



CLEARWATER UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

NEWSLETTER – January 2024

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WORSHIP SERVICE:

Sundays at 9:30 AM

Come and join us in worship – our attendance is down – we would love to have your presence.

Plan to stay for coffee after in the fellowship hall. Feel free to bring some treats to share!

WEEKLY BIBLE STUDY:

Mondays at 10:30 AM

MONTHLY: United Women in Faith-UWIF

1st Tuesday of every month at 2:00 p.m. – January 2

MONTHLY MOVIE NIGHT:

First Saturday of each month – January 6 – at 6:00 p.m. Bring a snack to share during the movie or

just come. Invite your friends and family.

ANNOUNCEMENT:

January 7, immediately after the worship service, we will be taking down the Christmas decorations, please come and help with this also.

PRAISE GOD!

For a lovely Advent Season and for getting together with our families and our church family!

OUR CHURCH WEBSITE:

www.clearwaterumcmn.org
– Please remember to log in and check it out.

BUDGET OVERVIEW

Our projected budget for 2023 shows \$600 more per month of expenses than our projected income.

Please pray about this problem. We do have \$ in the bank because in 2021 we did receive the 2 PPP Grants of about \$7,800 each plus a small grant from the county. We do need more giving dollars to cover our expenses though. Through October of 2023 our income and expenses were about the same as 2022, however there is a shortfall for both years.

We had a meeting with our District Superintendent in November and he was very supportive and had good things to say about our church mission.

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS:

Jan Pearson – Jan 5

Jim Heinks – Jan 22

If we are missing your birthday, please call, text or e-mail Carol and we will add.

FOR NEXT NEWSLETTER –

Please send by e-mail or call Carol with any announcements, articles, projects, thoughts, recipes, etc.

If you would like to be taken off of the newsletter list please respond to Carol. There are many on the email list that are inactive. If you are interested in our church mission we would appreciate your financial support. If you are not interested in our mission we will take you off of the mailing list.

THANK YOU for your gifts for the Angel Family that we supported for Christmas 2023. So many lovely gifts.

SUBMISSIONS

For many years, after the excesses of the holiday season, I would join many others in making a mental or

a written list of resolutions for the unfolding year. They would usually involve behaviors or attitudes that I needed to change, the idea being that these changes would make me happier and/or healthier. Often people would ask, “Have you made any New Year’s resolutions?”

That question, of course, made me feel like I should, and I would.

These promises basically turned out to be things that I would change or delete from my life. They included flossing my teeth daily, getting my mammogram on time, losing weight, using no swear words, writing thank you notes on time, and changing the filters in the HVAC monthly. For the most part these resolutions were all things that would benefit me, make my life better.

It never really occurred to me that resolutions involved anyone else but me and what I could do to improve my life. After all, left to my own devices, I would probably focus on myself anyway. However, in a New Year’s Eve conversation with my son, I heard him use the phrase “God’s appointed time” as it relates to New Year’s resolutions.

The point was that God has an appointed time in our lives, namely this year, when we are to respond in certain ways. Our job as God’s children is to use this year as the “appointed time” to carry out our responsibilities to others. Now that’s a change for me. The idea that a resolution is not about me personally, but what I can do for others and what I can do to make disciples of the world is a totally new perspective. It basically changes the whole deal and focuses me on my neighbors.

It’s not about floss and filters. It’s Blessing Bags, volunteer hours, reading with a child, calling at-home folks, writing my city councilperson about the homeless problem, taking my neighbor to the doctor, listening attentively to someone share his burdens, saying thank you and smiling to a stranger who holds the door or going to a funeral when we don’t want to. To be honest, it’s not about me at all. It’s God’s appointed time for me to be all about others.

Shared by Helen Cress
(from East End UMC Weekly
Evotion by Naomi Griffith,
Lay Leader)

.....**From Pastor Alison Hendley**.....

I was in St. Louis recently for a graduation.... all of us had traveled there: from Idaho, Mexico, Illinois, Indiana and me from Minnesota, and none of us had spent much or any time there before, including the graduate who had done his Masters all online.

So the day after Graduation we booked tickets to go to the top of the Gateway Arch. We didn't know what to expect as we showed up and lined up and climbed aboard the tiny little tram cars that take you up. We uncurled ourselves from the tram, handing out baby Luka so he didn't get bumped on the short doorway, and found ourselves on the top of the arch! The views were spectacular, even on that cloudy morning, and most of us rushed to a window to look out. But I noticed Ramon, the graduate, standing still in the middle of the walkway. "How are you doing?" I asked.

He replied shakily, "I don't like heights. I'm scared."

"Look out to the horizon instead of looking down," I suggested, and he got closer to a window and looked. A shy smile beginning to form on his face.

"That's not so bad!" he said, and continued to look out at the horizon, noticing things in the distance, the tremble in his legs stilled. "It doesn't seem so high when you look out instead of down. Thanks Alison!"

After Epiphany we will be joining the conference in a 4 week sermon series based on the book, Dynamite Prayer, a 28 day experiment, by Rosario Picardo and Sue Kibbey. It's a devotional type book with both prayer prompts and space for reflection to listen closer to the dunamis (inherent, miraculous) power or activity of God in our lives. It will, in essence, be a way of looking past the fears to the beauty of God's action in our lives.... a way to not look down and feel just the gravity of our lives, but breakthrough to pay attention to what God actually wants us to see for both our individual lives and the life of our church. To breakthrough what we think we know and listen with fresh hearts to the Spirit.

I invite you to buy the book to follow along with the daily devotions, or to simply come to church and hear the reflection each week that will help us focus on the Spirit's breakthrough power. As we step into 2024, what could be a better invitation than that!

You can order the book here, or just see more about it: <https://www.dynamiteprayer.com>