

MARCH
2024

THE HERALD
First United Methodist Church
Dixon, Illinois



NEW 2024 PRAYER FOR 2024



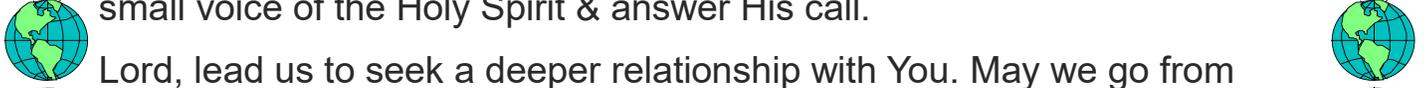
God of Love & Power,



We offer Dixon First United Methodist Church to You! We are Your people and this is Your church. We come seeking Your vision and Your purpose. We ask that You help us break through in new ways to love our neighbors and build relationships with all people. Pour out Your Holy Spirit upon us. Give us the vision, courage, and confidence to fulfill Your will in our community and the world beyond.



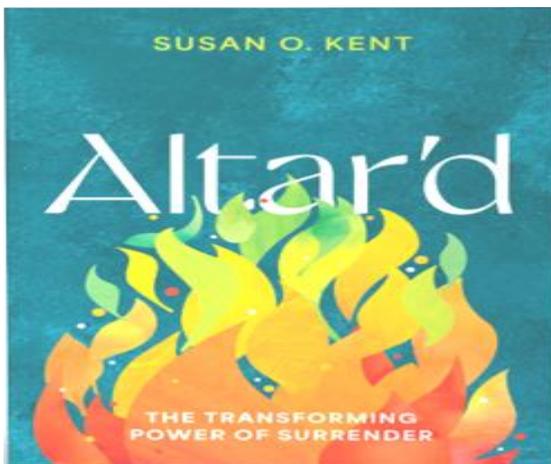
Help us to notice new faces & be welcoming to them. Open our eyes to see one another as Your beloved children. Inspire us to use our spiritual gifts to serve others, glorifying Your Holy Kingdom. Let us hear that still, small voice of the Holy Spirit & answer His call.



Lord, lead us to seek a deeper relationship with You. May we go from asking "Who is this Jesus?" to putting Jesus first in our lives & openly sharing our faith with others.



We pray in the mighty power & grace of Jesus Christ. Amen.



Lent 2024 Sermon Series "Altar'd"

Wed., Feb. 14
Sunday, Feb. 18
Sunday, Feb. 25
Sunday, March 3
Sunday, March 10
Sunday, March 17
Sunday, March 24
Thursday, March 28
Friday, March 29
Sunday, March 31

ASH WEDNESDAY

"Making Space to Surrender"

"Surrender It All"

"Renew Our Faith"

"Sacrifice of Praise"

"Freedom!"

"At What Cost?" - **PALM SUNDAY**

MAUNDY THURSDAY - *Soup Supper*

GOOD FRIDAY

HAPPY EASTER!

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 Risen Lord and Savior Jesus Christ:

We are moving along in this season of Lent - Journeying toward Easter 2024. Easter is the day we celebrate the culmination of God's redemptive plan. This year, we are on a journey with author Susan Kent to be "Altar'd" by God. We are being asked to make space to surrender to our beloved Triune God and allow the Holy Spirit to lead us on a journey of making more room in our hearts, minds, and souls for a deeper relationship with God. How are you doing?

I am always grateful for the reminder that this journey is not something we do alone. It is not about proving we are worthy of God's love, because we already have God's love. God says, "I will walk with you along the way, and let us talk. Talk about your life. What have you gone through in the past? I will help you put that in its proper place, behind you, so you can be free to live fully in the present with me by your side. I want you to experience the depth and breadth of my amazing love. What are your hopes and dreams for the future? I have hopes and dreams for you too! Let us share those hopes and dreams together and mold them into an unstoppable vision."

This is why I am so grateful for the great traditions of the church. To have the season of Lent come every year is a fantastic opportunity to let go and let God guide our lives once again. It is an opportunity to do a deep cleaning of our souls, our lives, and our relationship with God with the best possible coach available! God! As we move through the remaining days of Lent, I hope that you are available for God. God will be available for you! Anytime, anywhere!

In chapters 6-7 of the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus is teaching about what it means to be His disciple. At the end of chapter 7:24-27, Jesus tells the parable of the wise man and the foolish man. He encourages us to be wise and build our house on the rock. The "rock" is his teachings on being a disciple, the ones He had just finished teaching about. We are like the wise man if we put Jesus's teachings into practice. If you have not taken the time to look at Dixon First's Discipleship Pathway, here is the link to it on our website:

<https://www.fumcdixon.org/get-involved/>.

Our pathway was created to help you put Jesus's teachings into practice. We **Gather, Grow, and Go** in our discipleship. Our **Ministry Teams** and our **I Can Say "YES" to That** flyer are encouragements for you to put your faith into practice - encouragements to live out your discipleship by being the hands, feet, and voice of Jesus. This year, our theme for our congregation is **Becoming the People of God**. So, I hope that you take your discipleship seriously! **Gather** in worship and G2- Growth Groups. **Grow** through daily devotions, bible studies, and G2 - Growth Groups. **Go** through participating in Ministry and Mission Teams in the church, community and beyond.

Finally, I hope that you have your new 202 Breakthrough Prayer for 2024 card. We started handing them out during worship on February 17 and 18. Jody sent it out in an email blast, and you can find it on the cover of this issue and on our website: fumcdixon.org under resources. Check out this month's Holy Spirit Moment and read about how God directed the team as they wrote this prayer.

I look forward to sharing life with you as you are a part of our community.

Blessings.

Pastor Tim

Pastoral Perceptions



Greetings to my sisters and brothers in Christ of Dixon First UMC!

As many of you might know, I was recommended to become a provisional elder of Northern Illinois Conference on my third attempt at the commissioning interview on February 5th, this year. In other words, I am now at a crossing over point, going on toward the next step of my call to ordained ministry. Physically this is a crossing over from the membership of a local pastor to the membership of a provisional elder in our annual conference, but spiritually to a more demanding stage of sanctification, that is, to live more like Jesus, as a pastor seeking ordination.

What does this crossing over mean for me to follow the call to ordained ministry? This is a question that I have been asking myself through my spiritual journey in the ordination process. Many of you have also asked me about my path to follow the call to pastoral ministry.

Through the experience of receiving two rejections or “not yet” from previous commissioning interviews, God gave me answers to this question. First, God let me know something, through the entire experience of seeking ordination, that we are reminded of repetitively: it is God, not us, who has planned and prepared us to follow the call to be used as His hands and feet. What we can do is to say “Yes” to Jesus and cross over into a new experience or a new phase of life where we are invited to take up our own cross, even with the fear of the growing pains we may face in doing so.

Surely receiving “not yet” twice was disappointing and made me feel rejected by God at the very moment that I received the results. I doubted my call to ordained ministry. However, it didn’t take long to be reminded and reaffirmed in my call. I realized that God wanted me to be humbler and better equipped for the ministry to serve God and God’s people - with the same love and servanthip that Jesus modeled for us.

Second, God always reminds me of the amazing love and grace that I have experienced in the loving relationship with God and with my loving family in Christ, through the power of the Holy Spirit. This is the only source of power for me to move forward in a crossing over into a new phase of my call to ordained ministry - even with the anticipation of my own growing pains. With the experience of God’s love and grace through the people of God, we can all move on at any crossing over toward the next phase of our lives even with fear of growing pains.

When Jesus tells His disciples that He must suffer the trial and death that leads to the cross, the disciples cannot accept it. Nobody seems to understand Jesus’ messiahship of suffering and sacrificial death on the cross for our salvation from sin. But Jesus has shown us this messiahship through His life, His ministry, His suffering and death on the cross, and His resurrection. He calls us to follow Him as His disciples and witnesses of His love and grace on the path to the cross. As He says in Matthew 16:24, *“If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me.”*

We are on the path to the cross on our Lenten journey, following Jesus as his disciples and looking forward to meeting with the risen Jesus on the Easter morning. As Jesus calls us to take up the cross and follow him, we can expect to face a crossing over at the invitation to a sometimes demanding ministry as Jesus’ disciples. Many times, we hesitate with the excuse that we need to be more qualified or prepared for the call before we can say “yes” to Jesus.

But remember, it is not us but God who is the proactive protagonist of our lives, empowering us to follow Jesus as His disciples throughout our Lenten journey to the cross. We are always surrounded by God’s love and grace through Jesus Christ, in the power and guidance of the Holy Spirit, our loving relationship with God and our loving family in Christ. Amen.

Blessings,

Pastor Young Sun

Youngsun Lee



Green Notes

Submitted by Sandy Burris

Genesis 2:15 The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and to keep it.

March has arrived and people are beginning to plan their gardens. A successful garden needs proper soil preparation. Clean up the garden area. Get rid of leaves and other debris that may have accumulated. Be sure to loosen the soil so water can reach the roots. The University of Illinois Extension can test your soil for acidity or alkalinity. They may recommend ways to improve your soil's nutritional value for maximum success.

After the soil is prepared, you can choose what to plant. If planting flowers, choose plants native to the area. They thrive better where they have naturally evolved and are familiar to local pollinators. Many of the caterpillars, birds, insects, and bees that pollinate plants are endangered. Without pollinators there wouldn't be many crops to harvest from farm fields or vegetable gardens. Avoid using chemicals to control weeds and pests. Protect flowering plants and pollinator nesting sites.

A recent article in the Dixon Telegraph spotlighted the pollinator-friendly yard of a local woman, Dayona Smith. Experts estimate the over 80% of plants are pollinated by birds and insects. It stands to reason that we should attract pollinators if we want successful gardens. By attracting butterflies and bees, much of your vegetable gardens will be of better quality, especially foods such as squash, cucumber, and pumpkins.

Dayona Smith recommends growing zinnias and cosmos in your flower garden. You can order free seeds by sending a self-addressed stamped envelope to Dayona Farm Foundation, P.O. Box 51, Van Orin, IL 61374. Seeds will be mailed during May and June. They also accept donations.

For other ideas on what, when, and where to plant, there are at least two master Gardeners affiliated with our church: Nancy Wadsworth and Tom Cartwright. Both are willing to help to help if asked. If they don't know the answer, they know who to ask.

The local Extension office can also be a resource. They are offering some local workshops that might be of interest. The workshops are free but registration at go.illinois.edu/FourSeasons is required.

- March 9, 2024 Bottle Terrariums at 11AM at Sauk Valley Community College (SVCC)
- March 23, 2024 Ready Set Grow Gardening Workshop 8AM-noon at Loveland Community House, Dixon.
- April 13, 2024 Succulent Wreaths 9:30 - 11AM at SVCC for ages 12 and up. Register at: go.illinois.edu/CommunityEdSVCC.

Get ready to enjoy your garden, be it flowers or vegetables. Any excess produced can be donated to God's Garden Table. If you plant pollinator-friendly flowers, the Garden Table could be overflowing!

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

Green Tip of the Month: Plant pollinator-friendly flowers.



MAUNDY THURSDAY SUPPER



The Maundy Thursday Soup & Bread supper will be held in the Fellowship Hall on March 28th.

Serving will begin at 5:30PM. Signup sheets for food donations will be available during the month of March at both the Saturday and Sunday worship services. We need lots of soup, so that everyone can sample any and all they want! Bread and desserts are also needed.

PLEASE SIGN UP!! It helps the committee plan the event.

The Maundy Thursday service with communion will be held following the supper.

MIXING POLITICS & RELIGION

Event motto: We can disagree and still be friends.

Tuesday, March 5

6:00 p.m.



How I Mixed Politics and Religion
Tim Bivins
Former State Senator



Response:
Tom Demmer
Former State Representative

6:45 p.m.



Why I Think Partisanship is a Sin
Tom Wadsworth



Response:
John Evans
St. Patrick's Catholic Church

Tuesday, March 12

6:00 p.m.

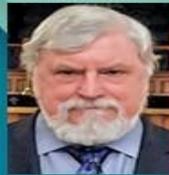


Why Christians Must Be Political
Mike Sutcliffe
Corner Fringe Ministries



Response:
Steve Young
Greater Life Church

6:45 p.m.



Why I Keep Politics Out of the Pulpit
Tim Mitchell
First United Methodist Church



Response:
Mark Juliot
Immanuel Lutheran Church



Community Christian Conversations

Location:
Loveland Community House
513 W. 2nd St., Dixon, IL
All are welcome.

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.

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!**

Our mission was to write the “2024, 2:02 Prayer!” Sue Stach, Peg Willey and I met in the parlor on a Monday morning. I could hear Becky Macklin’s voice in my head...“That is a HUGE assignment!” And she was right! I never asked Sue or Peg how they were feeling about writing this prayer, but speaking for myself...I was feeling a pretty heavy load on my heart. This had to be done and it had to be done right! Where should we begin? Well, before we did anything, we paused and prayed. We thanked God for this opportunity to serve Him and we prayed for the Holy Spirit to guide us and give us the words He wanted us to use in this prayer. As the three of us began talking, Sue shared some research she had done and Peg brought a book we could use as a reference. I thought, “Great, these two obviously know what they’re doing.” We each threw out different ideas and then chose the words we hoped would speak to the congregation. For several days, many texts back and forth, changing and adding to the prayer, hoping to use just the right words; we felt like we were ready to hand it over to Pastor Tim and Pastor Young Sun. Looking back, there were four members on our team, not three, and the fourth member was our Chairman...our Leader who promised to never let us down. When God gives you a mission, no matter how impossible it may seem, stop and pray. When you ask the Holy Spirit to be your Leader, He will show up. He will equip you and guide you to complete your mission. And that’s a promise directly from Heaven! Thank You, Holy Spirit!

Lynne Heacock



PRAIRIE SOUTH LEADERSHIP TRAINING

RESCHEDULED DATE

March 16, 2024

9:00 am - Noon

Dixon: First UMC 202 S. Peoria Ave, Dixon, IL

Cost \$10 each Up to \$50 per church
Childcare provided Bring your own snacks.

Schedule: 8 a.m. Registration with light refreshments
9 a.m. Worship with Holy Communion
9:30 a.m. Transition time
9:45 a.m. - Noon Presentations

Classes: Branding and Communication for Local Churches
led by Lisa Smith
Staff Parish Relations Committee
led by Rev. Arlene Christopherson
Evangelism and Outreach in Rural Communities
led by Rev Megan Smick and Pastor Jan Shaulis
Fundraising for Large Projects
led by Rev. Jonathan Crail, Tom Weber, and Jim Horn
Expectations for General Conference 2024
led by Rev. Dr. Brian Gilbert, Prairie South District DS, and NIC delegate
Mental Health First Aid led by Rev. Rosa Lee

More information and registration:
umcnic.org/calendar/prairie-south-leadership-training-2024

 **Northern Illinois Conference**
OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Questions? Contact Marcia Peddicord - marcia.peddicord@gmail.com

FINANCIAL NOTES for JANUARY 2024		
Income	\$ 32,436.61	* Jan. 2024 income was (\$5,618.22) or -14.8% less than Jan. 23
Expenses	\$ 24,626.30	
Net/Deficit	\$ 7,810.31	**Jan. 2024 expenses were (\$1,814.90) or 6.0% less than Jan. 2023
Debt Carryover from 2023	\$ -3,736.05	



SUN	MON	TUE	FRI	SAT
MARCH 2024				
<p>C - Chapel CR - Conference Room FH - Fellowship Hall P - Parlor Rm 210</p>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10am Worship 11:30am Agape You 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10am Stach G2 - RC 4pm Pastor Tim G2 6pm Leadership Co 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6pm Community Ch 	<p>Pastor Tim Day off</p>	<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"> 10am Stach G2 - RC 4pm Pastor Tim G2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pastor Tim Writing I 9:30am UMW Ex. Bd 10am Lynne's Small 	<p>Pastor Tim Day off</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Atkinson and Meiborn 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"> 10am Stach G2 - RC 4pm Pastor Tim G2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pastor Tim Writing I 10am Lynne's Small 	<p>Pastor Tim Day off</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9am Prairie South L 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"> 10am Stach G2 - RC 4pm Pastor Tim G2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pastor Tim Writing I 10am Lynne's Small 	<p>Pastor Tim Day off</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5pm Worship, C
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8:30am Brooks Bible 8:30am Jesus Seek 10am PALM SUNDAY 11:30am Agape You 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10am Stach G2 - RC 4pm Pastor Tim G2 6pm One Board Lea 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pastor Tim Writing I 10am Lynne's Small 	<p>GOOD FRIDAY</p> <p>Pastor Tim Day off</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5pm Worship, C
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8:30am Brooks Bible 8:30am Jesus Seek 10am EASTER SUN 	<p>Apr 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10am Stach G2 4pm Pastor Tim, G2 	<p>MAUNDY THURSDAY</p>	<p>GOOD FRIDAY</p> <p>Pastor Tim Day off</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5pm Worship, C

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
Dixon IL 61021

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www.fumcdixon.org
Facebook: FUMCDixon

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

THE HERALD MARCH 2024



Prairie South District of United Women of Faith
Presents:
Saturday, March 9th 2024
Morning Women's Retreat
**NURTURING
THE
GARDEN
OF
YOUR SOUL**

8:15 a.m. Doors Open for Fellowship Breakfast
9 a.m. - 12 p.m. Retreat

Registration \$5
<https://uwfaithps-march9-2024.cheddarup.com>

First United Methodist Church
202 S. Peoria Avenue
Dixon, IL 61021

Questions?
815-483-3851
char.szymoczek@fmc.org
Chair: Myronni



Staff Phone#

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Jessie Marie Dir, 815-288-1326
Sharon Welker, 815-652-4384
Keith Gabany, 815-288-5001