

Sumner Center Newsletter

August 2025



OPEN HEARTS. OPEN MINDS. OPEN DOORS.

Pastors Notes... August is here, and we all know what that means...summer's basically over, school's about to start and we need Jesus to conquer this new season. Needless to say, we need Him all of the time, in every season! So, since we recently flipped the calendar to beautiful August, I'm gonna share 10 Bible verses with you for this month!

1.) Psalm 27:1

"The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?"

2.) 1 timothy 4:12

"Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity."

3.) Colossians 3:20

"Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord."

4.) Joshua 1:9

"Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest."

5.) Proverbs 15:5

"A fool despiseth his father's instruction: but he that regardeth reproof is prudent."

6.) Galatians 5:22-23

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law."

7.) Philippians 4:13

"I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."

8.) Philippians 4:19

"But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus."

9.) Philippians 4:6-7

"Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."

10.) Proverbs 3:5-7

"Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths. Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the LORD and depart from evil."

***Sunday Worship:
In Sanctuary at
11:15am***

&

***Sumner Center UMC
Facebook Page***

**Visit our Church
Website at:**

<http://www.sumnercenter.com>

**Donations may be sent to our mailing
address:**

25378 151st Ave

Spring Valley, Mn 55975

Pastoral Support Team

Pastor Bridget Sheely

Email: bridget@countrywidecarriers.com

Cell # 507-438-1352

Pastor Jon Marburger

Email: marburgerjon@gmail.com

Cell #507-227-6711

Grace and Peace in the name of Jesus Christ:



If you have items you would like to be published in the newsletter, please contact Pastor Bridget by the 3rd Thursday of the preceding month by emailing your information or dropping at Church. The light of God remains to shine bright in our community only by your generous giving heart! If you would like to donate a gift, you may send donations to the address above or deliver it in person during Sunday morning worship service

Calendar of Events

(Subject to change and/or be added to as the need arises)

August 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3 11:15 am Worship 	4	5	6	7	8	9
10 11:15 am Worship	11	12	13	14	15	16
17 10:30 am reception for Sims/Davids family 11:15 am Worship	18	19	20	21	22	23 Ad Council Meeting 10 am
24 11:15 am Worship	25	26	27	28	29	30
31 11:15am Worship						

August Worship Schedule

August 3, 2025

Pastor Jon Leading



In our Gospel Lesson this morning, 'The Parable of the Rich Fool', we will meet Jesus just as he is starting to gain a lot of followers. His ministry is becoming highly influential. Crowds are surrounding Him and hanging on His every Word. While traveling to Jerusalem, Jesus gave his followers some very important teaching regarding discipleship. The topic in today's text specifically deals with covetousness and greed; the notion that wealth can secure prosperity or a good life.

August 10, 2025

Pastor Bridget Leading



This morning, we look at the Book of Hebrews, starting at verse 1 of chapter 11 and working through to verse 16 of the same chapter.

If you have been a Christian for any length of time, then you will likely find at least some of the things written in this chapter to be somewhat familiar to you. Certainly, this would be one of the more well-known portions of the Bible - one that finds its way onto any number of calendars and, scenic photographs, and "verse-of-the-day" items every year.

August 17, 2025

Pastor Bridget Leading



Today is a very special day. Today we, the church, will host a reception for the decedents of the Sims and Davids family.

Please come and help us give them a warm Sumner Center "welcome home" at 10:30 am. We will be serving cookies and drinks with worship to start at 11:15am.

"When you give a banquet,
INVITE THE POOR ...
and you will be
BLESSED."



August 24, 2025.

Pastor Jon Leading

God is on our side—until we're not. Wait, does that make sense?

God is on our side, but sometimes we wander away. Sometimes we are off track. That's what sin means, off track. We've forgotten to be humble. We've forgotten to be grateful. In our text today Jesus will share a parable to remind us of how we are to act as His children.

August 31, 2025.

Pastor Jon Leading



Why do we tell stories? We tell stories to share experiences, to teach lessons, to create community, to reveal ourselves, to gain attention, to lighten a heavy moment, or . . . well for lots of reasons. Stories have power and have an effect beyond the words of the story. Stories shape our experience of the world. Sometimes, stories dream of a world that could be or might be. Everyone leans in when stories are told. So, why did Jesus tell stories? For all the reasons above, no doubt. Something is happening when Jesus tells stories, something beyond the words of the stories themselves. Even when the words are hard to hear.

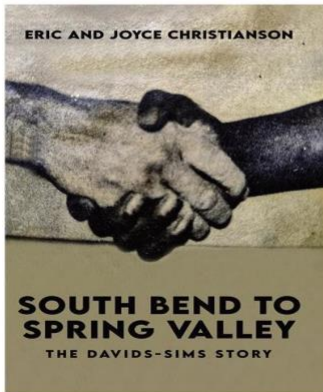
Book Signing - Meet the Author!

*Saturday, August 16, 2025
9 - 10:30 am at Some Like it Hot Coffee Shop
112 N. Broadway Ave. Spring Valley, MN*

South Bend to Spring Valley:

The Davids-Sims Story

Authors: Eric and
Joyce Davids Christianson



A single letter sparked an extraordinary bond between two families from different worlds. Set against the backdrop of America's shifting social landscape, this is a powerful true story of kindness, courage, and an unexpected friendship that defied the times.



Now available at
[amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com)

**Thank you, Kathy Hawkins, for
Sharing the love of Christ
Through your beautiful poetry.**

**The tragic events of the flooding
Through Texas and beyond are
Heartbreaking.**

**May your words help remind us how
fragile this earthly life is and keep our
vision on what truly is important. God's
children!**



Texas Tragedy

By Kathy Hawkins

The night rains came and the river rose
The children awakened with water rising fast
The leaders of the camp worked to keep them safe
As the winds blow

Hanging on to trees and poles to save their lives
While protecting loved ones from the waves
The rush of the water was filled with trees and
debris
As the winds blow

The loss of friends and family of all ages
Rips at the hearts of way too many
This nation aches for the souls that were lost
As the winds blow

To survivors and those who work to find
All the dear people still lost in the storm
Our hearts are with you we pray this day
As the winds blow

Let me introduce you to a wonderful new podcast!



Join Rev. Erica Koser for great inspiration in this ever-challenging world! Church is changing. It's time to plant new seeds. Hear from innovators, practitioners, seekers, and more as we nurture sprouts of ideas big and small. Join us in the conversation! A podcast of the Minnesota Annual Conference of the UMC.

You can Follow this podcast on: [Apple Podcasts](#) [Spotify](#) [Overcast](#) [Castro](#) [Castbox](#) [Goodpods](#)
Type the RSS feed into your podcast app: <https://feeds.buzzsprout.com/2459679.rss>

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Awards given for loving boldly at Annual Conference

Seven individuals and two churches were recognized with awards at the 2025 Annual Conference. They are noteworthy examples of United Methodists making a difference by loving boldly, serving joyfully, and leading courageously in their communities across Minnesota. Here's a look at each of the recipients and their contributions:

The Wesleyan Way: Rev. Jerad Morey (Individual Award) and First UMC of the St. Cloud Region, Sartell (Congregational Award)

This newly created award honors one individual and one congregation in the Minnesota Conference who embody Wesley's General Rules to do no harm, do good, and stay in love with God.



Rev. Jerad Morey received the individual Wesleyan Way Award. First UMC of the St. Cloud Region, Sartell, was given the Wesleyan Way Award for congregations.

Morey is director of strategic relationships with the Minnesota Council of Churches. He has been instrumental in developing the [Respectful Conversations Project](#)—structured, facilitated conversations designed not to change minds, but to soften hearts in communities experiencing or anticipating polarizing conflicts. Since 2012, more than 8,500 Minnesotans have participated in Respectful Conversations on polarizing topics. On average, 70 percent of participants report developing a stronger sense of empathy for those whose viewpoint is different from their own.

First UMC, led by Revs. Leah Rosso and Susan Putzke, lives into its call to be a "Love First" church. The congregation has begun a Trauma Responsive Church Initiative—committing to learning the complexities of trauma to create a more trustworthy and safer faith community that promotes healing and support. First UMC has also recently offered support to and walked alongside Sauk Centre and Grey Eagle UMCs in their season of pastoral transition.

Denman Evangelism Award: Revs. Jeff Adams and Jeremy Peters



This year, the Denman Evangelism Award went to two clergy, Revs. Jeff Adams and Jeremy Peters. The Denman Evangelism Award, administered by the Foundation for Evangelism, was awarded to two clergy this year. Recipients are selected for their commitment to consistently introduce others to the good news of Jesus Christ in all ministry settings.

Rev. Jeff Adams, a licensed local pastor at Fairmont UMC, has shared good news through the Walk to Emmaus movement and in a men's small group that has met weekly for 24 years. Adams has also served and ministered to people living with addiction, experiencing homelessness, facing food insecurity, and navigating chronic illness.

Rev. Jeremy Peters, pastor at The Grove UMC's Cottage Grove campus, has built the congregation into a spiritual home for those often overlooked by traditional religion. Rev. Dan Wetterstrom, The Grove's lead pastor, nominated Peters. "What began with just Jeremy's family has grown to over 100 in weekly worship, not because of gimmicks or flashy programs," Wetterstrom said. "His sermons speak of justice and mercy, his leadership models compassion, and his

outreach always begins with listening.”

Foundation for Evangelism Laity Award: Jean Carlos Diaz



Jean Carlos Diaz was awarded the Foundation for Evangelism Laity Award.

This new award from the Foundation for Evangelism honors laity with exceptional evangelistic ministries.

Jean Carlos Diaz is the director of campus ministry for the Wesley Foundation at the University of

Minnesota — Twin Cities. In less than a year, he [rebranded and relaunched the ministry](#), calling it

“Neon.” Through a new [storytelling initiative](#), Neon connects students to each other and to the broader community.

Stories of faith with themes of discovery, rejection, acceptance, or going forward are shared. More than 150 college students and community members gathered at Neon’s most recent storytelling event to support transgender and non-binary storytellers and their powerful messages of the expansive, inclusive love of God.

Francis Asbury Award: Rev. Kelly Figueroa-Ray



The Francis Asbury Award went to Rev. Kelly Figueroa-Ray.

The Francis Asbury Award recognizes one United Methodist in each annual conference who has made a significant contribution to fostering United Methodist ministries in higher education. Rev. Kelly

Figueroa-Ray serves as chaplain and director of the Wesley Center at Hamline University in St. Paul.

Figueroa-Ray engages students on campus, curates the Mahle Lecture in Progressive Christian Thought, works with leaders in scriptural reasoning from around the world, and serves as the campus vote coordinator to increase civic engagement on campus. She oversees Hamline University’s Basic Needs Program, which includes their Food For Thought Pantry, which had started in 2019 as a student and faculty-led popup pantry to address campus food insecurity and work towards food sovereignty. She was instrumental in institutionalizing the food pantry in partnership with the Hamline University Student Congress, which passed a resolution last spring to fund the pantry with an annual student fee. With these funds, the Wesley Center has now hired a full-time basic needs program and case manager, who hired a part-time coordinator of the food pantry, while building a case management system, expanding resources, and and serving the needs of the Hamline campus community. In one recent semester, more than 40,000 pounds of food were given away at the pantry.

Jeanne Audrey Powers Award: Rachel Casper



Rachel Casper of Eden Prairie UMC received the Jeanne Audrey Powers Award.

This award is given to someone who has made significant efforts to build beloved community through collaborative partnerships and ecumenical efforts, working for justice and reconciliation for all persons.

When Rachel Casper’s teenage son was a baby, she was asked not to bring him back to her church’s nursery because he was “too much to handle.” That was in another state and before he was diagnosed with autism, but it’s something she’s never forgotten. Casper—director of children’s ministry at Eden Prairie UMC—helped [develop a neurodivergent ministry](#) that supports kids and families in Sunday School and at other events. She also developed an Adaptive Bible Camp to provide neurodivergent kids a positive camp experience and coordinates inclusion-based activities for children during worship.

One Matters Award: Motley UMC and Rev. Greg Leslie



Motley UMC and Rev. Greg Leslie received the One Matters Award this year.

The One Matters Award is given to one congregation from each annual conference that has

demonstrated significant revitalization in discipleship, marked by an increase in professions of faith and baptisms, from zero to at least one in the previous year. The award comes with a \$1,000 gift from

Discipleship Ministries. This year’s recipient is Motley UMC and its pastor, Rev. Greg Leslie. With 154 members, Motley UMC celebrated 10 adult professions of faith and one child baptism in 2024. Since Leslie was appointed to Motley UMC in 2017, the congregation began sharing Christmas gifts with community kids. Each year, they serve about 100 kids and give more than 500 gifts. An unchurched mother with children who attended this “Santa Day” in December found the warmth of the community so appealing that she returned to Motley UMC. This growth is a testament to the people in the congregation who build friendships, accept everyone, and promote a family-friendly culture in the church.

Congratulations to all of these award recipients! We give thanks for the ways they are loving boldly and sharing Christ in and beyond their communities.

August - National Dog Month

D	S	B	D	D	U	L	E	T	P	L	E	B	M
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D	I	G	R	E	A	T	D	A	N	E	E	D	E
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BULLDOG
DACHSHUND
GREAT DANE
WEIMARANER
MALTESE
SHIH TZU
BICHON FRISE
BOXER
SCHNAUZER
DALMATIAN
PUG
POODLE
AKITA
BEAGLE
AIREDALE
BASSET HOUND
LHASA APSOS
LABRADOR
TERRIER

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