July 2022 Volume 5, Issue 7

A publication of First-Faith United Methodist Church

THE MESSENGER

Grace and peace be yours in abundance First-Faith family. July 1st marks the beginning of my third year here at First-Faith. The last two years have been such a challenging, rewarding, grace-filled experience that I can't possibly come up with enough words to describe how blessed I am to be your pastor. I look forward to another year of making disciples of Jesus Christ that we may be a light for those in the dark and place of peace and love for those who are lost.

This last month I attended the Great Plains Annual Conference in La Vista, Nebraska and participated in doing the business of the annual conference. This was our first annual conference in two years and was a time of spirited worship and much needed fellowship.

This Annual Conference was also a time for us to take stock of the losses and gains that the Great Plains Conference has experienced during such a tumultuous time. It was good to know that the Great Plains Conference continues to be one of the most stable and financially sound conferences in the United States after the pandemic. That is in large part to the support of the 950+ congregations in our conference and our continued giving.

The highlight of Annual Conference was my Ordination that took place on June 10th. It was a wonderful evening that I will never forget. I am incredibly grateful to the people of First-Faith who have helped me, pushed me, and prayed with me throughout the ordination process. I am a better pastor and a better person because of this congregation and I can never thank you enough for all that you have done and continue to do to support me and my family.

One of the areas of growth that I have challenged myself for the next year is to preach more from the Old Testament. In the month of July I will be starting a worship series called Prophet Margins. During the five Sundays of July we will be hearing stories from three of the Prophets from the Old Testament, Elisha, Amos, and Isaiah.

In our world, we have moved past a pandemic and are now faced with a very different world than we had in the spring of 2020. We are faced with a world in turmoil and a world that seems mired in hopelessness. We are faced with a world that is desperately searching for peace and the promise of a better tomorrow. What do the prophets of old have to say to us?

Prophets have a frustrating propensity to speak uncomfortable truths. And the rest of the world—even the rest of the people of God—has an even more frustrating propensity to not listen to them when they speak.

What might we learn if we took the risk to listen? If we took the risk to let these holy ones of God become our traveling companions on our summer journey? We might be troubled, and we will be, but we might also be lifted up. We might be challenged, but we might find reasons for hope, or we might find a renewed vision that inspires us for all the journeys we make.

I hope that you will join us in July for worship. I pray for safe travels for those on vacation and for peace for those who are struggling. God bless and keep you.

Pastor Ray

Every Sunday

Worship Service at 9:30 a.m.
Join us in person or online on our Facebook page
(First-Faith United Methodist Church)!

Meetings and Circles

Tues, July 12th

- Ruth Circle eating out at Olive Garden, 12:30 p.m.
- United Men's Ministry (UMM) Meeting, 6:30 pm

Mon, July 25th - Susanna Circle, 6:30 pm

Tues, July 26th - Friendship Circle, 1:30 pm

The Church Office will be closed on Monday, July 4th.

BIBLE TIME FOR KIDS!

Bible Time for Kids has had a successful month! We are planning on this being our format to provide Sunday School for our children. We look forward to seeing even more children during our church services to participate in this special time set up for youth 3 years-5th grade. They head up the aisle after children's time with great enthusiasm because they KNOW we have a fun time planned. Bring your children so they can be a part of this new learning experience!

SUMMER MUSIC!

Would you like to sing contemporary, praise music or play the guitar, bass, drums, keyboard, etc.? Practices are every Wednesday, at the church, at 6 p.m. If you would like to sing or play an instrument for special music in the Sunday morning worship service, please let Randi Pennell know or call the church office.

New Steps youth would like to thank Susanna UWF and Pastor Ray and Natalie Stone for two great meals provided for our Bible and Barbeque evenings.

GRAND ISLAND LITTLE LEAGUE CONCESSION STAND UPDATE

Thank you SO much to all of the volunteers who came out to help with the Snack Shack this year. You are very much appreciated! After 6 weeks, our total profit was $1,301.75. This will be deposited into the Church Fundraisers Account and will be used for local missions and the young family get-togethers. This is the remaining balance after purchasing a new Weber BBQ/Grill for the church that will be used for the Hot Dog Feed, men's and women's groups, our youth group and church activities. This also includes the cost of the hot dog feed for our Little League families on June 6 & 7 where 375 people were fed! They were very thankful!!!

The Church Fundraiser Account balance is currently $7,126.71. We have a committee that will suggest where some of the funds will be distributed before the end of the year. This is then approved by the Church Council. Last year, we were able to give $1,000 each to Hope Harbor, Project Hunger and the Veteran's Affair Volunteer Fund. Thank you everyone!

7/2 Melanie Sheen
7/3 Charlie Ponec
7/6 Kim Coates
7/7 Gena Hess
DJ Miles
7/9 Chyna Hayes
7/11 Heather Ford
Stacie Forsman
7/13 Robert Bigger
Barb Dunning
7/22 Thaddeus Erington
7/23 Doug Ferguson
Mike Novosad
Macey Salpas
7/25 Leah Borer
7/27 Dale Beckman
7/29 Ken Ross
7/30 Donna Schwartz
7/31 Devin Borer
Les Cornish

Clyde and Marilyn Church - July 6, 1968
Brett and Stacie Forsman - July 13, 2013
Jim and Judy Bliss - July 14, 1968
Terry and Michelle Carlson - July 14, 1984
Bob and Deb Trosper - July 15, 2000
Mike and Alice Gray - July 20, 1977
Gordon and Sharon Bigger - July 26, 1959
Gene and Kate Spencer - July 29, 1961

Dear First-Faith,

Thank you so much for the scholarship, water bottle and for allowing me to host my party at the church! The support from our community has meant so much to my family and I.

Sincerely, Meghan Pennell and family

WOMEN'S EXERCISE CLASSES

Strong Women: Every Monday and Wednesday at 3:30 p.m. (except July 4th)

Chair Yoga: Every Tuesday and Thursday at 10:30 a.m. and also at 6:30 both nights
There will not be Yoga on July 5th and 7th.

Step Aerobics: Every Monday, Tuesday and Thursday at 5:15 p.m. (except July 4th)

Wear comfortable clothes and come and join us!

LUNCH BUNCH

Our next Lunch Bunch Potluck will be on Wednesday, July 13th , at 12 noon. It will be at the church and everyone is welcome! Bring a dish to share and then join in the fun afterwards as we play RUMMIKUB!!!

Join us for Pitch (a card game)!

Monday, July 25th,
7 to 9 p.m. at church.
Bring a partner or we'll find you one!

We Extend our Sympathies to the Family and Friends of:

* *Jean (Jeannie) Jensen*
May 29, 2022
Member since April 20, 1980

* *Beth Obermiller*
June 16, 2022
Member since March 21, 1976

Our Refresh "Grandmas" would love to give you a break. We provide FREE quality child-care for ages 6 and under. If you need a few hours to get things done, bring your little ones by the church and our ladies will take great care of them! They will have fun during play time, reading, snack and a craft.

We will be open on Wednesdays, July 13 and 27, from 9 to 11:30 a.m. Please feel free to invite friends and family to use this service.

Questions? Call Sharon Sorensen at 308-382-7543.

S SINGLE
P PEOPLE
A ACHIEVING
R REAL
C CHRISTIAN
C CONNECTIONS

SPARCC EVENT
REVERSE GRUB CRAWL!

On Saturday, July 23rd, we'll meet at Culver's at 10:30 a.m. The address is 2185 N. Diers Ave. The remainder of the stops will be determined , by the group, that day.

Each person is responsible for their own costs.

A Perk & A Prayer

is available every Wednesday morning in July from 7 to 9 a.m. Come and enjoy a free cup of coffee and have someone pray with you.

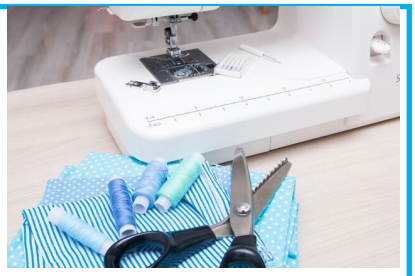
Women's Gathering at George Park

The UWF Circles (United Women in Faith) will be hosting Coffee in the Park at George Park on Tuesday, July 26th, at 9:30 am.

***All Women** are invited to come out and share in some great fellowship. Donuts will be provided. Please bring your own beverage of choice.*

Ladies' Sewing Group
July 12 & 26
9:30 a.m.

We meet at the church and all are welcome!



MEN'S COFFEE TIME

Come and join us every Tuesday at 9 a.m. for some coffee and great fellowship at the church!

Men's Fellowship Cornhole

Men: Even if you've never played before, come on out and join us for some fun!

We'll be playing every Thursday night, from 7 to 9 p.m., in the sanctuary at the church. Enter through the kitchen door. Call Alan Hess, at 308-737-0389, if you have any questions.

The Great Plains Annual Conference met in La Vista, NE June 8-11. Bishop Ruben Saenz Jr presided over the conference. Pastor Ray Stone and Duane Coates both attended the conference. This was the first in-person conference in two years.

Each of the standing committees of the Conference made reports and we received reports on the financial stability of the conference. Almost 99% of churches in the conference were able to make their mission shares during the pandemic which has allowed Great Plains to be financially stable and looking forward to new growth in the coming years.

Nine churches were given approval for closure. In Kansas: Angola, Wichita Cedar Chapel, Chetopa, Randolph Fancy Creek, Fowler, Linwood, Moline, Eskridge. In Nebraska: Stanton.

The Annual Conference voted to allow twelve churches to disaffiliate and leave the United Methodist Church. Disaffiliating churches. In Kansas: Bethlehem, Enterprise, Nickerson Fairview, Jarbalo, Logan, Louisville, Minneola, Neutral, Stull, Wilsey, Goddard. In Nebraska: Pierce.

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

Calling all children for a noble quest! Please come and join us for Vacation Bible School (VBS) at First-Faith on Sunday, July 17th, from 10:45 a.m. to 1:15 p.m. It is for ages 4-years-old thru 5th grade. (We would also love to have the youth group stay and help!)

The theme for our VBS this year is **Knights of North Castle: Quest for the King's Armor** where we will learn how to be strong in the Lord and in the strength of God's power.

Help us find all the pieces to God's armor!

After the church service that day, the children are invited to stay for a fun day of Bible time, music, arts and crafts, and recreation. Lunch will be served by the United Women in Faith. Registration forms are in the narthex. Please fill one out asap so that we will know how many to expect for lunch. If you have any questions, please call Chyna, Randi, or the church office.

We hope you will make plans to join us for this free, fun-filled adventure!

Ordination and Laying on of Hands

Bishop Ruben Saenz Jr.& Pastor Ray

Pastor Ray and Wife Natalie

Pastor Ray's Mom Lana and Natalie's Father Joe Francel and his friend Gale.

Congratulations Pastor Ray!

Pastor Ray was ordained an Elder in Full Connection at the Great Plains Annual Conference in La Vista, NE. Pastor Ray's wife Natalie, mother Lana Stone, and father in-law Joseph Francel were all in attendance for the worship service.

Your First-Faith family is proud of you!

First-Faith United Methodist Church
4190 W Capital Ave
Grand Island, NE 68803

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Grand Island, NE

Worship Schedule
Sunday
9:30am - Morning Service
10:30 am - Sunday School and Fellowship Time

Office Phone:
(308) 384-5620

Office Email:
firstfaithumc@gmail.com

Website:
http://firstfaithumcgi.org

Office Hours:
Mon-Fri 8:00-4:30
(Closed 12-1 pm - Lunch Hour)

Pastor: Rev. Wm. Ray Stone

New Steps Youth Group

July 6th at Hayes's home at 4316 Claussen Road, 6:30-8:00 pm…Dunk tank, yard games, good food, fire pit with s'mores and Bible study.

July 20th at Kuebler's home at 2323 West Anna St, 6:30-8:00 pm…yard games, good food, and Bible study

***Also, New Steps Youth...please plan on helping with our one-day VBS on Sunday, July 17th from 10:45 a.m. to 1:15 p.m.**

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

The Junk Jaunt at First-Faith United Methodist Church will be held on Friday, September 23 (8:00 am-4:00 pm) and Saturday, September 24 (8:00 am-2:00 pm). There will be MANY opportunities to volunteer in MANY different ways, so please consider helping. United Methodist Men will have lunch for sale and we will serve free coffee both days. We will need people to price, organize ahead of time, work the sale dates at the church (in whatever way you are able), clean up after it is over, and to **donate items to sell.** PLEASE bring your sale items to church starting July 10th We will NOT BE ACCEPTING CLOTHING. Please make sure your items are clean and in good repair. For more information contact Chyna at 308-390-2352.

Article Deadline for August Newsletter: July 21, 2022