



GRACE COURIER

lindstrommethodist.org

Our December Mission Focus is The Gideons

Changing Lives for Over 100 Years!

The Gideons International began distributing the Word of God in 1908. Today, they have more than 300,000 members—and an untold number of supporters—in 200 countries, territories and possessions across the globe. These dedicated individuals give their time and money to make it possible for others to learn about the love of God by giving them access to His Word.

Distributing Bibles and new Testaments Around the World

Having God's Word can and does lead people to faith in Christ, and those new

Christians then grow by studying their Scriptures and even use them to share their faith with others.

For this reason, Gideons focus on distributing complete Bible, new Testaments, or portions thereof. These copies of God's Word are printed in more than 90 languages and are either given directly to certain individuals or placed in selected public locations where large numbers of people, who may be searching for answers, will have the ability to encounter the Word of God.

Mission Sunday is December 15. You may give any time during the month. Envelopes are in each pew.

Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship

We hope you will join us to celebrate Christ's birth this Christmas Eve, Tuesday, December 24 at 4:30 p.m.

Come early to hear the special prelude music provided by musicians in our congregation beginning at 4 p.m.

Our offering will be divided between Family Pathways Food Shelf and the Pastor's Discretionary Fund which helps those in our congregation who have a financial need.



Living Nativity

Come experience the true meaning of CHRISTmas.

Saturday, December 14th
Shows at 6:00p, 6:30p, 7:00p, 7:30p

Bundle up for this FREE outside event. Shows last about 15 minutes. Interested in participating, check the sign up sheet in the fellowship hall.

We are in need of LOTS of cookies for the Living Nativity! We invite the people who watch the nativity inside for hot chocolate and cookies between shows. So, as you are doing your Christmas baking set aside a few dozen cookies and bring them to church by Saturday December 14th.



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Dates to remember:

December 14
Living Nativity

December 15
Mission Sunday-Gideons

December 24
Christmas Eve
Candlelight Service

December 25
Christmas Dinner

December 31
New Year's Eve

From the pastor...

Dear Friends,

I write this as we are nearing the Thanksgiving holiday. As it approaches I am continuing to consider those things I am grateful for in my life and in the life of our congregation. Among many, one of the things I am most grateful for in the life of our congregation at this time is our newly introduced Angel Tree Mission of the Month, coordinated by Tina Forcier and Adrienne Stegmeier. The Angel Tree mission provides Christmas gifts for children of local families in need. I am so happy to share that (to date) nineteen local families will benefit from this mission of our congregation. Thank you!

When we think about the impact of this mission, the Angel Tree provides joy to both the giver and the receiver. In my experience with this mission currently, and in previous congregations, I have experienced and observed first-hand the joy members have felt from purchasing gifts for these children - children who are unknown to them.

I always like to imagine a similar joy felt and experienced on the other side - the side of the child - upon receiving and opening their gift. Excitement and joy on both sides - for giving and for receiving. This is what the upcoming season of Advent and Christmas are all about - the combined joy of giving and receiving.

Thank you again, to all who have participated in the Angel Tree mission this year. I am grateful for you, as are the families whose children will benefit. It is my prayer that we all find such joy in both giving and receiving this season as we are reminded that we all have already received a Christmas gift. This gift hasn't changed from last Christmas or the Christmas before that or from Christmases long ago. Every year - and every day, for that matter - we embrace the gift of a Son. This is the one whom we receive, and this is the one whom we give to others. Great joy in both!

The blessings of Advent and Christmas to you,

Pr. Dale

Youth Cookie Baking

Need help baking for the Holidays?
Let the Youth help you!



You can order a festive wrapped platter containing **SIX dozen** homemade cookies and treats for \$30. You will enjoy tasty treats such as peanut butter blossoms, decadent fudge, sugar cookies, Russian tea cakes and more! See Order Form on table in foyer for ordering information, or find one of the youth at the Cookie Table in Fellowship Hall following services.

Children's Shop Day

As we've been traveling for many years, we haven't had the opportunity to be here for 'Shop Day'. This year **Irvin** and I helped set up the many donated gifts (Wow! What a beautiful gift shop!) **Irvin** made sure coffee was always available for parents and grandparents in the lounge while **Juanita Morgan** and **Jan Gravelle** served cookies and the kids shopped.

I wrapped gifts along with nine other wrappers. We did work fast and kept busy. A comment made was the look of apprehension on the kid's faces before entering the gift shop and their expressions when leaving with their wrapped presents. A delight to watch!

This is such an organized event thanks to **Erin and Taylor Thorvaldson** and their many helpers.

We'd like to make a request to you after Christmas shoppers—please buy gift bags (every size)! They work so well. We can store them if you bring them to church.

Thank you, **Dorothy Lecy**



In Our Prayers...

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

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.

Thank you!

To my dear friends at FUMC:

I thank you so very, very much for being a part of the fun filled day this past Saturday (Nov. 9) as we celebrated my 100th birthday! Your kindness in thoughts and deeds made this day one I will never forget. My heart smiles every time I recall the wonderful events of the day. May the blessings you extended to me be warmly returned to all of you.

God bless you!
Babe Anderson



Thank you!

A big thank you to the following volunteers who helped to keep the church lawn mowed all summer and to those who helped pick up leaves this fall.

Great job **Dick Berglund, Terry Kopp, Irv Lecy, Tom Lundberg, Russell Oehme!**

Trustees

Nursery

We are pleased to be able to provide a Nursery during the worship service. It is designed for infants through 2 years.

Children are always welcome in the worship service.

Birthdays!



Jim Holweger.....December 6
Pam Fossum.....December 11
Cindy Kopp.....December 12
Gary Gerke.....December 13
Ernie Kertzsch.....December 14
Gretchen Dorenbusch.....December 15
Madelyn Tomczak.....December 16
Rachel Tracy.....December 16
Carol Lundberg.....December 22
Jim Caldwell.....December 23
Jeff Vitali.....December 24
Chris Anderson.....December 29
Karen Brohaugh.....December 29
Larry Knopf.....December 30



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 **Lloyd Jones**, 651-213-3110..

Merry Christmas!

We wish you and your family a very Merry Christmas and a Blessed New Year!

Pastor Dale

Carol Schmidt Adrienne Stegmeir
Lloyd Jones Scott Lecy
Beth Lunsford Cheryl Hultquist
Erin Thorvaldson



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.

2020

#299 Men: February 20-23

#300 Women: February 27-March 1

Held at Main Street Church, North Branch

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 October was \$10,049.81.

Thank you for your support of our ministries!

Worship Attendance in November

Nov. 3—75

Nov. 10—70

Nov. 17—72

Nov. 24—78



Community Christmas Day Dinner



First UMC will be serving a free Christmas Dinner Christmas Day from 12:00—1:15 p.m. A tasty, hot meal will be served for those seeking a place to share a meal and enjoy in a little Christmas Day fellowship.

Homebound individuals may request a meal be delivered.

Individuals wishing to volunteer to help, or donate food or cash to support the event are invited to call the church at 651-257-4306 before Dec. 18.

The meal is free, but reservations are requested by Dec. 18. To make a reservation, call the church at 651-257-4306. If after hours, please leave a message.

Year End Giving

If you wish to make an end-of-the year charitable donation to First UMC, it will need to be received **NO LATER than Sunday, December 29** to be included in your 2019 contribution.

Anything received after that date will be applied to your 2020 contribution.

Thank you for supporting the ministries of First UMC

Foundation Mission

Just a reminder from the Foundation Board that our mission is to assist church members in funding activities that lead to a more Christ-centered life. This applies to both adult and children's events. Applications for funding are located in the Foundation po box located outside the church office. If you have any questions, please talk to **Donn Arnold, Dick Berglund, Cyndi Keese, Susan Hernick, Lois Anderson, or Dari Ferguson**.

Monday Night Community Meal

The goal of the Chisago Lakes Community Meal is to provide a free healthy meal and a place for social fellowship, especially for those living in isolation, for anyone in our community every Monday night. The meal is served at Zion Lutheran Church in Chisago City from 4-6 pm.

- September 10, 2019 marked the 8 year anniversary of this community event.
- 9,230 meals have been served January through October this year, which puts us on track for serving about 500 more meals this year than last.
- Since Feb. 2018, we have consistently served over 200 meals. Many Mondays we have served 220-240 meals including those packed “to-go” for homebound spouses and neighbors.
- The food cost for a meal averages \$1.45. Weekly, we spend an average of \$308 for food/supplies and \$160 for salaries (we pay a head cook who plans, shops and prepares the meals, and an assistant who helps with food prep on Mondays) which makes a total average weekly cost of \$465.
- In 2019 (through October) we have had 738 community volunteers from churches, school teams and organizations, businesses and service groups come to serve this meal donating a total of 2,248 hours of time.
- We survey our guests twice a month and find that 51% of the people who eat at the meal are at 200% of the poverty guidelines or lower. 70% of the people we serve are seniors, but we have seen an increase in the number of families with children who attend.
- Our expenses run about \$24,100 per year. As a board, it is our goal to always be working one year ahead on financing, so we know the program will continue to exist.
- We held our first fund raising event on August 8th and raised \$5,786 at our “Fund Raising Feast.”
- First UMC members have provided desserts many times this year on an ongoing schedule. As a church we have served two full community meals and many have volunteered serving over the course of this year.

- Chisago Lakes Clergy Association (CLACA) helped out twice this year by generously donating a freezer and then later, two refrigerators when ours broke down.
- We have tried to increase our visibility within the community by taking part in three local parades and sharing information at several community events.
- The most wonderful thing about this ministry is that it is truly a “community” meal. It is eaten, served, funded, hosted and run by the people of the Chisago Lakes area. It’s really pretty special. Thank you for being a part of it!
- First UMC will be serving at the Community Meal Monday, January 13. More to follow.

Board members:

Dorothy Lecy and Nancy Thalacker

HELP

Health Equipment Lending Program

Do you or someone you know need temporary medical equipment?

HELP began in 2010 with the idea of three men from the community (two from Trinity Lutheran Church and one from First UMC) who saw the need for health equipment to be available to all who may have need of it.

HELP offers used medical equipment to anyone with a temporary need. The equipment can be “borrowed” for up to six months, but can be extended with a phone call for another six months – for a total borrow time of one year. After that, the equipment will need to be returned. The equipment is housed at First UMC.

The equipment is donated by individuals and health care providers. It is cleaned and sanitized before being issued for use.

Call the church office, 257-4306, for information on what equipment is available for your use or to donate used equipment.

Hours are Monday—Friday, 9:00 a.m.—2:00 p.m.

Church Council Minutes February 19, 2019

Council Members Present: Pastor Dale, Lloyd Jones, Adrienne Stegmeir, Erin Thorvaldson, Juanita Morgan, Emily Honerbrink, Scott Lecy, Cheryl Lecy

Trustees: Playground rock has been delivered; we received a free donation from Aggregate Industries for the rock and Lloyd arranged free delivery from Roadmaster Express. Rock will be spread in the near future. Parking lot light has been installed and is working, thanks to Mark Vanderwerf. Craig Stockel will once again be serving community Christmas dinner at Church. Continuing to get quotes together for carpet in fellowship hall; decision after January 1st.

Foundation: No report, still looking for another committee member.

Missions: \$477 was raised for the October Mission (Youth With A Mission (YWAM) – Erik & Ele Brohaugh). \$700 was raised for Hurricane Relief (UMCOR). November mission will be the Angel Tree; 19 children have applied. Thank you to everyone who has already donated wrapping paper and gift cards. Sunday, November 24th people can take names from the tree. December mission will be Gideons (presenting December 15th). Thanksgiving Service FUMC donations will go to CLACA. Christmas Eve collection with split between Family Pathways & the Pastor's discretionary fund.

Publicity & Social Media: Living Nativity will be advertised in local papers. Posters for the Nativity will be available for people to take and post on Sunday, November 24th. Flyers will be placed in grocery bags at Brinks; we are also getting the large sign from Brinks to advertise the event. Additional sign will also be placed near County Press offices. 400 people have shown interest in the event on Facebook. Children's Shop Day generated \$687, roughly 120 kids attended. Huge shoutout to **Taylor Thorvaldson** for all her hard work! Barb's Facebook posts are continuing to generate good responses.

Lay Leader: no report

Staff/Parish Relations Committee: Thank you to **Scott Lecy** for covering pastoral compensation. Rule of Christ Training still in limbo; up for discussion after holidays. Planning is underway to recognize people in both paid positions and volunteer positions at the Church; recognition at different times of the year for each group.

Finance: Giving is down for October. November giving is on track. Notable: Missions giving is double this year over last year. Some members have redirected offerings to missions. Council reviewed preliminary budget for 2020; final budget will be voted on in January. Preliminary budget is \$18,532 less than the 2019 budget. Pledges are currently down significantly. Committee announced they were looking for additional members; **Gerry Gaudette** volunteered to serve.

Worship Team: Communicating weekly; team is meeting November 24th to plan for Advent.

Children, Youth and Family: 2 classes were held last week (PreK-K, 1-3rd). Classes have fluctuated, 4-9 kids on average. Will do pajama day again on December 15 (day after Living Nativity). Super Bowl Worship will be February 2nd. Currently working on ideas to engage the older kids.

Upcoming events: Joint Thanksgiving worship Tuesday, November 26th (FUMC, TLC, CLLC) hosted by Trinity. 6:30pm; Pie Social to follow. Looking for people to bake or buy pies! Living Nativity December 14.

New Business: **Wendy Vanderwerf** has agreed to take on the role of Council Chair beginning January 1. Wendy will be an incredible asset to the council; she has a strong faith, is committed to the Church, has a positive outlook and is excited to take on the role. Thank you Wendy!

Pastor Dale's Report:

Highlights of the Month:

October 26: Oktoberfest

October 27: Commitment Sunday

November 2: Children's Shop Day

November 2-4: Vacation (Pr. Tom Ervasti - Guest Pastor)

November 13: Chisago Lakes Clergy Association –CLACA

November 14: Finance committee mtg for 2020 budget prep

In Addition...to these highlighted dates/events I will add that the Wednesday night Adult Bible Study on Ephesians is going well and is well attended.

Thank you to all who participate! Confirmation on Wednesday night continues to go well, also. There are six students. We are studying and applying themes of the New Testament, singing songs, playing games and planning service events.

Our CLACA group met with Chisago Lakes School District Superintendent, **Dean Jennissen**, on 11/13 to express our clergy support and to brainstorm ways we can work together with the school district, when possible, for the betterment of our wider community.

I continue to meet with congregation members for pastoral care and counseling needs on a weekly basis, in homes, on the phone, or at Church.

I also want to express my appreciation to **Bret RempelEwert** and **Sue Hanvey** for making the effort to get our choir together whenever possible in the absence of a formal choir director. This is great for our worship experience. Thank you, Bret and Sue! Those involved in leading worship will be meeting on Sunday, November 24 to discuss and plan our upcoming Advent and Christmas season worship.

I look forward to our Advent and Christmas season together. I plan to use my remaining vacation days after Christmas, December 29-January 4.

Respectfully submitted, **Emily Honerbrink**



Meals on Wheels Deliverers

Dec. 2—Donn & Sharlene Arnold
Dec. 3—Marvin Hultquist

Dec. 4—Gary Gerke
Dec. 5—Irv & Dorothy Lecy
Dec. 6—Greg McCarthy

Dec. 9—Michelle Gillespie
Dec. 10—Ron & Juanita Morgan
Dec. 11—Larry & Shirley Knopf
Dec. 12—Fred Prindle
Dec. 13—Bonnie Vasatka

Dec. 16—Phil & Joan DeMunck
Dec. 17—Cindy Kopp
Dec. 18—Lois Anderson & Judy Pierre
Dec. 19—Bonnie Bielicki
Dec. 20—Jim & Joyce Stafki

Dec. 23—Irv & Dorothy Lecy
Dec. 24—Grace Schmidt & Erma Broecker
Dec. 25—HOLIDAY
Dec. 26—Jon Glader
Dec. 27—Harold & Jan Lovaas

Dec. 30—Dick Berglund & Wally Ostlie
Dec. 31—Jan Gravelle & Diana Westrum

Meals on Wheels Coordinator:
Juanita Morgan, 257-9268



Tech Ministries Schedule

Dec. 1 – Sound: Craig Stockel
Accompanist: Sue Hanvey

Dec. 8 – Sound: Bruce Larsen
Accompanist: Nancy Thalacker

Dec. 15 – Sound: Scott Lecy
Accompanist: Sue Hanvey

Dec. 22 – Sound: Craig Stockel
Accompanist: Nancy Thalacker

Dec. 24 - Sound: Bruce Larsen
Accompanist: Nancy Thalacker & Sue Hanvey

Dec. 29 – Sound: Craig Stockel
Accompanist: Nancy Thalacker

Hope Circle meeting...

Hope Circle will be meeting Thursday, Dec. 12 at 11:00a for a potluck luncheon. Bring food item for Food Shelf, also toiletries for men and women. All women of the church are invited!



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. 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.



December 2019



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 1st Sunday of Advent 9:00a Worship/ NO Sunday School 10:15a Fellowship	2 6p Bell Choir	3	4 6p Adult Bible Study 7p Confirmation 7p Choir 8p Worship Team	5	6 Pastor's Day Off	7
8 2nd Sunday of Advent 9:00a Worship/ Sunday School 10:15a Fellowship	9 6p Bell Choir	10 6:30p Trustees	11 6p Adult Bible Study 7p Confirmation 7p Choir 8p Worship Team	12 11a Hope Circle/Potluck Brunch	13 Pastor's Day Off 5:30p Rehearsal for Living Nativity	14 6:00p 6:30p 7:00p 7:30p Living Nativity
15 3rd Sunday of Advent 9:00a Worship/ Sunday School 10:15a Fellowship Mission Sunday~ Gideons	16 6p Bell Choir	17 No meetings Newsletter deadline	18 6p Adult Bible Study 7p Confirmation 7p Choir 8p Worship Team	19	20 Pastor's Day Off	21
22 4th Sunday of Advent 9:00a Worship/ NO Sunday School 10:15a Fellowship	23	24 Christmas Eve 4:30p Worship Office Closed	25 Christmas! Christmas Dinner Served 12:00—1:15p 	26	27 Pastor's Day Off	28 12p Fellowship Hall Used
29 9:00a Worship/ NO Sunday School 10:15a Fellowship *Pastor Dale	30 on vacation	31  Dec. 29-Jan. 4*	Office Hours Monday – Friday 8:00a – 2:30p			

First United Methodist Church
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lindstrommethodist.org

Address Service Requested
Contains dated material

Sent with a prayer to:

December 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.

Children leave for Sunday School during Worship

Coffee fellowship 10:15 a.m.

Wednesday Evening Activities:

5:00p Family Dinner

6:00p Adult Bible Study

7:00p Confirmation

Our Ministry Team:

Pastor...

Administrative Secretary / Treasurer...

Children's Coordinator...

Choir Director...

Church Council Chairperson...

Custodian...

Finance Chairperson...

Financial Secretary...

Foundation Chairperson...

Lay Leader...

Lay Member to Annual Conference...

Mission Chairperson...

Staff/Parish Relations Chairperson...

Trustees Chairperson...

Worship Team Leader...

Youth Coordinator...

Dale Stiles

Carol Schmidt

Erin Thorvaldson

Cheryl Hultquist

Scott Lecy

Lloyd Jones

Donn Arnold

Craig Stockel

Adrienne Stegmeir

Juanita Morgan

Lloyd Jones

Beth Lunsford

Erin Thorvaldson

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