Fourth Teller Newsletter

Open hearts. Open minds. Open doors.

October 2026

FROM THE PASTOR

Hello friends,



Shawn Stoll - "We are a community moving forward together in Jesus."

As I write this, we have made it to the halfway point of Saul/Paul's letter to the churches of the region of Galatia. On September 20, we spent some time diving deeper into the heart of that letter, in which the author warns against allowing the Body of Jesus' followers to be divided by race, social status, or gender. Division along these lines threatens the wholeness of the community.

That leads me to ask: What threatens the wholeness of our community? One of the conversations I have been hearing a lot about is the painful effect of the vote in which we decided to remain united as Methodists in our pursuit of Jesus and in our representation of the Way of Salvation. That decision was difficult for many of us, and there were real disagreements and real wounds surrounding it. While the vote did prove effective in dividing this church, it has now been three years since that decision.

Those three years have given us some distance. They have also given us an opportunity to ask what God might be doing among us now.

What remains is a group of Jesus' followers with the potential to continue contributing to the life and flourishing of Faribault. We have gifts, resources, experience, relationships, and most importantly, a desire to follow Jesus. The question before us is: What part will we play?

We are actively seeking the Spirit of God for the one to three needs in our community that we are uniquely gifted and prepared to address. We don't need to be everything to everyone. But we do need to discover where God is calling us to invest ourselves faithfully. I believe the Spirit of God

(*From the Pastor continued on page 2)*

INSIDE THIS EDITION

PAGE 1 — From the Pastor

PAGE 2 — From the Pastor con't

PAGE 3 — Monthly Blessings
- Birthday's & Anniversaries

PAGE 4 — Finance & Investment

PAGES 5/6 — Mission & Outreach
- Updates

PAGE 7 — A Note from Trustees
Church Family Spotlight

PAGE 8 — Mission & Outreach

PAGE 9 — T-Shirt Sales
Blood Drive

PAGE 10 — Soup to Go

PAGE 11 — Brighton Hospie
- Hospice 101

PAGE 12 — Lost for Words
- Help Us Find the Letters

Upper Room
Gentle Reminders

PAGE 13/14 — October Calendar
Stay Connected
Join Us

is heard most clearly through the chorus of believers - not simply through one person's perspective, but through the many voices of God's people listening together.

Recently, I have been devoting time to listening to our congregation in small gatherings. I have heard that some of us are uncomfortable with the discussions taking place on Sunday mornings. Others are energized by those same conversations. Both responses are important. Both deserve to be heard.

So I am asking all of us to remain engaged.

When I was first introduced to this church, I listened to your concerns, dreams, and hopes for where you wanted to go. One of the questions I asked then was - and continue to ask now - **What are we willing to do to get there?**

Faithful ministry requires more than financial resources. In fact, even the resources we have accumulated can sometimes give us a sense of security that makes change more difficult. Our resources are a gift, but they are also a responsibility. How might we use what God has entrusted to us in ways that serve our neighbors and faithfully reflect the love of Jesus?

For us to have a sustainable presence in this community going forward, we need to listen again to the cry of this generation. **What is the open need, and what part can we play in meeting that need?**

Like Saul/Paul, we are faced with the ongoing question of how we love God, self, and neighbor in ways that accurately portray the love of God we have found in Jesus. For us to have a faithful and sustainable part in the future of Faribault, we need to honestly assess what we bring to the table, listen to one another, and discern together how God might be calling us forward.

Our all-church meetings are designed to help us do that. Our shift in Sunday mornings is another attempt to help us learn to listen well - to God and to one another - and to discern what the Spirit is calling us to be and to do.

Thank you to each of you who has reached out and communicated with me outside of our Sunday morning gatherings. Those conversations matter to me. Your concerns matter. Your hopes matter. Your experiences matter. And I want us to remember that discerning our future does not require us to dishonor our past. Many faithful people have given their time, prayers, resources, and love to this congregation. We are here because others have gone before us. We can honor their faithfulness while also asking what faithfulness looks like for us in this particular moment.

May we listen with humility.
May we speak with courage and grace.
May we honor those who have gone before us.
And may we discover together the role God is inviting us to play in the life of our community.

May we find something we can unite around, and when we do, may we play our part well.

In this with you,
Pastor Shawn

"The first service that one owes to others in the fellowship consists in listening to them."

~ Dietrich Bonhoeffer

MONTHLY BLESSINGS

Celebrating Life & Love

Every birthday and anniversary is a beautiful reminder of God's faithfulness and the gift of community. As you mark another year of life and commitment, may you feel deeply loved by God and supported by your church family. Blessings on your special day!

October Birthdays

2 Jill Stenbakken
6 Jackie Luedke
11 Elaine Nagel
17 Hadley O'Malley
17 Julie Orara
18 Donna Smith
18 Mardea Sonpon
19 Donald LaCanne
19 Ron Swartwoudt
22 Deb Jindra-Pope
24 Ruth Stewart
27 Darrell Goede
28 Julie O'Malley
29 Brandon Kern
29 Kaylee Kern
29 Kelsey Kern

October Anniversaries

4 Ron & Kelly LandsverK
7 Zach & Cortney Waterston



"I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with you." — Philippians 1:3-4

FINANCE & INVESTMENT

2027 Budget Planning

Reminder: all church committee chairs are reminded that budget requests for 2027 are due by October 5, 2026. Please email your request directly to Sara Steele at ssteele1148@gmail.com. The Finance and Investment Team will review the requests and prepare a draft budget for Administrative Council approval in advance of our All-Church Charge Conference in November.

Thank you to everyone who contributes time, ideas, and careful stewardship to the ministries of our church. Your cooperation during the budget process helps us plan responsibly and support our shared mission.

Apportionments and Our Shared Responsibility

What are apportionments and why are they important? Apportionments are the contributions that each local church makes to support international, national, and local mission initiatives. A portion of the funds contributed by Minnesota congregations remains in the state to support Minnesota United Methodist Conference programs and mission efforts. Approximately one-quarter of the funds contributed by local churches is allocated to the global United Methodist Church. Some of the ways apportionments support our ministry at Fourth Avenue include:

- Training, credentialing, appointing, and supervising clergy in education through the conference board of ordained ministry, the district superintendency, and Ministerial Education Funds.
- Moving expenses for pastors changing appointments and retiring local pastors and elders.
- Information, resources, and training for clergy and lay leadership.
- Administration of a health-insurance and pension plans for clergy.
- Grants for projects that help churches reach neighbors and increase spiritual vitality.
- Assurance that 100 percent of gifts to Advance Specials, United Methodist Committee on Relief, Imagine No Malaria, Love Offerings, Special Sundays and many others benefit the desired mission or ministry without reduction due to administrative costs.
- Support for the Resource Center for Churches, which makes available curricula, small-group study books and videos, stewardship training tools, Bible studies, Christian education resources, and much more.
- Support for the Minnesota United Methodist Foundation, which advises churches on planned giving, stewardship, and investment management of church assets.

Our apportioned amount for 2026 is $16,631.00, calculated using a three-year average of our membership roster and expenses. For 2026, our average membership was 173, and our average expenses were $114,265. Membership accounts for approximately 15% of the apportioned amount, while budgeted expenses account for the remaining 85%.

To date, we have not made payments toward our 2026 apportionment owed. If you would like to contribute toward this obligation in addition to your regular offering, please designate your gift accordingly.

Respectfully submitted,
Sara Steele

UNDERSTANDING OUR IDENTITY

Understanding the Identity of 4th Ave UMC

(Below is a summary of this past Sunday's discussion groups – provided to us by Rob Quigg and the assistance of Artificial Intelligence writing and text generation.)

1)What are the three primary strengths of this congregation?

- Music
- Positive minister
- Mission work
- Soup luncheon
- We are known as a friendly church
- Music – testimony of strength
- Giving church when asked
- Welcoming church
- Willingness to try changes will be more active in community
- Communication of problems and taking action
- The number of positive thinkers
- The number of dedication in the church family
- Well meaning, big hearted and want to get better
- Mission, including REM and malaria

At its core, our church is a warm, big-hearted family defined by genuine friendliness, dedicated members, and an uplifting spirit. Grounded by an inspiring, positive minister and a vibrant music ministry that serves as a living testimony of our strength, we strive to be an open and welcoming home to all. Fellowship flourishes through gatherings like our soup luncheons, while our faith is put into active practice through generous giving and impactful mission work—from community outreach to global initiatives like REM and malaria relief. We are a congregation of positive thinkers who face challenges head-on with open communication and swift action, constantly embracing positive change and seeking new ways to be an active, loving presence in the wider world.

Strong music, emphasis. A lot of the folks that sing, play instruments, and we have a strong, competent choir and praise band. Quality, musical instruments, and beautiful pipe organ and grand piano. Beautiful historical building with a lot of space for potential use of various groups.

2) What is the mission of 4th Ave?

- Make people feel welcome
- Love God
- Love neighbor
- Change the world
- To become disciples of Christ
- Seek Savor Share
- Growth
- Make the congregation stronger
- Increase the number of younger folks
- Serve God and our neighbors and spread the word through the world
- Serve veterans, homeless, Wednesday warm-up, recovery, community, falcon 's nest, connection point to reach needs

Here is the AI-generated summary of the answer for the question above from the answers that the church members provided:

The church's mission is to "love God and love our neighbors" by fostering an open, welcoming community where all can grow

as disciples of Christ. Guided by the call to "seek, savor, and share" God's love, the church is dedicated to:

- "Strengthening the Faith Community:" Deepening spiritual growth, building a more resilient congregation, and actively expanding to engage youth and younger generations.
- "Spreading the Word:" Sharing the Gospel locally and globally to inspire positive change and transform the world.
- "Serving Tangible Needs:" Acting as a vital community connection point to care for veterans, individuals experiencing homelessness, and those in recovery, while providing active outreach through programs like Wednesday warm-ups and Falcon's Nest.

3) What ministry is the church most noted for or most proud of?

- Music
- Willingness to be missionaries in community
- Soups-soup to go is a real ministry
- Helping their neighbors
- Community involvement
- Being relevant
- Partnering with other churches
- Many diverse missions to help people
- Backpack blessings program

Here is the answer AI generated:

The church is most noted for and proud of its "vibrant community outreach and compassionate food ministries", highlighted by hands-on efforts like the "Soup to Go" meal ministry and the "Backpack Blessings" program. Across the board, the congregation takes deep pride in living out its faith beyond the sanctuary walls—serving as active, relevant missionaries in the local area, helping neighbors in need, and collaborating with neighboring churches to maximize impact through diverse, community-centered missions alongside its uplifting "music ministry".

Expanding on the music ministry topic. One of the groups provided a more detailed, honest answer to this question…

"Music. A lot of churches don't have the quality of music, instruments, etc., or any choir at all. I was quite surprised that many churches don't have any music programs at all. Could we invite more community members to participate or expand our music into the community?"

As we look at these reflection responses together, we invite you to consider your own role in the ongoing story of Fourth Avenue UMC. Where do you see our church flourishing next, and what unique gifts, talents, or passions might you share to help us grow into that vision? Whether you have a fresh idea, a heart for a specific ministry, or simply want to explore how you can get more involved, your voice and presence matter. We encourage you to reach out and continue this conversation - feel free to connect directly with Pastor Shawn, reach out to one of our Trustees, or catch any of our team members after a Sunday service!

A NOTE FROM TRUSTEES

Keys

Trustees are working on a policy for all the church keys. With writing the new policy as a reminder **not to share** your key with anyone and **if you don't need** your key/keys anymore please return to the office.

Fall Clean-Up

Please watch for dates for fall cleanup around the outside of the church. It should be much easier now without the leaves from the trees. We are looking forward to doing some landscaping on the boulevard. We all need to help with keeping our building in great shape.

3rd Space - HCI

The third-floor education building is being used for HCI. This is a collaborative with Northfield, our school district (Faribault) and Rice County services. It is offering a gathering space for teens from 14 to 18 to go hang out, play games, get help with a tutor, and social services if needed. They are serving a meal in the Parlor at 5:30 for the youth. The third-floor group is responsible for cleaning and maintaining their area. The church conference requires that the sanctuary is locked (unless being used) during their hours.

As a church, we are responsible for having volunteer hall monitors and to be welcoming.

Please volunteer and do your safe training. The space is being used on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 4:30 to 7:30pm at this time and may expand with time. If you have questions, please contact Pastor Shawn Stoll or John Streiff.

~ Marcia Speiker

CHURCH FAMILY SPOTLIGHT

Who can play 88 keys, read four lines of music, and the choir director's mind all at the same time? None other than our awesome accompanist.... Doug Madow!!!

If you've attended a worship service, choir practice, or praise band rehearsal lately, chances are you've seen and heard the wonderful talents of our accompanist, Doug! Doug plays a vital role in our music ministry not just here at Fourth Avenue UMC, but also serving our brothers and sisters at Hope UMC. Whether it's stepping up for morning rehearsals, lending his skills to the praise band, or filling our sanctuary with music every Sunday, Doug is always ready to lend a helping hand with a generous spirit and a smile.



We are so grateful for his dedication, time, and the musical gifts he shares across both church communities.

Thank you!

MISSION AND OUTREACH

Greetings from the Mission Team!

Wow! Fall is upon us already. Time just flies by.

3rd Space

The 3rd Space youth are enjoying the space. It's been a slow start but as the weather cools, it should get a much bigger turn out. So nice to hear them enjoying the space! We still need volunteers to sign up for chaperoning. (Note from Sarah Clark: There is a sign-up sheet in the library. Please pick the date that works best for your schedule. Also, please use the sheet next to the sign-up to include your contact information in case you are needed to be reached.)

Wednesday Warm-Up

We have decided to start the "Wednesday Warm-Up" after Thanksgiving, December 2nd. Same time, same place, same joyful fellowship and declicious food. (I might even sneak in some wild game sausage too.) With that we will be asking for donations late November. Whether food or money we'll gladly accept help. Most of all though we would love to see your smiley faces and joyous conversations. We really do have a lot of fun; the laughter is amazing.

Blood Drive - October 2nd

Friday, October 2nd is our third blood drive for the year. We hope to break **30** units. Come on in and save a life! (29 units is our record.)

One Last Blood Drive Added

We will be hosting another blood drive for Christmas on **Thursday, December 17th**. I am told it's a busy time and the need is great! God bless everyone that helps. (Blood demand in the U.S. can rise by 60–70% during the holidays, while donations often drop by up to 90%. ~ hamrolifebank.org)

Falcon's Nest

The fall Falcon's Nest project was a huge success. All the supplies we provided were greatly appreciated and helps students stay focused and learn. Thank you for all your donations.

Joy Stockings Blessing Project

As we approach the holiday seasons of Thanksgiving and Christmas, please try to remember the Falcon's Next Joy Stockings Blessings Project. **This is a way a few cents everyday** can add up. The kick-off for that is Sunday, November 29th and will finish Sunday, December 13th. Let us bring cheer to those in need.

That's all for now but stay tuned. You never know when a surprise blessing might come.

Always remember, God loves you, and so do I!

~John Streiff

P.S. If anyone has ideas, I'd love to hear from you. If anyone wants to join the fun that would be awesome! Mission meetings are the second Monday of each month at 6:00 pm in the Parlor.

At right: Joy Stockings from a previous year.



FOURTH AVENUE UMC T-SHIRTS

T-Shirt Sales Continue

The Fourth Ave UMC t-shirt sales are going very well! Profits from the sales will fund more mission projects like maybe a Wednesday warm-up or maybe a mission trip somewhere, who knows. With the help and wisdom of the committee I'm sure it will be put to good use.

~ John Streiff



To Purchase a T-shirt:
The cost is $18, cash or check are welcome. If you are unable to snag one after church, please stop by the office during normal business hours to purchase.

BLOOD DRIVE

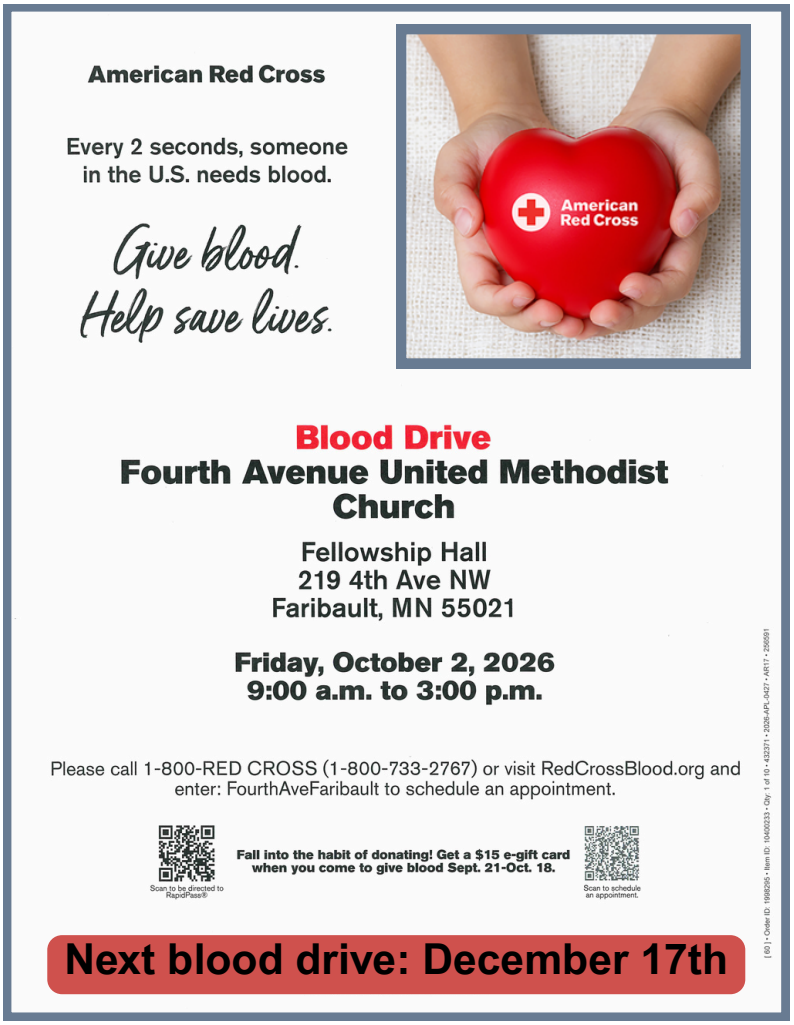
October 2, 2026

An hour of your time can mean a lifetime to a neighbor in need. Giving blood is one of the most tangible ways we can share God's love and support those around us. Help us make an impact - sign up today and let's fill every slot for our upcoming drive!

Donations accepted at the upcoming October 2nd blood drive:

- **Blood**: The most common type of donation, during which approximately a pint of 'whole blood' is given. This type of blood donation usually takes about an hour.

- **Power Red**: A Power Red donation collects the red cells but returns most of the plasma and platelets to the donor. These donors must meet specific eligibility requirements and have type A Neg, B Neg, or O blood.



SOUP TO GO

Mark your calendars for some "SOUPER" fun!

Our Fall Soup Sale takes place on the first three Fridays in November: **November 6, 13, and 20.**

How You Can Help:

- **Volunteer:** Veggie prep takes place every Thursday before a sale date starting at 12:00 PM. We also need volunteers to help staff the sale on Fridays.
- **Donate Supplies:** Stop by the sign-up table to see our list of needed ingredients. Turkeys have already been purchased, but our greatest needs right now are hamburger and butter.
- **Monetary Donations:** Cash or check donations are always welcome to help offset the cost of fresh vegetables, canned goods, and dairy. Please place your donation in an envelope marked "Soup Sale" in the offering plate, or give it directly to Kathy DuChene.

This is a major fundraiser for our church budget, and your support makes a huge difference! Don't forget to pick up flyers from the sign-up table to share with friends, family, and local businesses.

Questions? Contact a Soup Committee Member: Kathy DuChene, Deb Jindra-Pope, Kelly Landsverk, Jack & Jackie Luedke, Lisa Miller, Sara Morris, Sara Steele, or Jean Vincent.





BRIGHTON HOSPICE

Brighton Hospice Mission

Our mission at Brighton Hospice is to provide the best physical, emotional and spiritual care for our patients and their families. We achieve our mission by hiring the most compassionate and skilled people in the industry who deliver clinical expertise and exceed our patient expectations. We cultivate an environment where our team members are valued and provided personal and professional growth opportunities. Our leaders focus on supporting the clinical team so they can concentrate on patient care. We are always guided by our commitment to excellence.

Our Belief

At Brighton Hospice, we believe that the end of life should be just as beautiful as the beginning. Hospice care provides patients with the quality of life they deserve and freedom from pain as they leave this life.

Values

- Excellence
- Compassion
- Collaboration
- Integrity
- Loyalty

Hospice 101

Help us spread the word about this important community education happening on **Sunday, October 11th, 6-7:00pm** at Brighton Hospice in Faribault. In a welcoming, supportive setting, we will discuss how to approach end of life planning as well as dispel common misconceptions about Hospice Care.



Information received via email and from www.brightonhospice.com

LOST FOR WORDS

Help us get our sign talking again

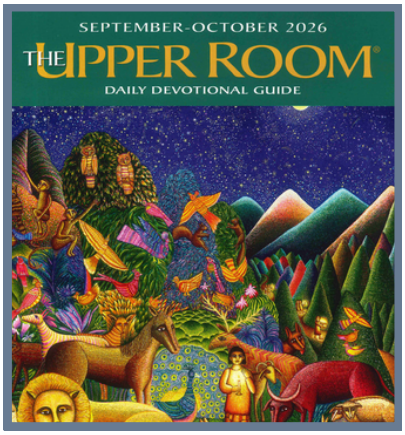


If you've walked down the hallway, we are sure you've probably noticed our sign is stuck on repeat! For quite some time, it's faithfully declared, "Rejoice in the Lord always and again I say rejoice". While we definitely still agree with the sentiment, we're currently missing the box of plastic letters to post any new updates! If you accidentally tucked them away, put them in a "safe spot", or simply know their whereabouts, we'd love to have them back. Drop them off at the office or leave them right by the board so we can give our classic verse a well-deserved rest and get back to sharing fresh scripture! Thank you!

~Sarah Clark

THE UPPER ROOM

The Upper Room is a daily devotional to help keep you connected to scripture. The reading starts with a passage from scripture and then a reading to help you reflect on the meaning of the passage followed by a "Thought for the Day". Each reading only takes a few minutes.



The September/October issue is now available. Stop by the information center to pick one up, the church office, or call the church office and we will mail you one.

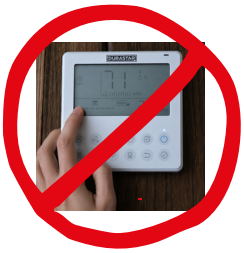
If you would like to be on the list to receive a copy bi-monthly, talk to Kathy DuChene or contact the church office.
(Suggested donation $2.00)

GENTLE REMINDERS

Thermostats

Please do not change the thermostats. Some are run by an app on phones, and some are controlled by the thermostats on the wall. The boilers are off. Please dress accordingly. If you feel the temps need to be changed, please contact a Trustee.

Our current Trustees:
Dale Hauptli, co-chair
Marcia Speiker, co-chair
Robert Nelson
John Streiff
Tom Bossmann



Custodial Attention

To ensure our church building remains a welcoming, clean, and safe environment for worship and fellowship, we kindly ask for your help in caring for our shared space. If you notice any maintenance issues, spills, or areas requiring custodial attention, please submit a request to Sarah Clark in the church office. Alternatively, you can directly reach out to any of the trustees listed in the column to the left. Thank you for your watchful eyes and partnership in keeping our church beautiful!



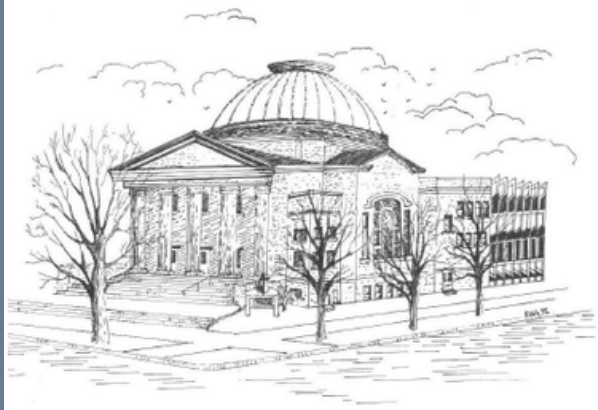
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 Trustee 6:30pm Parlor Operation 23-Zero 7:00pm Library	2 Red Cross Blood Drive 9:00am - 3:00pm FH	3 CROP Walk 8:00am Reg 9:00am - 10:00am Walk Jesus Food 10:00 - 12:00pm Faribault Mall
4 Worship w/ Communion 9:00am	5 Lakelanders 7:00pm	6 Mission Sewing 1:00 - 3:00pm	7 Trauma Group 1:00 -3:00pm, BR Worship Cmte 6:00pm, Parlor Choir 6:30 - 7:30pm	8 UWIF 12:00pm Parlor Vision Planning Open to all 6:00pm, Parlor	9 Bring a bag lunch Dessert Provided	10
11 Worship 9:00am	12 Mission & Outreach 6:00pm Parlor Ad Council 7:30pm, Parlor Lakelanders 7:00pm	13 Mission Sewing 1:00 - 3:00pm	14 Choir 6:30 - 7:30pm	15 Finance & B&G 5:30pm Parlor Piecemakers 7:00pm	16	17
18 Worship 9:00am	19 Lakelanders 7:00pm	20 Mission Sewing 1:00 - 3:00pm	21 Choir 6:30 - 7:30pm Fourth Teller Deadline	22	23	24
25 Worship 9:00am	26 Lakelanders 7:00pm	27 Mission Sewing 1:00 - 3:00pm	28 Choir 6:30 - 7:30pm	29	30	31

STAY CONNECTED

Fourth Avenue United Methodist Church

Reach Out	The Details
Visit the Office	219 4th Ave NW Faribault, MN 55021
Give Us a Ring	507-334-4308
In Your Inbox	fourthaveumcoffice@gmail.com
Office Hours	Wednesday, Thursday & Friday 9:00 am - 1:00 pm

Our Team	
Pastor	Pastor Shawn Stoll
Administrative Assistant	Sarah Clark
Office Volunteer	Kathy DuChene
Choir Director	Kelly Landsverk
Pianist/Organ Accompanist	Doug Madow
Audio/Visual	Jim Heyer & Dale Hauptli
Nursery Attendant	Kim Luedke
Custodian	Sarah Clark



JOIN US!!!

⛪ Join Us for Sunday Worship!

We would love to see you this Sunday! Whether you're joining us in person or tuning in online, there is a place for you in our church family.

🕗 Worship Service: 9:00 AM

☕ Fellowship & Treats: Immediately following service in the Annex (come grab a cup of coffee and connect!)

🍞 Holy Communion: Observed on the first Sunday of every month.

💻 Can't Make It in Person?

Catch our service broadcast live every Sunday on YouTube at @FaribaultFourthAveUMC!



"Where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them." --- Matthew 18:20