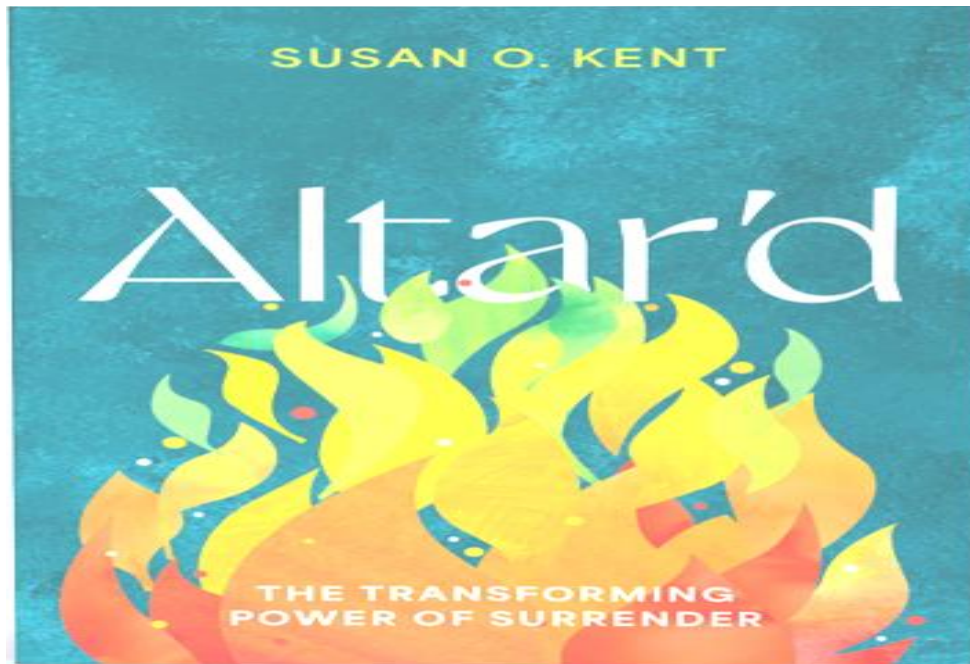


FEBRUARY
2024

THE HERALD
First United Methodist Church
Dixon, Illinois

Lenten Sermon Series “Altar’d”



Lent 2024 Sermon Series “Altar’d”

Wed., Feb. 14	<i><u>ASH WEDNESDAY</u></i>
Sunday, Feb. 18	“Making Space to Surrender”
Sunday, Feb. 25	“Surrender It All”
Sunday, March 3	“Renew Our Faith”
Sunday, March 10	“Sacrifice of Praise”
Sunday, March 17	“Freedom!”
Sunday, March 24	“At What Cost?” - <i><u>PALM SUNDAY</u></i>
Thursday, March 28	<i><u>MAUNDY THURSDAY -Soup Supper</u></i>
Friday, March 29	<i><u>GOOD FRIDAY</u></i>
Sunday, March 31	<i><u>HAPPY EASTER!</u></i>

Our mission is making new disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world by Faithfully Uplifting the Message of Christ



The Shepherd Speaks:

Greetings in the name of our Beautiful Lord and Savior Jesus Christ:

Welcome to 2024! A new year and, in many ways, a new beginning in our church. A couple of scriptures come to mind when I think of the new life offered to us in Jesus Christ. Isaiah 43:18-19 NIV, ***“Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland.”*** The other passage comes from 2 Corinthians 5:17. ***“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!”*** God is in the business of resurrection! God brings New Life and a new reality!

Another passage appropriate for Dixon First is Luke 5:37-38, ***“And no one pours new wine into old wineskins. Otherwise, the new wine will burst the skins; the wine will run out and the wineskins will be ruined. No, new wine must be poured into new wineskins.”***

Dixon First was slowly dying; it was old wine in old wineskins. But starting in 2020, during the pandemic, we became a new wine. We have become a Holy Spirit-led church. Take a moment to read the Holy Spirit moments from Becky Macklin and Judy Gusse. Those stories tell the new life that is happening at Dixon First!

When I first came to Dixon in 2015, we had a church full of passionate people who wanted to make a difference in our community. But, we had no vision to channel that passion. Slowly, our passion began to wane. The pandemic allowed us to do a hard reset of our church. Through our Breakthrough Prayer, God transformed our congregation. Even though we were physically distant, we were connected deeply because we relied on our beloved Triune God. Once the pandemic ended, we were able to stay connected through the Holy Spirit and find God’s Beyond the Horizon Vision for Dixon First.

Through our constant celebration of Holy Spirit Moments, we are now pouring our new wine into new wineskins, and God is doing something new! I hope that you are as excited as I am. **GOD IS DOING SOMETHING NEW AT DIXON FIRST UMC!** And you are a huge, HUGE part of that!!

We had our first Leadership Council meeting in January using the New One Board Model. Rev. Dr. Jaye Johnson, Director for Congregational Excellence, returned to lead us through the transition from the old to the new. This is another new wineskin for new wine! One of the most critical questions the Leadership Council must ask is, “Whose work are we doing?” The council is not the doer of the work of the church. They are the vision casters that enable the congregation to live into their commitment as disciples of Jesus Christ. The Leadership Council is charged with moving our Beyond the Horizon Vision forward. This is a significant shift in how the church is the church! It is a reminder of that wonderful children’s song we sing! ***I am the church. You are the church. We are the church together. All who follow Jesus, all around the world. Yes, we’re the church together!***

We all have a part to play! God has gifted us and called us to Dixon First to be God’s hands, feet, and voice to our community and beyond. What’s your passion? What does God call you to do to fulfill our Beyond the Horizon Vision? As followers of Jesus Christ, we all have a vital role in sharing the love of God found in Jesus Christ!

During 2024, we will be helping and encouraging you to find and use your gifts for God’s glory! Are you filled with some trepidation? Yes! Are you worried you don’t have any gifts? Maybe! But remember Philippians 4:13, ***“I can do all things through him (Jesus) who strengthen me!”*** We are going to have an amazing story to tell in 2024!

Blessings Pastor Tim

Pastoral Perceptions



Greetings to the loving and caring family in Christ of Dixon First UMC!

With great thanks to Our Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit for all the blessings that we received last year, 2023, I would like to say, "Happy New Year!", to you all again with prayers for God's blessings overflowing throughout your days in this new year.

As we look back on the blessings we have received in 2023, each of us can remember our own personal moments of blessing. Most of us shared these moments as one family in Christ through worship, our small group meetings, bible studies, and many other ministries and events that we participated in - as witnesses of Jesus Christ by saying "Yes" to Jesus.

We celebrate these blessed moments through the ministries that we serve, with the gifts given to each of us, (both personally and as the church) in fulfilling our Beyond the Horizon Vision. Our focus of the ministry plan for 2023 was "community" among the four big Rocks of "Community, Connection, Worship, and Discipleship."

We have witnessed how God helped us to be used as God's hands and feet through the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit such by the mission trip to Midwest Mission Center, the Thank offering worship led by our laity, our Annual Holiday Bazaar, Agape Youth and Powerhouse Kids' Christmas Pageant, and many other events and ministries that each of us has been called to serve. God has given us abundant blessings to share with one another as a community of faith and one family in Christ. As we proclaim in Our Beyond the Horizon Vision, we are "a family, not perfect, but a loving and caring place to call home" for anyone who wants to belong to this community of faith."

Now, as we continue fulfilling Our Beyond the Horizon Vision in the new year, we are making our resolutions for 2024. We resolve to thrive and flourish as the church, the body of Christ, with our new twelve member One-Board Leadership Council, nominated and elected by our congregation.

What can be our new year's resolution for 2024 in order for us to fulfill of Our Beyond the Horizon Vision? What are the ministries that are to be celebrated as blessings 2023 ends? These are the questions we are seeking to answer at the Leadership Summit we have on January 27th and throughout the year. We will keep our minds and hearts open to God's calling and continue saying "Yes" to Jesus.

As we began our new worship series "Becoming the People of God" we remember our baptism through the celebration of the Baptism of our Lord, Jesus Christ, and we are reminded of how we are loved and claimed by God to be God's children. We are also reminded of how we are blessed and guided by the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit to live out our faith on the path to becoming the people of God. Apostle Paul says in Galatians 3:26-27 (NIV),

"So in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ."

May we all remember our baptism throughout this new year, whenever we are called to serve God on the path to becoming the people of God - not confident in our ability or even in our worth to do the work of God. May we all say "Yes" to Jesus, keeping in the forefront of our minds what Paul says in the scripture above! Amen.

Blessings,

Youngsun Lee



Green Notes

Submitted by Sandy Burris

1 Corinthians 10:26: “The earth is the Lord’s, and everything in it”.

Please ponder these new lyrics by Kristina Sinks to the tune of “How Great Thou Art”.

Oh Mother Earth

Verse 1:

O Mother Earth, when we in awesome wonder,
consider all you nurture in your care.
We see the stars, we hear the rolling thunder, we
taste the fruits of sun, and soil and air.

Verse 2:

By waters deep, the source of all that’s breathing,
we find your rest, though waves swell o’er the shores.
In lake and sea, with mighty creatures teeming, and
babbling brook, and rain that on us pours.

Verse 3:

In dark of night, the sky abounds with beauty,
with moon and stars, so much beyond our reach.
When we look up, t’ward all this glimmering
grandeur, we find our way, stars point to what we
seek.

Verse 4:

We wander through our watersheds, our homeland.
We learn the names of creatures, plants and streams.
Our power now, to hurt, to heal, to plant, determine
if and how our children dream.

Verse 5:

With calloused hands, these humble servants offer,
all we can give, our energy and time.
Restoring earth to all we still envision, abounding life,
all healed and intertwined.

Refrain:

Our souls cry out, remembering our home,
O Mother Earth, O Mother Earth.
She needs us now, she needs all we can give
for all to live, for all to live.

**Remember: The world is in our hands.
Go green!**

WHAT: ADULT MISSION TRIP OUTREACH OPPORTUNITY

WHEN: July 22 – 26, 2024

WHERE: MIDWEST MISSION
1001 MISSION DRIVE – PAWNEE, IL

WHY: MINISTRY OPPORUNITY &
BUILDING COMMUNITY WITHIN GROUP

The mission of Midwest Mission is to bring the hearts and hands of God’s people together to transform resources into humanitarian relief. They are a logistical conduit for Christ’s ministry. They receive a request from trusted nonprofits, then prepare items they have and ask supporters for items they need. Volunteers process, revitalize, and assemble the donated items. Then, donations are shipped to our trusted partners to distribute to those in crisis.

If you would like more information about this opportunity, please contact:
Nancy Wadsworth – 815-677-0119 or Laura Brooks – 779-772-3666.

MARTHA CIRCLE

meets the 3rd Tuesday of the every month at 9:30AM in the Parlor.

MATTERS OF THE HEART CIRCLE

meets the 2nd Thursday of each month at 6:30PM in the Parlor.

UM MEN'S GROUP

meets at 8 AM on the 1st Saturday each month at Fresco on First.

G2 GROWTH GROUPS

meet on different dates and times each week. Pick up a flyer on the Welcome Table or call the office at 815-284-2849 for more information.

POWERHOUSE KIDS

meet every Sunday at 10AM on the 3rd floor in the Arena Area.
(ages Preschool to 4th grade)

AGAPE YOUTH

meet on the 2nd & 4th Sundays each month at 11:30am - 3rd floor Youth Lounge
(grades 5th-high school)

Work-Thon



A Youth Member from The First United Methodist Church in Dixon IL will do work for donations towards our Mission Trip to Duluth Minnesota

Where our group will have the opportunity to assist in children's programming at a local youth center, care for the elderly by helping with outdoor yard projects, or sort donations at a food pantry.

We Do:

Shoveling Your Snow



Yard Work



Cleaning



Walk your dogs



Babysitting



To schedule a Youth Member from the First United Methodist Church in Dixon IL to assist you for an donation towards our Mission Trip

Call or Text Aaliyah at (815) 973-8790

Email: bakerm.aaliyah@gmail.com

Holy Spirit Moments

***Holy Spirit Moments* is a place to share when the Holy Spirit is showing up in our lives. This is an opportunity to celebrate and share those divine encounters! Read on for “the rest of the story” with Becky Macklin’s and Judy Gusse’s Holy Spirit Moments.**

Oh my goodness!! When I read about the opportunity to talk of the Holy Spirit and His working I was excited!!! Although I have seen His work many times I want to share one that many of you also witnessed. I am referring to ‘Thank Offering Sunday’ November 12th, 2023. This is traditionally a service lead by the United Women in Faith. Here is a glimpse of behind-the-scenes:)

Linda Frana has graciously put together this service in the last few years and 2023 was no exception. As the timing this year coincided with her nephew’s wedding in Tennessee, she did the planning and responses prior. She then asked if I would do the announcing of songs, etc “and no problem”, Pastor Young Sun would have the message that day. Unfortunately, procrastination is one of my failings. So...Tuesday evening of that week I decided to text Pastor Young Sun about getting together to make sure we were all on the same page. Wow! Was I ever surprised when she was unable to participate Sunday due to health concerns. Lynne was going to give the message.

The next evening I found myself sitting in my Jeep before choir practice and thought I have just GOT to call Lynne and tease her about getting herself into this situation and touch base regarding the service. Hmmm.....it didn’t take long to see she was feeling overwhelmed as life was coming at her from all directions that week. She had already asked Jody to lead the service. As a friend I felt the need to ask her if there was anything with which I could help. OK, I said this with fingers, feet and toes crossed. Her response was if I could do the Pastoral Prayer...? Silently, I am literally shaking my head ‘no’ and repeating my question over the phone “what can I help you with”? Same response, Pastoral Prayer. O..K...!

0607 the next morning I found myself awake with the prayer being written in my head. I have been down this road before and KNOW the Holy Spirit wakes you in the night (no doubt because our day is ‘loud’) and when you think “I will remember the words”, you don’t.

Lynne, Jody and I decided we needed to meet so we could appear ‘professional’. We laughed many times that if that phone call was not made, the three of us would have converged at the pulpit looking at each other wondering what the other was doing there. In that meeting Lynne told us she had changed her message title to ‘Through it All’ to which Jody responded “I think there is a song by that name”. Should we change the closing hymn? The prayer was already written. (And) that is how the service, the message, the prayer and closing hymn became unbelievably cohesive. THAT is what happens each week as the pastors prayerfully put together the service and the songs are picked. THAT is the Holy Spirit!

And another Holy Spirit Moment from Judy Gusse...

A few months ago I was in the hospital awaiting surgery for a blocked artery and a brain aneurysm. The night before, after everyone left, I sat on my bed and began to pray. That’s when God stepped into my story and became The Protagonist. There was a pressure on my arms that felt like arms around me and a very strong sense that Jesus was there and that I would be okay. The Holy Spirit that I had always felt or experienced in the spiritual realm entered my physical world in an unexpected way and brought me peace, love, and joy about my outcome from surgery.

FINANCIAL NOTES for NOVEMBER & DECEMBER 2023

	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER	2023 YEAR END
Income	\$ 20,000.44	\$ 33,259.22	\$ 333,115.11
Expenses	\$ 29,529.94	\$ 24,224.08	\$ 351,243.88
Net/Deficit	\$ (9,529.50)	\$ 9,035.14	\$ (18,128.77)

FEBRUARY 2024

SUN	31	THU Feb 1	FRI 2	SAT 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8:30am Brooks Bible 8:30am Jesus Seek 10am Worship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pastor Tim Writing Dr 10am Lynne's Small 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6:30pm Matters of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pastor Tim Day off 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8am UMM, Breakfast 5pm Worship, C
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8:30am Brooks Bible 8:30am Jesus Seek 10am Worship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pastor Tim Writing Dr 9:30am UMW Ex. Bd 10am Lynne's Small 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6:30pm Matters of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pastor Tim Day off 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5pm Worship, C
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8:30am Brooks Bible 8:30am Jesus Seek 10am Worship 11:30am Agape You 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ash Wednesday Pastor Tim Writing Dr 10am Lynne's Small 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6:30pm Worship co 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pastor Tim Day off 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Faith Christian Fundra 5pm Worship, C
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For a more interactive calendar, see our website at FUMCDixon.org and click on the Events tab.

First United Methodist Church
202 S. Peoria Ave
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www.fumcdixon.org
Facebook: FUMCDixon

Conference website: umcnic.org
District Superintendent, Rev Brian Gilbert
815-561-8285

THE HERALD
FEBRUARY 2024

BISHOP'S DAYS ON THE DISTRICT

Please join Bishop Dan Schwerin for a day of reflection and conversation on your district.



Clergy

- Fellowship: 9:30 a.m.
- Program: 10 a.m.
- Lunch afterwards

Laity

- Conversation: 6:30 to 8 p.m.

Lake North - Thurs., Feb. 1 Clergy - Mount Prospect Trinity UMC
Laity - Park Ridge First UMC

Prairie South - Wed., Feb. 7 Clergy - Dekalb First UMC
Laity - Dekalb First UMC


Prairie North - Thurs., Feb. 8 Clergy - Freeport First UMC
Laity - Freeport First UMC

Lake South - Mon., Feb. 12 Clergy - New Lenox UMC
Laity - New Lenox UMC

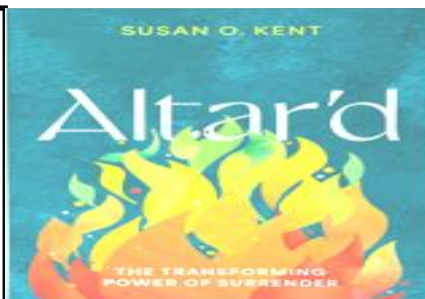
Prairie Central - Tues. Feb. 13 Clergy - Elmhurst First UMC
Laity - Lombard First UMC

Find out more: umcnic.org/calendar/2024-bishops-days-on-the-district

Come gather to share the great things happening and learn about the Bishop's vision for our conference



Sign up to order the devotional book for the upcoming Lenten Sermon series "Altar'd". Sign-up sheets are on the Welcome tables. Starts February 14th. Suggested donation - \$13.00.



Staff Phone#
Pastor Tim Mitchell, 815-440-0278
Pastor Young Sun Lee 217-778-7898
Jody Mitchell, office, 815-284-2849
Tommy Whitcombe, 815-440-9623
Carla Anderson, 815-590-6698
Jessie Marie Dir, 815-288-1326
Sharon Welker, 815-652-4384
Keith Gabany, 815-288-5001