

AUGUST 2022

THE SPIRE

KEARNEY FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH NEWSLETTER

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WEDNESDAY NIGHT ACTIVITIES START AUGUST 17!!

Children's Ministry from 7-8pm

Open gym from 8-8:30pm

Preschool - Room 125

Kindergarten/1st - Crusaders Room

2nd/3rd - Friendship Room

4th-5th - Seekers Room

Youth Ministry from 7-8:30pm

Middle School - Wesley Room

High School - Couch Room

We look forward to seeing you!

A NOTE FROM PASTOR MATT

TENSION IN THE SYSTEM: RECAPPING THE ALL-CHURCH MEETING

I have one of those garden hoses that is advertised as unable to get kinks in it, and it works pretty well. However, occasionally, while it doesn't kink like older hoses, it still binds up and restricts the water flow. Then, when I give the hose a little tug, it releases some of the tension and the water flows freely.

In my Spire articles this summer, I've sought to emphasize the ways in which just the right amount tension can be a good thing using the following images: jumping rope, Hamilton's call for Aaron Burr to live more fully into his convictions in the musical Hamilton, and water skiing. Then, in our "Thriving Faith" videos each Wednesday on the church's Facebook page, we've shared ways in which our United Methodist tradition helps us live in response to God's grace in our everyday lives.

But, as with my garden hose, sometimes stretching helps us find the necessary tension to allow for full, thriving, faithful living in community. My hope is that our recent church informational meeting provided a little of this sort of unbinding. While I cannot condense all of that conversation, we have prepared a recap video and some additional resources that can be found on the church website. In what follows, I will attempt an alternate, more condensed recap in Q&A format.

In the spirit of unbinding the hose, please also see the video, and talk with me or Pastor Seungli if you have other questions or concerns.

Is the United Methodist Church splitting? No. A group of United Methodists have officially launched a new denomination (the Global Methodist Church, on May 1) for two simplified reasons: 1) a desire to make sure their churches continue to forbid same-sex marriages and the ordination of self-avowed and practicing homosexual people; 2) a series of critiques about the polity or organization of the UMC.



Presently, a very small percentage of local UM churches (and two clergy) in our annual conference have chosen to stop being United Methodist. Other denominational affiliation for these churches has not been publicized. Finally, the departure of some churches does not require any action from Kearney First UMC, other than to continue growing in its God-giving mission.

Is the United Methodist Church, moving forward, abandoning orthodoxy, changing its historical Christian doctrines, and being overtaken by liberals/progressives? No. The next General Conference, in 2024, is the only body to speak for the church, and it's not presently clear what legislation will come before that body, or how it will act.

A NOTE FROM PASTOR MATT

TENSION IN THE SYSTEM: CONTINUED

However, it is effectively impossible to change our historical doctrines – such as the Incarnation, the Trinity, the primacy of scripture, etc. In this regard, the United Methodist Church generally, and Kearney First UMC locally, will continue to hold fast to all of our historical doctrines, seeking to live into Christ's calling to make disciples of all nations through which God is transforming the world.

Because we're a denomination founded on helping people experience and respond to God's grace – as opposed to denominations formed by rules and retribution, dogma, or doctrinal debates – we'll continue to be a denomination based foremost on the commitment to live out our faith in response to God's grace. This means we'll continue to be a diverse, big-tent sort of community: a connection with space for George Bush and Hillary Clinton (both UMC members), for the mission-minded justice advocates and the prayer and Bible study groups, for the hand wavers and pew-seated noddors. Perhaps this is harder than being homogenous, but our unity has never been about uniformity. Instead, we've always sought to live in response to grace that makes space for faithful, thinking disciples of Jesus to disagree and still be part of God's mission in the world together. God's grace looks like this: the fullness of God's presence living and walking with us in Jesus, who consistently invited people to follow him in his way of putting love of God and love of neighbor first in thought and practice. Grace isn't forceful; it's invitational.

So, what's next for Kearney First United Methodist Church? Transparency leads me to say we have two options. First, we can spend most of the next year in an undoubtedly divisive journey toward leaving the denomination, driven largely by unfounded fears and half-truths. Or, second, we can spend the next year, and each after that, seeking to clarify and enact God's particular calling and vision for us as Kearney First UMC, so that, by the Holy Spirit's sanctifying grace, we can grow as a people who love God, love others, and make disciples through the practices of talking to God, listening to God, partnering with God, growing in God's image, and sharing God's grace with others. To me, only the second option sounds like Jesus' calling.



MINISTRY SNAPSHOTS

CHECK OUT WHAT OUR MINISTRIES ARE DOING!

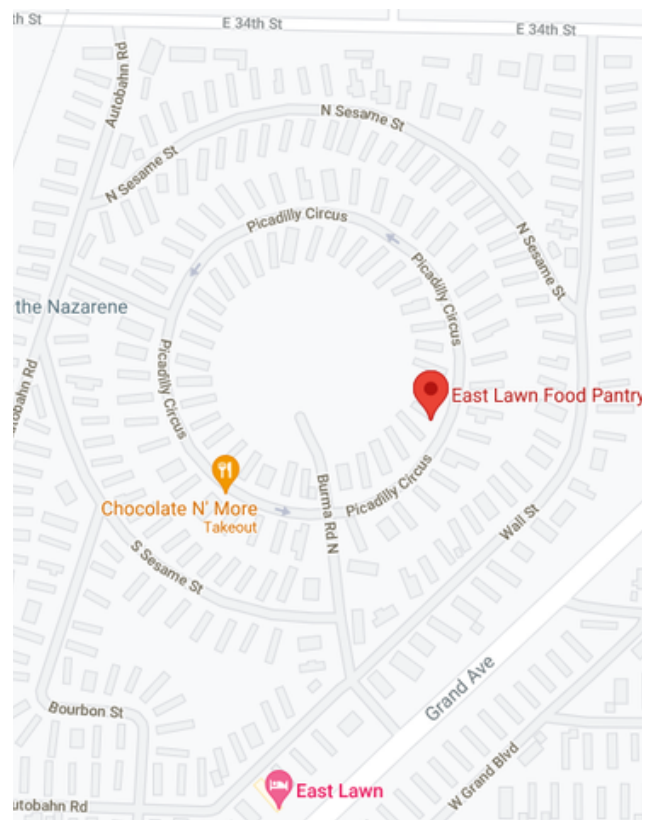
EAST LAWN FOOD PANTRY

2800 Grand Ave. Trailer #342

Visitors at the food pantry have stayed rather consistent with 330 families visiting in June furnishing food for some 1300 individuals. Repeat visits to the pantry indicated 804 visits. This is about 90 visits each time the pantry is open. So the volunteers serving at the pantry are very busy each time.

We are still experiencing some shortages of food items that are no longer from the Food for the Heartland out of Omaha. Thankfully, Cashway Distribution has filled the void with many meat and other key food items for East Lawn. But, keep the pantry in mind and when you shop, buy one item for the pantry and if several people do that, it will help us out greatly. The main item we are short in is canned fruit. It is rather expensive as compared to other items but still furnishes a healthy food for clients. Look for sales in the local grocery stores and help support them as they are having some supply issues as well.

Thank You to all those volunteers who pick food items up from the grocery stores in Kearney and transport it to the trailer, to volunteers that sort the food items and place it on the shelves, to volunteers that work each day the pantry, to those that work on those days repacking items or other large packaged items into smaller packages for distribution. There are over 50 people who help in one way or another to support the pantry outreach program. That sounds like a lot of people, but if several are gone and some are only able to tackle certain jobs, it sometimes becomes hard to find people to work. So if you would like to be put on a substitute list, that would be great! If you would like to help with one of these or more areas, please contact Colleen Jacobsen for scheduling a time to help. General information is available from the church office for phone numbers.



MINISTRY SNAPSHOTS

CHECK OUT WHAT OUR MINISTRIES ARE DOING!

2ND GRADE BIBLES

It has been our tradition at First UMC to give each child in the 2nd grade class a children's Bible. The Bibles will be presented on Sunday, August 14th at all worship services (8:15AM, 9:30AM, or 11:00AM). Please rsvp by calling the church office or emailing Jeanine at jeanines@kearneyfirstumc.org by August 7th to let us know which service you plan attend. If you are unable to make it to one of the services, arrangements can be made for you to pick up your child's Bible at a different time.

We encourage the 2nd/3rd graders to bring their new Bibles and join us for the first eight weeks of Wednesday Kingdom Kids or Sunday School beginning August 17th & 21st, for a special curriculum to learn how to use their Bibles.



YOUNG ADULTS GROUP

Calling retreat to Branson, Mo
August 11 -14, 2022

Kearney First young adults will go to Branson, Mo to discern God's calling. It is a crucial time for young people, particularly college students to know how to use their gifts and talents for God's Kingdom and glory. We believe that God has specially called each and every one of us and gave us unique talents and gifts. If you are still wondering about your calling, please join and let us discern and pray together. Kearney First young adults will have intentional questions about their calling from God and have a fun time together in Branson, MO, known as "Live Entertainment Capital of the World." This retreat will be free of charge for young adults.

Contact the church office or Pastor Seungli for more information. Please pray for young adults and give your hearts to them through financial support.

Pastor Seungli You

Join us on Wednesday evenings and Sunday mornings for children's Kingdom Kids & Sunday School!



Sundays

Wednesdays

Aug. 17 @ 7:00-8:00PM

Kids Preschool-5th grade join us for Kingdom Kids classes. Enter and check-in at north door.

Open gym 8:00-8:30PM

available for kids with older siblings and/or parents in later groups.

Aug. 14 during services

Presentation of 2nd Grade Bibles

Aug. 21 9:30AM & 11:00AM

1st morning for regular Sunday school classes.

10:30AM

Children's Choir & Bell Choir
Join us in a fun time signing songs and playing bells! We will preform during services throughout the year.

MINISTRY SNAPSHOTS

CHECK OUT WHAT OUR MINISTRIES ARE DOING!

BACKPACK BLESSING

SUNDAY, AUG. 7 TH

STUDENTS OF ALL AGES BRING
YOUR BACKPACKS TO
WORSHIP. WE WILL HAVE A TIME
OF BLESSING AND PRAYER AT
EACH SERVICE.

MAKE YOUR OWN BACKPACK
TAG BETWEEN SERVICES IN
THE GATHERING AREA.



EAST LAWN FOOD PANTRY VAN PURCHASE

Pictured is the new van purchased for the East Lawn Food Pantry. This mission helps support hungry families in our community. Through God's grace and the help of many devoted volunteers we are able to continue this wonderful mission in Kearney. The purchase price of the van was \$10,500. If you would like to help offset the cost of the van for the East Lawn Food Pantry you can go online and make a payment to the East Lawn Van Fund, or you can write a check payable to the church with East Lawn Van written in the memo line.

SUNDAY SCHOOL & KINGDOM KIDS TEACHERS NEEDED

We need teachers and helpers for the
Sunday School and Kingdom Kids year!
All lessons and materials will be provided.

Contact Jeanine to volunteer!
jeanines@kearneyfirstumc.org



WEDNESDAY NIGHT ACTIVITIES

Mark your calendars for August 17th at 7:00PM, as we begin our Wednesday evening activities here at First UMC! We have been busy planning and preparing for everyone to join us in beginning a new season of living out our mission together of loving God, loving each other, and making disciples of Jesus Christ.

As we come together to grow, learn, and serve in our respective groups, some things may look a little different this year. A couple of these changes will be that we will not be providing the free will offering meal or the Come As You Are Worship. We as a staff have spent much time together prayerfully discerning the fruitfulness or usefulness of these two ministries in the life of our church. In doing so, we looked back at the previous year, weighing the advantages and ways that these two different ministries have served or not served their purpose. The typical low attendance at each, for a good majority of the year, suggest to us that we may be entering into a new season, where the usefulness or need of these two ministries has changed.

So, for now, we will take a break from offering the meal and worship to better focus on building and developing our various disciple making groups. As you come along with us on this journey, please lift in prayer the leaders, kids, youth and all other group members, that we may truly be partnering together to share God's grace with others.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

PLUG IN AND SERVE!



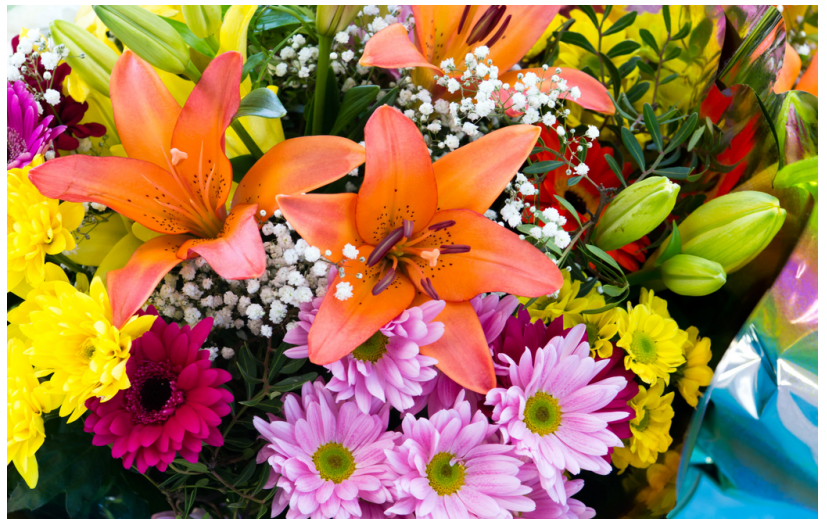
RADIO BROADCAST

Sponsors Needed

The 11:00am worship service is broadcast live every Sunday morning on KGFW Radio 1340AM and 96.1FM. Generous members of this church sponsor this broadcast each week. Cost is \$199 per Sunday. Dates available include: September 11, 18 & 25, October 9, 16 & 30, November 6, 13 & 20, and December 4, 18 & 25.

ALTAR FLOWERS

Would you like to purchase altar flowers in honor or memory of a loved one? If so, please sign up on the flower chart in the Fellowship Hall or call the church office. The cost is \$20 each and you will be billed directly from Divas.



PASS IT ON MINISTRY

Would you like to help a grieving family? We are looking for volunteers that would like to help out with funeral lunches by either helping serve, clean up or provide food. If this is an area your heart fills passionate about please contact the church office.

SYMPATHY & THANKS

WITH LOVE FROM YOUR KEARNEY FIRST UMC FAMILY

WITH SYMPATHY

Family and friends of Anna Mae Andrews who passed away July 16 .

Family and friends of Lyla Hecox who passed away July 17.

Family and friends of Paul Maxwell who passed away July 24.

Family and friends of Kent King who passed away July 23.

Family and friends of Dora Day who passed away July 25.



THANK YOU

Kearney First UMC,
Thanks very much and with added loads of appreciation for allowing our youth group to stay overnight at your church. We thank Brandi, Pastor Matt, and Margaret for allowing this to happen. It provided a nice and beautiful location for our fantastic mission trip to Colorado!
Pastor Sam - Montevideo, MN UMC



AMEN CORNER

*In Memory of
Rev. Maurice Holt 1907-1997*

Thank you to our counters that help with offering. You make a big difference and we appreciate you.

Note: This corner has been designated the AMEN corner for "an audible alert that something special was (is) being done."



150TH ANNIVERSARY SURVEY

2022 marks the 150th anniversary for First United Methodist Church in Kearney. We are planning a celebration to be held on Sunday, November 6th. We would like to give everyone a chance to provide some comments that may be used in the presentation.

Below is a survey with just a few questions. Please answer any or all of the questions and bring the survey to the church office or put it in the offering plate by August 31st

Sincerely,

The 150th Anniversary Committee
First United Methodist Church – Kearney

Name: _____

1. What event here has made the biggest impact on your spiritual life?

2. Describe some of your favorite Church activities/get togethers.

3. We would like to invite you to share one or more of your special memories of First United Methodist Church and why the church has been important to you, your life and our community.

First United Methodist Church

4500 Linden Drive,
Kearney, NE, 68847
(Return Service Requested)

Phone: 308-237-3158

Fax: 308-237-4654

Website: www.kearneyfirstumc.org

Address Label Here



kearney

First United Methodist Church

OFFICE HOURS AND WORSHIP TIMES

Office Hours: 8 AM - 5 PM Monday - Thursday, and 8 AM - 4 PM Friday

Sunday Traditional Service: 8:15 AM and 11 AM

Sunday Modern Service: 9:30 AM

Sunday Service Livestream: www.kearneyfirstumc.org/watch-online

Radio Broadcast of 11 AM service on KGFW Radio 1340 AM and 96.1 FM

STAFF MEMBERS

Rev. Cindy Karges, District Superintendent, Email: gatewayds@greatplainsumc.org

Matt Fowler, Senior Pastor, Email: mattf@kearneyfirstumc.org

Seungli You, Associate Pastor, Email: seungliy@kearneyfirstumc.org

Jeanine Spangler, Children's Ministry Director, Email: jeanines@kearneyfirstumc.org

Lyz Garwood, Middle School Youth Minister, Email: lyzg@kearneyfirstumc.org

Braden Garwood, High School Youth Minister, Email: bradeng@kearneyfirstumc.org

Ann Patterson, Administrative Assistant, Email: annp@kearneyfirstumc.org

Brandi Walker, Administrative Assistant, Email: brandiw@kearneyfirstumc.org

Jennifer Dierberger, Comptroller, Email: jenniferd@kearneyfirstumc.org

Anne Reinhiller, Multi-Media Coordinator, Email: anner@kearneyfirstumc.org

Diann Martin, Pumpkin Patch Director, Email: ppatch@kearneyfirstumc.org

Margaret Klimek, Wedding Coordinator, and Evening Custodian, Email:

mkweddings@yahoo.com

FUMC VISION

In order to grow in Christ, to learn from Christ, and serve Christ; we will be a Christian community characterized by our Wesleyan Heritage of: Doing Good, Doing No Harm, and Staying in Love With God.

EDITOR'S NOTE

The next issue will be mailed out at the end of this month. Information for that issue should be turned into the church office by the 20th of this month. The editor reserves the right to edit for content and space. - Brandi Walker, Editor.

