



OPEN HEARTS. OPEN MINDS. OPEN ARMS.

Union Avenue News

KEEPING MEMBERS UP TO DATE

MARCH 2024

March Worship

March 3 9:30am
"Liar, Liar" Exodus 20:1-17
Pastor Doug Dent

A Celebration of The Lord's Supper

March 10 9:30am
"God's Portolan" John 3:14-21
Pastor Doug Dent

March 17 9:30am Confirmation Sunday
"Fruit Flavored Christians" Galatians 5:16-26
Pastor Doug Dent

A Celebration of Baptism

March 24 9:30am Palm Sunday
"A King's Ransom" John 12:12-16
Pastor Doug Dent

March 28 7:00pm Maundy Thursday
"Peter Got It Wrong" John 13:1-17, 31b-35
Pastor Doug Dent

A Celebration of The Lord's Supper

March 29 7:00pm Good Friday
"Is this Good?" Mark 15:15-46
The Rev. Ali. Haugerud

March 31 9:30am Easter Sunday
"The Skiplagging" John 20:1-18
Pastor Doug Dent

HE IS RISEN!

Dates to Remember

Sunday, March 3
Communion
10:30am Pre-K Sunday School w/ Parents

Wednesday, March 6
5:30pm Lenten Service-Dave Loeks
6:00pm Lenten Supper

Sunday, March 10
9:30am Choir Sings

Tuesday, March 12
6:30pm Ministry Nite

Wednesday, March 13
5:30pm Lenten Service-Amber Gerstmann
6:00pm Lenten Supper

Sunday, March 17
Baptism - Bobby Baker
Confirmation Sunday

Wednesday, March 20
5:30pm Lenten Service-Erin Anderson
6:00pm Lenten Supper

Thursday, March 21
6:30pm D&E Meet

Sunday, March 24
Bells Play and Choir Sings

Thursday, March 28
7:00pm Maundy Thursday Service

Friday, March 29
7:00pm Good Friday Service

Sunday, March 31
Easter Sunday
Choir Sings



"Jesus said, 'It is finished.' Then he bowed his head and gave up his spirit" (John 19:30). If this is where our story stopped, we would not be living as people of the resurrection. We would be stunted at the crossroads, having no clue where to go and what to do. We would not know who we are or where we were going. But thanks be to God, that is not where our story ends; that is just the beginning. God does something miraculous through Jesus Christ, so we can shout with joy-filled hearts on Easter Sunday, "CHRIST IS RISEN!"

"He is not here; for he has been raised" (Matthew 28:6). This is what we proclaim on Easter Sunday and every day following. God's greatest promise is that Jesus is not dead, he lives! By Christ's life, death, and resurrection we are granted grace upon grace. Through this unfailing, unfaltering, unparalleled love, we are freed to be people of the resurrection, covered by grace, and forgiven. We are no longer at a crossroads, but rather, covered in God's grace.

In this grace, received from Christ Jesus, we give God our praise and thanksgiving. For the light of Christ is found in the resurrection, we see Christ in his glory, and we receive the gift of grace. We sing and we trust the light of Christ will never burn out, it will never grow dim, it will not let us stumble in the darkness. Christ's light will ever shine and guide our steps.

This is why Easter matters! We will never be forsaken, never be left alone to wander in the darkness. True light has come, and God has done something extraordinary through Jesus Christ. God, the creator of the world and liberator of all people brought Christ to new life, and through the resurrection of Jesus we are freed from our fears and ignited with the light of Christ. It is through Jesus Christ that we are forgiven, set free and saved by grace. There is no greater love than this and nothing compares to this grace. God restored humanity and in God's mercy, we are called to share this love and grace with all whom we encounter. Let the light of Christ shine in your hearts, illumine your path and guide your comings and goings so that you might always know the way, the truth, and the light. We know this only through Jesus Christ, who is, who was and who will always be our Savior and Lord. Thanks be to God.

Remember the true meaning of Easter, which is the Resurrection. As the world brings out fluffy bunnies, sweet treats, and colored eggs, be rooted in the promises of forgiveness and grace that comes from a crucified and risen Savior.

Remember that when you come to worship, we worship together, with trumpets and song to the God of unparalleled love. We worship a God who gave everything so we might know the comfort and promise of God's grace.



Remember that when the trumpets and fanfare fade away and the work week resumes that we are still covered in God's abundant grace.

Remember that as we go about our daily lives and the glorious nature of Easter Sunday fades in your memory, God is still loving us, and Christ still died and rose again so we might know this AMAZING GRACE!

Savor the sacred moments of Holy Week and let the Holy Spirit wash over you as you worship on Easter Sunday and know that God's love is why Easter matters. I look forward to Easter Worship and the blessed sacred journey of Holy Week.

Easter blessings!
Pastor Doug



Church Office

The church office hours in March are from 10am-2pm Monday-Thursday and 9am-12pm on Fridays.

Easter Flowers

If you would like to purchase flowers for the Easter worship service, please contact the church office by Friday, March 8th. Lilies are \$17, Tulips and Hyacinths are \$16 each. When you contact the church office, please specify if the flower(s) are in honor or in memory of an individual. Flowers can be picked up following the Easter Service.

Federated Food Shelf Day

Federated Food Shelf Day is the Friday after the 4th Sunday of every month from 1-4pm. They will meet next on Friday, March 1st. If you have questions about the dates, contact Brianna in the church office.

Confirmation Sunday

Congratulations to our newest members! The 2024 Confirmation class: Bobby Baker, Chloe Beske, Gabe Carlson, Chloe Cruz, Olivia Jensen, Madilyn Michael, Sully Rufer, Leo Schierer, and Jude Weinrich. Join us on Sunday, March 17, 2024, as we welcome them into active ministry with our congregation.

Village Co-op

Join Pastor Ali and Pastor Doug for coffee at the Village Co-op on Tuesday, March 19th at 2pm in the Great Room.

Coffee Hour

Women's - Tuesdays at 10am
Men's - Fridays at 10am



Christian Education and Youth

Rev. Karen Anderson

What a wonderful spring-like winter we have had! We have already entered the next season! Our programs for children and youth are going strong and encouraging lots of thought and creativity. The Christian Education committee will be doing the March 6th Lenten meal and hope to raise funds to put toward updating our 2nd-4th grade and 5th-6th grade classrooms. Come join us for some good food and help us begin to dream about making our classrooms beautiful and welcoming! Also, be sure to mark your calendars for Vacation Bible School, set for June 24th-28th from 9:00am to noon.

Sunday School:

We are SO EXCITED to announce our NEW NURSERY ATTENDANT, Nevaeh Konrad! Neveah is the daughter of Pete Konrad and is a recently confirmed member of our church. She is 18 years old and comes well prepared as a CNA. Nursery services will be available from 9:15am until 11:30am every Sunday morning. We are also planning to offer volunteer confirmation class hours for middle school students who are willing to assist Nevaeh. Come talk to me (Karen) for details. Our Sunday school classes continue to meet each week as we continue to learn more about the Fruit of the Spirit and move into friendships in the Bible.

Kidz Club:

We hope you are enjoying the artwork the kids display every week from our craft time. We have a great crew of art volunteers. Thank you, Lu Echelberger, Caroline Anderson, Beth Schlepp, Melissa Davenport, Sheila Rodning, and Char Zielin who are dedicated to finding unique and fun craft activities for our group. We also have some wonderful youth volunteers who help with music (Jonathan Dent), and gym time (Jonathan Dent, Siri Anthonisen-Brown, Claire Gutzmer). It is so incredible to have such a solid foundation of helpers to make this ministry so successful. Our "Jesus' theme" year continues with His miracles and will go into the story of His death and resurrection in the coming month. These elementary school aged kids are SUCH deep thinkers! You all would be so excited to hear their questions and discussions.

Confirmation/Middle School Youth:

Our 9th grade confirmation class is ready to be confirmed into membership on Sunday, March 17 during worship. We are so excited to welcome these impressive young people into full membership of our church, after they have worked so hard and made their personal statements of faith. Please come and celebrate with us! Middle school youth groups will begin to meet consistently in March and run through the first few weeks of May. Our 7th and 8th grade students can simply continue to come after school for snacks/hangout time, which will be followed by youth group. It will run until 5:30pm each week.

Senior High Youth Group:

Our senior high youth group meets every Wednesday at 7:30pm. Many of our youth arrive early to simply hang out. In the past month we have had fascinating discussions about aliens, giants, suicide, and as appropriate for the month of February, relationships. Our discussions are based on polling held in the fall which provides the leaders with ideas of WHAT our group wants to discuss. We base our discussions in the Bible and find answers and sometimes more questions in God's word. What a smart crew of seekers we have! They also love to play games and have time for fellowship. Wednesday evenings are incredibly special!

Adult Bible Studies:

Both of our Bible studies are going strong! Our women's Bible study continues to study 1 Samuel (think King Saul, David and Goliath, David, and Jonathan). We meet each Tuesday at 11:15am for prayer and learning. Our Revelation Bible study is entering its third month, with a super group of seekers! We are moving slowly but steadily through this challenging book, encouraging one another, and asking God's guidance as we tackle the text. We meet every Monday early evening at 6:30pm. Feel free to join us!

Christian Education and Youth





Committee News

Worship Committee

Lenten Services

Join us on Wednesdays during Lent. Worship will be at 5:30pm and supper at 6pm. All services will be live-streamed.

Speakers

March 6th - Dave Loeks

March 13th - Amber Gerstmann

March 20th - Erin Anderson, Executive Director, Clearwater Forest Camp

Suppers

March 6 - Karen Anderson & Youth (Gourmet Mac-n-Cheese)

March 13th - Dennis Bowman (Chili)

March 20th - John MacFarlane (Beef Stew)

Holy Week

Palm Sunday, March 24 (9:30am)

Maundy Thursday, March 28 (7:00pm)

Good Friday, March 29 (7:00pm)

Easter Sunday, March 31 (9:30am)

Bell Choir Rehearsal

The Bell Choir practices on Wednesday nights at 6pm through Easter. If you are interested in joining, please contact Tessa Nord at 218-205-8627. The bells will play during worship on Sunday, March 24th.

Choir Rehearsal

Choir Rehearsal will be held on Wednesday evenings at 7pm. If you are interested in joining or know someone who might be interested, please contact Jack Raaen at 701-367-0021 or by email: jackraaen@yahoo.com. The choir will sing during worship on Sunday, March 10, March 24th (Palm Sunday), and March 31st (Easter).

Fellowship Committee

Palm Sunday Potluck

Join us on Palm Sunday after worship for a potluck brunch at 10:30am. A sign-up sheet is on the table by the Narthex. Please sign up if you would like to bring a breakfast casserole, breakfast meats like bacon, sausage, and ham. We are also asking for salads, breads, and desserts.

D&E

At their meeting on February 15, 2024, the Deacons & Elders:

- Met with the 2024 confirmation students;
- Scheduled baptism for Bobby Baker, one of our confirmation students;
- Hired Nevaeh Konrad as the Nursery Attendant;
- Approved funding for a new web-based pictorial directory;
- Reviewed the results of an email survey about church security;
- Established a task force to review our congregation's committee structure and tasks;
- Invested \$10,000 of unrestricted funds in a short-term CD;

Mission Committee

Food Share Month

March is Food Share Month, the month when our donations to the Fergus Falls Food Shelf have an even greater impact than usual due to special support from Minnesota FoodShare and the Feinstein Foundation. In keeping with our tradition, the Federated Church Mission Committee will match food shelf donations from the congregation – up to \$700 – during March.

The food shelf is a valuable resource for local families, but support is especially needed this year as its grocery costs have increased from about \$12,000 a month to \$20,000. All donations are appreciated!

In 2023, the food shelf served a total of 332 households with 783 members. Of those, 61 percent were adults, 14 percent were seniors and 25 percent were children under the age of 18.

The food shelf is open Wednesdays and Fridays and last year averaged 40 clients each business day.

It's easy to contribute during Food Share Month: You can put your donation in one of the special envelopes you'll find in the pews during March; donate online through [Tithe.ly](https://www.tithe.ly); or mail a check to the church with Food Shelf in the memo line.

Thanks to all who support this valuable mission!



Did you know that the word Lent means spring? As we go through this season preparing for Easter and the resurrection, we can see signs of the whole earth getting ready to blossom and grow. These themes of life and growth aren't just for the cycles of the liturgy. They also resonate with our life as Christians. As God's people we can also expect to go through cycles of quiet and rest as well as life and growth. Lent can be a time of spring for discipleship. We can reflect on our own growth as children of God.

As I reflect on this season of life and growth and change in terms of pastoral care, I am captivated by the idea that a Christian is like a tree. Scripture often uses the image of people growing in the light of God. We Christians, like trees, are called to have deep roots. Just as secret waterways nourish tree roots, we are sustained by the waters of our baptism. Our rootedness comes from years of worship, prayer, and Bible Study. We find our roots in the communities that have nourished our faith in various times in our lives. In times of spiritual drought, we count on the foundations of our family practices and church traditions to give us stability. We rely on our faith communities to help us find life when it is hard to find it for ourselves. Deep roots make us strong.

We Christians, like trees, are called to have strong but flexible trunks, so that when the storms of life come, when changes blow through, we must be able to bend and sway or we will break. Like the tree, we must learn how to stand strong and where we can bend. Rings of wisdom helps us both to maintain structure and adapt to the changing world around us.

And like trees, our branches reach out into the world around us providing shelter and life. It is not to exist as we always have, we must reach out. We stretch our branches to grow new fruit, to provide shade for those in need and to provide shelter in surprising ways...working to serve people who are hungry or homeless, sick or lonely helps us grow as Christians and fulfill our calling as God's people. In this season of Lent (and spring), may we, like the trees, grow deep roots, strong (but flexible) trunks, and wide branches. And may we remember the one who on the tree of the cross brought life and salvation for us all.

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!

Greeters-March 2024

Sunday, March 3

Worship @ 9:30am w/ Communion
James & Becca Michael

Sunday, March 10

Worship @ 9:30am
Matt & Donna Solin

Sunday, March 17

Worship @ 9:30am
Confirmation Sunday & Baptism
Jodie & Jerry Nuss

Sunday, March 24

Worship @9:30am
Palm Sunday
TBD

Sunday, March 31

Worship @9:30am
Easter Sunday
TBD

REMINDER: Greeters are responsible for handing out the bulletins, taking worship attendance, and passing the offering plate. The worship attendance sheet can be dropped off in the offering plate. If you are ever interested in greeting a certain Sunday, please let Brianna know in the church office. Check your email for reminders on greeter duties.



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:

March 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.

Stewardship Report

General Fund Report

Revenue	\$60,293
Expenditures	\$33,370

Year to Date Pledge Offering

Budgeted	\$33,672
Actual Received	\$57,396

Grocery Receipts

THE GROCERY RECEIPTS

Service Food

February	\$8,258.02
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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

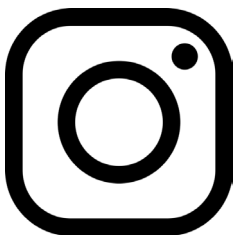
ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Time sensitive information
Please deliver by February 1st



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

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March Birthdays

03/01	Char Zielin	03/20	Cayden Hendrickson
03/01	Natalie Vogel	03/23	Bonita Stock
03/02	Douglas Becker	03/23	Karen Bush
03/02	Lisa Becker	03/25	Madalyn Dent
03/02	Brian Rodning	03/26	Skip Zielin
03/02	Benjamin Nuss	03/26	Terri Skretvedt
03/06	Melissa Davenport	03/28	Vanessa Whipple
03/06	Gabe Dean	03/28	Leif Christianson
03/06	Matthew Orcutt	03/28	Ryan Truax
03/08	Mark Anderson	03/29	Robert Hansen
03/08	Zachary Eifert	03/29	Tanner Johnson
03/11	Mark Davenport	03/29	Mary Ann Nead
03/12	Karen Anderson	03/30	Dolores Duncan
03/12	Jordan Schiefert	03/31	MacKenzie Meis
03/14	Carol Andstrom		
03/14	Sully Rufer		
03/15	Robert Flom		
03/16	Conner Cooper		
03/17	Ross Stone		
03/17	Cindy Holte		



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: 218/734-2227 | email: church@federatedff.org
03/18 David Whipple
03/19 Martin Anderson