



# Union Avenue News

DECEMBER 2017

## December Worship

DECEMBER 3 9:30a.m. Worship

From Fad to Foundation  
*Pastor Doug Dent*

Mark 13  
*Celebration of the  
Lord's Supper*

DECEMBER 10 9:30a.m. Worship

Thank you for Waiting  
*Pastor Doug Dent*

2 Peter 3  
Viktor Gustafson Baptism

DECEMBER 17 9:30a.m. Worship

Kid's Christmas Pageant

DECEMBER 24

CHRISTMAS EVE

9:30am A Dynasty of Grace  
*Pastor Doug Dent*

2 Samuel 7

5pm Lessons and Carols Service

Scripture Readings and  
excerpts from Martin Luther's  
Christmas Sermons

11pm Candlelight and  
Communion  
Manger Danger  
*Pastor Doug Dent*

Luke 2

DECEMBER 31 9:30a.m. Worship

NEW YEARS EVE

Design Thinking  
*Pastor Doug Dent*

Psalms 148

## Dates to Remember

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 2**

4:00pm CHRISTMAS CANTATA

**MONDAY, DECEMBER 11**

7:00pm Prayers for Peace

**TUESDAY, DECEMBER 12**

6:30pm Ministry Nite

**FRIDAY, DECEMBER 15**

**NEWSLETTER DEADLINE  
ANNUAL REPORTS DUE**

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17**

9:30am Christmas Pageant  
Christmas Joy Offering

**THURSDAY, DECEMBER 21**

7:00pm Blue Christmas Service

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 24**

**NO SUNDAY SCHOOL**

9:30am Worship

5:00pm Lessons and Carols

6:00pm Potluck

11:00pm Candlelight Service

**MONDAY, DECEMBER 25**

**CHRISTMAS DAY**

OFFICE CLOSED

**Friday, December 29**

12:30pm Federated at Food Shelf

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 31**

**NO SUNDAY SCHOOL**



"Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife; for the Child who has been conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. She will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus... (Matthew 1:20b-21a).

The Gospels tell us that, besides Mary, Joseph, and a handful of sleepy shepherds, no one knew that God had come among us in the little one they named Jesus. Imagine, everyone in Bethlehem going about their business like any other day, and God Almighty- the Lord of Hosts, shows up in a manger, complete with an angelic choir... and no one notices. There was no news flash; no announcement on the Emergency Broadcasting System. The world simply did not notice.

The Quaker writer Thomas Kelly (1893-1941) describes us all as "time-blinded" people. Essentially, Kelly is making reference to that fact that we are so caught up in the machinery of passing time that we have become blind to eternity. We are either captured by the nostalgia of our fading memories or we are holding our breath for some imagined future. Seldom are we caught alert and aware in the present moment. After all, we are busy people. In fact, most people consider being busy as the sign that we are worthwhile and not willing to lay down and give up just yet.

That's a problem for us, given the fact that eternity cannot be measured by time. For us, eternity-God-exists as the ever-present moment beyond the tick of a clock or an orbit 'round the sun. In other words, according to the Gospels (and Thomas Kelly), busy people wouldn't recognize God if God came and stood right in front of them. Much less would they notice God's arrival out back in a small town cattle stall; or, for that matter, hanging on a cross over by the town dump. We simply do not expect to see the eternal right now in the otherwise avoided and ordinary places of our lives. God is far off in heaven or in our future. Or, God is in our past speaking through Old Testament prophets or the saints of our childhood.

Yeah, well...not so much, says the Bible. The Christmas Story is God's way of saying, "I've come to you in person. So, stop

whatever it is you're doing and take time to welcome me. You won't regret it." Get it? You are worthwhile and important, not because of all the things you busy yourself with, but because God Almighty, the Creator of time itself, chooses to come in person: to you, to us all. You just have to sit with that for a while before you discover how profound this demonstration of God's love is and can be: that God would even bother with us at all, let alone come in person.

It is very difficult for the world around us to notice this God. What with all the "wars and rumors of war," the tears and fears, the shame and corruption, the self-serving bluster, and the constitutionally guaranteed anger of entitlement which seems to be all the rage nowadays, it's no wonder no one notices God when God comes near. They're too busy pursuing their own interests, blinded by the times.

To combat this "time-blinded-ness," Federated Church is offering some wonderful opportunities to stop and notice what God is doing in and around us.

You are welcome to join us for the advent season. Come, take time for the wonder of God. Welcome the One who comes to us all, in person, bearing gifts of eternity. Whether you worship with us or with another congregation, don't let Christmas pass you by. According the scriptures his name is Immanuel, "God with us", but as you may have noticed, we just call him Jesus.

Merry Christmas! Blessings for the New Year.  
Pastor Doug Dent

PS – For more of Thomas Kelly's works, check out "A Testament of Devotion" and "The Eternal Promise." Both are available on Amazon.com



## Local Mission

Thank you for your continued generosity with the Local Mission Fund! Those who are helped by this fund are extremely grateful for the extra support they receive during tough times. According to our policy, we are able to help each family or individual three times during a 12 month period, with up to \$100 a time, depending on funds. We assist with food, utilities, rent, and, in emergency situations, a night at a hotel. Donations can be put in the offering plate with Local Mission Fund in the memo line or dropped off in the church office. Thank you!

During this month, we were able to help 13 families or individuals from the local mission fund. We gave a total of \$1,115 for food, rent and utilities.





1.If you haven't already done so, it is time to get your flu shot. Thank you to all who have done it! That's just one way to love your neighbor.

2.Do you have that box of salt or bag of kitty litter in your car for those icy parking lots and sidewalks? Yes, love yourself too.

3.Do you have a "Procedures for Emergency Care: Call 911" brochure by your telephone and in your car? I called the Emergency Medical Services Corporation to get quick reference guides to have handy around the church building and received about 50 copies. I will place some in the nar-

thex for you to take. There are two sets: Procedures for Emergency Care and a Pediatric quick reference guide. Be prepared to help yourself and your neighbor.

4.May God Bless and keep all of you well and safe. Merry Christmas!

## Remind Text Alerts

The Federated Church is now using Remind, a text alert system to send out reminders, schedule updates, cancellations and other time-sensitive announcements. If you would like to receive text updates from Federated Church, please **text the message @federated to the number 81010**. You will receive a confirmation text, followed by a text asking if you are a parent, student, or teacher. There's no need to respond to this text. You'll receive another text telling you about the app available to use with Remind. You can use the app, but it is not essential to have the app in order to receive text alerts. Feel free to contact the church office with any questions!



*Joy* that will be for all people  
today in the town of David a  
Savior has been born to you, He  
is Christ The Lord  
Luke 2:10



“A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit. The Spirit of the Lord will rest on him—the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of power, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord—and He will delight in the fear of the Lord.”

The approach of Christmas is always exciting and busy for Christian Education here at Federated! We are working on our annual Christmas pageant during Kids Club and Sunday school for the first few weeks of December. Mark your calendars! The pageant is planned for Sunday, December 17th at the 9:30 worship service. We hope to have as many kids as possible participate in this event. It is a great way for everyone—pageant participants AND congregation members alike—to focus our attention on the true meaning of Christmas. This year, the children will be doing a slightly different pageant. Using our Kids Club lessons from this fall, the pageant will journey toward the birth of Jesus. Using stories from the ancestors of Jesus and Christmas carols, we will tell of “God’s Promise Through the Jesse Tree”. Don’t worry! We will tell the traditional Christmas story and singing our favorite songs. We will simply be doing it in a different way! Please plan to attend this holiday service and support our kids!

## Youth group

Our senior high youth group have two fun events planned for December—both of which have become traditions in the past few years! We will be singing at the Village Co-op on December 6th, and then on December 13th we will be doing our “Blessing Scavenger Hunt”. The youth always enjoy these activities; both weeks help us focus on Christmas giving and fellowship.

## Sunday School

With more students in Sunday school, we are hoping to form a 2nd and 3rd grade class beginning on January 7th. We have one volunteer so far, but will need one more in order to begin the class. If you are interested in serving as a

Sunday school teacher, please contact Karen at [kmad@prtcl](mailto:kmad@prtcl) or the church office. We have some GREAT kids who would love to learn more about God’s word WITH you! Please consider this opportunity.

Important note: There will be NO youth activities (Kids Club, confirmation, or youth group), on December 20th or December 27th. All activities will resume on January 3rd, 2018.



**A Note from Sadie ~**  
**Hey 7th-12th Graders! I hear there is a Bible Study just for you Sundays @ 10:30 am in the narthex! Think about coming! More peeps means more fun! See you there!**



# Bible studies and discussion groups

## Women's Bible Study

THURSDAYS 10:30am

Jesus repeatedly teaches for something to really live, it must first die: "Truly, truly I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the Earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit." ~ John 12:24

Our weekly bible study sessions have shown and taught us, to be able to experience new life in Christ, one must first die to his or her old life. I have been very moved and thankful for our time together. The ladies who come have taught me so much about my personal connection with Christ in these past few weeks. I'm excited and looking forward to the future weeks ahead. Blessing to you all in this season of Christmas!

. -Sadie

## Men's Bible Study

MONDAYS 12pm

Men's Bible Study meets on Mondays at noon for one

hour. They will be diving into a study of Revelation. All men are invited! Friends of Federated are invited, too!

## Adult Bible Study

*The Story* by Randy Frazee

If you've ever had trouble reading the Bible all the way through - and let's be honest, Leviticus isn't the most exciting book of the Bible - then try reading the *The Story*. Here the major stories and themes of the Bible are presented in a narrative form, more like a novel. Giving an overview of God's master plan, *The Story* tells the grandest, most compelling story of all time: the story of a true God who loves God's children, who established for them a way of salvation and provided a route to eternity. Each story reveals the God of Grace who speaks, acts, and listens, and whose love for us culminated in the coming of Jesus. We will work through the 31 chapters of *The Story* in an informal, conversational way. Copies of *The Story* are available in the church library (suggested donation: \$5).

## Church News

### Canceled Meetings

There will be no Stephen Minister's Meeting or D&E meetings in December.

### Newsletter Deadline

The Holiday season can be busy. Please don't forget to get your newsletter information to the church by December 15th. Thank you!

### Automatic Withdraws

Starting January 2018, automatic withdraws for pledges will be taken out of accounts on the 5th and 16th of every month.

### Annual Reports

Chairs of Committees need to get their Annual Reports in by December 15th. Contact the church, if you have questions on how to create an annual report.

## Christmas Prayer

In a world where worry, not peace, prevails, stir up that good news again. This Christmas, make it real in our hearts. Never have we needed Your joy and peace more than now. Thank You for the gift of Jesus, our Immanuel, the Word made flesh. Forgive us for forgetting—that Your love never changes, never fades, and that You never abandon the purpose for which You came: to save us from our sinful condition, and to give us life eternal, the joy of relationship with a holy God. Your birth—and Your death—sealed Your promise to us forever. Amen.





# Events: **The Holiday Season**

## **Christmas Concert, Dec 2**

Federated's concert will be held at 4:00pm. Enjoy the music from the Christmas choir and orchestra concert.

## **Community Tree Lighting, Dec 2**

Meet at the City Hall at 5:30pm. From there, everyone will walk together to the Christmas Tree Lighting at 6:00pm

## **No Stephen Minsters, Dec 5**

## **Prayers for Peace, Dec 11**

Service for peace here at Federated 7:00pm

## **Christmas Program, Dec 17**

At the Sunday Service 9:30am here at Federated Church

## **Christmas Baskets, Dec 19**

We are putting Christmas baskets together at 11:00am for those in need.

## **No Confirmation, Dec 20 and 27**

## **Blue Christmas, Dec 21**

A service at Federated remembering those who are no longer with us at 7:00pm.

## **Christmas Eve, Dec 24**

5:00pm Lessons and Carols

6:00pm Potluck Supper

11:00pm Candlelight and Communion Service

## **Ice Fishing Contest, Jan 6**

All day starting at 7:00am on Otter tail Lake. Cost per person \$25. Call Dennis to reserve your fishing hole at 218-998-0717 or 205-8147.

## **Chili Cook-off, Jan 14**

10:30am after church. This is a competition! May the best chili win!



## Photos





# Business as usual

## Service Group

### DECEMBER SERVICE GROUP

Group #5  
 Jim and Phyllis Behrends  
 Kathy Hatling  
 Jeremy and Jen Jensen  
 Steve Lockhart and Donna Ohe  
 Tiny Macheel  
 Jacinta Macheel  
 Dave & Tessa Nord  
 Ann Porter  
 Mary Jones Olson  
 Duane and Carol Rose  
 Melissa Saurer  
 Donna Solin  
 Joan Tester  
 Troy and Keriann Stenstrum  
 Toby Wach

### JANUARY SERVICE GROUP

Group #6  
 Dennis and Jean Bowman  
 Dennis and Lu Echelberger  
 Paul and Tina Eckhoff  
 John and Thea Franzen  
 Cindy Holte  
 Love Ell Hultin  
 Karen Johnson  
 Ross and Lisa Johnson  
 Gary and Roxane Nereson  
 Gene and Dorothy Porter  
 Al and Connie Seltz  
 Gerry and Anne Worner  
 Vern and Joyce Youngren  
 Jeff and Emily Sivertson

## Ministry Nite:

**December 12 - 6:30PM**

Please email your minutes to church@federatedff.org. If you are unable to attend, please contact your chairperson. If your committee does not make a quorum, please schedule a time for your committee to meet before the next Ministry Nite. Reminder: Committees do not meet in July.

## Stewardship Report

General Fund Report	
Revenue	\$26,616.00
Expenditures	\$35,005.00
Year to Date Pledge Offering	
Budgeted	\$283,382.00
Actual Received	\$268,203.00

## Grocery Receipts

THE GROCERY RECEIPTS FOR OCTOBER

SunMart	
NOVEMBER	\$2,578.00
Total as of 11/28/17	\$78,734.00
Service Food	
NOVEMBER	\$14,175.55

## Newsletter Deadline

Articles and announcements are due the 15th of each month. Please send the by email whenever possible. The church staff reserves the right to edit articles for content and space.

## Greeters and Coffee Hosts

### DECEMBER 2017

#### SEASON OF ADVENT

#### Sunday, December 3rd

9:30am Dave and Tessa Nord  
 Donna Solin

#### Sunday, December 10th

9:30am Jeremy and Jen Jensen  
 Toby Wach

#### Sunday, December 17th

9:30am Steve Lockhart and Donna Ohe and Anne Porter

#### Sunday, December 24th

9:30am Duane and Carol Rose  
 Joan Tester

#### Sunday, December 31st

9:30am Troy and Keriann Stenstrum and Kathy Hatling

**REMINDER:** You are also the coffee hosts for that Sunday. If you are unable to do it the Sunday you are assigned, it is your responsibility to find a replacement. Check your email for information on greeter and coffee host duties. Please add church@federatedff.org to your safe senders list. If you don't use email, please check the bulletin board in the narthex for the information.

## The church staff wants to know...

We rely on you to contact us with your email, phone or address changes. If you are not receiving our emails, but would like to, please contact to church office. Also contact us for pastoral care or parish nursing needs. Please call 218-739-3227 or email church@federatedff.org





# Federated CHURCH

224 North Union Avenue  
Fergus Falls, MN 56537

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

NONPROFIT ORG  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
FERGUS FALLS, MN  
PERMIT #285

Time sensitive information  
Please deliver by December 1st

## Thank you



Thank you for welcoming me to the Federated Church family! I have enjoyed working as your Administrative Assistant, and I look forward to continuing in the new year. It has been a joy to meet your congregation. Merry Christmas!

-Ada Erlandson



## December Birthdays

- |                            |                        |
|----------------------------|------------------------|
| 12/01 Shannon Wilson       | 12/21 Mara Braaten     |
| 12/02 Marsden Brimhall     | 12/22 Lori Beske       |
| 12/03 Dale Larson          | 12/23 Jean Giles       |
| 12/03 Patty Shol           | 12/24 Phil Link        |
| 12/05 Aaron Link           | 12/24 Ronnie Becker    |
| 12/05 Kason Sytsma         | 12/24 Iyla Iverson     |
| 12/10 Tami Anderson        | 12/26 Ron Henely       |
| 12/14 Beverly Bach         | 12/28 Amber Underdahl  |
| 12/17 Cris Styve           | 12/28 Courtney Meder   |
| 12/17 Rebecca Thanel       | 12/29 Molly Stoddard   |
| 12/17 Riley Peterson       | 12/29 Jonathan Collins |
| 12/18 Karen Johnson        | 12/29 Jonathan Dent    |
| 12/18 Syler Steinbrenner   | 12/29 Jacob Hatling    |
| 12/19 James Worner         | 12/30 Myron Lenning    |
| 12/19 Perry Werner         | 12/30 Mary Olson       |
| 12/20 Carol Hoivik         | 12/30 Daniel Anderson  |
| 12/21 Amy Donoho           | 12/30 Camen Andrews    |
| 12/21 Jacob Gustafson      |                        |
| 12/21 Jessica Steinbrenner |                        |

The Federated Church is a joint ministry of The Presbyterian Church (USA) and The United Church of Christ.

224 N. Union Avenue, Fergus Falls, MN 56537  
Phone: 218-739-3227 | email: church@federateddff.org