



Pastoral Letter

Sunday Services

Worship:
10:15 a.m.

In this issue:

Pastoral Letter

1

United Women in
Faith

2

Clean Up Day

3

Kick Sled Event

3

Coins for Lent

4

Book Club

9

Calendar,
Birthdays

10

“Open wide your hearts”

2 Corinthians 7:13

Dear First UMC,

There have been numerous times this winter when I’ve shown up at church to find someone sleeping in our entry way. I usually greet them to make sure they are okay, and then go inside. I asked one man recently, “how are you?” to which he responded, “cold.” *Yeah, I bet...* I thought to myself, as I snuck inside. The warmth greeted me like a smack in the face. What does it mean to show Christ’s love to this man? After consulting with Jenn, we invited him inside to warm up. He graciously obliged, gathered his things, and rested in the narthex area.

I found myself keeping him at arm’s length for the encounter. Not letting him get too close, for fear of what? I don’t know. Throughout his rest he was abundantly gracious, kind, and considerate. After an hour or two, he wished us both well with our day and then headed back out into the cold. I watched him go with gratitude for the intersection of our lives, if only briefly.

Paul’s words in his second letter to the Corinthians strike me as towing the line between judgement and invitation. *“We have spoken frankly to you Corinthians; our heart is wide open to you. There is no restriction in our affections, but only in yours. In return... open wide your hearts also.”* Why is my heart so closed off? Why is it guarded? Because of the stigma around homelessness? Because of fear of the unknown? And yet here Paul invites us into a new life – a life where the love of Christ flows through us and we can shed the fear that closes our hearts.

That’s my prayer this month. That Christ would create in me an openness to my neighbor, an openness to each person I see, and an openness to how God is at work in the ministry of this church. It’s my prayer for you too. Friends, as we journey together, may we be open to all the ways God leads us in life together.

Your fellow disciple in Christ,
Pastor Emily

Open Office Hours: Tuesday 1pm to 4pm and Wednesday 9am to 12pm.

Availability to meet by appointment: Monday – Thursday, 8am to 4pm, and as needed.

Email: pastor@firstumcanchorage.org

Office Phone: 907-272-2112

Sabbath (days off): Friday and Saturday (I don’t look at email or respond to calls or texts these days unless it is an emergency)

Emergency Pastoral Care: 907-315-1110



United Women in Faith to make care sacks

St. John's United Women in Faith will once again make "care sacks" for friends, family and women in our lives who might just need a little pick-me-up during these cold winter months. This involves collecting items (candles, notepads, pens, candies, tea bags, pocket hugs, etc), and assembling them in cloth bags with a note. At the last meeting, each attendee chose some women who would receive these gifts of love. Items can be brought to the church office or given to Debbie Pintsch or Linda Heim on Sunday morning. Bags will be assembled at the next 2nd Saturday meeting at 9:30 a.m. Feb. 11 in Room 163.



United
Women
in Faith

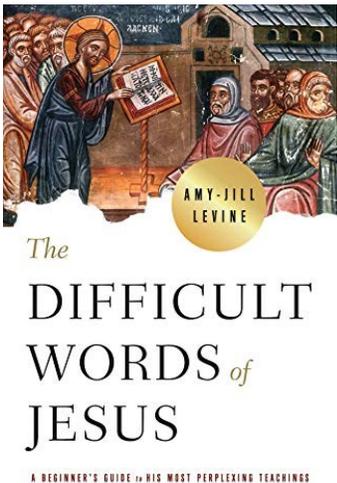


Anchor Park United Women in Faith

On Sunday, February 12th at noon you are invited to join in the Wesley Hall at Anchor Park for a wonderful lunch and a justice-themed program. The lunch menu will be Chicken Cordon Bleu with Garlic Parmesan Orzo Pasta, Tomato Salad and Chocolate Mousse for dessert. Our special speaker will be Kathy Harris from First UMC who is a long-time activist in anti-death penalty justice work. She will speak to us about factors leading to incarceration and then will focus on death penalty issues and implications. There is no state death penalty in Alaska, but Kathy has many years of national experience and stories to share with us. This will be an informative and interesting program, so we are encouraging all women to attend .

First UMC Work day!

Join Pastor Andy and the Men's Group from St. John for a service project to scrape the carpet off the walls in rooms M6 and M7. Bring a spackle knife and work gloves to help get these two rooms ready for community groups this summer! Saturday, February 18th, 10am to 12pm.



Lenten Study

Join Pastor Emily in a Lenten study: "The Difficult Words of Jesus" by Amy-Jill Levine. We will gather at Fire Island on K St. to discuss one chapter each week and to spend some time in discipleship and growth with one another as we study Jesus' words more in depth. Contact Pastor Emily to let her know if you are interested and we'll find a time that works for the study group.

Fur Rondy Warming Station for Kick Sleds

On February 25th we are hosting a warming station for volunteers for the Kick Sled event that is happening on the park strip.

This is a great opportunity for us as a church to provide some hospitality for the community!!

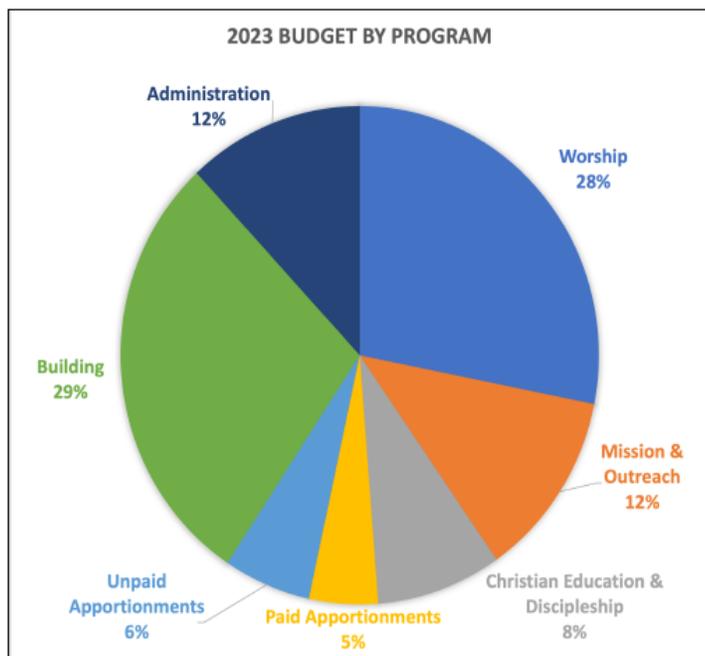
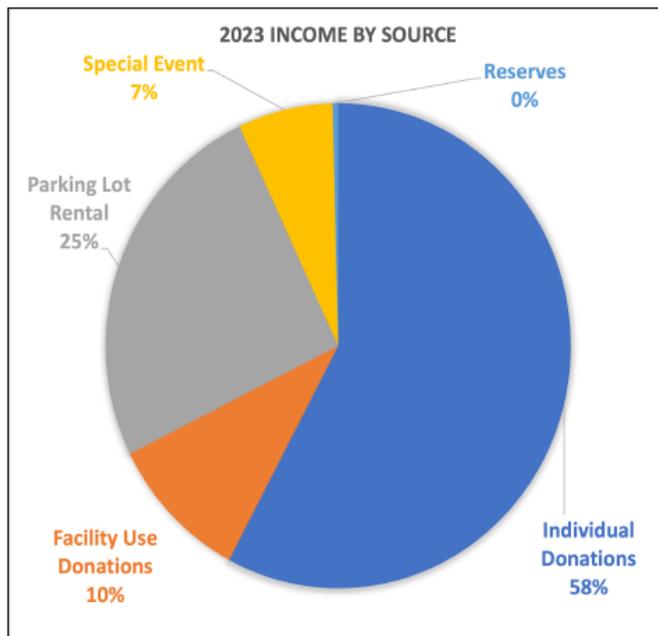
We will be open from 10am-4pm, we would love to have church volunteers bring cookies, snacks, or hang out. Please contact Jenn Miller in the church office if you are interested in volunteering or have questions about this event.



Funding Mission & Ministry at First UMC in 2023

Category	Income
Individual Donations	\$175,367
Facility Use Donations	\$30,000
Parking Lot Rental	\$77,004
Special Event	\$20,000
Reserves	\$1,192
TOTAL	\$303,563

Individual contributions make up more than 50% of our budget! Worship, Christian education, and mission happen thanks to your generous giving. THANK YOU for supporting the ministry of First UMC as we seek to be a blessing to our Anchorage community!



Category	Expenses
Worship	\$90,809
Mission & Outreach	\$39,221
Christian Education & Discipleship	\$27,312
Paid Apportionments	\$15,000
Unpaid Apportionments	\$19,103
Building	\$92,680
Administration	\$28,541
TOTAL	\$322,666
TOTAL (less unpaid apportionments)	\$303,563

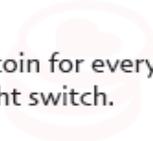
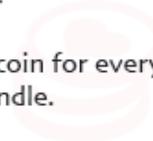
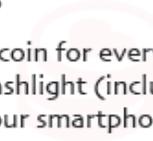
Would you prayerfully consider how you can financially support your church in 2023? Your gift helps make this ministry and mission a possibility. Help us continue to be a shining light in the Anchorage downtown and propel us into ministry through 2023 and beyond! You can give by mailing a check or by credit card online. May God bless you this day and always!

Coins for Lent

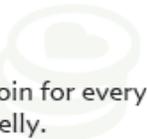
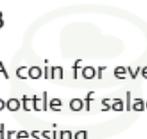
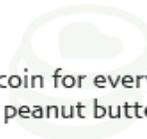
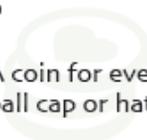
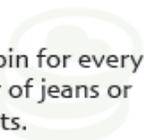
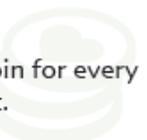
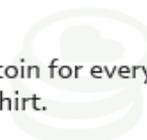
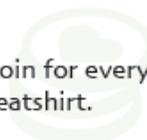
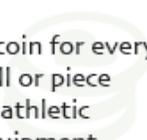
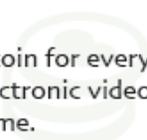
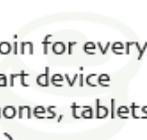
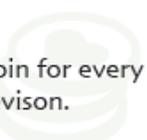
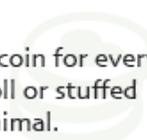
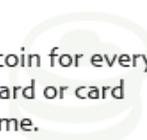
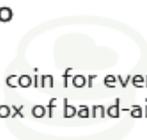
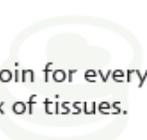
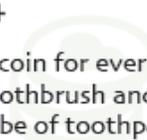
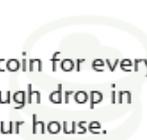
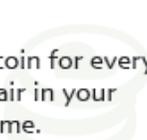
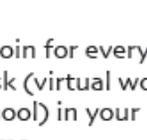
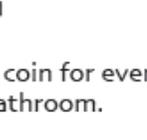
During Lent, many of us are reminded to examine our lifestyles and ask, "What can we do for others?" Part of faith formation at any age is compassion and offering a serving heart to our neighbors. Lent is a good time to commit to giving money to a project that helps those in need. One way to involve the whole family is to collect coins during the season of Lent and then following Easter, donate the money. Follow our Coins for Lent Giving Calendar as a guide, and bring in your coin collection on Easter morning!



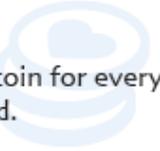
February

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15 	16 	17 	18 
19	20 	21 	22 Ash Wednesday A coin for every lamp.	23 A coin for every light switch. 	24 A coin for every candle. 	25 A coin for every flashlight (include your smartphone). 
26 Pray today, thanking God for the gift of light. Pray for those who live in darkness.	27 A coin for every box of cereal.	28 A coin for every can of soup.				

March

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1  A coin for every type of bread.	2  A coin for every jar of jelly.	3  A coin for every bottle of salad dressing.	4  A coin for every jar of peanut butter.
5 Pray today, thanking God for the food you enjoy. Pray for those who have no food this day.	6  A coin for every ball cap or hat.	7  A coin for every pair of shoes.	8  A coin for every pair of jeans or pants.	9  A coin for every coat.	10  A coin for every t-shirt.	11  A coin for every sweatshirt.
12 Pray today, thanking God for clothing that protects you from the elements. Pray for those who lack clothing to keep them warm and dry.	13  A coin for every ball or piece of athletic equipment.	14  A coin for every electronic video game.	15  A coin for every smart device (phones, tablets, etc.).	16  A coin for every television.	17  A coin for every doll or stuffed animal.	18  A coin for every board or card game.
19 Pray today, thanking God for how you can enjoy entertainment in your home. Pray for those who would be grateful for just one of these items.	20  A coin for every box of band-aids.	21  A coin for every bottle of vitamins.	22  A coin for every box of tissues.	23  A coin for every bottle of hand sanitizer.	24  A coin for every toothbrush and tube of toothpaste.	25  A coin for every cough drop in your house.
26 Pray today, thanking God for your health. Pray for those who are sick.	27  A coin for every room in your home.	28  A coin for every electrical outlet in your home.	29  A coin for every chair in your home.	30  A coin for every desk (virtual work/school) in your home.	31  A coin for every bathroom.	

April

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1  A coin for every bed.
2 Palm Sunday Pray today, thanking God for shelter. Pray for those who have no place to sleep at night.	3 A coin for every Bible.	4 A coin for every book of hymns or sacred songs in your home.	5 A coin for every cross in your home.	6 A coin for every prayer you say today.	7 A coin for every story of Jesus you can tell.	8 A coin for every person in your family.
9 Easter Sunday Pray, thanking God for Jesus and for the many ways we can gather and worship God. Pray for those who will receive the coins collected that they would see God's presence through them.	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

Book Club

February 2023

We had a great meeting as we discuss A Piece of the World by Christina Baker Kline. We discussed the way a piece of art can look simple upon first glance but when you take time to study it there is a story that can be seen. We also were intrigued by the story of people's lives and how things intertwined.

Our next meeting will be on February 23rd at 7:00 p.m. We will be discussing The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo by Taylor Jenkins Reid.

Aging and reclusive Hollywood movie icon Evelyn Hugo is finally ready to tell the truth about her glamorous and scandalous life. But when she chooses unknown magazine reporter Monique Grant for the job, no one is more astounded than Monique herself. Why her? Why now?

Monique is not exactly on top of the world. Her husband has left her, and her professional life is going nowhere. Regardless of why Evelyn has selected her to write her biography, Monique is determined to use this opportunity to jumpstart

her career.

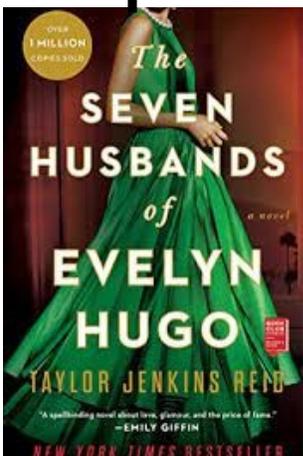
Summoned to Evelyn's luxurious apartment, Monique listens in fascination as the actress tells her story. From making her way to Los Angeles in the 1950s to her decision to leave show business in the '80s, and, of course, the seven husbands along the way, Evelyn unspools a tale of ruthless ambition, unexpected friendship, and a great forbidden love. Monique begins to feel a very real connection to the legendary star, but as Evelyn's story near its conclusion, it becomes clear that her life intersects with Monique's own in tragic and irreversible ways.

We will be meeting at the home of Georganna Derrick (call (907)278-3997) for directions). Everyone is invited to join in, share what you have read with the group. We are always looking for new books to read! Our book club is always a great time of fellowship, food, and sharing of books!!

Upcoming Books:

February

The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo
by Taylor Jenkins Reid



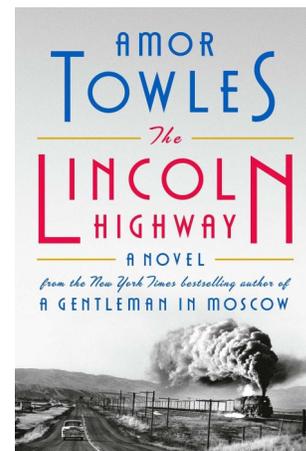
March

Midnight Library
by Matt Haig



March

Midnight Library
by Matt Haig



FEBRUARY

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 Deliver Clare House Dinner 5:15 pm Wed night Supper* @ St John	2 Emergency Cold Weather Shelter	3 Office Closed	4
5 10:15 am Worship	6	7	8 5:15 pm Wed night Supper* @ St John	9	10 Office Closed	11
12 10:15 am Worship	13	14	15 5:15 pm Wed night Supper* @ St John	16 Emergency Cold Weather Shelter 12:00 pm 49+ Lunch @ St. John	17 Office Closed	18 10:00 am Men's Group Work day @ FUMC
19 10:15 am Worship	20 Office Closed	21	22 12:00 pm Ash Wednesday Service 6:30 pm Ash Wednesday Service @ St John UMC	23	24 Office Closed	25 10am Kick Sled Warming station
26 10:15 am Worship	27	28 11:00 am Sack Meals For Brother Francis				

February Birthdays

- Sean Walsh 5
- Kim Damrill 11
- Charlie Antonio 17
- Carly Campbell 22
- Brian Greenlee 25
- Cindy Walsh 25



***Wednesday
Night
activities @ St John
Wednesday Night
Supper:
5:15-6:15 p.m.**

**Adult Classes and
Wednesday Night
Bible Study:
6:30 p.m.**

**Youth Group
(Grades 7-12):
6:30-8 p.m.**

**Mini-Methodists
(Grades 5-6):
6:15-7:30 p.m.**

**Biblemania
(Grades K-4):
6:15-7:30 p.m.**