

2023



*"We are God's
People Sharing the
Love of Christ!"*

Website:

www.fumcgreeley.org

Email:

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Dear Siblings in Christ,

'Tis the season to be worried' has passed. For me, Christmas is a time of anxiety and fear. I worry that I am going to forget some important detail for the Advent and Christmas Eve services. I have children traveling great distances to come home and I worry about their safety. I am always nervous about what Sharon will think of her Christmas present. This year, with the added challenges of my son's wedding, I worry about all the little details, some of which I'm sure we've overlooked. During all this, I must remember our wedding anniversary. Yikes, another present to agonize over! One saving grace this year, I don't have to be concerned about how the Nebraska Cornhuskers will do in their bowl game. To be honest, at the end of Christmas, I am tired. I am tired of worrying, tired of being afraid, tired of the nervous feelings. During this Christmas time, I end up asking myself, "Did Jesus come to this earth that I can live in fear and worry?"

When we read the Gospel accounts of Jesus' birth, the answer is clear. No, Jesus did not come so we can be slaves to anxiety and fear. Zechariah was told not to fear. Joseph was told to be not afraid, the Shepherds out in their fields were told the same thing. Even Mary, who was getting very troubling news, was told not to be afraid. How can the Good News boldly proclaim, "do not be afraid", in times of struggle and strife? The birth of a child, a child named Immanuel (God with us), empowers the Good News, reminding us that we are never alone.

If the last three years have taught us anything, it is that every new year is going to bring new challenges. I believe that 2023 will not be any different. This upcoming year will have beautiful moments, heartwarming moments, times that take our breath away. 2023 will also have heartbreaking, anxious moments. There will definitely be things to worry about. However, the Good News is the message of Christmas: God is with us. When we carry that message, it empowers us to hope all things, believe all things, it allows us to do all things through Christ who strengthens us. For this new year, let us remember that Jesus changes everything.

Pastor Al Strauss

STAFF

Rev. Al Strauss

Senior Pastor

Kathy Trevino

Director of Operations

Mardy Gerwig

Bookkeeper

Nikki Barrios

Director

Family Ministries

Travis Kornegay

Director

Chancel Choir

Daniel Mullins

Director

Alleluia Bell Choir

Travis Kornegay

Organist

Daniel Mullins

Accompanist

Evan Messmer

William Zaggle

Sound and Media

Erika Vasquez

Custodian

John Hull

Security

Ginger Jansson

Newsletter Editor

tgjansson@gmail.com

FUMC FINANCIALS

YEAR TO DATE EXPENSES: **November 2022**

Conference Apportionment	\$	5,500.00
Communication	\$	1,776.16
Personnel	\$	244,074.30
Education	\$	1,367.11
Caring and Evangelism	\$	97.84
Membership Activity	\$	360.51
Worship	\$	695.08
Board of Trustees	\$	80,922.58
Administration	\$	10,602.94
Finance	\$	849.24
Youth/College	\$	153.75
TOTAL EXPENSES: Nov. 2022	\$	346,399.51
GIFTS RECEIVED	\$	322,599.09
BUDGET BALANCE	\$	-23,800.42



Ways to Give

*If you are comfortable attending in-person worship, your contributions may be placed in the offering plates.

*You can mail your check to the church (917 10th Ave, Greeley 80631)

*Another way to give is to use your King Soopers Loyalty card. Make sure you link your card with First United Methodist Church, Greeley as your charity of choice. Then each time you shop, King Soopers will donate to FUMC.

*If you shop Amazon, they have an *Amazon Smile* program. You can list First United Methodist Church, Greeley as a charity of your choice.

Thank you, FUMC Finance Committee



Help us celebrate the birthdays of our church members who are 80 years old or older.

Judy Linn	1/03	87 yrs
Pearl Hoot	1/07	94 yrs.
Doreen Smith	1/08	101 yrs.
Mercedes Morrison	1/16	106 yrs.
Doris Bunting	1/19	96 yrs.
Gary Bracken	1/20	89 yrs.
Anita Dosch	1/20	82 yrs.
Irene Longwell	1/24	96 yrs.
Paul Bechthold	1/25	95 yrs.
Georgia Bernd	1/28	84 yrs.



We celebrate the anniversaries of our church members who have been married 50 years or longer!

Frank & Glinda Ross	1/03	52 yrs.
Jerry & Joyce Carr	1/14	72 yrs.

Our deepest sympathy to the families of:

Don Lutz	December 14, 2022
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Worship Service Attendance

Knowing you are here is important to us. There are three Attendance Notebooks available for you to register your attendance on Sunday mornings. You only need to sign in one time! Knowing who is in the building helps us in case of an emergency. This also gives you an opportunity to update our records if there are changes to your phone number or address.



Announcing...

The deadline for the February 2023 *Messenger* is **Monday, January 16th**. Articles can be emailed to Ginger Jansson at tgjansson@gmail.com. If you know of someone who would like the newsletter emailed to them, please have them send their email address to me or to the office at office@fumcgreeley.org. Thank you.



Sewing for Service – End of the Year Report – 2022

Wednesday afternoons a small group of women gather in Fellowship Hall to stitch together colorful quilts, which are donated to members of our community who might need a little extra warmth during our cold winters.

During 2022 there were 127 quilts donated and 22 quilts sold.

Habitat for Humanity	34
Human Services	22
Life Stories	21
Veterans	20
A Woman's Place	20
Greeley Family House	10
Sold	<u>22</u>
Total =	149

Thanks to everyone who purchased a quilt. That money buys the batting (filling) and thread and pays for sewing machine cleaning and repairs.

During the year, several members of the church donated finished quilts, fabric or sheets to Sewing for Service. Thanks to Linda Moody, Luella Kinnison, Leona Bowker, Jean Eklund, Gerry Bertelsen, Vicki Bottenberg, Marcia Hull, Connie Long and Donna Hettinger. (Sorry if your name isn't listed – sometimes we just find a parcel of fabric without a name attached or we don't make note of the donor's name)

Every child in a new Habitat for Humanity home receives a quilt at the home's dedication ceremony. With Habitat expanding its program and building more homes, the need for quilts will increase, too!

We are always happy to have more hands to help with this community outreach project. If you can't join the group in Fellowship Hall on Wednesdays, arrangements can be made to do work at home. Tying knots, pinning edges, creating designs, sewing squares together are all simple tasks, but important steps in creating a quilt. Contact the office or Marian Ruge, 970-584-4199, amruge@juno.com – or just come to Fellowship Hall on Wednesday afternoon.

ABUNDANT LIFE MINISTRY

First of all, a very big "THANK YOU" to all of you who have helped with the Abundant Life meals over the years! Your willingness to buy and fix food as well as help serve meals has been a blessing to the homeless and needy people in our community. This ministry has been in place for 15 years, but it has come to an end. There are now many places in Greeley where people in need can get a meal, and the numbers eating at Abundant Life have dwindled to often fewer than 20. Augie and Diana and their crew have done an incredible job with this ministry!

Although there will no longer be meals served each Saturday, the doors of Abundant Life will remain open for their clothing bank and food pantry. The current plan is that this will be for a couple of hours on the last Friday of every month to continue to serve people who need this assistance. We at First United Methodist Church can help by donating clothing and blankets. Please bring clean items to the alcove that is near the parlor and leave them there. Our Local and Global group will be taking your donations to the Abundant Life Church, and we will probably be asking for some people to volunteer a couple of hours of their time to help on those Fridays. Right now, donations of clothing and blankets are what we can do to help. Thank you in advance, because I know that our church will be generous in helping those less fortunate.

"I was naked, and you clothed Me."
Matthew 25:36

Joyce Langham



News from United Women in Faith

Happy New Year from the United Women in Faith, Greeley Chapter. Welcome to 2023. We are looking forward to seeing and greeting our friends at our monthly meetings in Fellowship Hall.

Our most important meeting of the year will be Thursday, January 12th, at 1:30 pm. This meeting's program focuses on our Pledge to Mission and completion of our yearly pledge cards for 2023.

Pledges received go to Pledge to Mission to support nearly 90 national and more than 54 missions around the world. We also support at least 9 local service agencies and needs within our church.

Our new updated membership booklets are now complete. We are asking a donation of \$2 for each booklet to cover costs. They will be available starting with our January meeting. Thank you to Ulafay Fry for all the hard work she has put in to get us updated!

If anyone has an idea or thoughts of a program for the year, we would welcome your ideas/help.



United
Women
in Faith

Sincerely,
Donna Hettinger, secretary



Thank-You FUMC

The Greeley Chorale would like to extend our gratitude to Connie Long and the music ministry of FUMC for the use of their handbells for our recent concerts with the Greeley Philharmonic and our own presentation of this past weekend! We experienced beautiful performances for over 1500 Greeley patrons and the use of the bells in the piece "I Saw Three Ships" was absolutely magical! Thank you!

Sincerely,
Dr. Galen Darrough
 Artistic Director, The Greeley Chorale

Wednesday Small Group

We would like to invite anyone who is interested to join us for a Bible Study during Lent. We will meet on Wednesdays, starting on January 11, 2023, 10:00am, in the Parlor. During our first meeting of the new year, we will be bringing thoughts about what study we would like to do for the Lenten Season. We have passed the leadership amongst members of the group to lead the lesson for the week. If you have questions, please direct them to Carolyn Tarman, 970-396-8564, or Connie Long, 970-371-5277

Membership Activities Commission



Mark your calendars and dust off that chili recipe. On January 15th the Membership Commission will hold a Chili Cook-off and Game afternoon. Bring that famous batch of chili and join us after worship for a great time of food and fellowship. Even if you are not a chili maker, please join us for the fun.

Report from Church Conference 2022

At the Church Conference on November 21st the following persons were elected as chairs of our committees/commissions:

Administrative Council/Lay Leader: Joyce Langham
 Staff-Parish Relations: Kevin Hilmes
 Board of Trustees: Kent Craven
 Finance: Don Kautz
 Membership Activities: Linda Kautz
 Care and Concerns: Lynette Wasse Miller
 Worship Commission: Linda Kautz
 Local and Global Concerns: Donni Clark

Let us pray throughout the year for these in leadership and all who serve on the various committees/commissions.

**The following Year End reports were submitted to the Church Conference in November.
We would like to share them with you.**

Trustees:

Ongoing maintenance continues to be the greatest challenge for Trustees with our older building. The Trustees in 2022-2023 made major upgrades to the sanctuary HVAC with a new evaporator coil and thermostat control system after it was discovered early spring that the coil had suffered freeze damage. Additionally, the hot water circulating pump for the same system was repaired in preparation for winter. Ongoing plan is to add glycol to the cooling water to prevent future freeze damage and eliminate seasonal draining and refilling. It was decided to forego future HVAC maintenance contracts that are too expensive and have not eliminated the need for major repairs, electing to wait and use the money for any repairs instead when needed.

A used lift was purchased and partially refurbished along with a pew straddle and all the overhead sanctuary lighting was replaced with new bulbs. Half the price of a suitable trailer to haul the lift is being provided by the Ft. Morgan Methodist church. They will also provide a suitable year-round storage location in exchange for the use of the First United Methodist Lift when needed for their church.

Numerous smaller projects were also completed. Older style florescent ballast lights were transitioned to LED bulbs throughout the hallways. Curtains for fellowship stage were repaired and new pull ropes and lead hangers replaced so they open and close correctly. A large stage screen and LED projector was also acquired for use with movies and presentations in the fellowship hall. The church bus had several battery, lift, and door issues that were addressed. A new irrigation sprinkler controller was acquired and installed during the summer, with more work to be done in the spring.

William Zaggle
Trustee Chair

United Women In Faith:

In March of this year our familiar name of United Methodist Women was changed to Women in Faith by the Methodist Women Conference.

Like many groups in post Covid 19 era, we are still struggling with loss of membership and fewer attending meetings. Our Greeley Women In Faith has added 3 new members but saddened with the loss of 14 through moves, declining health & passing. We continue to support our local organizations financially and fund our Aims Scholarship program.

Sincerely,
Donna Hettinger

Staff Pastor/Parish Relations Committee:

2022 was supposed to be a “quiet” year for SPPRC, but we should have realized that when people are involved, nothing is ever quiet or easy.

We were able to hire a drummer, Kevin Montgomery, a student at UNC. He is an excellent addition to our Praise team and enhances our service weekly.

Mardy Gerwig was hired as our bookkeeper to bring us in line with proper accounting practices.

Connie Long resigned her position as the Bell Choir Director on July 20. We were sorry to see her leave that position. Fortunately, Daniel Mullins agreed to take that position and is doing a wonderful job with the choir.

Mike Villanueva, our custodian, has resigned as of November 18th. We have hired Erika Vasquez as our new part time custodian. She began working on November 21st.

Bev Williams, SPPRC Chair

Local/Global:

The Commission on Local and Global Concerns continues to be the outreach commission for First United Methodist Church/Greeley. We are supported by your generous Easter and Christmas offerings and in turn we send donations to local organizations such as Greeley Family House, Catholic Charities and A Women's Place. We also support organizations outside of our community—Prison Ministries, Peace Corps and Water for People.

We also support nonprofit agencies with our physical support. Backpacks for Kids happens at the Weld Food Bank as we fill sacks for students to have food over the weekend. From November 2021 through October 2022, church members have filled 11,210 backpacks and volunteered 488 hours. Our church also supports the Weld Food Bank with two food drives during April and October of each year. Members of our church prepare and serve lunches at Abundant Life Church every month for those in need. We support Habitat for Humanity with a scheduled workday and prepared lunches for the workers. Habitat dedicated six homes in 2021 and Sewing for Service provided 22 quilts to children. By the end of 2022, it is anticipated that 14 homes will be dedicated, and 34 children will receive quilts. Our group continues to collect donations for the Clothing Bank and several of our members volunteer at the Clothing Bank. We also order flowers for Easter and Christmas.

We continue to support the Kids Hope program which provides mentors to elementary students who have been identified by the school principal as needing individual attentions. We were able to add one new mentor this year and hope to add more in 2023.

Education:

Our Sunday School for children started off in 2022 with Pastor Al's woodworking combined with painting and Bible stories. This brought back some of our before-Covid children as well as attracted some new interest. For the fall of 2022, new Sunday School material was purchased, with independent lessons that can be used in any order. Rather than try to have a substitute Sunday School teacher to give Nikki a break occasionally, we have instituted "no Sunday School on the 4th Sunday of the month." With parents being made aware of this, we are hoping that it will be a success. So far this fall we have about 10-12 kids in Sunday School each Sunday.

VBS was a huge success! There were about 25-30 kids in attendance each evening. Many of our church's adults generously gave of their time, talents, humor, and caring to make this a fun event for the kids.

The Children's Message is back to an in-person message time during the worship service rather than a pre-recorded video. We are also bringing back the participation of some of the older children as acolytes.

We had a very successful Easter Egg hunt in Lincoln Park the day before Easter, with participation of around 100 kids. We had Trunk or Treat again this year, with an added attraction of someone to do face painting.

Instead of having a children's Christmas program on Christmas Eve, it was the center of the Sunday morning service on December 18th. Plans were in the works to include our children and youth in all of the Advent Sunday services.

We do not currently have enough older kids for a "youth group," but Pastor Al has included our older kids with the ones from Ft. Morgan and Brush for some activities, one of which was a visit to a corn maze and haunted house. Nikki is planning some kind of special activity for younger kids about once a month. These activities outside of Sunday morning church are a good way to keep our youth involved and to perhaps draw some new children and youth into our church family.

There are also opportunities for adults to gain more in-depth understanding of the Bible. We have two weekly Bible studies, led by knowledgeable adults willing to spend time preparing each week. There are also various special after church studies led by Pastor Al.

Our Red Box Pantry out in front of the church is still being stocked with food and various other supplies for our homeless and needy population in the downtown area. This ministry was started a few years ago by the youth of our church and is most definitely a way for us to treat our neighbors the way Jesus would.

We awarded three McNulty Scholarships this year! Our recipients (Travis Kornegay, Lea Sanford, and Evan Messmer) were each awarded the maximum amount of \$2500.

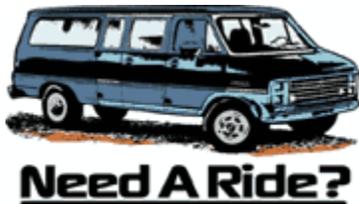
We are pleased to report that our programs, especially for our children and youth, are growing. We look forward to continued success as we try to keep our focus on God and His love for all of His children of all ages.

Blessing Box

The little red Blessing Box is an opportunity for members of FUMC to be blessed by being a blessing to others. We continue to collect “grab and go” foods and snacks, small water bottles as well as hygiene items (i.e., travel size shampoo/conditioner and soaps, toothbrushes, wash cloths, deodorant, etc.). We also need gallon sized Ziploc bags to put items in. All items can be placed on the table across the hall from the office.



We can use volunteers to help keep that room organized, fill baggies and place items in the Blessings Box during the week. Please contact Kathy @ 970- 353-5522.



HIS Ride

If you would like to start attending service on Sunday morning and need a ride, please call the church office at 970-353-5522. We will let you know what time the bus will be coming to pick you up.

We are looking for 1 or 2 substitute drivers to run the bus if our regular bus drivers cannot fill in for each other (which has rarely happened). Please let the office know if you are interested.

Liturgists

The worship committee is looking for Liturgists for the Sunday morning worship services. This includes reading the Call To Worship and Scriptures. Kathy will send you a copy of these during the week before your Sunday. If you would like to help, please sign up on the clipboard in the East Narthex.



Greeters



What's the best job in church? Being a greeter! You are the first loving touch a guest or member will meet when they enter the building. How awesome is that? If you would like to volunteer your smiling face and warm hospitality as a greeter on Sunday mornings, please sign-up on the clipboard in the East Narthex.



CHILI COOK- OFF

January 15th -
In Fellowship
Hall @ 11:30.