

629 Kansas City Street, Rapid City, SD 57701

Phone 605-342-4498

[www.rapidcityfirst.org](http://www.rapidcityfirst.org)

# Messenger



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Inside this issue:

Volume 23, Issue 02

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Michele's Minute	<a href="#">2</a>
Children's Ministry, PrimeTimers	<a href="#">3</a>
Financial News, Giving to Others	<a href="#">4</a>
Calendar of Weekly Events	<a href="#">5</a>
UMW	<a href="#">6</a>
Reflections	<a href="#">7</a>
Volunteer Spotlight	<a href="#">8</a>

## Greg's Greeting

Through a recent mailing and announcements during worship, I've shared the news of the pending pastoral change for our congregation. I'll devote more space to my own thoughts and future plans for another time. We are trusting God that all things will work out according to his design and that as we wait, we do so with hope and patience. This much I know with certainty, Pastor Barry Whipkey is a skilled, caring pastor who is poised to lead this congregation. I've known Barry and his wife, Deb, for the past dozen years. Actually, the connection goes back almost 30 years as I later learned that Deb provided housekeeping assistance to my late, maternal grandmother at her home in Parker, SD. I've known Barry to be an outstanding spiritual leader while I served as his district superintendent. He is devoted and disciplined in his own discipleship journey, as well as in his personal leadership and life-style practices and habits. Most importantly to me, he has been a devoted pastor serving the Madison UMC, the congregation that has been the spiritual home for my parents. In my father's declining health and eventual passing, Pastor Barry was a source of great strength and compassion as my father crossed over into the fullness of life eternal. First UMC will be blessed to have Barry and Deb. The people of First UMC will be, I have no doubt, a blessing to them.

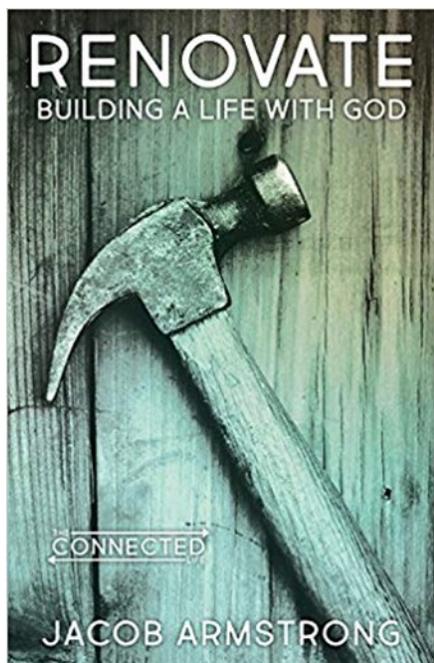
As we live into these changes already before us, we're also mindful that this month a special General Conference will convene in St. Louis, MO. Meeting from February 23<sup>rd</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup>, delegates from our global United Methodist Church will consider various proposals for dealing with matters of human sexuality that have brought our denomination to the point of schism. I have provided summary information previously and more information is constantly becoming available. Here is a link to an official website so that you can access the most current and updated details <http://www.umc.org/topics/general-conference-2019-special-session>. On **Monday, March 4<sup>th</sup>** at 2:00 pm and again at 7:00 pm, I'll lead a presentation and question/answer session to detail the actions taken by the general conference. In so far as it is possible, I'll also explain what any such actions might mean for the UMC, as well as the Dakotas Conference and our own local congregation. I'm planning that each session would last no longer than 90 minutes. If additional time is needed, additional gatherings will be scheduled.

Please join with me in lifting these situations before the Lord in our prayers. We pray for a wonderful welcome and transition for all as Pastor Barry and Deb come to make First UMC their spiritual family. We pray for the United Methodist Church that God will direct the hearts and minds of all United Methodists to be the Church that God is calling us to be. May God also direct the decisions of our general conference delegates accordingly.

Along the Journey Together,

Pastor Greg

## Michele's Minute



As we look ahead to Lent, First Church joins with many other Methodist churches in the Dakotas Conference in using the book, "Renovate" by Jacob Armstrong as our study for this season. Armstrong uses the book of Nehemiah and that prophet's God-ordained project of rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem as a focus for the study. We will spend six weeks comparing the rebuilding of the people of Judah's spiritual lives with how we might do the same. Chapters in the book include:

Never Too Late for a Renovation

It Starts with Tears

What to Know Before You Build

When Others Don't Like Your Plans

Inviting Others to Come Home

The Big Reveal

There is a DVD component in addition to the book and we hope everyone will participate in this study. Other studies will be going on hiatus during Lent to encourage everyone to share in this. Books will be \$11 each. You may order it yourself or download it to a device for approximately the same price.

I had the chance to listen to Jacob Armstrong at an event in Sioux Falls this past fall and he was a very engaging and inspired speaker. I expect the videos will be quite helpful. Even if you choose not to order the book but would like to sit in on the video and discussion, please join in! Classes will be held at 10:10 a.m. Sunday mornings and at 6:15 p.m. on Wednesday evenings. Classroom location TBD depending upon number of students. Additional times and locations may also be available.

Please sign up in the parlor by February 10 and note which class you plan to attend and whether you would like us to order the book for you. Classes will begin March 3 (Sunday) and 6 (Wednesday).

Please let me know if you have any questions on this or any other studies.

Blessings to you all!

Michele

# Children's and Youth Ministry

## A Note from Children's Ministry:

Children's ministry will be continuing our At Home with God series in Sunday School. This is a curriculum that guides us through the families of the Bible and their relations to our families today. Wednesday Night Live (WNL) will continue rotating through the different pieces and parts of the story of Jesus's life.

A few reminders:

- Nursery is available Sunday mornings from 9:00-12:00
- Sunday School meets from 10:10am-10:50
- WNL meets Wednesday nights. from 6:00-7:30

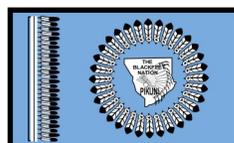


Here is a delicious opportunity to help our youth and leaders go to Montana again!

### Fat Tuesday Pancake Feed—March 5th, 6:00PM in the Fellowship Hall

Join the youth for a delicious pancake feed the day before Ash Wednesday and the beginning of Lent. Donations will go toward the 2019 Mission Trip to the Blackfeet Nation.

The mission trip to the Black Feet Nation is open for young adults and families! If you are interested, please contact Jerry Simmons by February 28th.



# Financial News

## Monthly Contribution Update:

### Dec 2017 Actual

**\$80,287**

### Dec 2018 Actual

**\$66,909**

### Dec 2018 Budget

**\$55,506**

- December Contributions were below last year but above budget.
- In December we **did not** pay any *Apportionments* and for the year we shorted apportionments \$68,239.
- If you have not pick up your **2019 giving envelopes**, they can be picked up in the parlor.
- Contribution Statements will be mailed before the end of January. Please review them carefully. If you do not receive one or have any questions – please call us at the church office.
- This church gave over **\$23,000** to 3<sup>rd</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday Mission Offerings. We also gave over **\$9,000** to local missions in 2018.
- If you have any questions or concerns about our finances, please contact me at the church office at 605-342-4498.

**--Bill Waugh/Jerry Laird, Business Administrator(s)**

**Keep The Receipts Coming**— Once we reach \$150,000, the church receives \$1,000 from Nash Finch to help with church expenses. Please turn in your entire receipts in the metal basket on the red wall by the Welcome Center *To date, we have collected \$25,950.*

**Thank you to Jon and Nila Boone, for totaling the receipts each Sunday.**

**“We Care” food certificates** are a great way to give to your church and your community! Simply write a check to First UMC and get a food gift certificate (Safeway, Walmart or Family Fare) for the amount of your check. You are given the full amount, but Church Response and First UMC both get a percentage! It is a win-win proposition!!

### ***Cornerstone Rescue Mission Meal***

Thank you those who served the mission meal: Bruce and Kim Nearhood, Randy and Robynn Welch, Bonnie Longcor and Delane Rains. *If you're interested in helping with this (we serve dinner on the third Sunday of every month). Call the office at 605-342-4498 and we'll help make it happen!*

### ***Church Response***

Please consider bringing canned vegetables for our church response food drive.

See the [rapidcityfirst.org](http://rapidcityfirst.org) calendar on the website (click the lines at the top right of the home page for the menu) for up-to-date events and more information. Please call the office at 605-342-4498 if you need more information.

### **February 2019 Calendar of Weekly Events**

Day	Time	Event	Location
Sunday	9:00 AM	Contemporary Worship	Sanctuary
Sunday	10:10 AM	Sunday School	Upper Room or Parlor
Sunday	11:00 AM	Traditional Worship	Sanctuary
1st/3rd Tuesdays	Noon	Men’s Upper Room Bible Study	Parlor
3rd Tuesday	5:30 PM	Leadership Council Meeting	Parlor
Wednesday	6:00 PM	Wednesday Night Live	
Wednesday	7:30 PM	Choir Rehearsal	Choir Room
Thursday	6:30 PM	Contemporary Worship Team Practice	Sanctuary
Thursday	6:30 PM	Bell Choir Rehearsal	Choir Room

How much do you know about Lent? Lent begins on Ash Wednesday (March 6, 2019). Here’s an interesting quiz, adapted from [www.umc.org](http://www.umc.org) to help test your knowledge about this special season leading up to Easter Sunday (April 21, 2019).

- 1. What does the term ‘Lent’, which comes from ‘*lencten*’, mean?**
  - a. Time   b. Length   c. Sacrifice   d. Spring.
- 2. When did United Methodists start the ‘imposition of ashes?’**
  - a. 1877   b. 1933   c. 1992   d. 2008
- 3. What do some United Methodists NOT sing at Lent?**
  - a. Alleluia   b. Doxologies   c. “In the Garden”   d. The communion liturgy
- 4. Many people fast during Lent. How often did John Wesley fast?**
  - a. Twice a week   b. Twice a month   c. Rarely   d. He did not fast

# UMW Notes

Because of 150th UMW birthday in March, UMW Sunday is set for March 3 with the usual UMW "Presence in the Parlor."

The Spring Rummage Sale this year will be Saturday, April 13, from 8:00 am till noon. Please note the date in your 2019 UMW Yearbook and on your calendar. Bring donations next month to room 115, and plan to help with set-up April 11 and 12.

## Reminders:

- Remember to pick up a copy of the monthly UMW News for Rapid City First Local Organization of United Methodist Women from the holder on the red wall in the parlor.
- Get 2019 UMW Yearbook from the basket in the church office workroom. And, add the above noted Spring Rummage Sale date.

## Dates to Remember:

Feb 6	Leadership Team, 9:00 am, parlor
Feb 7	Prayer Shawl Ministry, 1:30 pm, parlor
Feb 13	Esther Circle, 1:30 pm, parlor
Mar 3	UMW Sunday with "Presence in the Parlor!"

## For those of you collecting Family Fare UPCs: Thank you!

- Make sure you save only Family Fare UPCs. The barcode includes "70253."
- UPCs from other brands sold at Family Fare do not qualify for the Labels for Education program. Thank you for helping support UMW missions.
- 0 70253 16109 (Sample UPC number)



## Reflections

A couple of miles southeast of Jerusalem and situated on the eastern slope of the Mount of Olives, in the town of Bethany, there lived a man named Lazarus and his two sisters, Mary and Martha. They and Jesus were close friends, and it was not unusual for Him to occasionally stay over with them.

One day, when Jesus and some of the disciples came to Bethany, "...Martha received Him into her house" (Luke 10:38-42). Mary, unwilling to miss a word of what Jesus had to say, sat at His feet.

Luke describes Martha as being "...cumbered about much serving..." Understandably, she wanted everything to be just so, and she grew increasingly upset with Mary for sitting when she could just as well be helping. Finally, Martha's irritation must have found its boiling point, for she stormed in to where Jesus was teaching with "...don't you care...my sister has left me to serve alone?" Furthermore, she told Him to tell her, etc., etc.,...(You know how that sort of thing can go, Lord help us.)

"Martha!" Jesus mercifully stopped her before she could say more. "Martha," He continued, "thou art careful and troubled about many things; but one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her" (Luke 10:41-42).

In responding to Martha's complaint, Jesus perfectly illustrated what Paul would later write to the Ephesians (4:15): "But speaking the truth in love, [we] may grow up into Him in all things, which is the head, even Christ." We've no indication as to Martha's response to Jesus' admonition, but we do know of Proverbs 3:11, "My son, despise not the chastening of the Lord; neither be weary of his correction." We also know His correction is one more proof that He loves us because "...whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth..." (Hebrews 12:6a). Of the various definitions of 'chasten,' the one of which I'm most fond is 'refine.' It's kind of like He's polishing us up. Being works in progress—thee, me, and every other believer—we are encouraged by Philippians 1:6, which assures us that we can be "...confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."

In Bethany that day, Mary's action calls to mind the sons of Issachar in David's day. Descendants of Jacob's ninth son, they are noted for being men "...that had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do..." (I Chronicles 12:32). Perhaps Mary discerned Jesus' time on earth would be brief. So, perhaps, might hers. Whatever the case, she knew moments with Jesus were not to be lost to distraction. Much later, after the raising of Lazarus, this same Mary (John 11:2) would pour costly spikenard on Jesus' feet and wipe them with her hair. When Judas Iscariot deplored such 'waste,' Jesus rebuked him saying "Let her alone: against the day of my burying hath she kept this" (John 12:7).

Regarding Martha, surely she is to be commended for wanting to feed her guests and see to their comfort. The question is: was such a labor intensive operation necessary that day, or was there more important business at hand? The 'one thing' of which Jesus spoke may have referred to what He wanted them to know, we'll do fine with a plate of fruit, or some combination thereof. Ephesians 2:8-10 tells us God has prepared works for each of us to do. Ecclesiastes 3:1 mentions timing. James 1: 5&6 assures us of wisdom that is ours for the asking. May we be like the sons of Issachar.

Love and prayers,  
Kathy Moose

Lent quiz answers (from page 5):

1. D   2. C   3. A   4. A

## Volunteer Spotlight

### Big thanks to the Life INC helpers!

A humongous thank you goes out to all those people who have made themselves available to help host this group of roughly 35 students and their children and teachers as they attend various classes on improving their financial, physical and emotional health. All these people from First UMC have already helped, are scheduled to help, or have promised to help if called upon, either as individuals or as part of a group! If I missed anyone, please accept my apologies and let me know so I may make a correction. **Thank you to:** Brandy Alexander, Mardeena Bentz, Alan Buhler, Margot Burton, Ryan Chocholousek, Gordon Coates, Susan Dittman, Sharon Hansen, John & Judy Hey, Cindy Hillman, Shirley Huisman, Roger & Ruby Iszler, Kathy Jones, Ken & Diane Ketel, Sam & Sandy Koedam, Christal Krein, Greg Kroger, Cheryl Kulm, Kristi Larson, Bonnie Longcor, Sandra Lyons, LaRee Mayes, Kim Nearhood, Vana Nelson, Gary & Joan Newland, Pete Ottoson, Delane Rains, Lance Roberts, Kathy Rose, Judi Sides, Jerry Simmons (and family), Rodger Slott, Lynn Thorson, Bobbi Tracy, Lori Walker, Rhonda Weisser, Randy & Robynn Welch, Rhonda Williams, Shirley Wood. An extra appreciation goes out to those of you who helped multiple times throughout the nine weeks or who said "yes" to last minute needs.

Thank you for serving with a joyful heart and sharing your gifts, talents and time with those in need! We are the church!

After the Fat Tuesday Pancake Feed on March 5th at 6 pm, put on by the Youth in the Fellowship Hall, please come upstairs to the Sanctuary to celebrate with the students who are graduating from Life INC's Winter Quarter. All are welcome. This is an important event for many of these folks, who may have had trouble finishing things in life. We encourage our faith community to come and congratulate them with your presence and words of encouragement. Cake will also be served in the Parlor after the ceremony.



**Life INC Graduation Event  
March 5 at 7:15 p.m.,  
Church Sanctuary**