



First United Methodist Church
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united methodist church

December 2022



The Heart That Grew Three Sizes *with Pastor Sara Nelson*



Pastor Sara Nelson

How the Grinch Stole Christmas! by Dr. Seuss has been an iconic and favorite Christmas story among many for generations. We aren't quite sure why the Grinch dislikes Christmas so much. We don't know his reasons for wanting to steal Christmas, but we do know that something extraordinary happens in his heart which causes it to grow three sizes.

According to writer Matt Rawle: "Doctor Seuss purposefully did not make the Grinch overly religious because he wanted the story to be more universal in tone. In fact, Seuss identified with the Grinch's frustration over the commercialization of Christmas, and soon began to realize that the Grinch's story was more autobiographical than he cared to admit." (The Heart that Grew Three Sizes, pg. 8)

Maybe you can relate to Dr. Seuss' feelings during the Christmas season. This season can bring about lots of feelings both good and bad. Sometimes, I wonder if there is a little bit of the Grinch inside of each of us, even at this time of year. But the good news is that the Grinch experienced a significant change of heart. His heart grew THREE SIZES!

For Advent this year, we are exploring this moving story through the lens of Jesus' miraculous birth. Sometimes, it can be tempting for us to separate the secular and the sacred in our lives. But God the Father broke down the walls between these two realities when he sent Jesus to earth which brought about the greatest miracle of all. God's

gift of love came down from heaven to earth. As the beloved Christmas hymn proclaims: "Love came down at Christmas, Love all lovely, Love divine; Love was born at Christmas; star and angels gave the sign." (Love Came Down at Christmas, United Methodist Hymnal)

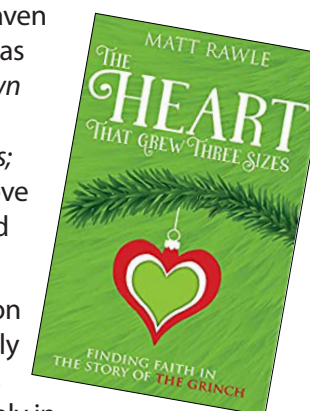
This Advent and Christmas season we invite you to dive more deeply into both stories. May our hearts grow in size as we fall more deeply in love with God and our neighbors.

Happy Advent and Merry Christmas!

Pastor Sara M. Nelson

Pastor Sara

P.S. If you'd like to read How the Grinch Stole Christmas! by Dr. Seuss, please go to: How the Grinch stole Christmas Audiobook by Dr. Seuss @ Book in Bed - YouTube



Information is correct at publication.

Please visit our website, sfumc.org, for further details and updates.



Office is Closed

*Christmas Holiday -
Mon., 12/26 and Tue., 12/27*

New Year Holiday - Mon., 1/2

Adult Discipleship



Loving the 605 with Family Visitation Center

This December we are Loving the 605 through partnering with Family Visitation Center. This organization provides a safe place for children to connect with family members. These children are going through difficult things like divorce, domestic violence, and other issues.

One of the best ways you can support this organization in our community is through financial donation this month. But there are also some needs that they are asking for this December, too. As winter sets in, socks, gloves, and hats are a need for adults and children. We will collect these items at the church and deliver them at the end of the month. Thank you for Loving the 605!

Higgins Bible Study

We are continuing in our journey through the Old Testament. Higgins meets the **2nd and 4th Tuesdays @ 8 a.m.** in the Fireplace Room. There are donuts and coffee as well as great discussion about who our God is as revealed to us in the Old Testament. Join us!

"5-6-7" Fellowship

Who: "5-6-7" Fellowship

What: **Sioux Falls Christmas Light Tour**
First 16 to call the church @ 605-336-3652 and reserve a seat will be able to ride in the church van

Where: Meet at First United Methodist East Parking Lot

When: Thursday, December 15, 2022 @ 6:30 p.m.

A new group is forming at First Church called "**5-6-7 Fellowship**". This group is intended for people in their 50s, 60s, and 70s, and it is a group that seeks to connect with others socially and simply have fun together. Call the church office to get a spot for the Christmas Light Tour. Bring a friend or two!

The Young Adult Fellowship

On **Tuesday, December 6, @ 7 p.m.**, the Young Adult Fellowship is having a get-together in the Wesley Dining Hall. We are having a **Gingerbread House Making Party**. This is a time for folks in their 20s and 30s to gather, find friendship through fun activities, and build community. On the Facebook Group page there is more information and what to expect at this gathering. Join us and make sure to wear your Christmas sweaters!

Advent Book Studies

On Sunday, November 27, we started a new sermon series based on the book "**The Heart that Grew Three Sizes**" by Matt Rawle. This book looks at the children's book *How the Grinch Stole Christmas* and looks at how some of its lessons apply to our faith.

There are six book/video studies offered with the series:

- Tuesdays @ 12 p.m., Fireplace Room, started 11/29
Led by Pastor Deborah Stowers
- Wednesdays @ 5:45 p.m., Fireplace Room, starts 12/7
Led by Pastor Jordan Louks
- Thursdays @ 7:15 p.m., The Source, starts 12/1
Led by Heather Coombs
- Fridays @ 12 p.m., Zoom, starts 12/2
Led by Nancy Hallenbeck
- Three Week Study: 12/8, 12/14, 12/21 @ 6 p.m.,
Leopard Library. Led by Brian and Stacey Jans.
- One Session Study: Tuesday, December 20 @ 5:30 p.m.
Leopard Library. Led by Jane Healy (Book Overview)

Books are available in the church office as well as signup sheets for the various studies. Feel free to jump in at any time even if you have missed or will miss a week or two.

Christmas Tea Giving Opportunity

For the Christmas Tea this year, United Women in Faith is partnering with the **Red Cross Deployment Program**. We are looking to collect items to give to the keynote speakers that can be used in military care packages for those who are serving overseas.

Here are some of the top items needed: high-quality socks, sunscreen, and hand/foot warmers. Please bring the items to the Christmas Tea on Saturday, December 3. Thank you!



Congregational Care

Thank You Blood Donors!

Thank you for everyone who donated blood at the Turkey Dinner! Your made a difference in our community.

- 12 — Pints Donated at Drive
- 36 — Lives Saved from Donations
- 537 — Total Donations

Service of Remembrance

**DECEMBER 11, 2 PM
Sanctuary**

This service is for those who have experienced loss during the past year. This may have been the loss of a loved one or the loss of health, a job or financial well-being or something else of major importance in your life. This Service is to provide support and hope for you during the upcoming Holy Season that can make loss extra stressful and difficult.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

Tim Blodgett Tyler Kopp
Kristy Blodgett Andrea Kopp
Traci Gilbertson Renae Malone
Brad Gilbertson

Walk This Way!

**Monday – Thursday
8 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.**

The First Church Gym is open to use for walking! Please use the front Spring Avenue entrance.

CHURCH FAMILY

WEDDING

- Nick Willuweit & April Hanisch (daughter of Todd & Julie Hanisch)

- Marion Manning (wife of Jay Manning, mother of Anita (Rich) Brenneman)

JOYS & CONCERNS

- Cynthia McConniel (wife of Mike McConniel)

BIRTH

- William Finnley Larsen (son of Jake Larsen and Madison Gill, grandson of Mark & Jennifer Larsen) – born November 8, 2022

- Bishop Plambeck and all others in episcopal leadership

- Dwight Seigenthaler (husband of Renae Seigenthaler)

BAPTISM

- Nolan Jasper McConniel (son of Kristian McConniel & Erika Mizhquiri)
- Jayla Marie Brown (daughter of Lorenzo Brown Jr.)
- London Cole Brown (daughter of Lorenzo Brown Jr. & Abby Brown)
- Millie Grace Frey (daughter of Michael & Marlee Frey)

- Family of Scott Alhers (family friend of Caitlin Marsh)

- Kerry Marsh (Aunt of Caitlin Marsh)

ATTENDANCE

- Sep 18: In Person247
Online224
- Oct 16: In Person330
Online260
- Oct 23: In Person280
Online278
- Oct 30: In Person262
Online228
- Nov 6: In Person441
Online296

HOSPICE

- Mary Newcomb

DEATHS

- Kent Meyer (brother of Gene Meyer)

"The Bag Ladies"

AA Women's Only Group Meeting

Bring your "brown bag" lunch.
Wednesdays, 12-1 p.m., Fireplace Room
First United Methodist Church



"3C's" Al-Anon Family Groups

Al-Anon Family Group Meeting

Thursdays, 1:30-2:30 p.m., Fireplace Room
First United Methodist Church
To request Zoom link send email to:
SDAAnonOutreach@gmail.com

www.al-anon.org / www.sdal-anon-alateen.org
Sioux Falls Hotline / meeting information: 605-679-5497
Rapid City Hotline / meeting information: 605-390-6432



Next Generation

November kicked off with a Wednesday youth group setting up tables and chairs for Turkey Dinner. The High School followed with a Lock-in. 17 students and 4 adults had a fun-filled (and productive) night- played lots of crazy games and finished set-up for Turkey Dinner. It was a great time!

On the Topic of Turkey Diner...

We had a wonderful Turkey Dinner, Silent Auction and Country Store. Here are few numbers and stats to help put it all in perspective:

- **Number of Volunteers** – 73 people! (*planning, set-up, day of, and tear down*) 52 of these people helped on more than one occasion. (*This does not include all those that made such wonderful items for the Country Store and those who donated to the Silent Auction*)
- **Volunteer Hours** – About 325 total hours go into this event!
- **Served** – 677 people (*at best count*): 455 in person and 222 to-go
- **Country Store** – Made \$1,007.50
- **Silent Auction** – Brought in \$2,930
- **Total funds raised for Youth Missions** – Trip to Puerto Rico (*after food and supply costs*) \$7,430.10 (*an increase of nearly \$2,300 over last year!!!*)

Without the help of so many, this event would not be the tremendous success that it was! Thanks for helping set-up, prep, plan, serve, clean-up, eat and enjoy!



Next Generation Wednesday Advent Gatherings - 5:45-7 p.m.

- **Dec. 7** – Service project and Christmas Party night. Kids will be making ornaments that will go in the cards that the youth will be making. The High School students will deliver the cards when they go Christmas caroling later in December.

The kids and youth will each have fun parties that evening too. Come and celebrate! Bring friends!

- **Dec. 14** – All-Church Christmas Game-Show Extravaganza! Christmas Program in the Sanctuary will begin at 6pm. It is an all ages, participatory evening of fun! Plan to come that evening as we hear and interact with the Christmas story! The more the merrier, come one, come all!!! We will end the evening with cookies, cocoa, and hot cider in the Multipurpose room.

If you're looking for more information or want to know how you can be a part of helping with any of these ministries contact Pastor Andrea at pastorandrea@sfumc.org

KIDSTOP

by Kathy Martens, KidStop Executive Director

Gift Tree and Christmas Store!

It's December again, which is a busy time at Kidstop. This year we will again be purchasing a gift for each child that they will receive at the Kidstop Christmas Party.










The "Gift Tree" will be located in front of the Leopard Library to the right. Pick an ornament with a child's name and age. On the back on the ornament will be a list of the kids needs and wants. You can purchase what you like and return to the church office no later than Monday December 19.

We will also be doing the **Christmas Store** again where the kids can use their "good behavior bucks" to purchase items for their families. Thanks to all the wonderful donations throughout the year we have all we need for our Christmas store. Thanks, for everyone who has donated items. As always is so wonderful to have the support from the church Family!



Due to **Christmas** the **January Here @ First** newsletter articles are due by **4:30PM, Tues, 12/13**. The December newsletter will be mailed on **Wed, 12/28**. Please email information to Jill Johnson at johnsonj@sfumc.org

December

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>4 Communion Sunday Worship: In-Person & Online 8:30am (Sanctuary) Storytime: 9am (Library) 9:45am w/Kid's Connection (Sanctuary) 11:01am (Wesley Dining Hall) Heartland Handbell Choir Concert: 3pm</p>	<p>5 Nighthwatch at Hayward: 5pm</p> 	<p>6 Amen's: 12pm Midweek Refresh: 12pm (Fireplace Room) The Young Adult Fellowship: 7pm (Wesley Dining Hall)</p>	<p>7 Women's Bible Study: 9:30am Feeding SD Food Distribution: 5:30pm Dinner: 5pm Kids @ First: 5:45pm Youth @ First: 5:45pm Adult Bible Study @ First: 5:45pm High School Study: 7pm Chancel Choir: 7pm Confirmation: 7:05pm</p>	<p>1 Les Cloches Rehearsal: 5:30pm 11:01 Band Rehearsal: 6pm Praise Band Rehearsal: 6:30pm Adult Bible Study w/Heather Coombs: 7:15pm (Offsite)</p>	<p>2 Facebook: FYI Friday 11am Adult Bible Study w/Nancy Hallenback via Zoom: 12pm</p>	<p>3 Men of Integrity: 7:30am Christmas Tea: 2pm</p> 
<p>11 Sunday Worship: In-Person & Online 8:30am (Sanctuary) Storytime: 9am (Library) 9:45am w/Kid's Connection (Sanctuary) 11:01am (Wesley Dining Hall) Service of Remembrance: 2pm</p>	<p>12</p>	<p>13 Higgins: 8am Midweek Refresh: 12pm (Fireplace Room) Men's Ministry: 5:30pm (Fireplace Room) January Newsletter Deadline</p>	<p>14 Women's Bible Study: 9:30am Sages: 11:15am Wedded Band: 1pm Dinner: 5pm Adult Bible Study @ First: 5:45pm Christmas Program w/Refreshments to follow: 6pm Adult Bible Study w/Brian and Stacey Jans: 6pm Chancel Choir: 7pm High School Study: 7pm</p>	<p>15 Rachel Circle: 9:30am Les Cloches Rehearsal: 5:30pm 11:01 Band Rehearsal: 6pm Praise Band Rehearsal: 6:30pm Adult Bible Study w/Heather Coombs: 7:15pm (Offsite)</p>	<p>16 Facebook: FYI Friday 11am Adult Bible Study w/Nancy Hallenback via Zoom: 12pm</p>	<p>17 Men of Integrity: 7:30am Nan Circle: 9:30am (Library)</p> 
<p>18 Big Music Sunday Worship: In-Person & Online 8:30am (Sanctuary) Storytime: 9am (Library) 9:45am w/Kid's Connection (Sanctuary) 11:01am (Wesley Dining Hall)</p>	<p>19</p> 	<p>20 Serve the Downtown Banquet: 5:30am Amen's: 12pm Midweek Refresh: 12pm (Fireplace Room) Carefirst Meeting: 5:30pm Read @ First: 5:30pm</p>	<p>21 Adult Bible Study @ First: 5:45pm Adult Bible Study w/Brian and Stacey Jans: 6pm Chancel Choir: 7pm</p> 	<p>22 Serve Christmas Dinner @ Downtown Banquet: 4pm Les Cloches Rehearsal: 5:30pm 11:01 Band Rehearsal: 6pm Praise Band Rehearsal: 6:30pm Adult Bible Study w/Heather Coombs: 7:15pm (Offsite)</p>	<p>23 Facebook: FYI Friday 11am Adult Bible Study w/Nancy Hallenback via Zoom: 12pm</p>	<p>24 Christmas Eve Candlelight Services Modern Service: 9pm Unity Service: 5pm Outside Service: 6:15pm Traditional Service: 7pm Acoustic Service: 11pm</p> 
<p>25 Christmas Day Worship: In-Person & Online 9am Brunch/Hot Coco Bar: 10am</p> 	<p>26 Church Office Closed</p>	<p>27 Church Office Closed</p>	<p>28 Chancel Choir: 7pm</p> 	<p>29 Les Cloches Rehearsal: 5:30pm Praise Band Rehearsal: 6:30pm Adult Bible Study w/Heather Coombs: 7:15pm (Offsite)</p>	<p>30 Facebook: FYI Friday 11am</p>	<p>31 New Year's Eve Men of Integrity: 7:30am</p> 

Just call the front office @ (605) 336-3652 to request a copy and we can either email, mail, or you can stop by in person to receive yours.

Did you know that you could get a copy of Pastor Sara's Sunday sermons?



by Anelis Coscioni, Toy Lending Library Director

Meet Our Volunteer - Greg!



Greg Woods is our toy box creator and resident Lego master! He retired from the Air Force in 2009 and started volunteering at the Toy Lending Library in 2017.

Along with Anelis (our founder), he knows all of the ins and outs of our operation. He creates and repair toy boxes, prepares toy boxes for delivery to the libraries,

patiently trains new volunteers in processing and cleaning toys returned from the libraries and does many of the day-to-day tasks that keep the Toy Lending Library (TLL) running. His sense of humor and playful nature make coming to the TLL an adventure!

We love having Greg on the team and we are very THANKFUL for his support all these years!

THE 11:01 Baking Soon
LOADING 70%...

*Cookie Baking Party, Sunday, December 18
Following the 11:01 Service*

Advent Readers & Candle Lighters 2022

Our church enjoys the tradition of family and friends reading the Advent scripture and lighting the Advent candles each Sunday of the season. We would love to have you and your family or group of 2 or more join in the tradition. Please contact Pam Knuth to sign up.

Christmas Eve Greeters

Help First Church show our Extravagant Hospitality by signing up to be a greeter on Christmas Eve! Sign up at the Information Desk or by contacting Pam Knuth.

Why A Foundation?

- Have you ever wondered why First Church has a Foundation?
- Why when funds are donated to the Foundation, they aren't just spent for current needs?

Charitable, church, private or public foundations, are established to have an investment vehicle where funds can grow and increase in value over a specific period of time or an indefinite period of time. Church Foundations are established to invest the funds, using income from the funds for current Church needs as well as for new opportunities to spread God's Word.

Each request is presented to the Foundation Board with details of what the request is for, why the need, and how the funds will fit into our Church mission. The Foundation funds are for today, tomorrow and for the next 150 years of our Church.

To learn how you can leave a legacy contact Jill Johnson at johnsonj@sfumc.org or talk to any Foundation Board Member.

How Our Foundation Feeds the Hungry

- Did you know First Church Foundation has an Endowment for The Banquet?
- Did you know the income generated by the Endowment is used to help First Church volunteers feed those in need?
- Did you know you can add to the Banquet Endowment within the Foundation by designating so on your check when you contribute to the Foundation?

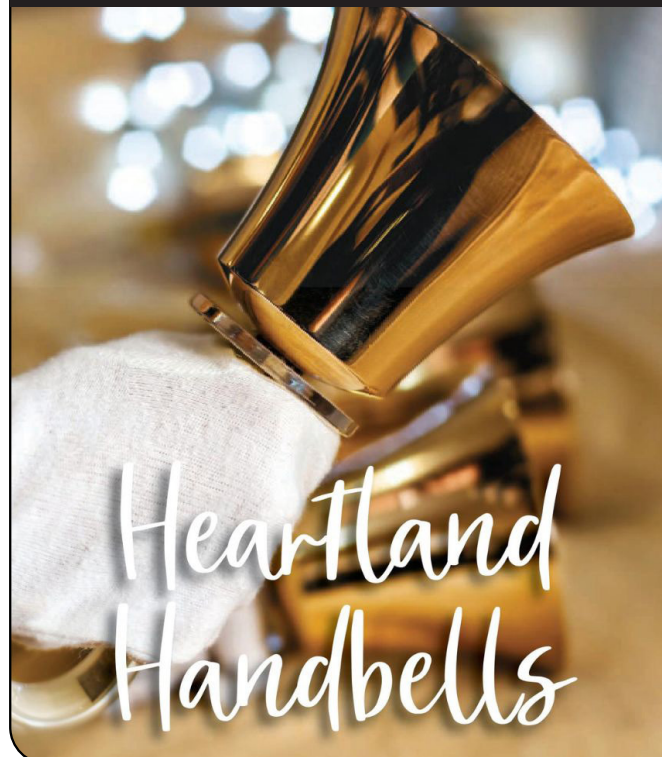
The Banquet serves 16 warm, nutritious meals six days a week to individuals who may not have any other access to food or those who are just having temporary financial challenges.

These donations are added to the account to invest and the income distributed annually. This is a gift that keeps on giving. Next time you make a gift in memory of or in honor of someone, consider making a gift that feeds the hungry.

"Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me."

~ Matthew 25:40

You're Invited To Attend...



Heartland Handbells

presents

"Jazzy Jingle Bells"

SUNDAY, DEC. 4 | 3:00 P.M.

with

"LES CLOCHES," THE FUMC BELL CHOIR
and special guest musicians
EMILY ANDERSON, FLUTE &
BOB GOHEEN, PERCUSSION

"Read @ First" Book Club

Read@First meets 12/20 at 5:30 p.m. in the Leopard Library. The book is **The Heart That Grew Three Sizes** by Matt Rawle.

We don't know why the Grinch hated Christmas. We just know he did. In this new Advent study, Matt Rawle explores the faith themes in the Christmas classic, *How the Grinch Stole Christmas!* including, how did the Grinch's heart grow three sizes come Christmas morning? How did Christmas save the Grinch? Could it be that the very thing we think we hate is the one thing that changes our lives? This Advent and Christmas season, look at a familiar classic through the lens of faith and see how Christ speaks to us through our culture.



This is the Advent study book, so you can sign up for a weekly study and/or attend this book overview discussion.

S.A.G.E.S.

S.A.G.E.S. meets **Wed., Dec. 14 at 11:30 a.m.** in the **Multi-Purpose Room**. We will have a turkey dinner catered by Tony's plus dessert for \$7. We will celebrate Christmas with music and sing-a-long led by Doris gist. All are welcome! Please call the church office at (605) 336-3652 to reserve your spot.

Wedded Band

Wedded Band will meet **Dec. 14 at 1 p.m.** in the **Lewis Friendship Room**.

We'll enjoy hearing about Kelby and Jan Fode's recent vacation trip.

"Blessed is the season which engages the whole world in a conspiracy of love." Hamilton Wright Mabie

Charge Conference

Charge Conference Reports are available in the church office.