



Inside this issue:

Pastor's Page	1
Pastor's Page	2
Live Streaming	3
Financial Update	
Worship Themes	4
Upcoming Events	
Memorials	5
March Birthdays and Anniversaries	6
Upper Room	
March Memory Verse	
Noisy Offerings	7
Breakthrough Prayer	8



March Fourth Teller

The Problem of Practical Atheism



**“And He did not do many miracles there
because of their unbelief.”**
Matthew 13:58

Dear Fourth Avenue UMC Friends,

The Christian Church in America is plagued with the problem of *practical atheism*. Let me explain such a provocative statement. It goes without saying that we believe in God. But what kind of god do we believe in? Do we really believe that God can move mountains? Do we believe that God is still working miracles? Does God still raise the dead and heal the sick? Does Jesus Christ change hearts and save souls? Open doors that have been deadbolted shut? With all our technological and medical advances and material prosperity and declining moral character and cultural assault on apostolic biblical Christianity, it seems that our faith has taken a hit. For all intense purposes we have lost a robust faith in God, at least in the one true God revealed in the Bible and proclaimed by the Christian Church for 2000 years. Practical atheism.

Jesus encountered the same kind of anemic faith in his day, too. Matthew reports in his gospel (13:53-58) that when Jesus went to his hometown to teach, his wonder-working power could not be on full display because of the lack of faith among the people. What a sad scenario. They were astonished by his words, but they did not respond in obedience and faith. Their lives could have been radically changed for the better. Their community could have been radically changed. However, no positive changes occurred in the people or the town of Nazareth. Why? Matthew gives the reason, “Because of their unbelief.”

Unbelief shuts the door on the transformational power of Jesus. Faith opens the floodgates to that same transformational power. In contrast to this passage of Scripture are countless others where Jesus worked miracles in response to the faith present in the lives of people. (Read Matthew 9:2; 9:22; 15:28; Mark 10:52; Luke 8:48)

What is the state of our personal faith? When Jesus looks at our lives what does He find? Does he find a posture of believing faith? Or does he unearth a latent unbelief below a veneer of general belief?



Prayer Chain

If you need prayer for any reason, there is an active group in our congregation committed to praying for you.

Contact **Carole Evans** at 507-210-6971 or e-mail her at caroleannjean@gmail.com.

You are welcome to join the prayer chain. Just call Carole.

Pastor's Page (Continued from page 1)

And what about the faith of our congregation? Do we believe Jesus can do a work of renewal and revitalization in our church? Do we believe He desires to do so? Does he have the power to make something good and holy happen? Do we believe enough to pour out our souls to him with reckless abandon trusting him to hear us and respond by showing us a move of his hand? Honest assessment must precede true progress.

Today, God is confronting our practical atheism and calling us to bold, believing, biblical faith. And I believe that God is not through with us or our church. I believe that God is calling us to a deeper and stronger faith through the **40 Days of Prayer**. A faithful prayer that we might begin to pray is, "I do believe, Lord. Help me overcome my unbelief." (Mark 9:24) If we pond in humility to recognize that our faith needs a lifting and shoring up, we can confess the sin of unbelief and ask God to restore and build us up in faith. I am confident that God will draw near to us. God will surely honor that prayer and answer it with an awakening and strengthening of faith for God rewards those who sincerely seek him (Hebrews 11:6). Together, let us seek God for a renewed faith and revitalized Church.

For a renewed and vibrant faith in God and a revitalized Church,
I am sincerely yours,

Pastor Greg Ciesluk

If you notice a need for building maintenance, contact the trustees at: Trustees.fourthaveumc@gmail.com



ASH CROSSES

With Covid concerns this year, we found a creative way to administer ashes for Ash Wednesday. For those who attended the in-person worship service that day, we provided burlap squares etched in the sign of the cross in ash. Burlap and ashes are reminiscent of the wearing of sackcloth and ashes in the Old Testament to denote a sorrow for sin. Ashes remind us of the words spoken to penitents as they approach for the imposition of ashes, "Remember you are dust and to dust you will return" and are created through the burning of palm branches from Passion/Palm Sunday from the previous year.

The burlap squares with ash were created by Sharon Nelson, Tena Harren, Jan Barbo, and Pastor Greg. If you did not receive one, you may pick one up in the Annex on an upcoming Sunday or at the church office during office hours Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday.



Made by Jack Luedke

LIVE STREAMING PROJECT

Jim Heyer, Kathy DuChene, Grant and Lauri Lammin and David Goebel have been studying, researching and heavily involved in this project. Websites from other churches were reviewed as well as contacts made with other churches for questions and to receive their suggestions, guidance, etc.

Our first step was to change over our existing phone and internet provider from Century Link to Spectrum. Ethernet cable has been run from the janitor's room in the lower level to the church office and to the sanctuary. New routers have been purchased as well as a new camera and laptop. The proper licensing is being put in place.

Work continues on the project. Our goal and end result will enable us to "live stream" worship services, funerals, etc. You will be able to watch online and see the same thing the sanctuary worshippers see and hear--at the same time. You will be able to see the service from where ever you might be--on vacation, out of state, etc. as long as you have an internet connection.

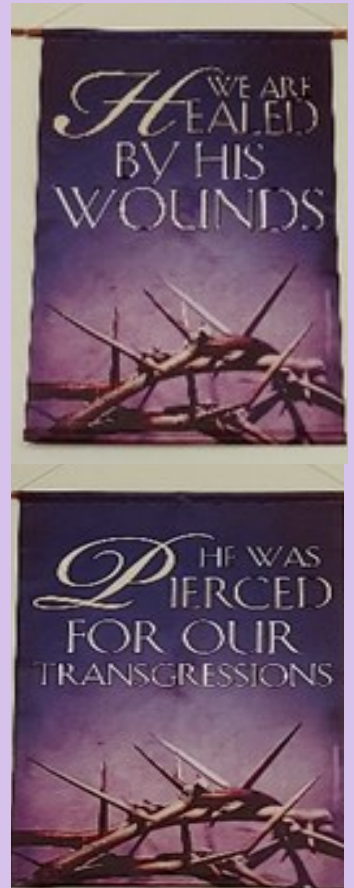
Please stay tuned.....

Kathy D.

March Ushers

Jean Vincent

Dale Hauptli



FINANCIAL UPDATE

Thank you for your continued gifts AND faithfulness to Fourth Avenue. All of our local bills are paid.

The total of our Christmas Offering is \$1,980. The Mission Committee will be making a recommendation to the Administrative Council for all or a portion of those funds to be shared with a mission.

Blessings,

Kathy D.

Worship services online!

- www.fourthaveumc.org
- click on the "VIDEO" menu—
- OR on HOME page
- Scroll down right side - see options for the worship service.

OR go to

YouTube and search for 4th Avenue UMC to find several videos—choir, special music, and entire worship services.

March Fourth Teller

Worship Themes

Third Sunday in Lent, March 7 (Holy Communion)

Message: *“Never Forget It’s a War”*

Fourth Sunday in Lent, March 14

Message: *“The God Who Revives”*

Fifth Sunday in Lent, March 21

Message: *“The Priority that Unleashes Power”*

Passion/Palm Sunday, March 28

Message: *“Raise a Hosanna When Darkness Dawns”*



Upcoming Events & Committee Meetings

March 2—Girl Scouts 5:00 PM Fellowship Hall

March 4—Trustees, 6:30 PM via zoom

March 8—Red Cross Bloodmobile 10:30 AM to 7:00 PM Use Ramp Door

March 9—Ad Council 6:30 PM

March 16—Finance 6:30 PM

March 16—Girl Scouts 5:00 PM Fellowship Hall

March 18—Piecemakers 6:30 PM Fellowship Hall

March 23—SPRC 6:30 PM



Bloodmobile Coming to Fourth Avenue



The Faribault Rotary Club is sponsoring a spring Red Cross Blood Drive on Monday, March 8, 2021 from 10:30 AM to 7:00 PM at Fourth Avenue United Methodist Church. Please use the lower level ramp door for entrance to the building. Masks are required.

To register, call 1-800-733-2767 or go to www.redcross.org.



Memorials



Our sympathy to Bonnie Hammer and Family on the death of her husband, **Dr. Robert E. Hammer**. Bob was born August 7, 1931 and died on February 17, 2021 at Milestone Senior Living in Faribault at the age of 89. He enlisted in the USAF in 1950 and received an Honorable Discharge in 1953. He earned his Bachelor and Master's Degrees from the University of Houston, Houston, Texas and his PhD Degree from the University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa. He worked for 32 years as Chief Psychologist at a state psychiatric hospital in Iowa. In addition to his clinical work, he maintained a private clinical and counseling practice.

Bob was very active in each community he resided. Some of those activities included Red Cross Instructor, 4H dog obedience and showmanship, Adult Education Ballroom Dancing classes, volunteer firefighter and so many more.

He served on the Board of Directors of District One Hospital, Faribault Area Senior Center and North Grove Cemetery Association as well as being a member of several professional psychological associations. Please see Bob's obituary at www.parkerkohlfuneralhome.com. Bob's Memorial Service was held on Friday, February 26, 2021 at 2:00 p.m. at Fourth Avenue United Methodist Church.

INFO FROM THE TRUSTEES

In December, the Trustees had an indoor air quality evaluation and testing process completed in the annex and sanctuary at Fourth Avenue. Jim Heyer worked with Field Environmental Consulting in Savage, MN.

The results of the laboratory testing indicate:

“No Indoor Air Quality concern identified.”

“All indoor fungal species within the sanctuary were similar to and in lower concentrations than the outdoor comparison. Results indicate no airborne fungal concern at the time of the testing.”

“Reported allergen levels were low in concentration and are likely not to cause adverse health effects or produce symptoms.”

“No Indoor Air Quality, mold or allergen concern identified for the sanctuary.”

The complete 15 page report is available in the church office for review.

Scripture Memory Verse for March

"I do believe, but help me overcome my unbelief!"

-Mark 9:24

Upper Room
March/April



The Upper Room devotional booklet includes daily reading of the scriptures & a brief life story. Call the church office and we will mail one out to you.

Donation - \$1.00

March Birthdays

Brenna VanDerVeen	02
David DuChene	03
Pastor Dianne Ciesluk	09
Harry Truman	11
Sue Allen	11
Kelly Landsverk	12
Carole Evans	15
Elias Ciesluk	15
Linda Hellevik	17
David Buresh	17
Jesse Osmundson	19
Sara Steele	19
Corrie Wikoff	21
Payton Wikoff	22
Morgan Hale	25
Steve Grundman	30
Heather Hale	31

Happy Birthday!



March Anniversaries



Nicholas & Mardea Sonpon	10
Joe & Sandra Jandro	25

Students in the News



The Faribault Emeralds Dance Team has won the Big 9 Conference Championship! The Emeralds competed in the Big 9 Conference Championship Meet hosted by Austin High School on Saturday, February 20th. Faribault danced in the second of three triangular competitions placing first in High Kick and third in Jazz! This is the Emeralds 9th consecutive Big 9 Conference Championship and their 21st overall.

The Emeralds will travel to Winona High School on Saturday, March 6th to compete for the Section 1AA Championship. Should they find themselves in the top three in the section meet results, they will advance to the 2021 State Competition hosted at Edina High School on March 12th and 13th.

Among the many talented dancers in the Emerald's Danceline is our own Ella Prange (confirmed Sept 2019), daughter of Brad and Elizabeth Prange and granddaughter of Tom and Liz Hartman.

Lenten Noisy Offerings

Lent is a season where we intentionally make sacrifices to unite ourselves with Christ and share in his suffering on the cross. To identify with those who suffer, we are reinvigorating our tradition of noisy offerings of spare change for the hungry in our community. Food insecurity is a major issue in our community and the pandemic has only exacerbated the crisis.

We will be receiving these offerings from February 22- March 28 that will purchase food for distribution from the newly formed Faribault Food Access Initiative. You may bring your offerings to worship on Sundays, to the church office Tues-Thurs, 9am – 1 pm, or mail them to the church office. To know more about this ministry, go to www.communityactioncenter.org/faribault.



Upcoming Community Events

Omelet Bar Breakfast Sponsored by Christ Lutheran Church March 7th, 2021



8am—noon

American Legion
112 NE 5th St
Faribault, MN



Tickets

\$11.00 per person
\$6.00 for 10 & Under

See Omelet Poster on bulletin board



Fourth Avenue United
Methodist Church
219 4th Ave NW
Faribault, MN
55021-5170



“RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED”

◆ Sunday Worship/9:00 AM

Website:

www.fourthaveumc.org

Like us on Facebook

Join us at 2:42 PM daily as we pray our church's Breakthrough Prayer.

March 2021 Fourth Teller



Our Church's Breakthrough Prayer

O God, our God, we praise and magnify Your Name!
Great are You, Lord, and greatly to be praised
With you, all things are possible.
We know that you are *with* us and *for* us
and Your plans are for our good,
for a future and a hope.
Breakthrough into our lives and into our church.
Stir up afresh our faith.
Set our hearts aflame with the fire of your love.
Open our eyes to new, fresh possibilities
and fill us anew with the power of your Spirit.
Usher us into a new season of faithfulness
and fruitfulness for your Kingdom;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Pastor Greg Ciesluk

Phone: 218-310-8813

Pastorgreg.fourthaveumc@
gmail.com

**Contact for Church Office &
Fourth Teller Editor:**

Sue Allen
Kathy DuChene

Office Email:

fourthaveumcoffice@gmail.com

Phone: 507-334-4308

**Office Hours: 9:00 am-1:00 pm
Tuesday-Thursday**

Staff

Choir Director: Kelly Landsverk

Accompanist: Doug Madow

Nursery Attendant: Kim Luedke

Custodian: Ken Harren

Secretary: Sue Allen