

December
2024



First United Methodist Church

Revelation

Pastor's Pedalings,

"Jonah prayed to the Lord his God from the belly of the fish: 'I called out to the Lord in my distress and he answered me.'" ~ Jonah 2:1-2a

Jonah was stuck. He was stuck with a call he didn't want because it meant doing something he didn't want to do. So, he tried running away from that call until the boat he jumped on was threatened by the sea, and he knew he was the cause of it, so he told the boat's crew to toss him overboard; they did, and the sea calmed. Then, Jonah ended up in the belly of a big fish.

Talk about stuck.

Jonah would find himself stuck again but the point is, sometimes people get stuck. Historically when people get stuck, they become more and more anxious, and anxiety can spread like an emotional parasite throughout large and small groups of people.

Throughout history, there have been numerous examples of bodies of people who got stuck. Some would argue that Jesus came into the world when he did as a way to address the stuck-ness of the ancient Judean religion, the stuck-ness of oppressed people, and even the stuck-ness of the Roman Empire. Some would say stuck-ness led to the split between the Eastern and Western churches around 1,000 CE. Some would say stuck-ness brought about Martin Luther's 95 theses and the reforms that came with St. Francis of Assisi. History indicates that European society was stuck before Christopher Columbus sailed across the Atlantic and ran into North America. John and Charles Wesley ended up forming a new denomination because they could see the Church of England was stuck.

How many more historic examples can you think of? I've only mentioned a few but there are plenty others. What about personal examples – where you've felt stuck – and maybe you realized it and maybe you didn't. I know I can relate to that, as well.

Being stuck isn't fun. When societies or groups of people get stuck, anxiety rises, and when anxiety rises, it's an indicator that something else is going on. I've experienced that more times than I can count, and I've seen it as many if not more times than I even realize.

Sometimes the stuck nature of anxiety has people look for someone to blame – to scapegoat the way Jesus was scapegoated. Sometimes anxiety gets so intense that people freeze. Something else anxiety does is have people do the same thing over and over expecting different results. Crazy huh?

It's taken me years to understand something about anxiety and stuck-ness, however, and when I finally figured it out, it made more sense than anything I've noticed in probably the last 20 years.

The only way to overcome stuck-ness and anxiety is adventure. I think that's what God was helping Jonah understand in the belly of the big fish, and it's certainly what Jonah experienced when he marched through Nineveh, even though his expectations weren't met. What Jonah needed was adventure. I wonder if Jesus' life, death, and resurrection were something of a cosmic adventure. Martin Luther's work and St. Francis of Assisi's work was certainly adventurous. So was Columbus' work. And John and Charles Wesley's work.

So, as we approach this Advent season, what changes are you preparing to make? And as we enter into this final month of the year, what adventures will you engage in 2025? I know what mine are already and I am excited to get them started now. I think all the things that have held me stuck in the last few years was God's way of saying, "I'm about to do a new thing."

This time, my stuck-ness was different. I didn't feel my own anxiety (although I did feel the anxiety of others at times), and my stuck-ness didn't feel permanent; it felt like God was patiently moving me forward. God has been calling me to adventure like I've never adventured and used every aspect of all that is good, bad, and ugly about my life to make it happen. Nothing could be more exciting for me because it has given me focus like I haven't felt since I went to seminary in 2002. All I know is that as I come out of all the fishy stuff in my life, my sense of serendipity has never been stronger, and for that I am truly grateful!

All I know is it's time for adventure, so let the adventures begin!

Until next time just keep Pedaling, Pastor Mark Crist

Enhanced Online Giving

Additional options have been enabled for online giving through our web site. You can access [Online Giving](#) or scan the QR code with your phone.



Through online giving, you have the option to give with a credit card or to setup direct deposit from your checking account. These gifts can be setup for a one-time gift or as a recurring gift. There is even an option to increase your gift to cover the cost of credit card processing fees!

We encourage you to create an account using the e-mail address you receive e-mails on from the church so your giving is associated with your account in the ChurchTrac membership system and will appear on your annual giving statement. By creating an account, you will also have access to all of the giving options mentioned above. If you do not want to create an account, there is an option to give as a guest.

Meals on Wheels

The Senior Center is looking for volunteers to deliver Meals on Wheels. To volunteer, contact Marissa at the Senior Center at 243-1872. Meals are picked-up and delivered by noon. Drivers receive a free meal! Meals on Wheels provides a hot meal and human contact for the homebound.

UWF is now helping to deliver Meals on Wheels on Monday's. If you are interested in helping, see the sign up sheet on the bulletin board.



Commodities

It was a very busy commodities day! Our crew consisted of 12 volunteers who helped to unload, pack and take boxes out to cars.

We served 125 boxes! 59 Singles, 20 Couples and 46 Families for a total of 125 boxes and 272 individuals served.



Cloud County Resource Center Needs

The Food Bank is open and accepting donations of cash or food items for distribution on **Monday/Wednesday/Friday from 9:00 am – 5:00 pm and Tuesday/Thursday from 1:00 – 5:00 pm**. Starting on March 1st, the Food Bank can be utilized one each month; an appointment must be made 24 hours in advance to pick up food at the Food Bank.



Missions and Outreach

Missions Buckets will be passed on December 1st and 8th for the Cloud County Resource Center Holiday Baskets program.

Thank you for your generous donations of \$73.31 in the November Missions Buckets to support the United Methodists Student Day Special Offering. For more information about this offering, visit <https://www.umc.org/en/content/united-methodist-student-day-faq>.



Good Neighbor Experiment Sledding Events



It is December and you know what that means – snow days are coming! We know that our church has the BEST sledding hill in our area and we want to welcome the families who come to use it this winter. If you would be willing to help serve coffee and hot cocoa on sledding days, please let Nancy Wentz know so you can be added to the call list!

Little Free Pantry



Thanks for your continued support of the Little Free Pantry. Please place your donations directly in the pantry. You may also leave food donations in the food box in the entry of the church for future use. During the holiday season, there will be increased traffic at the pantry and we appreciate all of your donations!

If you prefer, you can also make a monetary donation to help purchase food for the pantry. Donated funds were used in June to replenish our pantry stock! Thanks to Pam Campbell and Lisa Valcoure for helping to place food from our store in the pantry daily!

Charge Conference

5 members attended Charge Conference on November 17, 2024 on the Kansas Wesleyan University campus at Salina, Pastor Mark Crist, Pam Campbell, Angie Gabel-McConkey, Melody Leibbrandt and Lisa Valcoure enjoyed the Praise Band and Fellowship with other Methodist Churches in our district. D.S Karen Ratzlaff reminded the participants of the our new district name, North Central Kansas of the Great Plains Conference. It was exciting to be at the same location that the G.P. Conference will be held in June of 2025. There is a copy of the Charge Conference book in the Church office if you would like to have a copy.



Trustees Update

Renovation of the kitchen is now complete! More than 20 volunteers came to help re-load items in the kitchen and tear down the Haunted House on the first Saturday of November. **Please join us for a dedication of the new Kitchen on Sunday, December 15th!**

The majority of the kitchen project was funded by a directed gift received in April from the family of Anita Chartier. There are additional items that the Kitchen committee along with the support of the Church Council included in the project. **We are therefore asking you to consider an extra-mile gift to help fund these improvements. Please make a note of "kitchen" on your gift.**



Thanksgiving Dinner Photos

Thanks to all who helped with the Thanksgiving Dinner! We delivered 16 meals, prepared 67 meals that were carried out, and served 127 in the dining room!

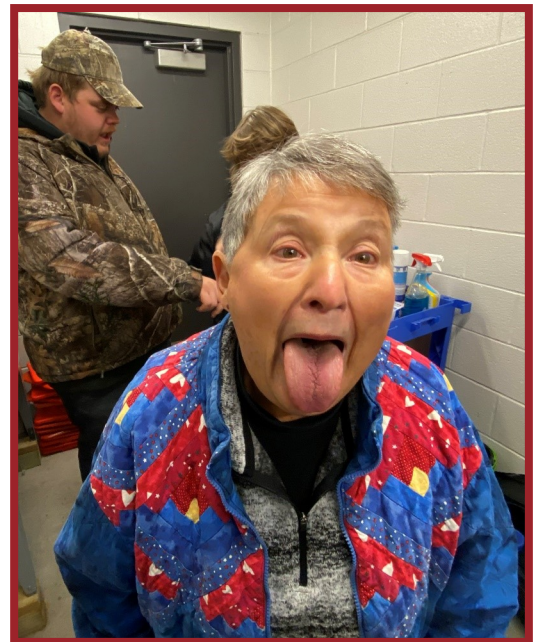
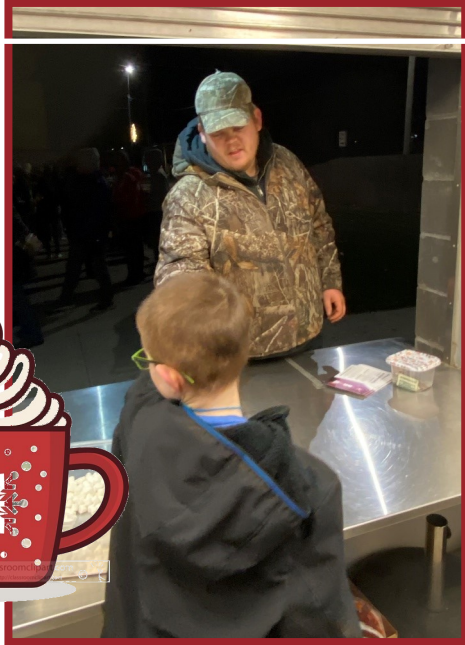


Home Town Holidays

FUMC Hot Chocolate Booth

FUMC members warmed the souls of 375 cold children and their families with hot cocoa during the Hometown Holiday Downtown Opening.

Thank you to all of those who showed up to warm the souls and kick off the Holiday Season!



****Christian Education News****



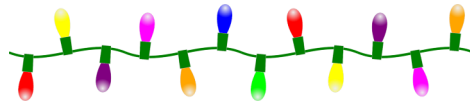
Wednesday Night Table Talk

IMPACT Youth: Jason, our youth leader, has announced the where and when of the IMPACT group's Mission Trip. They are going to Bloomington, Illinois in mid-July 2025. The kids must be 14-year-old before they leave for the trip to be eligible to attend. The group will be helping to paint, build ramps or whatever repairs are needed for those in need in the community. Please support our youth by purchasing tickets for items or events in the upcoming weeks to fund their trip.

In the upcoming weeks, this group will be baking and decorating cookies for Cookie Day and preparing for the Christmas Program, Rehearsal for Christmas Eve, on December 15th.

The Rock **Upper Elementary:** This group will be decorating cookies on December 4th and will also be preparing for the Christmas Program. They will have parts in the play as well as participating in the Bell Choir.

JAM Pre K-2nd grade: This young group participated in the telling of Daniel and the Lions and made their own lion masks and discussed ways they are thankful. They will be decorating cookies on December 4th as well, but are welcome to take their masterpieces home with them. JAM will begin practicing their bells for the Bell Choir at the Christmas Program.



United Women In Faith

On November 2nd, the United Women in Faith group met for a short lesson revising the idea of "Finding God's Image in Everyone". We followed up with the chore of organizing our newly remodeled kitchen. What a joyful task that was!! The UWF attendees collected \$ for water bottles for DVACK. Instead of meeting in December, we will host Cookie Day on December 7th.

Refer to the **Calling all Cookie and Candy Makers** flyer on ways to support this event and the **Cookie Day** flyer for detail on the event itself.

UWF has offered to drive a route for Meals on Wheels each Monday of the month. This volunteer opportunity takes about one hour between 11:00 am to 12:00 pm to complete. There is a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board in the hallway, if you are able to help with driving.

Our next meeting will be January 4th at 9:30 am.

Women's Weekend Getaway

Eureka Springs, AR
September 18-21, 2025

The women of our church are taking a weekend to see the Passion Play at Eureka Springs, AR. Our trip will have availability for 10 or 11 women. This will be a 4-day, 3-night getaway to the historic Ozark Mountain town of Eureka Springs, Arkansas. The following are examples of activities planned for the trip.

****1st Day: Holy Land Tour, Buffet and Passion Play**

****2nd Day: Luncheon on the Eureka Springs and North Arkansas Railway, Shopping at the Historic Downtown, and possibly tour Quigley's Castle**

****Sunday morning services at Thorncrown Chapel
The Chapel has won many awards for its amazing architecture.**



This trip will cost approximately \$400 which will include housing, the Passion Play and Holy Land tour, the train excursion, and 2 meals. If you are interested in this "getaway", please get in touch with Angie. She will need a \$100 deposit by February 1st so that we may secure the housing.

Angie Gabel-McConkey

Christian Education Director-FUMC

con1umchristianed@gmail.com



**How can we help others in
Cloud County during the
holiday season?
Here are some ideas!**



Concordia First United Methodist Church
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**Help the Cloud County Resource Center fill Santa's Sleigh to prepare
Holiday Baskets by bringing these items November 17th - December 8th:**

Hats, Scarves, and Gloves for men, women, and children

Stuffing	Mashed Potatoes	Ramen Noodles	Mac & Cheese
Boxed Dinners	Peanut Butter	Jelly	Loaves of Bread
Gravy Packets	Cereal	Evaporated Milk	Baking/Cake Mix
Canned Soup	Canned Vegetables	Canned Fruit	Canned Cranberry Sauce
Canned Tuna	Canned Pumpkin	Canned Sweet Potatoes	

Food items (including donations of hams and turkeys) can also be delivered directly to the CCRC (open 9 am—5 pm, M/W/F, Tu/Th 1—5 pm) Specific items for children or seniors can be purchased by visiting the Angel Tree at Walmart.

Give money for CCRC Holiday Baskets!

We will pass the Missions Buckets on **December 1st and 8th**. All money collected will be used to help families in need. You can also make a donation or adopt a family directly by contacting Tonya Merrill at the CCRC (243-1065, ccrc@nckcn.com). Each basket costs \$75 to prepare.



Volunteer to help prepare and distribute Holiday Baskets at the CCRC!

The CCRC will need lots of help packing holiday baskets and wrapping Christmas gifts!

Thanksgiving Baskets	Christmas Baskets	Wrapping Gifts
November 18th, 1-5 pm	December 10th, 1-5 pm	December 16th, 1-5 pm
November 19th, 5-7 pm	December 11th, 2-7 pm	December 17th, 5-7 pm
November 20th, 1-5 pm	December 12th, 1-5 pm	December 18th, 2-7 pm
November 21st, 5-7 pm		



For more details, Contact Tonya Merrill at the CCRC (243-1065, ccrc@nckcn.com).

**Volunteer to help ring the Salvation Army Bells at Walmart on
Sunday, December 22nd from 12:00—6:00 pm!**

A sign-up list is on the Missions Bulletin Board. More than 90% of the funds collected stay in Cloud County. In past years, \$800+ was raised during the time Concordia 1st UMC was ringing the bells!



**Spread a little cheer by joining us for Christmas Caroling on
Sunday, December 15th!**

Join us after Worship (and the youth Christmas Program) for lunch in the Fellowship Hall with caroling to immediately follow. A list of members will be included in the December Newsletter if you would like to send cards or letters.





Christmas Card Mailing List

Are you making your Christmas card list? Consider adding some of our members and friends!

Sunset Home

620 2nd Ave
David Lahodney
Stanley McMillan

Marquis Place

205 21st St
Eudora Peterson

Concordia Residents

Marge Cruzen
809 1st Ave

Jeanne Keazer
225 W 18th St

Sue Gustafson
701 3rd Ave

Steve Lawson
1017 W 11th St

Joan Lawton
1828 Crestview Dr

Jan Novlan
1515 State St

Kenny & Mary Ann Palmquist
1409 Crescent Ln

Richard & Joyce Peterson
1305 N 145th Rd

Jean Shankle
1405 Crescent Ln

Branson Wilcox
729 E 8th St

Out-of-Town Residents

Sue Collins
114 S High St
Clyde, KS 66938

Amy Gerber
5720 S 25th St, Rm 19
Lincoln, NE 68512

Wendy Holt
920 S 4th St
Lakeview, OR 97630

Judy Kircher
1007 Wilson St
Great Bend, KS 67530

Stanley & Joan Krohn
2109 Highway K148
Agenda, KS 66930

Wayne & Alberta Neel
4400 W 115th St, Apt 331
Leawood, KS 66211

Kay Peters
1008 Kay Valley Park Cir, Apt 404
Overland Park, KS 66209

Liz Steinle
2150 S Sagamont, #104
Wamego, KS 66547

Margaret Thornton
6117 W 119th St
Springfield, MO 65807

Our Impact Youth, with Jason Johnson and Deb Ketterman in the lead, put on an amazing Haunted House!



CALLING ALL COOKIE AND CANDY MAKERS!

WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 4TH

PLEASE BRING YOUR DOUGH WITH INSTRUCTIONS & TOPPINGS BY 5:30PM.
THE YOUTH WILL BAKE AND DECORATE AT TABLE TALK THAT EVENING.

THURSDAY DECEMBER 5TH BY 4:00PM

BRING YOUR PREPARED COOKIES OR CANDIES TO THE CHURCH

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 6TH @ 9AM

UWF WILL ASSEMBLE ALL BOXES AND DECORATE FOR THE EVENT!

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 7TH @ 7:00AM

UWF WILL PLATE COOKIES AND FINISH SETUP.

8:30AM ~ DOORS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC.

PLEASE STAY TO GREET & CHAT WITH OUR CUSTOMERS!



DECEMBER 15, 2024

10:30AM

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM!

RIGHT AFTER WORSHIP:
LUNCH &
KITCHEN DEDICATION



IMMEDIATELY
FOLLOWING LUNCH:
CHRISTMAS
CAROLING



YOU ARE ALL WELCOME TO SUNDAY EVENING YOGA

5:30pm-6:30pm
in the lower level of
Concordia 1 UMC
740 West 11th



2nd Sunday -Chair Yoga (Chairs provided)
4th Sunday-Mat Yoga (Bring your own Mat)

Wear comfy clothes!

Contact Angie Gabel McConkey
for more details!

(con1umcchristianed@gmail.com)



**The Brown Grand Opera House
&
The Concordia Ministerial Association**

Present...



***Christmas
Vespers***



***Sunday, December 8th
6pm***

at The Brown Grand Theatre

***Featuring Musical
Ensembles from:***

Local Churches

Cloud County Community College

USD 333

**A love offering will be
collected to support:**





LADIES *Coffee*
DECEMBER 21, 2024
9:00AM
@ JITTERS



Salvation Army Bell Ringing

Concordia First UMC will be ringing the Salvation Army Bell at Walmart on **Sunday, December 22nd**.

We need **two volunteers** for each time slot between **Noon – 6:00 pm**. Why two volunteers? So there are two people to greet shoppers and spread Christmas Cheer!



12.24.2024
A PLACE FOR YOU
THIS CHRISTMAS
5:30 pm
*Christmas
Eve
Service*

REFRESHMENTS IN THE
PARLOR AFTER SERVICE





MERRY
BIRTHDAY

1~Harrell Adams
2~ Donna Nelson
7~Joe Fakler
7~Lisa Moore
9~Merl Ramsey
9~Lori Ade
10~Addie Townsdin
10~Alison Waterman
11~Brian Ruud
12~Nickie Mildfeldt
13~Kaelyn Ade
14~Tyler Kocher
14~Teresa Benson
19~Karter Steinle
19~Charity Brown
24~Eudora Petersen
24~Deanna Conn
24~Marylu Fellows
24~Katie Thompson
29~Jessica Blochlinger





Sunday Morning Volunteers

December	1	8	15	22	29
Worship Leader	Christy Hasch	Loren Swenson	Angie Gabel McConkey	Cindy Kocher	
Sound	Jason Johnson	Monte	Monte		
Media	Lisa Valcoure	Nancy Wentz			
Advent Readers	Breault Family	Lawrence Family		Knox Family	
Greeters	Deb Ketterman	Phil and Connie Bentz	Deb Ketterman		
Nursery Helpers	Patty Mosher	Patty Mosher	Patty Mosher	Patty Mosher	Patty Mosher
Children's Moment	Cindy Kocher	Angie Gabel-McConkey	Christmas Program	Angie Gabel-McConkey	Pam Campbell
Scripture Reader			Christmas Program		
Ushers	Lyle Pounds	Lyle Pounds	Lyle Pounds	Lyle Pounds	Lyle Pounds
Acolytes					
Coffee Bar	Marsha Wentz	Marsha Wentz	Marsha Wentz	Marsha Wentz	Marsha Wentz
Alter Flowers	Poinsettia's	Poinsettia's	Poinsettia's	Poinsettia's	Poinsettia's

DECEMBER 2024



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 9:30 Crusaders/Searchers 10:30 Worship Services 6:30 Advent Bible Study	2	3	4 5:00 Sitting With Jesus 5:30 Choir Practice 6:00 Table Talk Meal 6:30 Classes Begin	5	6	7 
8 9:30 Crusaders/Searchers 10:30 Worship Services 2:00 Advent Bible Study 5:30 Yoga 6:00 Vespers	9 5:30pm FUMC Council	10	11 5:00 Sitting With Jesus 5:30 Choir Practice 6:00 Table Talk Meal 6:30 Classes Begin	12	13	14
15 9:30 Crusaders/Searchers 10:30 Children's Christmas Program 11:30 Lunch and Caroling 6:30 Advent Bible Study	16	17	18 5:00 Sitting With Jesus 5:30 Choir Practice 6:00 Table Talk Meal 6:30 Classes Begin	19	20	21 9:00 Ladies Coffee @ Jitters
22 9:30 Crusaders/Searchers 10:30 Worship Services 12:00-6:00 Salvation Army Bell Ringing 5:30 Yoga 6:30 Advent Bible Study	23	24 	25 	26	27	28
29 9:30 Crusaders/Searchers 10:30 Worship Services 6:30 Advent Bible Study	30	31 				



Concordia First United Methodist Church

Belong | Believe | Become

Pastor: Rev. Mark Crist

Administrative Assistant: Lisa Valcoure

Christian Ed. Director Angie Gabel-McConkey

Choir Director: Renata Knox

Organist: Pam Campbell

Contact Information:

Email: concordia1umc@gmail.com

Website: www.concordiafumc.com

Pastor's Email: rev.mark.crist74@gmail.com

Facebook: Concordia First United Methodist Church

Church Phone: 785-243-4560

Sunday Services:

Crusaders: 9:30am

Searchers: 9:30am

Worship: 10:30am

Wednesday Night Services:

Sitting with Jesus 5:00pm