

March is Women's History Month. It is a time to remember and celebrate the many, many, many accomplishments of women in our country, and even around the world.

John Wesley licensed many women to be preachers in the Methodist movement which began in England in the 1700's. His views on the values of women in ministry began with his mother, Susanna. She was said to have instilled in John, as well as his brother Charles, a deep appreciation for women and their intellectual and spiritual gifts as preachers of the gospel. Being a female clergy in the United Methodist Church in the 21st century, I am grateful to all the female clergy who came before me, paving the way and braving much discrimination in order that I might be free to serve.

The UMC began ordaining women back in 1956, a full twelve years before the Methodist Church merged with the United Evangelical Brethren Church to become the United Methodist Church. This historic event allowing women to be ordained into the Methodist Church occurred right in our own backyard, in Minneapolis, during the General Conference of 1956. Yet even after the change to the Book of Discipline allowing ordination of women, female clergy struggled to be offered appointments with the Church.

Today, we have almost 12,000 active and retired female clergy within our denomination. But there is still much work to be done. In the southern United States, where I recently relocated from, the average number of clergy who are female in any given Annual Conference is roughly 35%. Compare that to the almost 50% of female clergy in the Minnesota Annual Conference, we understand why the work of equality for female clergy remains unfinished. In addition, female clergy have suffered continued discrimination by many people, male and female, lay and clergy alike.

I consider myself blessed to be here with the congregation of Cross Roads, who has opened its heart and doors to me as female in ministry. I am thankful for all of the support and kindness shown to me since my arrival last summer. Yet I know there are still those who do not believe in equality for women, at any level of society, whether it be in the church, in other work settings, or in the home. Women have contributed so much to our world, with much of those contributions done in the background without any recognition whatsoever. So, to all of you women in our church, I want to say "Thank You" for all you have done to better your churches, your workplaces, society, and your homes. To you men I would say, support the women in your life, be it wives, daughters, sisters, aunts, etc. We have gifts and abilities God has given to us to do a wide range of work, and we could certainly use all the support we can get.

So during the month of March I would challenge you to reach out to a woman in your life that has made an impact on you, and let her know you thank her for all of the hard work she has done. Let's face it, without women, none of us would be here.

Peace,

Pastor Leslie

The Compass



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Admin Team Notes

I'm happy to say that I don't have much to report this month!

January was a good month. From a financial standpoint, our giving exceeded our expenses. (A warmer winter has certainly helped keep our some of our costs like plowing and heating lower than planned.) The Admin Team finalized the church's Personnel Policy to bring our processes into compliance with recent employment laws passed by the Minnesota legislature that affect all businesses in the state. And, while I just mentioned a warmer winter, we all kicked off Valentine's Day and Lent on February 14, with a blast of winter weather!


The new banners in the sanctuary are lovely and reminding us that Easter will soon be upon us. There some social opportunities between now and that sacred day, i.e. A church coffee (March 13), a birthday/anniversary celebration after worship (March 3) and Pastor Leslie invited everyone to join them after worship for lunch to celebrate Don's birthday/anniversary of their first visit to Cross Roads celebration at Zorbaz on March 17. Then come the Holy Week services and finally...Easter. I hope you take the time to worship, gather, and engage in fellowship with your Cross Roads family during this holy time.

In fellowship,
Pat Solheid, Chair, Admin Team

Admin Board Meeting Date Change

The Admin Board meeting has changed to *Tuesday, March 19th at 6:30pm*. This change is to accommodate a visit from our D.S., Laurie Kantonen. If anyone needs to attend via ZOOM, please contact Pastor Leslie for link information.

Lenten Project

 We are doing a special project for Lent. Special collection bags are available in the narthex and we ask that you collect clothing items (40 Items for 40 Days). These bags can be returned to church on Palm Sunday for a special blessing and will then be donated to various thrift stores in the area. You can also take your own bag to the thrift store of your choice!

Celebration Bash

Our next Celebration Bash will be March 3 following worship, where we will celebrate those who have birthdays and anniversaries during the month. Be sure to stay following our service and share in some good cake, coffee, and some wonderful fellowship!



Coffee Corner

Our next Coffee Corner will meet on Wednesday, March 13 at 9:00 am in the fellowship hall. Please join us for some good coffee and great conversation!



March Missions & Outreach

Our Mission Focus for March - MN Food Share allows food pantries to purchase 10X the amount of food during the month of March.

This year we will be supporting The Link's Food Pantry and the Kandiyohi County Food Shelf.

Food insufficiency is at an all-time high so please give generously. We'll split the offering between the two unless you designate your check specifically for one or the other.



Red Cross Blood Drive - Cross Roads is hosting a blood drive on Friday, March 8th from 9 am - 3 pm.

Blood donations are at an all time LOW! PLEASE sign up to donate. We need a minimum of 30 to host! To make an appointment to give blood, you can go to www.redcrossblood.org or call (800) 733-2767.



Looking Ahead...

In April we'll be hosting the Tuesday's Table Meal, on Tuesday, April 30th. If you'd like to help, please let Jenny Daby know.

The Fall Boutique at Cross Roads has been set. The date is Saturday, October 5, 2024. In preparation for the Boutique, there will be a meeting to launch this year's event, which will be APRIL 14th, right after worship and we'll meet in the Fellowship Hall. If you are planning to help with the Boutique this year, please plan to attend this important meeting. And keep working on those crafts!

Youth Group Meals Needed

The Youth Group Leaders still need TWO volunteers to help provide a meals for the youth group on April 17 and May 15.

If you would be interested in helping provide a meal for these young people as they gather to learn and study Scripture, fellowship, and have fun, please contact Donna Smith, Sarah Friesen, or Pastor Leslie.

This is a great way for those of you in our congregation who don't know our youth to get to know them better!

March Birthdays

Terry Albers 8th
Don Zeek 17th
Jim Solheid 19th
Alan Zaske 22nd
Donna Smith 24th
Natalie Denz 26th

March Anniversaries

Warren & Barb Gerdes 20th



If we have missed your special day, please let the office know.



JANUARY 2024 IMPACT FROM THE LINK

THE FOOD PANTRY

In January, The Food Pantry served **169 Households**- including 273 adults, 157 children and 58 seniors-- distributing a total of **9,053** pounds of food!



CLIENT OUTREACH and HOUSEHOLD EXCHANGE

Each month, The Link is able to provide support to a number of families facing hardships, such as (but not limited to): job loss, chronic illness, unexpected change in family dynamics and increase in the cost of living.

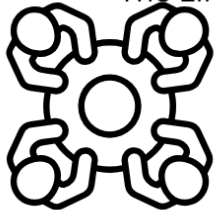
In January, your donations were able to support **19 families** by helping with medical bills and prescription cost, utility bills and rental payments along with providing budgeting support, networking and referrals for additional basic needs. The Link also provided **14 families** with basic household needs including clothing, furniture and winter gear!

WILDCAT BACKPACK AND SNACK PANTRY

The Link is currently serving **96 children** each week from NL-S schools! This is an ability to supplement children's food for the weekend when they are not in school.



The Link is also currently connecting **29 teachers** with snacks for students in their classroom.



TUESDAY'S TABLE

A free community meal the 1st Tuesday of the month: Our Lady of the Lakes (Spicer), 2nd Tuesday: Evangelical Covenant (New London), 3rd Tuesday: Faith Lutheran (Spicer), 4th Tuesday: Peace Lutheran (New London), 5th Tuesday: Rotating (call 320-354-5555 for more information).

HOW CAN YOU HELP?

Pray for the Link and the community; Help us spread awareness by talking about The Link to your friends and family and sharing on social media; Donate unexpired food items to the food pantry or organize a food drive; Volunteer at the thrift store or in the food pantry;



Donate your gently used clothing and household goods- (all proceeds kick back into The Link's programs; Donate financially-

Remember for every \$1 donated, The Link can purchase \$10 in food through Second Harvest.

CURRENT NEEDS: Gently used winter gear for adults and children (any size!!) Food: Kid friendly food (corn dogs, chicken nuggets, french fries, pizza, snacks, etc. , Monetary donations to support the increased need in outreach and The Food Pantry .

Donations made easy

Monthly giving at the the Link is convenient . You can set up online giving directly through your bank or by visiting The Link's website at www.youarethelink.org by scanning the QR code. You can also mail your donation to P.O. Box 823 , New London, MN 56273, drop off your donation in person or leave your check in the drop box outside of The Link's door at 20 Central Ave E, New London. Questions? Contact Ashley at 320-354-5555.



Thank you for your support! YOU are The Link!



**Cross Roads Community
United Methodist Church**

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March 2024

Christian radio stations in the area:

K-Love 90.9

KTIS 92.7 & 98.5

Spirit 92.9

The Cross Roads Mission

To help everyone find joy in their journey by:

Inviting everyone to walk with Jesus,

Growing together as His disciples,

Serving others we meet along the way

And Joyfully Celebrating the Journey.