



MASSENA

First United Methodist Church

Serve Massena. Connect with Jesus. Journey in Faith.

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APRIL 2024

Message from the Pastor

Massena First UMC exists to **Serve Massena, Connect with Jesus, and Journey in Faith.**

Psalm 1:3 They are like trees planted by streams of water, which yield their fruit in its season, and their leaves do not wither. In all that they do, they prosper.

Greetings Church Family,

Spring is upon us, a season that symbolizes new life. We see the trees flourish in April and May with leaves and flowers blooming. The cold winter turns into warm springy days, and the sunlight beams into the evening. It is the perfect time to remind ourselves that we are like the trees firmly planted with Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior, as mentioned in the verse above. Let us continue to be a garden for the Holy Spirit, who will help us grow in our faith as we listen to God's voice.

Speaking of listening to the Holy Spirit, I have some exciting news that I wish to share, including a slight change in my faith walk. Before I share, let me clarify that I love it here in Massena just as much as I love being the pastor of Massena First United Methodist Church, and I have no plans to change that. That being said, as many of you know, I was commissioned as an Elder last June at the Annual Conference, meaning I could qualify to be ordained in June 2025. However, after much prayer, I have decided not to rush through the process and will go before the board of ordained ministry in 2026.

One of my ordination requirements is I must go on a mission trip, and now we can look to do perhaps a church-wide mission trip for people who may want to join me. We are currently looking at the Red Bird Missions Organization, which allows churches to volunteer. Please let me know if you are interested. We are looking at next Spring or even next fall.

I am excited to see what this year can bring for our church, and I look forward to working with everyone as we continue to Serve Massena, Connect with Jesus, and Journey in Faith Together.

Blessed to be your pastor,

Reverend Cori J. Loudon



**APRIL BIRTHDAYS**

April 6	Matt Trego
April 7	Grace Stierheim
April 10	Anna Hendershot
April 11	Jerry Fregoe
April 12	Katie Aiosa Groff
April 16	George Love
April 18	Maureen Hoxie
April 19	Katina Thomson
April 21	Cierra Ladison
April 27	Martha Palmer

**APRIL ANNIVERSARIES**

April 5	Dennis/Colleen Martin
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Congregational Care

(FORMERLY PRAYER & CARE)

We met on March 4th for our regularly scheduled meeting. We have been trying to keep on top of those in the congregation who are sick or need a visit or a card. Not always an easy task but we do our best. We hope to do more over the next year to reach out to those in our congregation.

It had been suggested that we put together a prayer wall for church. The committee talked about it and decided that it would be a good idea. The purpose will be for our congregation to put on the wall those that they would like to have prayers for. Each week a member of the team will bring that list to Pastor Cori to be shared as part of joys and concerns. The wall is up and is in the back corner by the choir room corner. Please use this to put up any prayer concerns that you have.

We have also decided, after consultation with Pastor Cori, to change our committee to represent a broader focus for our work. The committee will now be titled Congregational Care with its mission to focus on the internal members of the church. Our responsibilities will include prayer and care concerns, crisis prayer team, grief fellowship, visitor and new people welcomes and hospitality focusing on the congregation. This focus allows us to support the congregation and its needs to strengthen our church family.

Also, we are looking for new members of our team who would like to reach out to those individuals. It can be a card, a phone call, a visit and does not have to involve a large time commitment but is so important to keep our church family connected. If you are interested in being part of the team, please contact either Fae Colby in the church office or Karen Lalonde to let them know.

Members of the team are: Karen Lalonde, Shirley Lamb, Betsy Stout, Debbie Moody, Sandy Donaldson, Marilyn Weathers, Kathy Perry, Pastor Cori.



Finance Report

This is an exciting time of year. There is a lot of activity around the church and the fellowship hall as we actually plan for some of the projects we want to accomplish within our buildings. To do this all takes money. Thank you to all of you who have pledged this year or who have given money for our special projects. We have paid all of our bills so far this year thanks to your generosity.

Our financial audit is complete and submitted to the district superintendent. Thank you Linda Weegar for completing this audit for us. No irregularities were found in any of our finances.

If you would like to get more involved in the finances of the church, please see either Barb Reid or Kathy Perry. The committee meets only a few times a year to set the budget, review our spending and do our year end reports.



Finance
Update

Community Meal News

March has been a busy month for our community meal volunteers. With the implementation of a no to-goes policy, we have seen an increase in the number of persons who are coming to our meals. Prior to Covid this is how we operated and returning to that made sense because our mission is to serve food for the body and fellowship for the soul. We will, however, continue to do to-goes for our homebound members and those who would normally come to our meals but because of illness are not able to.

The We Care About You Program has seen an increase in the number of requests we receive every month. This program allows us to provide support through personal care items, cleaning and paper products for our meal guests as needed. Donations for this program are accepted at all times. If you wish to see what we have available and how the program works, stop over on a Thursday and we will walk you through it.

We are looking for more help with all of the meals. If you can give a few hours, please let us know and we can get you on a team. We work hard together but it is really a very enjoyable venture.

Community Meal team: Sandy Donaldson, Laura McGrath, Debbie Moody, Marilyn Weathers, Darcy Sharpe, Greg and Sheila Mockry, Karen Murray, plus many other volunteers.



COMMUNITY DINNER



MISSIONAL OUTREACH

Missions

We met on March 4th to finalize the plans for our Spring Fling/ Easter Egg hunt. Starting at 12 and going until 2, this event was open to the entire community. We decorated Easter eggs, colored a cross for our church cross, had an Easter egg hunt and then had pictures taken with the Easter bunny. A lot of fun was had by all.

Outreach

Our Lent collection was "Change for Change". We will be sending the money to UMCOR for their use as 100% of all of the donations go directly to helping others. We set a goal of \$150 since last year we raised \$122 and we met that goal. Thank you so much. We are pleased to reach out beyond the four walls of our church to help our neighbors. We would love more help. Please see any of the members if you wish to join us.

Committee members: Judy Wanke, Karen Lalonde, Debbie Moody, Jessica Arnold, Pastor Cori, Kathy Perry, Karen Murray, Becky Glover, Kathy Barclay, Shirley Lamb, Carole Norman, Laura McGrath, Betsy Stout, Nancy Manley and Marilyn Weathers.



Bells and Choir

The Lenten season is upon us and the choir and bells, under the direction of Sandy Donaldson, are busy practicing some very special music. You will see us robing again for Lent as this is a special time on the church calendar. As we hope you have been able to see, we have added many more new singers. This is allowing us to sing more music made for a combination of voices. Plus we have borrowed robes from the Raymondville church to wear as well as music from both Waddington and Norfolk to expand what we are able to sing and play.

Choir and singing and playing together has brought us such joy and a sense of being part of the worship experience. We hope that this will continue on into the future as we make a joyful noise unto the lord.

We are always looking for new members to join us both for choir and for bells. Choir practice is Tuesday evening at 4:45 for those who can attend and Sunday morning at 10:00. We are trying to come up with a time to practice bells as we want to incorporate them back into the worship service.

If you are interested in joining the choir or playing bells, please see Sandy Donaldson or join us in the choir room on Sunday mornings.



Mission Trip, Anyone?

Have you ever thought about participating in a mission trip? We are planning a trip in 2025 to Red Bird Mission in Kentucky. An informational meeting will be held in the near future. If you are interested, please see Pastor Cori.



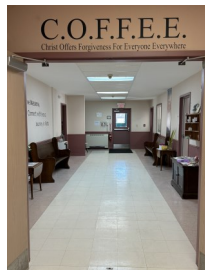
New Prayer Corner

We have completed a new prayer corner near the back entrance of the church. If you have someone you have a concern for and would like a prayer said for them, write their name on the paper provided and attach it to the wall. Each week Pastor Cori will read the prayer requests and concerns that have been placed on the wall.



New Signs

We've had some new signage put up inside the church. Thank you Bruce Tusler and Dan Witkop for the great job you did. They look fantastic!



Inside the fellowship area.



As you come in the front door.

Spring Fling/Easter Egg Hunt

We held our annual Spring Fling and Easter Egg Hunt on Saturday, March 16. This event was by reservation only so that we could provide a good time for all those who participated. All who participated had a fabulous time! Lunch was served, then a story was read by Pastor Cori and then the hunt was on for eggs! Anyone who wanted to could have their picture taken with the Easter Bunny, as well.



Spring Fling/Easter Egg Hunt volunteers

Pastor Cori reading the Easter Story.



Guessing game prizes



Easter Bunny visit





Bible Quiz

Many people contribute their success in life to people who taught them. Fill in the blanks with the proper teacher.

- 1) _____ was the first person in the Bible called a teacher; he instructed workers in brass and iron. (Gen. 4:22)
- 2) _____ told Moses "I...will teach you what ye shall do." (Ex. 4:15)
- 3) Habakkuk said the graven _____ was a teacher of lies. (Hab. 2:18)
- 4) Nicodemus said to _____, "Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God." (John 3:2)
- 5) Paul told the _____ that they were instructors of the foolish and teachers of babes. (Rom. 2:20)
- 6) _____ and _____ were teachers in Antioch. (Acts 13:1)
- 7) Paul admonished aged _____ to be teachers of good things. (Titus 2:3)
- 8) _____ went about Galilee teaching in the synagogues. (Matt. 4:23)
- 9) _____ and the other apostles were found teaching in the Temple after an angel released them from prison. (Acts 5:21)
- 10) One of Jesus' disciples said to Jesus, "Lord, teach us to pray as _____ also taught his disciples." (Luke 11:1)

Answers:
1-Tubal-cain; 2-God; 3-image; 4-Jesus; 5-Jews; 6-Barnabas and Simeon; 7-women; 8-Jesus; 9-Peter; 10-John

Bible Quiz

Visions of God.

- 1) Who had a vision of the Ancient of Days seated upon a throne?
- 2) Who looked up steadfastly into heaven and saw Jesus on the right hand of God?
- 3) Who knew a man who had been caught up into the "third heaven"?
- 4) What seer described himself as "in the Spirit" when he received his visions?
- 5) What did Isaiah see filling the temple when he beheld God sitting on his throne?
- 6) Who saw the back of God, since he could not bear to see him face to face?
- 7) Who, besides Isaiah, saw the Lord sitting upon his throne?
- 8) What seer of weird visions beheld a throne like a sapphire?
- 9) Who saw a heavenly ladder with the Lord standing above it?
- 10) Who, along with Moses, saw God during the wilderness wanderings?

Answers
1-Daniel (7:9); 2-Stephen (Acts 7:55); 3-Paul (2 Corinthians 12:2) 4-John, author of Revelation (Revelation 4:2) 5-the train of God's robe (Isaiah 6:1); 6-Moses (Exodus 33:23); 7-the prophet Micah (2 Chronicles 18:18) 8-Ezekiel (1:26) 9-Jacob (Genesis 28:12-13); 10-Aaron, Nadab, Abihu, and seventy of the Israelite elders (Exodus 24:9-10)

Quote for the Month

"Love life. Engage in it. Give it all you've got. Love it with a passion because life truly does give back, many times over, what you put into it."

— Maya Angelou





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