Christmas Eve service, we decided to bring Christmas into our community for our Second Annual Christmas Carol Sing-Along. We're looking forward to sharing Christ's Love in our community!

Pop Tabs, Box Tops and Ink Cartridges Benefit Wyoming Elementary

Thanks to all who have been bringing their pop tabs, Box Tops for Education and used ink cartridges from your computer printers. We have been bringing them to Wyoming Elementary School where our contributions are added to all the contributions from families around the community.

Thank You

Thank you to all of you who turned in your Estimate of Giving cards in November. Thanks to you we are able to continue to plan for ministry into 2018 and know we can count on you to keep us building bridges to Christ's love. We are so grateful for your gifts and faithfulness!



December Celebrations

Birthdays

12-2 Carly K.
12-7 Brooke B.
12-8 Dolly A.
12-9 Derik I.
12-12 Hans B.
Nathan M.
12-17 Eric R.
12-20 Brett H.
12-22 Lucas P.

12-25 Lily A.
12-27 Buck B.
Chevelle F.
12-28 Jane R.
April W.
12-31 Dave F.
Al J.

Anniversaries

12-17 Mike H. & Jane D.



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

A Way Forward

Some of you may have heard about the commission called A Way Forward that was formed following our 2016 United Methodist General Conference. The General Conference, with United Methodist representatives from across the globe, is the decision-making body of the United Methodist Church and meets every four years. They appointed a commission to study the church's LGBTQ inclusion.

With an emphasis on the values of unity, grace, and mission, the commission recently presented to the Council of Bishops three models for a way forward:

1. Affirming the current Book of Discipline language with an emphasis on accountability.
2. Removing restrictive language from the Discipline, while protecting the rights of those whose conscience will not allow them to perform same gender weddings or ordain LGBTQ people.
3. Emphasizing unity among United Methodists around doctrine, services and Council of Bishops, while creating different branches that have clearly defined values such as accountability, contextualization and justice.

The Holy Spirit guides this entire process and we have been asked to pray for the Commission and all church leaders as they go through this process of discernment. Our own Bea Z. was asked to write a prayer that was circulated to all Minnesota United Methodists recently. Her prayer:

Gracious and loving God,

We come before you with joy in our hearts and filled with the love of Jesus. We humbly bow before you in gratitude for our many blessings while also hurting for those who are lonely, discouraged, living on the fringes, feeling unworthy, needing your love and peace and strength and the hope that comes from knowing Jesus as Savior and Lord.

As we, your people, seek to serve you, loving God, open our eyes and our hearts. Show us how to graciously accept all our brothers and sisters, nudge us with your Spirit to accept, to act, to love, to bring hope to the hopeless and food and nurture to the hungry. May we always remember that all are loved by you, Jesus, and we are called to love accordingly. In Jesus' name, amen.

A note from Shirley F:

My daughter invited me to attend a meeting with her. She is a member of Fairmont Avenue United Methodist. The meeting was titled "A Way Forward." This meeting was a revelation to me. I'm not sure if I was too busy with major changes in my life or if what was going on in the larger church just did not make it out here to the suburbs.

I learned that at the last General Conference major splits in the body of the church were uncovered and there was talk of churches breaking away. The differences concerned the LGBT community and the churches' responses to this community.

In an effort to avoid a split in United Methodism, the Council of Bishops were asked to convene a Commission on A Way Forward. This commission was established and has been meeting. The members represent every segment of the global church. They will present their report to the Council of Bishops. The Council will then present the report at a special General Conference in February 2019.

The meeting I attended was led by Bishop Ough. We started late since so many more people came than were expected. More chairs were set up and the room was full. After the bishop's presentation, we met in small groups. My daughter had told me that her church was a Reconciling Congregation, which means that they are a congregation that welcomes the LGBT community to worship with them.

It has always been my feeling that in our church locally and throughout the world we may have differences of opinion on things, but we can all worship & fellowship together. I do not want to see our global church split. I think we need to come together—not pull away. I hope you will join me in prayer for the members of the commission as they work toward that goal. (If you have any questions or want to discuss this with Shirley, she is glad to talk with you any time.)



Unexpected Company Christmas Concert

Join us Friday, December 8, at 7:30 pm at Elim Lutheran Church, 20971 Olinda Trail N., Scandia or Sunday, December 10, at 3:30 pm at the Performing Arts Center, 29400 Olinda Trail N., Lindstrom for a program of holiday music. There will be a free will offering for the Friday concert. Tickets for the Sunday concert are available from chorus members. Tickets are \$10 adults and \$8 for seniors and students. There is a \$1 discount for tickets purchased in advance. See Jan & Dave Freemore and Shirley Faber for tickets.

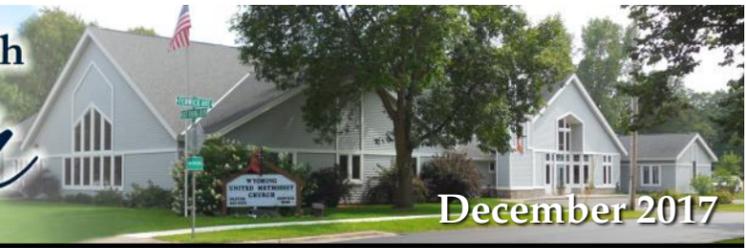
Women's Retreat

We have been invited to join Eden Prairie United Methodist Church in their annual Women's Retreat, 7 p.m. Friday, January 26, through 11:30 a.m. Sunday, January 28, at a Franciscan Retreat Center in Prior Lake (16385 St. Francis Lane, Prior Lake 55372). Pastor Holly will be the retreat leader and her topic is "Braving the Wilderness: The Quest for True Belonging and the Courage to Stand Alone." The cost is \$155 for two nights in a private room (shared toilet and shower with one other person), 4 meals and exclusive use of the facility for the group. Please see Pastor Holly if you are interested in attending.



Wyoming UMC • 651-462-5276 • Care Crew North: 651-462-4890 • www.wyomingunitedmethodist.org
Pastor Holly's email: hollyaastuen@gmail.com • Church email: office.wyomingumc@gmail.com

Wyoming United Methodist Church Messenger



December 2017

Christmas Eve Offering

Our 2017 Christmas Eve offering will go to New Pathways homeless shelter in Cambridge that we have been supporting for many years. New Pathways has been notified that their funding from HUD (Housing and Urban Development) will end in June of 2018. HUD funding has covered a major part of their operating expenses. Without it, their ability to counsel and support homeless families is in jeopardy. We have partnered with them for years, providing housing in our church building twice a year, and the need is even greater than they are able to currently address.

Pastor Holly is challenging us to consider giving to New Pathways an amount equal to the amount we spend on all our Christmas gift giving this year. Donate at any time during December with your cash or checks to Wyoming Church, marked 'Pathways.' Thanks from your Missions/Outreach Team!

Christmas Pageant

On Sunday, December 17th, we will have a no-rehearsal Christmas Pageant for children and youth and maybe even an adult or two! We ask those who are participating to come at 9:30 am on that Sunday and find a costume to become an angel, a shepherd or a wise one. As the service progresses, Mary and Joseph, shepherds, angels, and wise ones will come forward and gather around the manger as we sing songs of Christmas. Bring your kids and grandkids for this fun time. After the pageant portion of the service, the kids will be dismissed to get out of their costumes and celebrate a birthday party for Jesus! Come and see what fun this will be!

Christmas Eve Worship Service

Our Christmas Eve 5pm worship service will be a traditional service of Lessons and Carols as together we welcome the Christ Child into our hearts. This is a perfect time to invite friends and family to come with you, to sing the well-known songs of Christmas and light individual candles as we celebrate the one who brought light into the darkness.



Worship Services in December

In this season of Advent, we will open our eyes and our hearts to the Angels Among Us, looking at the angel stories in the Bible, especially the angel stories that surround the birth of the Christ Child, and examining how we can see angels among us even to this day.

December 3

Angels Among Us Bringing
HOPE
Luke 1:5-25

December 10

Angels Among Us Bringing
PEACE
Luke 1:26-38

December 17

Angels Among Us Bringing
JOY
Matthew 1:18-25

December 24

Angels Among Us Bringing
LOVE
Luke 2:8-20

December 24

Christmas Eve Worship 5pm

December 31

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



Wyoming United Methodist Church
5459 E Viking Blvd., PO Box 247
Wyoming, MN 55092



Wyoming UMC cordially invites you to our
Annual Christmas Tea
on Thursday, December 7, 2017, at
1:30 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall

It will be a time of fellowship, singing,
food, and fun as we prepare together
for the Christmas Season.

For more info please call 651-462-5276.