



GRACE COURIER

lindstrommethodist.org

Feed My Starving Children Mission Focus for August

A Christian non-profit founded in 1987, Feed My Starving Children tackles world hunger by sending volunteer-packed, nutritious meals to 70 countries, where they're used to operate orphanages, schools, clinics and feeding programs to break the cycle of poverty.

Last year, FMSC welcomed nearly 1.2 million volunteers to pack more than 333 million meals to feed more than 913,555 kids daily for a year. The Minnesota-based charity spends more than 90% of total annual donations directly on feeding kids.



Rev. John C. Blackford Scholarships

Six young people were awarded a Rev. John C. Blackford Scholarship June 30:

Thomas Braski

Brooke Kertzsch Harvey

Ashlee Nelson

Tyler Nelson

Eduardo Perez

Kelsey Perez

Blessings!

The Power of Food

Nutritious food equips kids to learn in school, build their communities and grow up strong in body and spirit.

Food paves the way for education. Food builds a solid foundation for communities to become strong and self-reliant. Food makes it possible for children to gain physical and spiritual health. Food delivers hope in the name of Jesus.

Turn hunger into hope with your own two hands.

You can give any time during the month with envelopes in the pews.

Feed My Starving Children Packing Opportunity

Feed My Starving Children will be our mission focus in August.

A packing opportunity will be Tuesday, August 13 at 6:00 – 7:30 p.m., 401 93rd Ave NW in Coon Rapids.

Please contact Adrienne Stegmeir at aestegmeir@yahoo.com for more information.



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Dates to remember:

August 4
Congregational Conversation with D.S.

August 13
Feed My Starving Children Packing Event

August 18
Mission Sunday

August 20
Newsletter Deadline

From the pastor...

Dear Friends,

Let's suppose that I bought a horse from a man, and for that horse I had to pay, in cold hard cash, a grand total of six dollars. When I get home with the horse, everyone's excited. My kids think I'm a hero. My frugal spouse thinks I'm a great bargainer. The horse is definitely a hit with the family. But after a while, problems arise. The horse is too big for the house, even though I've told the kids, "no galloping in the living room." It's getting expensive to feed this animal, too. Finally my spouse declares, "that horse has got to go." I take the horse back to the man who originally sold it to me, and he's gracious enough to buy the horse back for eight dollars. But I miss that old horse. A lot of times at night, after the kids have gone to bed, I can be found staring up at the moon and playing my harmonica, singing cowboy songs. My spouse, bless her heart, can't stand to see me mope over old Calico, so she finally gives in and says, "Oh all right, go back and buy that horse again." This time I buy the horse from the same man for ten dollars. You can guess what happened. No sooner did we get the horse back to the house that we began to face all the old problems again. The kids were still horsing around and horse was doing a major number on the carpet. I could see the handwriting on the stall. I was going to have to get rid of old Calico. So, I took the horse back to the same guy and sold him my horse for twelve dollars. I no longer have the horse, but I do have a question. After all my wheeling and dealing on that horse, did I *make money or lose money? Not counting feed, or gas back and forth to the farm - did I come out ahead? Did I go in the hole? Or did I break even? And if I did gain or lose - how much did I gain or lose?*

Take a moment to come up with an answer to that question. The answer I come up with is that *the man made a four dollar profit. (He spent six dollars and ten dollars = sixteen dollars; He received eight dollars and twelve dollars = twenty dollars; subtract sixteen dollars from twenty dollars and you get a four dollar profit.)*

I'm expecting a variety of different answers to the posed questions because of the nature of the story and the sequence of events within the story. I'm guessing coming up with an answer will be confusing, difficult, and maybe even frustrating for some as you struggle with what seems like an algebraic equation that it calls for.

This word problem was originally printed in a second-grade math book. Knowing that, the answer to this problem should have been easy to arrive at. But was it? If your math skills are like mine, then the answer is definitely no.

I share this classic word problem with you this month as a metaphor to the position our denomination finds itself in right now. The United Methodist Church, its Annual Conferences, and individual congregations (including ours) within them, are trying to solve a problem surrounding the matter of whether or not to fully include the LGBTQIA+ community. For some, on paper this problem seems easy and simple to solve. To others, it is anything but simple or easy. It is outright confusing, painful, and frustrating. Especially when everyone seems to come up with a different solution, perspective, or understanding of the problem - and they all think they are right!

To summarize again, our denomination has voted recently (February) to continue its ban on full inclusion of the LGBTQIA+

community meaning no same-sex marriages or no ordinations of homosexuals. Our Annual Conference recently voted to oppose this denominational ruling (as has 80% of all American Annual Conferences) showing its support of full inclusion of the LGBTQIA+ community. This means that our congregation will also move forward within the Conference as a congregation in support of full-inclusion.

As a result, within our congregation, I have observed these three distinctly passionate solutions to the "problem" of whether or not to fully include the LGBTQIA+ community in the life of the Church - and each feels they are right. Interestingly, each of these solutions are also biblically based. The first - *"The Bible says homosexuality is wrong. If my denomination says otherwise I cannot remain a part of it and I must leave."* The second - *"In the Bible Jesus says we are to love God and love my neighbor. If my denomination cannot love my LGBTQIA+ neighbors unconditionally, I cannot remain a part of it and must leave."* The third - *"In the Bible Jesus teaches us not to judge others. This is the denomination I've grown up in, raised my family in, and have been a part of for years. It doesn't matter to me how others choose to live their lives. To each their own. Who am I to judge? I'm not leaving my church!"*

Of course, this is a bigger matter than a second-grade math problem and obviously demands additional questions. Is there a right answer? Are there multiple solutions? How will we know our answer is the right one? How are we making our decisions about what is right and wrong, good and bad, or true and false? By what means do I come up with my own solution? Each of these responses I've observed deserve respect and understanding even in the midst of disagreement. I only hope such responses or decisions are made out of time spent in prayer, reflection and devotion.

As you hear of others within our congregation who look at the matter of full inclusion in our denomination differently than you do, I only ask that you listen to them, affirm them, and respect their point of view as you would hope others would do towards you. Remember, all are trying to remain faithful to their understanding of God's Word, and God's Word is bigger than all of us or our understandings of it.

The stark reality is that our congregation will likely look different than it has in recent years once individual's and/or family's decisions are made to stay or move on. However, for all who choose to stay, our mission remains the same - *To Grow in Love of God and Neighbor (the Great Commandment, Matthew 22:37-40), To Reach New People (the Great Commission, Matthew 28:19-20), and To Heal a Broken World (the Great Proclamation, Luke 4:16-21).*

My ongoing prayer for us is that we don't get consumed or distracted by any one matter of life and faith, but rather that we always remain united towards accomplishing the mission - as a whole - that has been set before us.

Grace and peace,

Pr. Dale

In Our Prayers...

Cole Anderson; Sandy Danielson; Brad Elshaug;
Brian Elshaug; Olga Determan; Nate Clark

Pastoral Care

Hospitals no longer telephone churches, because of the privacy act, to let us know that one of our members have been admitted.

Please notify the church office, 257-4306, if you desire pastoral care for illness, hospitalizations, or surgeries.

A Congregational Conversation

A Congregational Conversation with our District Superintendent, **Susan Neinaber**, will happen on Sunday, August 4, immediately following our worship service in the sanctuary.

In response to the Special General Conference's decision in February to continue the UMC's ban on same-sex marriage and gay ordination and the MN Annual Conference's recent opposition to that ruling, Pastor Susan will be here to help us understand and process what the future of the MN Annual Conference and the UMC might look like and how that might affect our own congregation, congregations within our District, within our Conference, and within the whole UMC.

At this time in our congregation's history, this is an especially important conversation to be a part of.

Please plan to attend.

Nursery

During the summer months, there is no Nursery Attendant, but you are welcome to use the room, if needed.

Children are always welcome in the worship service.

Birthdays!



Carol Vanek.....August 3
Lynne Hultman.....August 10
Jesse Figueroa.....August 11
Sue Meinholz.....August 12
Rebecca Ervasti.....August 13
Sue Hanvey.....August 16
Cyndi Keesee.....August 21
Lynne Wilkerson.....August 23
John Keefe.....August 26
Susan Hernick.....August 27



Purchased something for the church?

To get an accurate count of giving to the church, please let us know if you have purchased something for the church but have not asked for reimbursement. We will list that purchase on your giving statement as a "gift-in-kind" so it will show on your contribution statement and the church knows how much is being given.

If you have any questions, please contact church office, 651-257-4306.

Fund Raising Picnic

This picnic is to support the
Chisago Lakes Community Meal

Rain or Shine!

Thursday, August 8
3:30—6:00p

Zion Lutheran Church
28005 Old Towne Rd.
Chisago City

Free will donation
to support the
Community Meals
served every Monday
at Zion Lutheran

Questions?
Dorothy Lecy, 651-260-3048

Unidos en Cristo weekends Experience New Testament Christianity

Unidos en Cristo (formally Cursillo) is a 3-day learning, sharing and inspirational experience of living in a Christian community. During the three days of a week-end, a person experiences authentic Christian fellowship and the joy of being part of a genuine Christian community.

2019

Our next weekend will be October 31-Nov. 3. It's our first Co-ed Weekend and will be held at Faith Presbyterian. Our Rectora is Cathy Johnson Colman. This weekend is Co-ed, with men's tables and women's tables. It is not a couples weekend but couples are welcome. The experience will focus on the individual and their walk with the Lord. Sleeping rooms will also be by gender. This is also a Co-ed team. We are leveraging experienced leadership for this first Co-ed weekend.

If you would like to participate in an Unidos en Cristo weekend or would like more information, please contact **Scott or Cheryl Lecy**, 651-462-5725.

Prison Ministry...if you're interested in Charis Prison Ministry, please contact **Scott Lecy**, 612-805-2524.

Monthly Giving update

Our General Fund Budget for 2019 is \$192,053, which becomes \$16,004 per month.

General Fund giving for June was 17,512.55.

Thank you for your support of our ministries!

Worship Attendance in July

July 7—79

July 14—65

July 21—66

July 28—65



This 'N' That By Juanita Morgan

Remembrance--- Hope Circle women mourn the loss of **Sara Otto** who died July 2, 2019. Sara was a member of the Circle for several years. She was gifted and shared these gifts with our church: piano playing, calligraphy, art work, needlework, poetry, and more. We will not forget her loving presence.

Another loss occurred for Hope Circle this month. **Phyllis Perry's son Lee** died unexpectedly on July 9. The Circle provided refreshments after his funeral service at 1st UMC on Saturday, July 20. Phyllis is an active member of the Circle and often helps at funeral lunches. This time it was for HER SON!

From the Past—I am still perusing Hope Circle minutes from the late nineties. Here are a few tidbits:

February 1985—Meeting at **Dorothy Streed's** home. The Circle was given "tasks" by the UMW (United Methodist Women) to fulfill in the coming year.

-----Continue collecting Campbell Soup labels for Redbird Missions.

-----Circle will be notified as to the contribution to the F&S (Father & Son?) Banquet on Feb. 28.

-----Circle will contribute six pans of bars for the World Day of Prayer on March 1.

Minutes were written by **Dorothy Streed**, who wrote "**No one remembered where we had left off in our Bible Study. The rest of the time dealt in discussion of our church, the past, present, and future, and where do we go from here?**" Seems this is still a topic in 2019!!

There were other Circles. They all 'worked' under the umbrella of UMW, a national organization. Hope Circle usually met in member's homes, but often frequented restaurants such as Wagon Wheel, and Rainbow Cafe.

The Hope Circle Room did not **exist** until the 21st Century!!

Help Needed: Financial Secretary

Since **Linda Ploog's** resignation, we are seeking a volunteer Financial Secretary to begin as soon as possible. Linda is willing to help with training and the transition. If anyone is interested in this volunteer position, please contact **Pr. Dale** directly. A position description is available.

Looking ahead...

Confirmation Orientation and Registration

We are beginning a new three-year confirmation program this Fall. Youth in grades 6 – 8 are invited to participate. There will be an orientation and registration meeting on Wednesday, September 4 at 7:00 p.m. Confirmation will begin on Wednesday, September 11 at 7:00 p.m. Parents and youth are invited to attend the orientation. Friends of our youth are welcome to participate in the program if they and their parents wish. Talk to **Pr. Dale** for more information or if you are unable to attend the orientation.

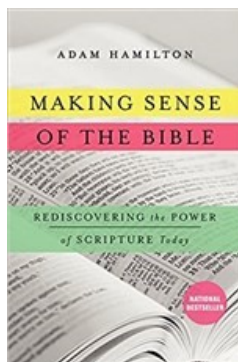
Adult Wednesday Night Bible Study

Adult Bible Study will resume on Wednesday, September 11 at 6:00 p.m. in the Lounge. For six weeks we will be studying together the book by Adam Hamilton, "Making Sense of the Bible: Rediscovering the Power of Scripture Today." Copies of the book will be available in the church office or you can order your own copy online if you prefer.

In *Making Sense of the Bible*, Adam Hamilton invites us into an honest conversation about the Bible. The six-session study begins with foundational questions such as, How and when was the Bible written? Who decided which books made it into the scriptures and why? How literally must we read it? And, is the Bible ever wrong? In approachable and inviting language, Hamilton addresses these often misunderstood biblical themes leading you to a deeper appreciation of the Bible so that we might hear God speak through it and find its words to be life-changing and life-giving.

Dive into the Old Testament with Adam Hamilton for a better understanding of the texts and how they were compiled as you gain an appreciation for scripture's foundation of our Christian faith today. These will be important questions to discuss together. Many read the same Bible but interpret it differently. These questions will help us gain more clarity and understanding in regard to our Holy Bible.

As always, you are encouraged to invite a friend!



Rally Sunday and Outdoor Worship Celebration!

Join us on **September 8 at 10:00a** as we worship outdoors at our pavilion!

We will kick-off a Fall preaching and worship series entitled, "Claimed: Wildly Loved By God!"

Throughout this preaching series we'll explore the question, "Who am I?" This is a question we often ask ourselves. Despite the many voices of social media, peers, family and influences from the world around us, there is one voice that reveals our truest identity – the voice of Jesus that claims that we are beloved children of God. Isaiah 43:1 says, "Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine." Throughout scripture, God constantly reminds us that we are God's children, and that we are claimed and wildly loved by Jesus.

This Fall we will explore our identity in Christ by studying who God says we are compared to who the world pushes us to be.

Rally Sunday, September 8 – God Claims Me!

Sunday, September 15 – God Loves Me!

Sunday, September 22 – God Equips Me!

Sunday, September 29 – God Forgives Me!

Sunday, October 6 – God Is With Me!



Help Needed: Choir Director/ Accompanist

Since **Kay Oien's** resignation, we are seeking a Choir Director/Accompanist to begin as soon as possible. Kay also, is willing to help with the transition if needed. This is stipended position (\$2,400/annually). If interested in this position please contact **Pr. Dale** directly.



Meals on Wheels Deliverers

August 1—Marvin Hultquist
August 2—Greg McCarthy

August 5—Michelle Gillespie
August 6—Ron & Juanita Morgan
August 7—Gary & Marna Gerke
August 8—Donn & Sharlene Arnold
August 9—Jim & Joyce Stafki

August 12—Phil & Joan DeMunck
August 13—Cindy Kopp
August 14—Larry & Shirley Knopf
August 15—Irv & Dorothy Lecy
August 16—Bonnie Vasatka

August 19—Harold & Jan Lovaas
August 20—Grace Schmidt & Erma Broecker
August 21—Lois Anderson & Judy Pierre
August 22—Jon Glader
August 23—Dick Berglund & Wally Ostlie

August 26—Jim & Joyce Stafki
August 27—Jan Gravelle & Diana Westrum
August 28—Fred Prindle
August 29—Bonnie Bielicki
August 30—Harold & Jan Lovaas

Meals on Wheels Coordinator:
Juanita Morgan, 257-9268

Tech Ministries Schedule

August 4 – Sound: NEEDED
Accompanist: Sue Hanvey

August 11 – Sound: Craig Stockel
Accompanist: Nancy Thalacker

August 18 – Sound: Craig Stockel
Accompanist: Sue Hanvey

August 25 – Sound: Scott Lecy
Accompanist: Nancy Thalacker

Hope Circle meeting...

Hope Circle will NOT be meeting in August



Prayer Chain

If you would like a request for prayer to go out on our Prayer Chain, please call **the church office**, 651-257-4306, or **Lois Anderson**, 651-213-1036.

Would you like to be a part of the Prayer Chain?
Please call the church office for more information.

Can we be of help?

Church Office Hours:
Monday – Friday,
8:00 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Pastor Dale is available to help you with your spiritual journey and the door is open most mornings. Please give us a call at 257-4306 if we can be of help to you in any way.

Church email address:
office@lindstrommethodist.org

Pastor Dale's email address:
dale@lindstrommethodist.org

Sunday Messages available online

Pastor Dale's Sunday messages are posted to our website: www.lindstrommethodist.org the week following the service.

Pastor Dale writes a blog on the website and posts it on Tuesdays.

August 2019



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Office Hours Monday – Friday 8:00a – 2:30p				1	2 Pastor's Day Off	3
4 9:00a Worship 10:15a Fellowship 10:30a Congregational Conversation with D.S. Susan Nienaber	5 ***Pastor	6 Dale	7 on	8 NO Hope Circle vacation*** /	9 Pastor's Day Off	10
11 9:00a Worship 10:15a Fellowship	12 *** Pastor	13 6p Feed My Starving Children Packing Event— Coon Rapids 6:30p Trustees	14 *** Pastor	15 Dale	16 Pastor's Day Off Carol Schmidt on vacation	17 vacation
18 9:00a Worship 10:15a Fellowship Mission Sunday~ Feed My Starving Children ***** /	19 *** Carol	20 7p Finance 8p Church Council Newsletter Deadline Schmidt,	21 Secretary,	22 on	23 Pastor's Day Off vacation*** /	24
25 9:00a Worship 10:15a Fellowship	26	27	28	29	30 Pastor's Day Off	31

First United Methodist Church
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Fax (651) 257*8039

lindstrommethodist.org

Address Service Requested
Contains dated material

Sent with a prayer to:

August 2019



First United Methodist Church Pastor Dale Stiles

Practicing Grace Until We Are Perfected In Love

The *Grace Courier* is a monthly publication of
First United Methodist Church.

**Deadline: the third Tuesday of each month
for inclusion in the next month's publication.**

Articles received after this date will not be printed.
Place articles in the secretary's mailbox, on the desk
in the office or email them to the church. The editor
reserves the right to edit any material submitted for
publication.

We welcome you to worship with us!

Worship 9:00 a.m.

Coffee fellowship 10:15 a.m.

Our Ministry Team:

Pastor...	Dale Stiles
Administrative Secretary / Treasurer...	Carol Schmidt
Children's Coordinator...	Erin Thorvaldson
Choir Director...	
Church Council Chairperson...	Terry Keesee
Custodian...	Cheryl Hultquist
Finance Chairperson...	Scott Lecy
Financial Secretary...	
Foundation Chairperson...	Donn Arnold
Lay Leader...	Craig Stockel
Lay Member to Annual Conference...	
Mission Chairperson...	Adrienne Stegmeir
Staff/Parish Relations Chairperson...	Juanita Morgan
Trustees Chairperson...	Lloyd Jones
Worship Team Leader...	Beth Lunsford
Youth Coordinator...	Erin Thorvaldson

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Web site: lindstrommethodist.org