

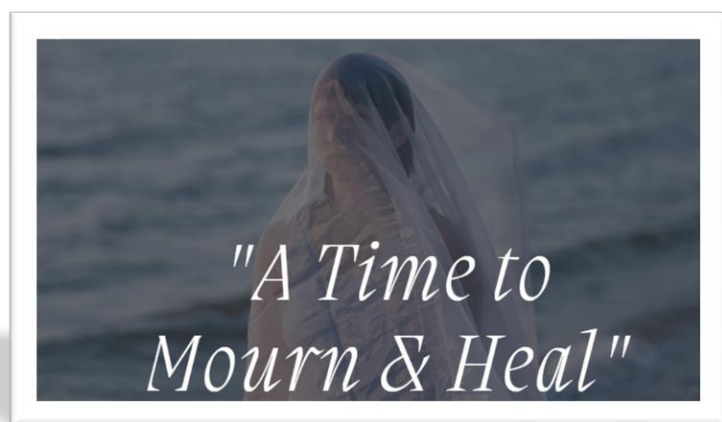
First United
Methodist
Church
of Fort Lupton
306 Park Ave.,
Fort Lupton, CO
80621
303-857-2257



8.6.26

Email - office@fumc-fortlupton.org

Website - www.fumc-fortlupton.org



Message

"Grief, Loss, Healing"

Rev. Lee Anderson-Harris

Scripture: 2 Corinthians 1:3-7 2 Corinthians 1:3-7 (CEB)

³ May the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ be blessed! He is the compassionate Father and God of all comfort. ⁴ He's the one who comforts us in all our trouble so that we can comfort other people who are in every kind of trouble. We offer the same comfort that we ourselves received from God. ⁵ That is because we receive so much comfort through Christ in the same way that we share so many of Christ's sufferings. ⁶ So if we have trouble, it is to bring you comfort and salvation. If we are comforted, it is to bring you comfort from the experience of endurance while you go through the same sufferings that we also suffer. ⁷ Our hope for you is certain, because we know that as you are partners in suffering, so also you are partners in comfort.



No Staying in Touch next week.

Gwen is out of the office from Wednesday, 8.12 - Monday, 8.17.26

WAYS TO SUPPORT OUR CHURCH

NO HASSLE GIVING

Have your donations automatically come out of your bank account.

Contact Church Office or Church Treasurer for information



Safeway cards -available downstairs after worship



SAFEWAY 

[DONATE TO THE CHURCH ONLINE.](#)

KING Soopers

King Soopers Community Rewards Program:
Visit
<http://www.kingsoopers.com>
search for First United Methodist Church of Fort Lupton either by name or VY166.
Need assistance call church office.

What's Happening

8-12 thru 8.17

Office Closed – Gwen out of town

8.24.26

Monday

7:00 pm Ad Board Meeting

Wednesdays

9:30 am

Wednesday Bible Study

**We now have a lock on the dumpster.
The code is 2011.**



Silent Auction: Brand-New Traeger Grill

A brand-new Ridgeline XL Traeger Grill (still in the box) has been generously donated to the church, and we will be offering it through a silent auction.

If you'd like a chance to bid on this item, signups will be available starting this Sunday, 8.2.26. A silent auction sheet will be located in the dining room following the worship service.

The last day to place a bid is 8.23.26.

All proceeds will go directly to our operational fund, which supports the day-to-day ministries of our church.





Aloha!

— YOU'RE INVITED TO A —

HAWAIIAN Luau

HONORING OUR AMAZING
CHURCH STAFF & VOLUNTEERS!

We are blessed by the many people who faithfully serve with love, time, and talent. Please join us as we say "*Mahalo*" (Thank You!) for all you do!



SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2026

✿ *Immediately Following*
✿ *the Worship Service*

CHURCH FELLOWSHIP HALL

Enjoy a delicious Hawaiian-inspired lunch, tropical decorations, fellowship, and an opportunity to express our *appreciation!*

Whether you are a staff member, volunteer, or simply want to come and show your appreciation,

everyone is invited!

Mahalo
FOR YOUR HEART
FOR HIS WORK!

Wear your favorite Hawaiian shirt or tropical attire if you'd like!

ALOHA,
FELLOWSHIP,
GOOD FOOD,
AND HEARTFELT
APPRECIATION
AWAIT!

Pastor's Page

Rev. Lee Anderson-Harris



A Season for Everything: Time to Pause

Haggai 1:5-7 (NIV)

⁵ Now this is what the Lord Almighty says: "Give careful thought to your ways. ⁶ You have planted much, but harvested little. You eat, but never have enough. You drink, but never have your fill. You put on clothes, but are not warm. You earn wages, only to put them in a purse with holes in it."

⁷ This is what the Lord Almighty says: "Give careful thought to your ways."

Haggai was a prophet to the Jewish people living in Jerusalem after the Babylonian exile. They have returned to their home land and have established houses for themselves; they have settled in and once again planted crops, raised livestock, returned to a way of life that felt familiar, even though for generations their people had been in exile in Babylon. From reading the prophets before Haggai, Isaiah and Jeremiah, we know what a mournful time the exile was, how there was a longing to return home. So, when I picture the scene here, I think of a deep peace after a long period of trouble. Sure, some chaos as people returned and re-established themselves, but ultimately, relief and peace. But there had been drought and financial struggles as of late. In these opening verses of the book, Haggai is speaking to the Davidic governor and the high priest of Jerusalem. According to the prophet, the people have not fared well because they don't have their priorities straight. The Lord wants them to rebuild the temple, but they have not paid attention to it. So God says that until they do so, he will continue withholding rewards for their labors; there will continue to be a drought, and they will live in poverty.

You might understand these verses as they are written, that what the people are experiencing is a direct result of God's actions. Or you might understand them to be reflections in hindsight of how people interpreted what they were experiencing and why...or at least, this prophet's interpretation. Either way, it is significant. Prophets before had named the ways the people had overlooked God's commands to care for the vulnerable in their midst, or bowed before other gods. Here, the wrongdoing is that the people had gone on with their lives without concern for rebuilding the house of God. Maybe this oversight reflects what their day-to-day lives looked like: They simply weren't paying much attention to God.

From time to time in our lives, we need to hit pause and take stock. We need to give careful thought to our ways, as the scripture says. There is a season for everything. We can't always be producing; we need time for rest. We need time to reflect on things that have happened to us; time to celebrate our successes, as well as time to grieve our losses and heal from our wounds. Sabbath was created so that there is a period of rest, but sabbath is about more than not working for a day. It is to remind us that there are natural rhythms that we are also a part of, and that we need to simply delight in God just as much as we need to labor. Just as there are seasons where plants and animals go dormant before they begin activity again, we need seasons where we can be renewed. And so, over the next few weeks, I want to talk about some of these seasons and hopefully inspire or encourage you if you are in one of these seasons, or if you need a season of rest and renewal, as we all do at times.

It probably comes as no surprise that sometimes our priorities get out of whack. We can simply go on autopilot with our lives, and also with our faith journeys. It often takes a crisis of some kind to shake us up in our relationship with God. If not a crisis, then some kind of mountain top experience. We become busy, or life becomes mundane, and after a while, God gets pushed out. Or sometimes you have to make adjustments due to a season in your life: busyness, hardship, circumstances taking you out of our normal routine. And then, you keep going in the new pattern without pausing to ask if it is time to do something different. There are many reasons why our priorities become misaligned with what we really need in life. When we talk about getting our priorities straight, it can sound negative, like somehow we have gotten off course. But sometimes priorities change. God is often calling us in new

directions. Our lives change. So this is not necessarily something we've done wrong, it's just time to move in a new direction. Taking time to pause and take stock helps to see whether the time you spend or the things that take your attention are in alignment with where your heart is, or with what you think matters most in life. And if you realize you are in a season of life where your time is not your own, then you can ask where you *can* make room for more God.

Have you ever seen the Jar of Life way of illustrating why we need to take stock of our priorities? It may have been done here as a children's message once. Imagine you have an empty glass jar, a pile of large rocks, a bag of small pebbles, and a scoop of sand. They represent your limited time and daily choices.

- **The Jar:** Your finite time, energy, and capacity in life. We can't do it all, we have limited capacity.
- **The Big Rocks:** Your absolute non-negotiables—family, health, values, personal growth, your relationship with God.
- **The Pebbles:** Important but secondary obligations, like job tasks, household chores, or routine appointments. Important, but a smaller part of the bigger picture.
- **The Sand:** Minor distractions—endless social media scrolling or watching video after video, trivial arguments that you have with people, other superficial things.

If you fill the jar with sand and pebbles first, you will quickly notice that the large rocks do not fit. This represents a life consumed by the urgent but insignificant, leaving no room for your deepest values. If you place the big rocks into the empty jar first, you establish your core pillars. Next, pour in the pebbles; they slip naturally into the open spaces between the rocks. Finally, pour the sand into the jar. The sand settles into the remaining tiny gaps, filling the container perfectly. Everything fits because you prioritized the essentials first.

How many times have you thought that you don't have time to do something that has been gnawing at you to do because you know it's important? We have all been there. We really do have the time, but it takes examination of how we are spending our time. That takes effort, but it is worth it. I have not mastered this, believe me, but I will vouch for the practice. If you are thinking it's time to do this in your life, do an online search of how to track how you spend your time and you'll find various helpful tools.

We take stock also to assess whether or not we are seeing fruit from our efforts. Going back to the scripture, the prophet points out that the people have planted much, but harvest little. Does it ever feel like you are planting but not harvesting? Maybe the fruit is there, and it's just not what you thought it would be so you don't see it. Other times, we might be doing all the right things but not getting any results. There are seasons or life cycles in all that we do: in careers, in ministries, in parenting or grandparenting, in relationships, in personal health, even in hobbies...you name it. If you are someone who likes to exercise or train for a physical goal like a marathon, you have probably noticed that what once worked to meet your goal stopped working and you needed to do something new. It doesn't mean you were doing it wrong before, it just needs to change. I've known artistic people who enjoyed creating a certain type of art for a while, and then it became boring to them and they moved on to something else. Depending on the situation, when something that you have been doing for so long no longer bears fruit, there can be disappointment, maybe even heartache. And we want to know why, naturally. And this is a good thing, to ask why and take a closer look. But I would say that most of us have a tendency to then place some kind of judgment on the answers. Using myself as an example, my blame usually goes to myself first. I had the experience pretty early in my career of having to discern whether or not it was time to close the books on a ministry program that was once thriving. It had been steadily declining but no one wanted to give up. And I felt like a personal failure because I had inherited this program, which had been going strong for many years. To revive it, I kept trying different things, nothing worked, and I was certain I had gone wrong as a leader. But the truth was that I was not alone in my discernment, and we realized the times had changed. Together we decided it was time to close the

chapter on this program. And what helped me develop as a leader after this experience is learning how normal this is because there are life cycles in ministry too. What I wish I had done differently is take time to celebrate the years of fruitful ministry that happened. It's good to take time to celebrate what God has done through us, even if it's time to bring something to a close. And whether we are talking about a program, a job, something that you used to do that you are no longer able to do, or some other chapter in your life, pausing to give thanks and spend time with God about it before moving on can make a vital difference in your perspective.

We can look at our life journey and faith journey as a pilgrimage. For centuries, people have embarked on journeys to holy sites by foot, walking for months to their destination. But the pilgrimage is about more than the destination; the journey itself becomes a way to draw closer to God. The pilgrim sees things with new eyes along the way, the Spirit gives insights as they journey. So, our own journeys really are like a pilgrimage, and there are a lot of parallels. In our life's journey, it is necessary to pause. We need rest in order to keep going. And there are times we need to check our direction, reassess the path that we are on and ask if it's the right one. And if you find yourself on the wrong path, it doesn't mean you are a failure. Pilgrimages are naturally full of unexpected twists and turns. Sometimes the course has to change because there was a roadblock or a detour that is not of your own making. Detours can end up taking us places we wouldn't normally have gone though, and we can discover something new! In the life of faith, feeling lost isn't a sign of failure either; it's often the sign that your soul is ready for a reassessment of direction.

Our courses also change because somewhere along the way, the destination you had in mind suddenly becomes less important. There is a book written by Father Richard Rohr that talks about the journey of life, called *Falling Upward: Spirituality for the Two Halves of Life*. According to Rohr, the first half of life is about building the container of our lives and the second half is about learning what the contents of that container actually are, or need to be. The first half is defined by certain priorities that in the second half of life, we no longer need, or even want. This doesn't mean the first half of life was all wrong. The hope is that you outgrow it, and move upward in your faith. But most people don't voluntarily move, they want to stay where they are. Hence, we *fall* upward. It typically takes some kind of crisis to launch us into the second half journey. This journey isn't about chronological age, it can happen at any point in our lives. But it does often happen when we reach some kind of mid-point in our lives.

As you continue to make your own journey in faith and life, drawing ever nearer to the heart of God, remember that the goal is not how quickly you can make it to your destination but how you travel. Take time to pause and take stock, check your direction, and rest. When we receive communion, I often think of the bread as bread for the journey. Christ feeds us so that we are nourished to keep going. As we move in that direction now, I'd like to close with a beautiful prayer that I found that speaks to our own pilgrimages and how we join with so many other pilgrims along the way:

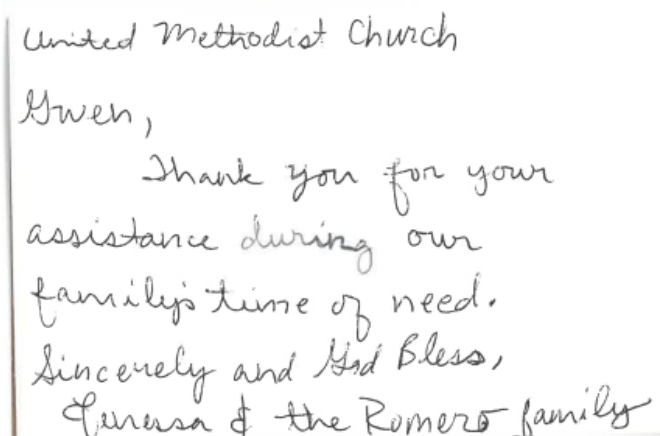
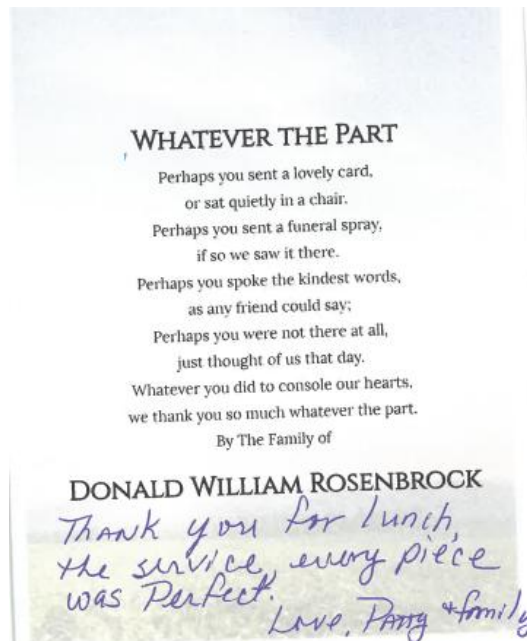
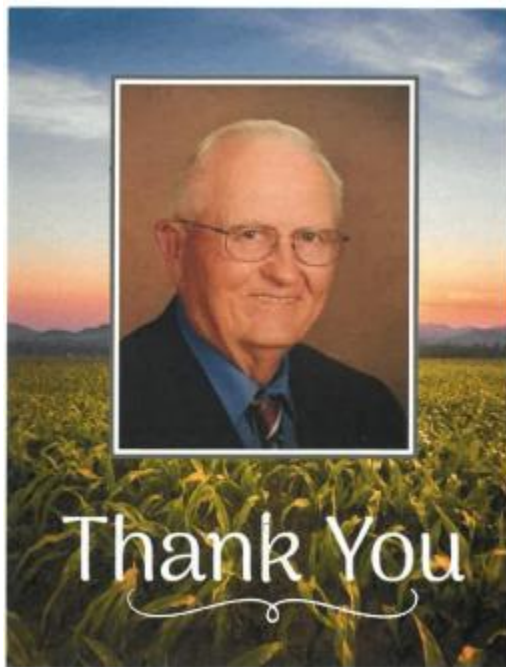
God of All Souls
who have ever traveled The Way of Life,
you know the depth of ache
we sometimes feel on the journey.
We come seeking your guidance,
as we consider the paths and directions of our lives.
Help us to find our way back to you,
to choose to turn towards you,
as the Ultimate Companion on The Way.
Amen.

Carol's Corner
By Carol McDermott

What a long stretch of HOT weather we are having. At least it cools down some at night. I feel so badly for many who don't have access to a cool place during the day! This too shall end, eventually and it will be one for the record books! I am so thankful that we have a nice, comfortable sanctuary, thanks to Pastor Kirsten when she was here and challenged us to pursue air conditioning in the sanctuary! Sandee Saar had the Children's sermon today and talked about the upcoming school year and what the kids could do to make it a good year for themselves, as well as their fellow students. I remember that feeling of anxiety of the unknown at the start of each school year. Sandee pointed out that Haggai was reminding the Jewish pilgrims who had returned from captivity that they needed to think clearly about their priorities. Funny that we are telling our kids that exact thing today. Success doesn't just happen – it requires sacrifice, planning, putting God first in our lives, and hard work. The kids had some great ideas to share about making it a good year for themselves and their fellow classmates. Jennifer Gordon Norby and Mikayla Cuenca sang a beautiful duet, "I turn to Jesus. What else can I do?" - a beautiful and very moving song.

Pastor Lee's sermon was titled "Hitting Pause, Taking Stock in Our Lives", based on Haggai 1:5-7. She told how the Jewish people returned to their homeland from being in exile and were so thrilled to be home, but soon the demands of daily life took precedence and the thrill and anticipation of rebuilding the temple and reestablishing worship was put on the back burner. They were distressed and disappointed that things just weren't happening the way they had expected. All their energies were spent building their own personal dwellings instead of clearing the rubble around the site of the temple and beginning the task of rebuilding it. They were content to do "just enough" to get by. Pastor talked about how easy it is for our priorities to "get out of whack". We go on "auto pilot" with our lives as well as our faith journeys, and we don't even realize it's happening. She talked about real life scenarios where seasons in our life require adjustments, or life becomes mundane and God is pushed out. She gave a great example of a "Jar of Life." She said "imagine you have an empty glass jar, a pile of large rocks, a bag of small pebbles, and a scoop of sand. They represent our limited time and daily choices. The jar represents our finite time, energy, and capacity in life. The big rocks represent the absolute non-negotiables – family, health, values, personal growth, and relationship with God. The smaller pebbles are important and represent secondary obligations like job tasks, household chores, routine appointments which are important, but a smaller part of the big picture. The sand represents minor distractions, endless social media scrolling, watching video after video, and trivial arguments with others. If you fill the jar with the sand and pebbles first there will be little room for the big rocks. Putting the big rocks into the empty jar first establishes our core pillars. The pebbles naturally slip into the open spaces between the rocks. The sand settles into the remaining gaps and fill the jar perfectly. Everything fits because you prioritized the essentials first." What a great illustration and one that made me think of my own sometimes crazy schedule and how I can fine tune it to be sure I'm leaving room for ministry to others and my own spiritual journey along the way. I'm going to do some work on priorities this week and hope you will do the same. She said that time changes what seems important to us and we need to not be afraid to change direction. Pastor said that in our journey of faith and life and drawing near to the heart of God, the goal is not how quickly we can get to our desired destination, but how we travel along the way. This was a sermon that made me stop and think about life and the desires of my heart. I hope you will take time to watch the service online or on Facebook and see if God doesn't touch you like He did me. It requires making the main thing the main thing! God is so good to us and desires a close, loving relationship with each of us. I want to make sure I'm making time for Him.

Thank Yous



Pics to Enjoy!

Sunday Worship Service

Praise Team asking the Holy Spirit to come.



Sandee sharing Children's Time.





Jennifer & Mikayla sharing
Special Music.



As you continue to make
your own journey in
faith and life, drawing
ever nearer to the heart
of God, remember that
the goal is not how
quickly you can make it
to your destination but
how you travel.



Enjoying Wilderness on Wheels 40th year celebration.



National Night Out

