

Local Missions



Loaves & Fishes Food Shelf is open Tuesdays from 3:00-6:00 p.m. and Saturdays from 9:00 a.m.-noon.



Volunteers are always welcome! Please bring donations to church on the first Sunday of each month.



The Well Youth Center hours are Tuesdays-Fridays from 3:00-5:00 p.m. The mission jar will be in the back of the Sanctuary on the third Sunday of each month.

Loaves & Fishes “Love Item”

Each month, The United Church features a “love item” of special focus for members to donate to Loaves & Fishes. This helps stock the shelves at Loaves & Fishes Food Shelf and helps increase our giving to this worthy and much needed mission in our own town. **Our Love Item for December is cereal!**

This summer, Loaves & Fishes noticed they needed more breakfast and lunch items than during the school year to help feed kids who rely on schools for those meals. So, for December, let’s help stock their shelves so they can be ready to help out families over the upcoming winter break! Cereals can be an important source of nutrients, especially for kids in low-income households.

The United Church of Mapleton

201 Troendle St SW; PO Box 413 Mapleton, MN 56065

(507) 524-3141

www.unitedchurchmapleton.org

secretary@unitedchurchmapleton.org

Our Mission:

The United Church of Mapleton is a Christian fellowship of mission, worship, and faith formation dedicated to the Maple River community.

Order of Worship

Sunday, December 21st, 2014 ~ Fourth Sunday of Advent

Prelude

Welcome and Announcements

***Call to Worship and Advent Candle Lighting**

Pastor: We have lit three candles, for hope, peace, and joy. Today we light the fourth candle, the candle of love. With this flame, we signify the love of God that surrounds and fills us at all times, but that we recognize in a special way in the Christmas story. There is no greater power than love. We love, because God loves us.

(Please keep silence as the fourth candle is lit.)

One: We have love, for Christ is coming.

Many: Loving God, as these candles are lit, light our lives with your imagination.

Show us the creative power of hope.

Teach us the peace that comes from justice.

Fill us with the kind of joy that cannot be contained, but must be shared.

Magnify your love within us.

Prepare our hearts to be transformed by you, that we may walk in the light of Christ.

One: Live eternally in God’s love, and be comforted by the knowledge that God is always coming into the world.



Continued

Many: We will seek God, not in a long ago stable or ancient manger, but in the people we meet and the depths of our own hearts.

One: May the blessing of Christmas make you a blessing to others.
May the peace of the season pervade all that you do.

**Many: We will welcome the challenge of discipleship.
We will offer ourselves as God's servant ministers.
We will shape our lives in Christ-like love.**

***Opening Hymn**

“People Look East” #161

***Prayer of Invocation**

***Gloria Patri**

Sung a whole step lower than printed in hymnal

“Glory Be to the Father” #734

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;
as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen, Amen!

***Moment of Fellowship**

Message for God's Children

*Children are invited to attend Sunday School after the
Message for God's Children or return to their pews. Children's
Worship Bags are available in the back of the Sanctuary.*

Mission Moment

Sue Prenzlou

Worship with Tithes and Offerings

Offertory

“Go Tell It on the Mountain”

Adult Choir

***Doxology**

“Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow” #34

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;

Praise him, all creatures here below;

Praise him above, ye heavenly host:

Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen!

***Prayer of Dedication**

Sharing Prayer Requests and Praises

*You are invited to take a Prayer Requests and Praises
sheet from the pew rack in front of you to write your prayer
requests and praises.*

*These will be collected by the ushers in a moment and
shared with the congregation anonymously before our
Preparation for Prayer.*

Preparation for Prayer (Moment of Silence)

Pastoral Prayer

Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy
kingdom come, thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us
this day our daily bread; and forgive us our sins as we forgive those
who sin against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us
from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory
forever. Amen.

***Hymn**

“My Soul Proclaims with Wonder” #170

Scripture

Luke 1:39-56 (NRSV)

One: For the Word of God in Scripture,
For the World of God among us,
For the Word of God within us,

All: Thanks be to God!

Message

“My Soul Magnifies the Lord”

***Closing Hymn** “Lift Up Your Heads, O Mighty Gates” #176

***Benediction**

*Please be mindful of others who continue to worship
through the Postlude.*

Postlude

Please rise in body or spirit.

Serving Us Today: Sunday, December 21st, 2014

Preacher—Ashley Whitaker

Lay Leaders—Lisa Shubert

Organist—Jola Walker

Greeters—Delbert and Ella Conrad

Head Usher—Diaconate

Coffee Hour Host—The Well Youth Center

Today's Worship & Fellowship

9:00 a.m. Morning Worship (*Sanctuary*)

9:00-10:40 a.m. Nursery Childcare (*Babies-Toddlers*),
Crib/Toddler Room, upstairs

10:00 a.m. Coffee Fellowship (*Fellowship Hall*)

10:00 a.m. Choir Practice

9:15 a.m.-10:00 a.m. Children's Sunday School (*PreK-5th Grade*)
Classroom A, upstairs

10:10-10:40 a.m. Youth Sunday School (*6th-12th Grade*)
Youth Lounge, upstairs

10:10-10:40 a.m. Adult Sunday School, Classroom B, downstairs

Our **Call to Worship** today is by and Advent Candle Lighting Litany is by Jeanyne Slettom at processandfaith.org/resources/liturgy/advent-candle-liturgy.

The **paraments** are purple for Advent, a season of spiritual preparation for the celebration of the birth of Christ (Christmas) while looking forward to the future reign of Christ. Eschatological expectation rather than personal penitence is the central theme of the season. Advent is the preparation for, rather than a celebration of, Christmas. The liturgical color purple symbolizes the sovereignty of Christ and communal penitence. (ucc.org)

Worship & Care Connections

Children's Worship Bags with creative supplies are available at the back of the Sanctuary for children during worship.

The **Nursery/Toddler Room** for infants and toddlers is available throughout the morning worship service and is located at the north end of the hallway opposite the Sanctuary.

The **Family Space**, located in the Overflow Room in the back of the Sanctuary, is for our families with infants and small children. This space is available for families in addition to the nursery so that families can both see and hear what's going on in worship.

If you are in need of **wheelchair assistance** on Sunday mornings, please let us know by calling the church office at (507) 524-3141 ahead of time to make arrangements *or* you may have an usher assist you on Sunday morning when you arrive at the church. There is a ramp located on the east side of the church which can be utilized by parking in the east parking lot.

If you or a family member would like a **pastoral care visit** for any reason, or would like to be added to our weekly prayer list, please let the church know! Feel free to contact Pastor Ashley, a Deacon, or the church office so that we may serve you. The church phone number is (507) 524-3141. Pastor Ashley's phone number is (507) 381-8199 and her email is pastor@unitedchurchmapleton.org.

If you have a prayer request for the **Prayer Chain**, please call Karen Stanton at 327-8168 or Joyce Johnson at 524-3727. Please let them know your prayer request, including the name of the person to pray for, and whether you would like your request included in the church's public prayer list or if you'd prefer the request be kept privately within the prayer chain. There is also a prayer request submission form available on the United Church website under the "Ministries" tab.

In Our Prayers

- The ministries of The United Church, including our local missions: The Well Youth Center, Loaves & Fishes Food Shelf
- The local, regional, and national leaders of the church, including all ministers and missionaries
- Those anticipating surgery, recovering from surgery, or undergoing medical procedures, tests, or treatments
- Those living in assisted living, a nursing home, or who are homebound, and all those who are caregivers
- Those who are grieving and mourning

Our church prayer list includes:

- Those with ongoing health concerns: Norma Baack, Shirley Bowen, Benjamin Brockmann, Hutch Cramer, Kathy Cox, Dawn Dietz, Jodie Gerdts, David Keller, Stan Solie, Alberta Samuelson, Marge Walters, Jonathan Ziert, Isaac Kolstad
- Family members and loved ones who are ill
- Traveling mercies for our members, family, and friends
- All who are grieving and mourning
- The 2015 American Baptist Churches, USA Biennial Mission Summit, to be held June 26-28 in Overland Park, KS
- The 2015 United Church of Christ General Synod 30, to be held June 26-30 in Cleveland, OH
- Hutch Cramer, who is recovering at the Mapleton Community Home after a fall and hip surgery. He is expected to recover; last Sunday's report of his failing health was incorrect, due to medical confusion.
- Jodie Gerdts, who is recovering at home from surgery to remove a tumor on Monday, December 15, which went well.

The prayer requests and praises shared during last week's worship service include:

Thanksgiving:

- And praise to God from whom all blessings flow—such as the skill and quality of health care and a supportive wife, family, and friends—joy!
- For a good four-month cancer checkup

Prayers:

- For Charlie Traynor, who is recovering from heart surgery in Rochester

Welcome to The United Church of Mapleton!

This announcement insert includes information about upcoming church, community, and area events. Please also take advantage of the many opportunities listed here to serve our community!

This Week at The United Church of Mapleton Sunday, December 21st, 2014

Sunday, December 21st, 6:00 p.m. Youth Group Fun & Fellowship Christmas Party

Monday, December 22nd, 6:30 p.m. Christmas Singers practice

Tuesday, December 23rd, 6:30 a.m. Men's Breakfast in GT

Wednesday, December 24th, 7:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Service

Planning Ahead

Tuesday, December 30th, 6:30 a.m. Men's Breakfast in GT

Tuesday, January 6th, 6:30 a.m. Men's Breakfast in GT

Wednesday, January 7th, Annual Reports are due

Christmas Tissue Boxes

The Women's Fellowship has purchased boxes of tissues to be given to our golden members and homebound. The boxes may be found in the narthex area. Each box has our members names written on them. Please pick one up today and pay a visit to our members.



Christmas Poinsettias

Thank you to everyone who brought in a **poinsettia plant** to decorate our sanctuary area for the Christmas season.



The United Church News and Announcements
Sunday, December 21st, 2014

The Well Youth Center

Sunday, December 21st, Coffee Hour and the Mission Collection jar will go towards helping support our local youth at The Well Youth Center.

The United Church supports The Well Youth Center in this way each month.

Special Mission Offering

December is when we have an opportunity to say thank you to the retired ministers and missionaries by giving to the Christmas Fund (UCC)/Retired Ministers and Missionaries Offering (ABC). Please give generously to let these dear people know how much we appreciate all that they have done.

You will find envelopes in the pews to put your offering in. Thank you, The Mission Committee.

Christmas Eve Service

Our Christmas Eve Service will be held **Wednesday, December 24th, 2014 at 7:00 p.m.**

Christmas Eve Singers and Guitarists

We will hold practice for Christmas Eve Singers and Guitarists Monday, December 22nd at 6:30 p.m. Anyone is welcome!

Youth Sunday School Teacher Needed

Beginning in January, the Youth Group will need a Sunday School teacher for the duration of Pastor Ashley's family leave (about 12 weeks). A user-friendly curriculum, *Nooma*, will be provided. *Nooma* is a series of short videos on DVD about faith and life with discussion questions included. If you're able and willing to help out with this important ministry, please let Pastor Ashley, the church office, or Liz Bair (Chair, Board of Christian Education) know. Thank you for your prayerful consideration!

The United Church News and Announcements
Sunday, December 21st, 2014

Youth Summer Camp Adult Leaders Needed

Our Youth had a great time at Youth Summer Camp last year! We hope to be able to send a group of Youth to camp again this summer. However, Pastor Ashley and Jeff will not be able to go with our Youth as Adult Leaders this year. Is God calling you to help our Youth ministry thrive in this important way?

We will likely go to camp at Pilgrim Point Camp in Alexandria, MN again this year, since we had such a good experience last year. Summer Youth Camp is one week long (Sunday afternoon—Friday lunch) and will either be July 19-24, July 26-31, or August 8-14. Adult Leaders help not only as chaperones, but also as small group leaders for spiritual formation, education, fun, and fellowship. The United Church will pay the registration free for any Adult Leaders that are willing to volunteer their time and talents this summer. Thank you for your prayerful consideration!

Volunteer Opportunity

There is an opportunity to serve our income-eligible seniors in receiving a free grocery box of food items once a month. This once-monthly volunteer position would consist of working the 2nd Thursday of every month from 9:30 a.m.—11:30 a.m. with minimal additional time for completing paperwork. The worksite will be the Mapleton Town and Country Leisure Center at 304 2nd Ave NE, Mapleton, MN.

Please contact Second Harvest Heartland at 651-484-1064. A position description is posted on the bulletin board.

Weekly Scriptures for Prayer and Devotion

Scripture for the Week: He will feed his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms, and carry them in his bosom. Isaiah 40:11

Sunday:

In the Lord my heart trusts; so I am helped, and my heart exults, and with my song I give thanks to him. Psalm 28:7

Let all that we are give praise to you, our Savior! May our thoughts, words, and deeds reflect our thankfulness to you, our God. Amen.

Monday:

John wrote: Peace to you. The friends send you their greetings. Greet the friends there, each by name. 3 John 15

Holy One, you know and call us by name and pour out your blessings upon us. We give thanks today for the friends and loved ones who share our journeys of faith. Amen.

Tuesday:

Make every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Ephesians 4:3

Mighty Counselor, we struggle to be respectful and loving towards those with whom we disagree. Guide us in paths of peace, give us ears to listen to one another, help us to bear with one another in love, so that even in our disagreements we may witness to your love. Amen.

Wednesday:

God, remember your congregation, which you acquired long ago, which you redeemed to be the tribe of your heritage. Psalm 74:2

Jesus said, "The gates of Hades will not prevail against my church." Matthew 16:18

Great Redeemer, you are the hope of the world and the hope of the church. Remember your faithful people and renew the church so that it may be a true community of faith and a living witness to you. Amen.

Weekly Scriptures for Prayer and Devotion

Thursday:

Paul wrote to Timothy: I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that lived first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, lives in you. 2 Timothy 1:5

Thank you, great Teacher, for those who have passed on their faith and stories of you from generation to generation. Give us words and courage to teach those you have placed in our lives. Amen.

Friday:

Everyone who asks receives, and everyone who searches finds, and for everyone who knocks, the door will be opened. Luke 11:10

Faithful God, hear us when we cry out to you. Let us dwell in your presence when we seek you—help us to find you even when you seem hidden. Amen.

Saturday:

In love God destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ. Ephesians 1:4-5

Loving God, we are blessed to be your children, recipients of your amazing love. Help us to share that love in our families, in our churches, and with those who have not experienced it. Amen.

Source: Moravian Daily Texts