



A publication of First-Faith United Methodist

MESSENGER

Grace and peace to you First-Faith family. The fall is finally here and I can tell you that I am excited! I'm sure that many of you are excited for the return of football and fall sports. I am excited to watch my Wildcats as much as you are excited to watch your Huskers. Not only is fall a time for many of our favorite past times, but it is also when we get back to church as usual. This fall we have so much to be excited about and so much to celebrate at First-Faith that I hope we can go above usual and shoot for transformational.

It seems so often that church becomes this thing that we do and less about who we are. Our activity and work in the church is only one small part of who we are as the church and what our mission is in the world. This last month we have been listening to Paul's instructions to the Ephesians about the fullness that we experience in our common and united lives as the church. The church cannot be a place that is closed off to each other and definitely not closed off to others. The church is the living, breathing representative of Jesus Christ in the world that wishes to grow and expand.

This month of September our theme will be evangelism. This is a scary word for many of us. It is uncomfortable to talk about our faith genuinely and authentically. We are afraid that someone will label us a weirdo or even worse, they may reject us completely. We shy away from talking about our faith because we feel like we may not be equipped to do it right.

This month our worship series is called *Everybody Tell Somebody*. We will be focusing on the need for us to share our faith and how Jesus walks with us in this journey. I hope that you will join us each week as we explore one of the more challenging parts of the discipleship process. But this is not the only challenge for evangelism that we have this month.

On September 10 we will be celebrating the ten-year anniversary of the merger that created First-Faith United Methodist Church. As we have been planning this celebration, the theme of being stronger together has been brought up many times. First and Faith came together that they may be a stronger and more active witness to Jesus Christ in our community. For ten years this congregation has grown and thrived, but it is time for this congregation to take the next step.

The number one reason that someone comes to a church is that they were invited. We can spend all the money on fancy ads and mailers, but the most important thing is the personal invitation. I am challenging you to invite someone to church this month. Maybe it is for the ten-year celebration or maybe any of the other Sundays. Maybe you need to invite someone to join the choir or come to your Sunday school class or small group. Wherever you feel the calling of the Holy Spirit, invite those you know and love to share in this amazing church and this amazing faith that you have.

I am always thankful for your continued prayers for me and my family. I am humbled that you have allowed me to walk through life with you and to share in the joys and sorrows that we experience. I am looking forward to an amazing fall and a prosperous new year. Grace and peace to 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)!

A Perk & A Prayer



Every Wednesday morning, from 7 to 9 a.m., you can drive in to the church parking lot and get a free cup of coffee and lots of smiles. If

you have a prayer request, someone will be there to pray with you.

HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE!!

Meetings and Circles



Tues, Sept 5th

Ruth Circle at 1:30 pm
Trustee Meeting at 7:00 pm

Mon, Sept 11th

Finance Committee Meeting at 5:30 pm
Church Council Meeting at 6:30 pm

Tues, Sept 12th

UWF Executive Board Mtg. at 1:30 pm

Mon, Sept 25th - Susanna Circle at 6:30 pm

Tues, Sept 26th - Friendship Circle at 1:30 pm

Thurs, Sept 28th - SPRC Meeting at 1:00 pm

September 6, 13 and 27



Handbell Choir Practice
On Wednesdays at 6:00 p.m.

Choir Practice
On Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m.
Come and join us!

BIBLE TIME FOR KIDS

OUR NEW THEME IS

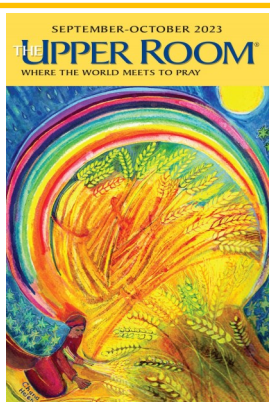
"GOD IS LOVE"

3-years-old to 5th Grade



Bible Time for Kids will be taught during the sermon. Please plan on having your children participate in this "Sunday School" experience.

Come and learn our new theme song and have your child join in this enriching time for kids every Sunday morning.



The Upper Room is a daily devotional magazine. The September-October 2023 issue is now available in the narthex at the church. The daily meditations are written by readers of the magazine and others interested in sharing their faith experiences through writing.

Suggested donation amounts:
Regular Print: \$1.50
Large Print: \$2.00

Ladies' Sewing Group

September 12 and 26 at 9:30 a.m.

We meet at the church and all are welcome!



WOMEN'S EXERCISE CLASSES

Strong Women

Every Monday and Wednesday at 3:00 p.m.
No class on September 4th.

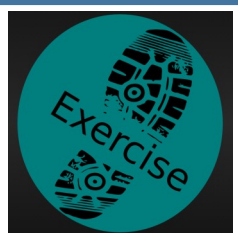
Chair Yoga

Every Tuesday and Thursday at 10:30 a.m. and 6:30 p.m.
No classes on September 19 and 21.

Step Aerobics

Every Monday, Tuesday and Thursday at 5:15 p.m.
No class on September 4 and 21.

Wear comfortable clothes & come and join us!



The Church Office will be closed on

September 1st and September 4th

for Labor Day.

SEPTEMBER



September

BIRTHDAYS

- | | |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| 2 - Abigail Lucas | 19 - Darlene Wiegert |
| 9 - Bob Trosper | 20 - Linda Cure |
| 10 - Nicole Lucas | 25 - Darrel Anderson |
| Mary Jo Mowinkel | 26 - Warren Pennell |
| 13 - Dusty Butler | 27 - Deb Grim |
| 16 - Casey Sorensen | Judy Jones |
| 17 - Stacia Morrison | 28 - Kent Sorensen |



SEPTEMBER

- Rob and Denise Leigh - September 9, 1989
 John and Peggy Helms - September 13, 1969
 Roland and Sandy Engel - September 15, 1968
 Tom and Paula Rauert - September 15, 1974
 Daryl and Annette Glos - September 23, 2000
 Ray and Natalie Stone - September 29, 2007



Helen M. Browning

March 7, 1926 to
 June 13, 2023

Helen's memorial service
 will be held on Saturday,
 September 16th, at 11:45 a.m.
 Apfel Funeral Home
 1123 West Second St.
 Grand Island



"Thank you all for the prayers, thoughts and help during and while recovering from my shoulder surgery. Prayer is awesome!"

God's blessings to all,
 Sue Routh

Thank You
 for your
Sympathy

"Thank you to Pastor Stone and our church family for your prayers, cards, thoughts and visits through this difficult time."

Lonnie and Jodi Awtry and family

Extending a big welcome to our newest member, Robert (Bob) Schroeder, on July 30, 2023!



HEALTHY CONGREGATIONS GRANT

FFUMC has again received a \$1000 grant to support the Healthy Congregation's ministries!



These funds contribute towards utility costs during exercise classes and supplies for exercise classes, Perk and a Prayer,

The Annual United Methodist Men's **Blue Rock Shoot** is set for **5 pm on Tuesday, September 12th, at Izaak Walton's**. There will be hot dogs and water-melon after the shoot. There is no cost for the event, but RSVPs are requested for an accurate food count. Talk to Doyle Henke or Bob Trosper for more details.



Men's Fellowship and Cornhole

Even if you've never played before, come on out and join us for some fun. We'll be playing every Thursday night, at 7:30 pm, in the church sanctuary.



Please enter through the kitchen door. We will not be playing on September 21st.



MEN'S COFFEE TIME

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



Join us for Pitch (a card game)!

Monday, September 25th
7 to 9 p.m. at the church.

Bring a partner or we'll find you one!

WHAT IS LUNCH BUNCH?

It's a monthly gathering of old and new friends. We gather to share a potluck meal (bring a dish to share) and have lots of good conversation. Then, we play a game or cards.



Come and join us on **Wednesday, September 13th, at 12 noon**. Then, save the date on your calendar for the second Wednesday of every month.

It will be at the church and everyone is welcome!

American Red Cross Blood Drive at First-Faith

Friday, October 6th
11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

The Red Cross is in desperate need of blood donors. Meet the need this Fall!

For an appointment, please contact Emily in the church office at 308-384-5620 or firstfaithumc@gmail.com

OR

Go online to redcrossblood.org
(use sponsor code **gi first united**)

Download the **Blood Donor American Red Cross** app on your smart phone.



American Red Cross
Together, we can save a life

Donors will receive a \$15 e-gift card to the merchant of your choice!

PARTNERS IN EDUCATION WITH ENGLEMAN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



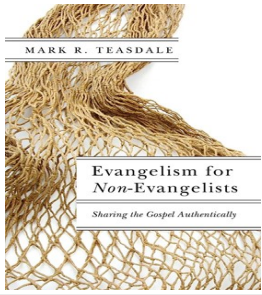
We would love to have you join us in this ministry.

This month, we will meet at Engleman on Thursdays, September 14 and 28 at 8:30 a.m. We help teachers by preparing educational materials for them.

If you have questions, please contact Glenda Vetter at 308-383-1716.

Thank you to everyone who contributed to the Noisy Can Offering on Sunday, August 13th! We received \$100.76 and here is a picture of the food that we were able to buy for the community food pantry. We had enough money to buy breakfast for 90 people, meals for 36, mashed potatoes for 48 and tuna for 12!





Evangelism Study with Pastor Ray

The book for this short-term study is *Evangelism for Non-Evangelists* by Rev. Dr. Mark Teasdale. The class will be offered on the following days:

Sundays at 10:30 am: September 3, 17 and 24

CELEBRATING 10 YEARS



In the Spring of 2013, First UMC and Faith UMC began the process of merging together as one congregation that would become First-Faith United Methodist.

Over the last decade First-faith has grown into a vibrant and mission minded congregation dedicated to being a light of hope for our neighbors. Please join us for our 10 year celebration on Sunday September 10, 2023. This special worship service will celebrate the history of First and Faith as well as the many successes since both congregations came together. There will be a meal after the service and we hope you will stay to share memories and join in fellowship.

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY QUILT

On a bright Thursday, July 13th, Melissa Garcia and her daughter Camilla received a special gift—a beautifully crafted quilt—courtesy of the First Faith quilters. Joined by our Home Buyer Support Committee, led by Melissa's dedicated mentor, Dennis, the occasion marked a heartfelt celebration of Melissa's journey.

Melissa, an unwavering mother, dedicated herself to 500 hours of sweat equity to achieve her dream of a secure home for her and her daughter. This quilt stands not just as a token of warmth, but also as a tribute to her determination.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to the skilled quilters whose artistry blessed this deserving mother with such a unique and exquisite gift. This moment reminds us of the powerful sense of community that fosters dreams and supports one another's aspirations.



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

TOWNSLEY-MURDOCK SITE and Doniphan's Red Bird Bakery

Saturday, September 9th

Meet at the church at 10 a.m. to carpool.

The Townsley-Murdock Immigrant Trail Site is along the land between the Wood River and the Platte River where the wagon routes traversed leaving wheel ruts. Also, below the surface are remains of buildings and other artifacts of the past.



Please RSVP to the church office by Wednesday, September 6th, so that we know how many to expect. Everyone is responsible for their own costs.

HELPING ONE ANOTHER

If you would like to sell or give something away, please call or email the church office at:

308-384-5620 or firstfaithumc@gmail.com

List your name, phone number, a brief description of the item and the price you are asking and we will put it in the next month's newsletter.



Worship Series for September “Everybody Tell Somebody”

August 27: The Great Commission | Matthew 28:16-20

Amidst our own experiences with evangelism and the many doubts that we carry, Christ inspires and calls us to a life of faith-sharing with the assurance that when we go, He goes with us.

September 3: The Good News is for Everyone | Acts 10:30-48

The unstoppable power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ breaks down barriers, so that all might know the transformative love of God.

September 17: Meet People Where They Are | Acts 17:16-28

Paul shows us that sharing often starts with learning and listening. Understanding each other can be the basis for sharing and hearing of the Gospel.

September 24: The World Needs the Good News | John 3:11-20

God loves each of us just the way we are. Through Christ, we are forgiven and offered life and salvation. What a gift that we get to share this Good News with others!

Finance Update

Since my arrival in 2020, the congregation of First-Faith has been incredibly financially supportive of the ministries and work of this church. For the last several years our giving has remained steady and has afforded us to expand and be an active and charitable contributor to our community. Unfortunately, we are now facing some financial challenges.

At the end of 2022 and the beginning of 2023, the church has seen many of our operational costs go up. Along with providing competitive pay for our employees, we have seen the increase of many of the services that we rely upon. Gas, electric, custodial, lawn care and insurance have all seen increases to name a few. At the current rate of expenses, we can expect to be no less than \$30,000 short for the year. While we do have reserve funds that we can draw upon, those funds will quickly deplete if we must dip into them repeatedly in the years to come.

I know that finances can be challenging, and many of you have also seen increases in your expenses, but I believe that we have a strong and vibrant congregation that is fully capable and equipped to face this challenge. I am urging you to help us meet our expenses by increasing your giving. Along with some cost cutting measures, and your increased contributions, I know that we can continue to meet our financial commitments.

If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out me, Pastor Ray, or to our church treasurer Terry Sheen.

With gratitude and love, Pastor Ray Stone



Follow the simple steps below to get the Church Directory on your phone:

* Go to the App Store, search for *Instant Church Directory* and download the FREE app (see picture of icon to the right).

* Use your email address listed in the directory to CREATE

A LOGIN the first time you use the app. If you are not listed in the directory, or, if you have trouble logging into the app, please contact the church office.

* No picture? Email one to the church office at firstfaithumc@gmail.com.



VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL 2023



A small but mighty group of children enjoyed our one-day Bible School experience. Thanks to many members of our congregation we were able to provide a “food truck” experience as children learned a meal blessing and the Bible story of Jesus feeding many using four fish and five loaves of bread.

Children received their own apron, made a bread plate for home meals, heard stories, visited the “food trucks”, sang songs, and had a fire truck ride (THANKS to Gordon Bigger!).



Make plans NOW to have your child participate in this fun, one-day experience next summer!



Our Refresh “Grandmas” would love to give you a break. We provide FREE quality childcare 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, having a snack and making a craft.

We will be open on Wednesdays from 9 to 11:30 a.m. - September 13 & 27

Please feel free to invite friends and family to use this service.
Questions? Call Sharon Sorensen at 308-382-7543.



The Junk Jaunt at First-Faith United Methodist Church is coming!

Friday, September 22nd (8:00 am-4:00 pm)
Saturday, September 23rd (8:00 am-2:00 pm).

We will need volunteers the week of the Junk Jaunt to price, set up, work the sale dates at the church and clean up after it is over.

Volunteer Sign-Up Sheets are in the narthex!

Last call for your “great junk”! Please bring your sale items to church between now and September 18th. We will NOT BE ACCEPTING CLOTHING. Please make sure your items are clean and in good repair.

The United Methodist Men will serve a lunch for \$5 that includes a hamburger, chips, pickle and a bottle of water. We'll be serving free coffee both days, too.

For more information, contact Deb Trosper at 308-379-5753. If you have large items that need to be picked up the week of the Junk Jaunt, please contact Bob Trosper at 308-379-4835.



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

Non-Profit Org.
 U.S. Postage
 PAID
 Permit #22
 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://firstfaithumc.org>

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

Pastor: Rev. Wm. Ray Stone



New Steps Youth Group

New Steps Youth will be meeting on Wednesday, August 30th, at Stephen and Chyna’s home (4316 Claussen Road) from 7:00-8:15 pm for Fire Pit Planning with s’mores and games. At this time we will decide how we want the youth group to look and function. If you are a youth 6th grade - 12th, please plan on attending. For the month of September, we plan on meeting on Wednesdays from 7:00-8:15 pm on the 13th and 27th.

Kindness Care Bags

We are gathering supplies to put together some Kindness Care Bags. These bags will be available for any of us to keep in our vehicles to distribute to people in need that we may see while we’re out and about. By getting involved in this ministry, we will have a tangible way of contributing needed items to those we encounter on a daily basis in our community.

Here are some suggestions for contributions if you choose to participate:

- | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Wet wipes | Beef sticks |
| Band-Aids | Hand sanitizer |
| Hotel-size bath soap | Socks |
| Granola Bars | Gift cards to Wendy’s or McDonald’s |
| Toothbrush/Toothpaste | Hard candy |
| Bottled water | Trail mix |
| Cash (to buy these items) | |

The items should be in travel-size small containers/servings so that they can be put into gallon-size Ziploc bags. The items may be brought to church and placed into the large basket in Chyna’s Office. If you have any questions, contact Amelia Nicolaus or Chyna for more information.