First United
Methodist Church
of Fort Lupton
306 Park Ave., Fort
Lupton, CO 80621
303-857-2257
11.12.26

Staying in Touch

→ First United Methodist Church of Fort Lupton

Email - office@fumc-fortlupton.org Website - www.fumc-fortlupton.org



Message

"Give Thanks for Our Gifts"

Rev. Lee Anderson-Harris

2 Corinthians 9:8-11 (NIV)

And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. As it is written:
"They have freely scattered their gifts to the poor;
their righteousness endures forever."
Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness. You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.







WAYS TO SUPPORT OUR CHURCH



Safeway cards -available downstairs after worship

Endowments

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

11.15.26	9:00 am	Shoebox Dedication
11.26.26		Office Closed – Happy Thanksgiving
11.21.26	9:00 am	Community Thanksgiving Giveaway
11.28.26	9:00 am	Hanging of the Greens

Mondays

1st & 3rd	9:00 am	Cup of Hope – small conference room

Wednesdays

9:30 am	Wednesday Bible Study
7:00 pm	Choir

Fridays

5:30 – 6:30 pm	Youth Group

Jan. 1 - September 30, 2026 Financial Update	
Income	$ 174,306.96
Expenses	$ 146,997.31
Revenue/(Loss)	$ 27,309.65
*Income includes $9000 interest from Endowment	
* Income includes $30,000 principal from CD	

A HEARTFELT THANK YOU

Words cannot express how grateful we are to everyone who helped make our UMW Annual Turkey Dinner, Silent Auction & Bake Sale such a great success!

To those who worked tirelessly throughout the planning and execution of the event; sold and collected tickets; organized, donated and/or cooked food; and to all the hands that worked so hard on Saturday to make sure everything was ready to serve on time.

Thank you to those who worked in the dining room serving and bussing tables, our kitchen helpers who kept the serving line supplied, dishwashers, our "takeout team," hostesses, and elevator helpers.

Thank you to everyone who contributed silent auction items, drawing items and baked goods; helped with setup, cleanup and teardown; washed towels and aprons; attended the dinner; and purchased auction and bake sale items.

THANK YOU!!

Every helping hand, every donation, every hour volunteered, and every bit of support made a difference. It takes a village to make an event like this happen, and we are blessed to have such a wonderful, generous and giving church family!

Your willingness to share your time, talents and resources is a true reflection of God's love at work.

From the bottom of our hearts, THANK YOU for supporting United Methodist Women! We appreciate each and every one of you!

May God bless each and every one of you as generously as you have blessed us!

In His love, Mariann Johnston, UMW President



Dear United Methodist Church,

It was my utmost honor to cut + serve pies at the turkey dinner. To watch you work together was like watching a well oiled machine. The activity was truly blessed by God. He blessed you with such cooperation and love as you worked together. I was so impressed with your whole event. God works within each one of you. Thank you for making me feel part of your body of believers. God has led me to my special place to worship, grow, and learn.

COLLECTIBLE, HAND-PAINTED FORGET-ME-NOT DESIGN DATES TO THE POPULAR CHINA-PAINTING TREND OF THE 1800S.

God's peace,
Jayne Leonelli

Current

Shoeboxes Available in Cry Room.

Dedication Sunday will be11.15.26.





Gwen will be working on a new directory. If you want to be included, please complete the form and return it to the church office.

First United Methodist Church Contact Information

Name(s):_____

Household Members (optional):_____

Address:_____

City/State/ZIP:_____

Phone:_____ ☐ Mobile ☐ Home

☐ OK to include in directory ☐ Staff use only

Email:_____ ☐ OK to include in directory ☐ Staff use only

Photo

☐ I will upload/attach a photo

☐ ☐ No photo in directory, please

Celebrations (Optional)

Birthdays:_____

Anniversary:_____

☐ OK to include in newsletter ☐ Staff use only

Interests & Involvement (Optional)

Ministry interests:_____

Skills or gifts I'd like to share:_____

Care & Prayer (Optional)

Prayer requests: ☐ Public prayer list ☐ Pastoral staff only

Privacy & Permission

☐ I give permission for the information I selected to appear in:

☐ Printed directory, (Newsletter – Staying in Touch/Web page)

☐ Please do NOT share my information publicly; staff use only

Signature:_____ Date: _____

Pastor's Page Rev. Lee Anderson-Harris

Finally, we are in the season of giving thanks. I have come to love November. Thanksgiving is still a holiday that isn't about gift giving and elaborate decorations. I mean, I do decorate my home, don't get me wrong, but I manage to fit all of my decorations into one box. And aside from the focus on abundance and giving thanks, November brings a natural beauty of its own that I have come to appreciate over time. In these next 3 weeks leading up to Advent, I want to focus on gratitude for the abundance that we do have, and how we are called to be caretakers of that abundance.

Giving thanks and being good stewards of the gifts we are given can be approached as just one other thing we are supposed to do as Christians. I think that's why it's placed into one month or one season. Stewardship season is this time of year, maybe a little earlier when the church budget is being planned. November is when we talk about giving thanks. But really, giving thanks and being good stewards of the gifts we are given should be a way of life. Not just to please God, but because it's good for the soul…our souls and the soul of the community. Writer William Arthur Ward sums it up like this… *"Feeling gratitude and not expressing it is like wrapping a present and not giving it."* In the movie Christmas Vacation, which some people will be watching again before too long, Clark Griswold gets stuck in the attic and so he kills time by looking through boxes containing old treasures. And he also finds wrapped presents that were hidden away and forgotten about, and never given. Have you ever done that? Maybe you can relate to the feeling of finding them. If we let ourselves, we can find plenty to be grateful for in many situations. And expressing it…to other people, to God…is the next step. A step that will cultivate even more abundance.

Give Thanks for the People

1 Corinthians 1:4-9 (NRSV)

4 I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that has been given you in Christ Jesus, 5 for in every
way you have been enriched in him, in speech and knowledge of every kind— 6 just as the testimony of Christ has been
strengthened among you— 7 so that you are not lacking in any gift as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ.
8 He will also strengthen you to the end, so that you may be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 God is
faithful, by whom you were called into the partnership of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

First Corinthians 1 opens Paul's letter to a church that was spiritually gifted yet torn apart by factions and immaturity. He writes this greeting, where he expresses his gratitude for them right away. He points out the spiritual gifts that they have, gifts that are due to the grace of God. The rest of the letter, as we know, are his words of encouragement and guidance in terms of how to live in unity, and how to be a community that loves like Jesus loves. The church in Corinth certainly needed Paul's guidance, and needed God's ongoing grace. But here, Paul says he is grateful for them. He is not proclaiming them to be a thorn in his side, or a burden of any kind. He gives thanks for them. Paul can still thank God for this troubled church because God's character provides the guarantee. God will remain faithful to his promises. But I imagine that Paul understands that there is much to be grateful for, even when things aren't perfect, and that even imperfect people have plenty to offer. Maybe he is grateful to be in community period.

What does this teach us? That we can give thanks for the people we are surrounded by, even though they are imperfect, even if they frustrate us, or we disagree with them, or we don't get along well. Does that seem like a stretch? Maybe it is; we all need to be stretched from time to time to grow in our faith. Gratitude does not come easily when we would rather the people just go away. To reference another Christmas movie, (and I recognize that it might be too soon for some of you…it's too soon for me to hear Christmas music and I've been hearing it in stores already)…If you recall in the movie Home Alone, Kevin wishes his family would go away. And it's hard to blame him! But once he gets his wish, after a period of absence, he realizes how much he took for granted and how much he missed them.

But sometimes we have to look harder to find gratitude for people who get under our skin. The reality is that people can often serve as mirrors. Maybe you see something in another person that deep down, you don't like about yourself. Another way that people serve as mirrors is when you see your own reactions to another person, and realize that those reactions say more about you than them. If you can see that, it is a gift. It may not feel like a gift, don't get me wrong. But it is an opportunity to grow, or heal, and to open yourself to God's grace.

Going back to Paul's letter, I don't think he was expressing gratitude for the people because they were helping to make him a better person through difficult relations. Despite his own flaws, I think he genuinely knew that community is a blessing.

As Barbra Streisand sang, "people who need people are the luckiest people in the world." A faith community such as this one is about sharing life together. Life is not easy, even for people who seem to make it look easy. Faith helps, but we need others in our faith journeys too. And so, it is a blessing to be able to come together to worship, talk, walk with each other, eat together, study together. And beyond that, I have been giving God thanks for what I have witnessed and experienced in this particular faith community. I am surrounded by people who genuinely care about others, who give of themselves without asking anything in return for the betterment of this church and the greater community. I have experienced a welcome and support in my transition that is very moving. And in doing the business of the church with others, I have seen servant leaders with a God-inspired heart to do what's right for the church, and for others, and to keep in front of us those things that matter most. And I have seen a lot of grace extended. God's Spirit, God's abundance, really does dwell here.

And if we expand our vision beyond the walls of this church, we can look around at the community in which this church is planted and give thanks for the people we have been given to serve. There are many things that have remained steadfast, like the values of the community. In my short time here, I have noticed that there is a common sense of helping one another out. People of this church give to others in the community in several ways, and that giving spirit is something I have seen among people beyond this church too as I have been getting a little more connected. And of course, the community has changed over time, like many have. Who are your neighbors now? What are their stories? If you went door-to-door to have conversations with folks who are newer to the community, what might you learn about their hopes and dreams, worries and fears? How are they the same as, or different from, the people who have been here a long time?

When communities change, it is easy to become focused on the ways the changes are affecting you. Trust me, I have complained plenty about increased traffic and housing prices, and I was once new to this state too! New people bring new ways of doing things, new ways of being and living. This calls for adjustment and open-mindedness, and that can take work. And it can also be a gift, as we learn new things, and new ways of being and approaching life.

As a church, we also have to adjust. If the needs of the people have changed, we have to learn what the new needs are to understand how we can try and meet those needs. And this doesn't just apply to people moving into the community. Needs change for many reasons. For instance, studies show that young people are, generally speaking, not interested in joining a faith community. If they grew up in a church and had a positive experience of that, it's a different story. But reaching new young adults and families is hard. Yet, they are still beloved, and still have needs. So how do we touch and bless *their* lives? And, what do we need to do to adjust our thinking and expectations, since the result of outreach truly may never be worship attendance? Membership and worship attendance is how people have measured success in a church for so long. But this does not come from Jesus. Jesus asks us to be in relationship with people. To *see* them…not to view them as a commodity or metric.

There are certainly challenges to being in community, and in living out our mission to be the body of Christ in the world. Especially when you have to learn and relearn how to do that in a changing world. Our predecessors had to do the same. When this church was planted, I am sure there was a lot to learn about the people who were already here, and then more to learn about the changing landscape and the people moving into the area and putting down roots. The 20th century saw more growth and change. So as we give thanks for the people we have been given, we can also give thanks for the people who came before us. We may not do things the way they did, but we are still connected to a long line of people who were trying to be faithful to God in their surroundings, as we seek to do today. Cultivating gratitude for the blessings we have received from God helps us to see what it is that we are to carry forward. And as we give thanks for the people who came before us, we realize our own blessings as people who can also leave a legacy. We can even look back to the work of the early church, when it was struggling to take root. Those disciples experienced something in Jesus that they wanted to pass on, so they invested in the ministry of the church some 2000 years ago. This is the legacy we inherit…some good, some bad…but I think overall more good. And we are blessed to carry on this legacy. It will keep changing and taking on new shapes, but it is a continuous thread.

I wonder what our world would look like if people generally looked at the people around them with gratitude and appreciation? I think it would change everything. Imagine seeing someone who gets under your skin with appreciation for who they are, not as you wish them to be. Or seeing them with the understanding that God loves them, and so even if you have a hard time liking them, you still want the best for them. Let's be honest, maybe whole-hearted gratitude for others is a stretch. But this kind of appreciation that I described is still a lot more than what many people

can muster, and it would do wonders for us as humanity. And even it feels like it doesn't make a difference in the world, practicing gratitude toward others will make a difference in your own life. I think this is what Jesus was pointing us toward…changing how we look at others. Looking at people beyond our own little bubble with his eyes.

I am sure you have heard this before, but in this world, there is enough food to feed everybody, but the brokenness and narrowness of our human systems prevent people from being fed. Likewise, there is abundance in Christ and yet our brokenness and narrowness can prevent us from sharing that abundance with the world. What we practice in the church community is different than "out there", isn't it? No church community is perfect, but there is at least a striving for grace, and acceptance, and understanding. We are fueled by the scriptures and prayer and so we practice forgiveness and the desire to include all voices and giving support to people when they fall on hard times. Even our administrative systems are different; when I first started working in a church, I had a hard time adjusting to how things were done because I came from the business world, which is a lot less forgiving and a lot more calculating. The way we treat people in faith communities can be an example to the world "out there." Further, we can serve the world out there by practicing these things outside of our church community, sharing the abundance of Christ that we have received. And it starts by embracing the world as it is, and people as they are, knowing and trusting that these are the people who are also loved by Jesus.

This is how we practice good stewardship of this gift we have been given, the gift of people. We remember that God first loved us, and through God we have the ability to know what love really is. And we remember that Jesus loves each person, so much that he gave his very life, for all eternity. That is abundant love. There is enough of the grace of God, enough of the love of Jesus, for all. We don't have to hoard these; they are given in an unending supply. So we are able to give these away to others, continuously. We can keep inviting people to the table. We can keep hope alive, even when things aren't as you wish they were. Especially when things aren't as you wish they were, because the hope is in God's glory, a deep abiding trust that God remains steadfast and at work even in ways you can't see.

I want to close with a quote from someone who is part of my spiritual community, even though I have never met him, and will never meet him because he died in 1996, Henri Nouwen. I consider him part of my spiritual community because his writings have touched me, and I continue to turn to his writings, his legacy, when I need guidance or just support. This was shared in a daily devotion email so I am not sure which of his books it came from. He wrote: "People who have come to know the joy of God do not deny the darkness, yet they choose not to live in it. They claim that the light that shines in the darkness can be trusted more than the darkness itself and that a little bit of light can dispel a lot of darkness. They point each other to flashes of light, here and there, and remind each other that they reveal the hidden yet real presence of God. They discover that there are people who heal each other's wounds, forgive each other's offenses, share their possessions, foster the spirit of community, celebrate the gifts they have received and live in constant anticipation of the full manifestation of God's glory."

Prayer: God, thank you for the people; the people of this church, the people of this community. Thank you for our loved ones, for the people you have placed in our lives. Thank you for those who have gone before us, and the ones we have yet to meet. And thank you for all people…the ones for whom we are easily grateful, and the ones we wish would go away, because these are all your children. Cultivate in us more gratitude for the people. And guide us in taking care of them. Help each of us see what is ours to do to in this world to care for others; help us as a church see what is ours to do to carry forward your mission. For in Christ, all things are possible. We are blessed to be a blessing, and we thank you for this. Amen.

Carol's Corner
By Carol McDermott

We've had an interesting week with fairly nice weather, at least in the afternoons. Who knows what this next week will bring! It won't be boring, that's for sure. Amy Wilbur had the Children's sermon and expressed to the kids how awesome they each are. She had a little box with a little green frog in it. The box said "Don't 'frog-et' that you are awesome! I know it, you know it. Tiny frog has your back whenever you need a pick-me-up." She had the children hand the boxes out so everyone in the service got one! Amy and Mike Wilbur sang a song during the offertory called "Truth Be Told" by Matthew West. The words say we all feel needy and incomplete in life, but we pretend that we have it all together. But if the "truth be told", it would reveal our insecurities. Wow! What a song with a punch!

Pastor Lee's message was titled "Give Thanks for the People", and the scripture was 1Corinthians 1:4-9. She said this time of the year encourages us to give thanks for all things, but it can seem like just one more thing to do during a season that is already filled with pressures to do as Christians. How did she read my mind!? She quoted writer William Arthur Ward who said "Feeling gratitude and not expressing it is like wrapping a present and not giving it away". Hmmmmm. Paul's letter to the church in Corinth is full of encouragement and some scolding, but a challenge to do and be better. The church in Corinth needed Paul's guidance and needed God's ongoing grace. She said this teaches us that we can give thanks for the people we are surrounded by, even though they are imperfect… see how perfectly the song Mike and Amy sang fit right in with Pastor's sermon? She said sometimes we have to look harder to find gratitude for people who serve as mirrors as we see something in that person we don't appreciate, and then realize that we all need God's grace, which comes through community. She talked about how communities change with time and we have to adjust. We have to learn how people have changed and how we can learn new things and new ways of approaching life and daily living. She said we have been given a gift - the gift of people. God loves us and also loves all others with abundant love. There is enough grace from God for everyone. She quoted writer Henri Nouwen who has been an inspiration to her. He said, "People who have come to know the joy of God do not deny darkness, yet they choose not to live in it. They claim the light that shines in the darkness can be trusted more than the darkness itself." Isn't that powerful! "They live in a way that heals each other's wounds, forgives each other's offenses, shares possessions, and fosters a spirit of community." In other words, "We are not to 'frog et' that we are awesome". We closed the service with the song, "Here Am I, Lord," a song of promise that we will live the gospel "out loud" with love and compassion. Let it be so.

Pics to Enjoy

Silent Auction Bake Sale











Turkey Dinner



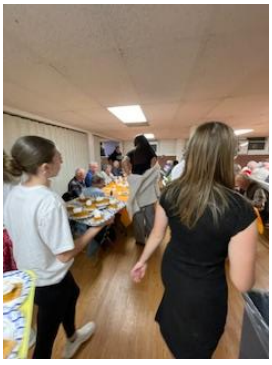























































Family


Silver





Sunday Worship Service

I wonder what our world would look like if people generally looked at the people around them with gratitude and appreciation? I think it would change everything. Imagine seeing someone who gets under your skin with appreciation for who they are, not as you wish them to be



Bringing in the Light of Christ.







Amy and Mike sharing special music.

Children's Time with Amy







AW! We love our littles.