

December Worship

Sunday, December 5 9:30am Second Sunday of Advent
Worship will be in-person and streamed online

"Making Peace with Fear" Luke 1:26-38
Pastor Doug Dent A Celebration of The Lord's Supper

Sunday, December 12 9:30am Third Sunday of Advent
Worship will be in-person and streamed online

"TBD" Matthew 1:18-25
Pastor Doug Dent

Sunday, December 19 9:30am Fourth Sunday of Advent
Worship will be in-person and streamed online

"TBD" Luke 2: 1-20
Pastor Doug Dent

Friday, December 24 Christmas Eve
5:00pm Worship will be in-person and streamed online

"Tonight!" Luke 2:1-20
Pastor Doug Dent

8:00pm *Worship will be in-person and streamed online*

"The Unused Gift" Luke 2:1-20 & Titus 2:11-14
Pastor Doug Dent A Celebration of The Lord's Supper

Sunday, December 26 9:30am First Sunday of Christmas
Worship will be in-person and streamed online

"Loud Praise, Softly Spoken" Psalm 1 48
Pastor Doug Dent

Dates to Remember

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 1
5:30pm Advent Service

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 8
Annual Reports Due
5:30pm Advent Service

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 14
6:30pm Ministry Nite

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 15
Newsletter Deadline
5:30pm Advent Service

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 16
6:30pm D&E Meet

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 22
5:30pm Advent Service

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 24
Church Office Closed
Christmas Eve
5:00pm Faith Family Worship
8:00pm Candlelight & Communion

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 25
Christmas Day

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 29
No Wednesday Activities

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 31
Church Office Closed
New Year's Eve





"God's readiness to give and forgive is now public. Salvation's available for everyone! We're being shown how to turn our backs on a godless, indulgent life, and how to take on a God-filled, God-honoring life. This new life is starting right now, and is whetting our appetites for the glorious day when our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, appears. He offered himself as a sacrifice to free us from a dark, rebellious life into this good, pure life, making us a people he can be proud of, energetic in goodness." (Titus 2:11-14, *The Message*)

For some reason, this passage from Titus keeps popping up: in my daily devotion, with my online text-of-the-day, as one of the suggested scriptures for Christmas Eve. For some only-known-to-the-Spirit reason, God wants me to hear this scripture this season.

I chose Eugene Peterson's translation of this passage because the words are so hope-filled. God's readiness to forgive is public. Salvation is available to everyone! We are being shown how to live a God-filled, God-honoring life. This new life starts right now! It is whetting our appetite for the day when Jesus appears.

So, what do all these hope-filled words mean? Most versions of this text say that God's forgiveness is *revealed* or is now *appearing*. Peterson uses the word "public." The original Greek is *epiphany*, a word with two meanings. One meaning is the coming of light into darkness, as dawn gradually emerges from the darkness of night.

Another meaning is the sudden appearance through divine intervention. God intervened on behalf of all humankind through Jesus. This coming of Christ in human form is called the *incarnation*. All too frequently, the incarnation is restricted to the actual birth of Jesus during the Christmas season; but the incarnation implies the entirety of Jesus' life: birth, ministry, life, death, and resurrection. God comes to us

in human form to live and work and die and rise again for us. The purpose of the incarnation is the salvation of all humankind. And that is great and glorious, good news for everyone!

That salvation is ongoing as Christ's Gospel fills the world and people come to the lightness of Christ's love. And through God's Spirit, we are being taught how to live lives worthy of that gospel. There is a sense of light growing in darkness, as a fuller understanding of Christ's grace grows in human hearts and minds.

We live in a "liminal" state, on the cusp of something, at the threshold of something great, as a new era emerges. God's Kingdom is both *here* and *not yet*. We celebrate the birth of Jesus and God's intervention in human life; but we are aware that God's reign is not yet fully realized. But it could be...

When Paul wrote to Titus, he believed that Jesus would return any minute. Paul encouraged Titus (and us) to live God-honoring lives today, as if Jesus would appear tomorrow. We do not need to wait for Jesus to come again, to begin living Kingdom-lives. We can live, kingdom *now into*, becoming people Jesus can "be proud of, energetic in goodness" and transforming the world into something amazing.

I am making Titus 2:11-14 the key text for our Christmas Eve services this year. The hopefulness, the expectancy, the light shining in the darkness, and God's intervention into human affairs all seem like something we should explore and celebrate together.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!
Pastor Doug



Committee News

Stewardship Committee

We're looking forward to an excellent 2022 for Federated Church as we celebrate 150 years of worship and work. All of us are critical to continued success in living out Christ's Gospel in our communities.

Thank you to everyone who has already pledged to our 2022 stewardship campaign. As of November 22nd, we have 108 pledges totaling \$337,938 (86% to our goal of \$394,876).

If you haven't yet made your 2022 pledge, we encourage you to pledge soon so we can begin our budgeting process. And if pledging is not right for you, consider making a one-time anniversary gift.

Remember to check out Tithe.ly, our online giving service. It's easy to use and convenient.

Endowment Committee

The Endowment Team recommended, and D&E approved four Heritage Grants totaling \$10,000 from the Federated Church endowment.

- \$800 – BIO Girls (Beautiful Inside & Out) is a group dedicated to building self-worth in girls 2-6th grades through life skills curriculum, mentoring and non-competitive physical activity.
- \$3,200 – Federated Church's Board of Managers for the purchase of an updated security system.
- \$3,000 – Habitat-4-Humanity to assist with the builds underway on Lenore Drive, Fergus Falls.
- \$3,000 – Jail, Inc. to support the ongoing ministry of the chaplains in Otter Tail County.

We are blessed by these local ministries and proud to support them from the proceeds of generous gifts from God and our members.

Mission Committee

Christmas Church Offering

Federated will be participating in the Christmas Joy offering until December 19th. The Mission Committee will be matching donations up to \$500. 50% of your gifts assist current and retired church workers and their families with critical financial needs. 50% of your gifts make it possible for students to learn and grow in faith at Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color. Envelopes are available in the newsletter or in the pews at church. Thank you for your consideration in giving to this important organization.

Meals By Wheels

Federated Church is scheduled to deliver Meals-by-Wheels Monday-Friday, January 10th-14th, & January 17th-21st 2022. Drivers should gather at the Senior Center at 11am. It takes about an hour to deliver these meals. If you can help please contact Peg Kalar (218-205-5028) or Sonja Johnson (218-205-7741).

Fellowship Committee

The Annual Ice Fishing outing will be held January 28th-30th at Lake of the Woods. We will leave on Friday the 28th and rides can be shared. Ice fishing house will be provided by the Fellowship Committee. The fishermen will share a motel in Warroad or Baudette. A guide will take you to the sleeper fish houses on Saturday morning. The cost is TBD. The Fellowship Committee will kick in \$100 per fish house. The cost will cover Friday night motel, meals for Saturday and Sunday, as well as the guide Service. If you have any questions, contact Dennis Bowman (218-205-8147).





December is here! We welcome Advent as well as the celebration of the birth of Our Savior Jesus Christ. We look forward to celebrating the season with our church family, especially after the challenges of the past few years!

Kidz Club & Sunday School

Each week we will be exploring a different part of the Christmas story and making an Advent or Christmas-related craft. In past years, we spent Advent working on a Christmas pageant to present to the congregation during worship. With lower numbers and a much younger group in both fellowship gatherings, we decided to focus on learning and crafts which we haven't been able to do when prepping for a pageant. The kids, volunteers, and leaders are really looking forward to having a month of Christmas learning together. We hope to do some Christmas carols, games, and other activities as well.

In addition to these plans, Pastor Doug and I are working on some fun ways to incorporate children and families into the Christmas Eve 5pm worship service. Following up on the success of our worship service from 2019, we will be including opportunities for congregational participation and some special roles for kids. We look forward to worshipping with all of you.

Our last day of Kidz Club for 2021 will be December 15th. We will begin meeting again on Wednesday, January 12th at our regular time with bus transportation from Kennedy School.

Confirmation

We are now three months into our 2021-2022 confirmation session and we have three to go. During the month of November, Pastor Doug sent letters to the families to share how their student is doing in the class. We will continue to meet through December 15th and then take a few weeks off for Christmas and New Years. We plan to start up again on Wednesday, January 12th which gives families an extra week to get back into the swing of the winter school and activity schedule.

Youth Group

Our senior high youth group continues to meet faithfully each week. Our youth are so good at inviting friends and including everyone who comes. I am so proud of our young people and they are truly loving individuals. During the month of December we will be doing some special activities such as wrapping gifts for our church's gift drive, caroling, and getting outside to skate on Lake Alice. All this along with our regular discussions, gatherings, and games will make for a great end to 2021. Our last regular gathering before the winter break will be December 15th, I expect we will gather for some special activities during the school break, as we have in past years. We will connect by text for those dates, as well as for our official start-up date in January.

Christian Education and Youth





Church News

Wednesdays in Advent

Join us on Wednesdays this Advent for services at 5:30pm. We will study the "Symbols of Salvation" that pointed the way to Jesus. Worship will be in-person and livestreamed. We will have no Advent suppers this year.

Dec. 1st "The Burning Bush"

Dec. 8th "The Tent of the Tabernacle"

Dec. 15th "Gideon, The One Man"

Dec. 22nd "The Living Nativity"

A Season of Giving

I invite you to share this giving season with children in the Otter Tail County Foster Care. We are collecting items for children in our community and surrounding communities. Items need to be delivered to the church by Wednesday, December 8th. These kids need new and unopened personal care items and body products such as shampoo, deodorant, soap, toothpaste, toothbrush, etc. We will also be collecting child sizes of new hats, gloves, socks, and underwear. Gift cards are also a great option. Items can be dropped off in the church Narthex. Let all that you do be done in love. If you have any questions, please contact Rebekah Meder (218-205-3384).

Annual Reports

Chairs of Committees need to get their Annual Reports in by December 8th. Contact the church, if you have questions on how to create an annual report. Please, type your report. Thank you!

Newsletter Deadline

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

Christmas Eve Bags

If you plan to worship from home, we will provide a Christmas Eve bag which contains everything you will need to participate in worship: glow sticks (all services), objects for kids (5pm), and communion kits (8pm). Please call **(739-3227)** or email **(church@federatedff.org)**. You may pick up your worship bag beginning December 13th during regular office hours 10am-2pm, Monday-Thursday or 9am-12pm on Fridays. If you need a worship bag delivered, please let us know.

Christmas Eve Services

Join us on Friday, December 24th for our Christmas Eve service. The Faith Family Worship will be at 5pm and the Candlelight with Communion will be at 8pm. We will have no potluck supper this year.

Poinsettias

If you ordered a Poinsettia, you may take it home after the Christmas Eve services or come in the next week Monday-Thursday 10am-2pm.

Church Office

The church office hours will remain the same in December. Phones and emails will be answered from 10am-2pm Monday-Thursday and 9am-12pm of Fridays. The Church office will be closed on Friday, December 24th and Friday, December 31st.

Pastor Doug Vacation

Pastor Doug will be on vacation December 27th-31st. He will return on Sunday, January 2nd.

Coffee Hour

Women's coffee hour is on Tuesdays at 10am in the Fellowship Hall.

Men's Coffee hour is on Fridays at 10am in the Parlor. No coffee hour on Christmas Eve.



Online Worship

To access Federated Church's online worship services, visit the church website (www.federatedff.org).

There are three ways to view worship videos:

- Click the worship slide on the homepage.
- Click the YouTube or Facebook icon at the bottom of the homepage.
- Click the "Resources" tab (top right), click "Live Stream Worship," and click a service to view.

A Note About Pre-pledging

As we approach the new year, please remember the following when pre-pledging. If you prepay your pledge, by law it must appear on the statement in the year it is received. For example, 2022 pledges received in 2021 will appear on 2021 statements.

Audio-Video Technician

Federated Church is hiring an Audio-Video Technician to be responsible for operating the audio and video systems for worship and rehearsals, and for maintaining these systems in good working order. This would be a part-time, ten hour per week position (averaged across the year). Applicants must be 16-years age or older. Please go to website for employment application and more on the job description. (www.federatedff.org) under the resources tab and employment opportunities.

Bell Choir

The Bell Choir is playing during December with safety measures put in place. If anyone is interested, they can meet at Federated on Tuesdays from 7-8pm. If you have any questions, please, contact Tessa Nord at 218-205-8627. No experience necessary and ages 10 and up are welcome.

Annual Meeting

The annual meeting of the congregation will be held Sunday, January 23rd, 2022 at 10:30am. At the meeting we will elect new officers and committee members, discuss the budget, and review the pastor's contract. Please plan to attend this very important meeting.

Safety At Federated

1. Face coverings are required for all persons. Face coverings will be provided for those who desire one.
2. Face coverings are required for anyone engaging in public singing. Praise Team musicians will continue to sing behind plexiglass shields.
3. Spatial distancing of 3-feet is recommended.
4. Church nursery is closed.
5. Persons who are sick or who have flu-like symptoms are requested to stay home.
6. Hand sanitizing stations will be provided at every entrance.
7. Wash hands frequently.
8. At coffee hour or at meals, please stay masked when not eating.
9. Around tables, it is recommended that persons from different households use face coverings with a limit of four persons.
10. Permit the use of hymnals and bulletins.
11. Use of Power Point for online worshipers.
12. Use of pre-packaged communion cups instead of passing communion trays.
13. Use of donation box in narthex instead of offering plates.
14. Proper ventilation of all inhabited spaces (AC and open windows when possible).
15. Updated safety signage and safety slides before worship.
16. Occupancy limits are suspended.





Bible Studies

Adult Bible Study

Our Advent study will complement the theme of our mid-week Advent services. Join us in the parlor on Sunday mornings after worship as we delve deeper into the "Symbols of Salvation."

- Nov. 28th "The Burning Bush"
- Dec. 5th "The Tent of Tabernacle"
- Dec. 12th "The One Man Gideon"
- Dec. 19th "The Nativity"

Women's Bible Study

Women's Bible study began the Book of Hebrews on November 16th. The book of Hebrews is a challenging and somewhat mysterious book. No one is certain of its authorship. This is a timely study as the author is addressing people who are caught between staying faithful in Christ in the midst of persecution and hardship or falling back on the world's culture. This is a thoughtful, prayerful, intelligent group of women who love learning and fellowshiping together every week. Please feel free to join us at 11:15am on Tuesdays in the parlor!



If you would like to receive text updates from Federated Church, please **text the message @federated to the number 81010.**

If you would like to Text "give", please **text the message give to 855-235-5961.** Click on the link to the setup page and enter your 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 needs. Please call 218-739-3227 or email church@federatedff.org

Ministry Nite:

December 14 - 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. Church committees do not meet in July.

Stewardship Report

General Fund Report	
Revenue	\$22,512
Expenditures	\$40,577
Year to Date Pledge Offering	
Budgeted	\$297,687
Actual Received	\$305,080

Grocery Receipts

THE GROCERY RECEIPTS

Service Food	
November	\$34,677.86

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.





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

*But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."
Luke 2:10-12*



December Birthdays

12/01 Shannon Wilson	12/24 Ronnie Becker
12/01 Dave Loeks	12/24 Iyla Iverson
12/02 Sophie Rufer	12/25 Jesus Christ
12/03 Patty Shol	12/28 Amber Underdahl
12/05 Aaron Link	12/28 Courtney Meder
12/05 Kason Sytsma	12/29 Molly Stoddard
12/09 Jamie Brause	12/29 Jonathan Collins
12/10 Tami Anderson	12/29 Jonathan Dent
12/13 Doris Davis	12/29 Jacob Hatling
12/18 Syler Steinbrenner	12/30 Mary Olson
12/19 Perry Werner	12/30 Daniel Anderson
12/20 Carol Hoivik	12/30 Camen Andrews
12/21 Amy Donoho	12/30 Daxton Thompson
12/21 Jacob Gustafson	12/31 Don Davenport
12/21 Jessica Steinbrenner	
12/21 Mara Braaten	
12/22 Lori Beske	
12/22 Makenna Stenstrom	
12/24 Phil Link	



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

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