

He had told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God? ~Micah 6:8

The prophet Micah asks, what does God require of us? He asks this question in a time of dishonesty, corruption, and injustice. A time when the leaders and the people had gotten so far off track that they were completely lost.

Had Micah posed this question to the people, the answer probably would be something along the lines of sacrifice, showing up for worship, giving offerings.

But instead, Micah asks this question and then answers it from God's point of view. And the answer should never cease to shock and surprise us, to make us uncomfortable as we wonder: am I really doing that?

God doesn't require the things we have come to expect like showing up for worship, knowing the Bible frontwards and backwards, having all the right beliefs. Instead God requires that we do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God. These actions are not optional for a life of faith.

So open we think of faith in terms of what we believe and how certain we are about those beliefs. But Micah wants us to think of faith in terms of what are we inspired to do, how does our belief in God change how we live our lives.

And Micah is not the only voice in Scripture asking this question, in the New Testament we hear "faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead." And we hear Jesus summarizing a life of faith as loving God with our whole being and loving our neighbor as ourselves.

Faith is not a feeling but a verb, it is the way we live out our lives with the kind of love that humbly walks with God, seeks out justice, and extends kindness to all. This is what God requires.

Micah reminds us of this not to shame us, because the truth is we all miss the mark. None of us are perfect and we all struggle with this. But although we might not be perfect, we can still try. And with God's grace we can grow to love more deeply so that justice, kindness, and a humble walk with God become more and more how we live.

So how today, or this week, or this month will you live your faith? How will you seek justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God? Faith is about what we do with what we believe.

Pastor Leslie

The Compass



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Lenten Series Study Beginning!

Pastor Leslie is teaming up with Pastor Kevin Gregory at Joyful Spirit UMC in Wadena and Pastor Amy VanValkenburg from Atwater and Rosendale UMCs to host a weekly Lenten study based on Bishop Michael Curry's book, *Love Is the Way*. Each week one of the pastors will take the lead for an online Zoom study. In each chapter, Bishop Curry—through his practical theology and storytelling from his own life experience—answers a question you might be asking about love: How do I find God's love? Do I have to love my enemy? Can love really change the world?

For six weeks, we will journey together in this way of love. We will cover two chapters a week, and each week will be introduced with a video from a member of our Appointive Cabinet followed by discussion time and various activities. Participants will be from several congregations, and everyone is encouraged to invite someone to join. The study will begin on Thursday, February 11. A Zoom link will be made available each week in our church-wide email, as well as our church website and Facebook page. We hope you will join us for this connectional time of study as we reflect on the love of God in our lives.

Ash Wednesday Services!

Wednesday, February 17 is Ash Wednesday, and on this day, we will officially begin in-person worship again. Therefore, in order to safely social distance and allow everyone the opportunity to worship, we will be hosting two worship services. The first one will be at 12:00 noon, and the second will be at 6:30 pm. The evening worship service will be geared towards our families with children and youth, although anyone is welcome to attend.

We hope you will join us as we begin the Lenten season by being able to come together physically once again.

Taco Tuesdays are Coming!

During Lent Pastor Leslie will be hosting a fellowship event, where each week, you can sign up for a virtual dinner get-together. This would be done on Tuesdays each week at 6:00 pm, and the menu of course would be tacos (hence the name). These events will begin on Tuesday, February 23 and will continue until Holy Week. The link for these dinners will be sent out weekly in our church-wide emails, as well as on our church website and Facebook page. Everyone is welcome to join for just one week or every week!

Sewers Needed!

Cross Roads Worship Team is looking for sewers who would be willing to make some paraments for the church sanctuary. We need two pieces in the following colors: green, purple, red, and blue. We have patterns and dimensions for each piece. If you would be willing to help make these for our congregation, please contact Pastor Leslie (320) 444-8992.

New Phone Number for the Pastor

Pastor Leslie and Don received new cell phone numbers, which are listed below. These are the only numbers they currently have, as all of their other numbers are now inactive. Please note the changes in your contact information in case you need to reach Pastor Leslie outside of the church office. Thank you!

Pastor Leslie: (320) 444-8992

Don: (320) 444-8989

Health Note

I know that not all of you have children at home, but many of us are parents, grandparents or great grandparents. As I was looking for a topic for this health note I found an article written by Christopher Curley regarding the importance of adequate sleep for children.

Almost half of the children in the United States do not get the recommended 9 hours of sleep at night. Lack of sleep can affect school work, and result in long-term health effects such as obesity.

Kids who did sleep enough had a higher interest in learning new information; they were more likely to complete homework and were more likely to care about doing well in school.

Risk factors for poor sleep include poverty, lack of care giver understanding of the importance of sleep, increased digital media use, difficult home life, and mental health issues.

Sleep deprived kids are more likely to have behavioral problems, academic problems, health problems, risk taking behaviors, anxiety, and a higher risk for self harm.

What to do: Talk to and listen to your kids about the importance of adequate sleep. Don't use bed time as a punishment. Create a dark, quiet, comfortable space. Have a routine with a media curfew. Keep screens out of the bedroom.

This likely is good advice for all of us,

Shari

February Birthdays

Wanda Zaske 2nd
Sue Wiegmann 3rd
Joy Baker 4th
Deb Bronner 6th
Kyle Denz 6th
Faith Duke 8th
Brody Duke 11th
Dan Wiegmann 13th
Marjorie Green 15th
Jayden Nelson 17th

Brian Wolff 17th
Kathryn Sasse 18th
JoAnn Wright 18th
Gerald O'Connor 21st
Mary Jane Young 22nd
Richard Kelvington 24th
Carol Underland 24th
Jordan Peterson 28th

February Anniversaries

Dan & Sue Wiegmann 9th
Josh & Emily Redington 18th
Jim & Pat Solheid 18th





January 2021 Updates

“When I was a boy and I would see scary things in the news, my mother would say to me, “Look for the helpers. You will always find people who are helping.” – Fred Rogers

This quote sums up this past year quite well. 2020 came with a lot of uncertainty and fear, yet there were always people looking for ways to help. When COVID began to affect our local community, there was a lot of questions as to what that would mean for The Link and its’ programs (especially when all of the typical fundraising events needed to be cancelled), yet, The Link was able to continue running programs as usual because of the outpouring support that came from our local churches, businesses and community members. It was humbling to see the amounts of people that called, stopped in or sent messages wondering what they could do to help their neighbors.

For Christmas, The Link was able to help provide 80 families with Christmas food baskets and 56 families with gifts! This year, there were 43 families that reached out wanting to “adopt” a family for Christmas which is more than The Link has seen in previous years. There was also \$3800 worth of gift cards donated to help families with food and gifts. Looking at numbers in years past, The Link was able to help more families than usual, despite the fact that more families were facing hardship. It is hard to put into words the gratitude that came from the families that received help- there were a lot of “Thank-you’s” and many tears.

In December, **The Food Pantry** welcomed 20 new families, served 76 children, 106 adults and 17 seniors. 4690 pounds of food was distributed and 1839 pounds of food was donated from community members and churches..

The Wildcat Backpack Program continues to deliver to Prairie Meadows Headstart program. There is hope that this program will serve the other schools as soon as there is a new routine established with school re-opening. If you know a family that could benefit from this program, please have them call Ashley at 320-354-5555.

Senior Food Delivery- If you, or someone you know, is interested in hearing more about this program please have them call Ashley at 320-354-5555.

The Link’s **Client Outreach** program served 11 families in the month of December. There were also some generous donors who wanted to help families experiencing hardship due to COVID. With that, we were able to pay rent for 2 families, make a car payment for another and take care of a medical bill.

There really are no words to express how it felt to feel God’s presence this past year through the kindness of others. There is rarely a day that goes by that someone doesn’t call looking for ways to help, even if they don’t have much.

Tuesday’s Table:

Tuesday’s Table continues to be cancelled until further notice.

Monthly Giving Opportunities:

The Link makes monthly giving a convenient option for our donors. You can set up online giving through The Link’s website at www.youarethelink.org or directly through your bank. If you would like to make a one time donation, you can send a check to P.O. Box 823, New London, MN 56273 or via Venmo @The-Link-1. Please contact Ashley at 320-354-5555 or email her at ashley@youarethelink.org for more information.



**Cross Roads Community
United Methodist Church**

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February 2021

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