

## February 4 Potluck and 2023 Annual Church Conference

On Sunday, February 4 we will gather in the Fellowship Hall following worship for our potluck and annual church conference. Please bring a main dish, side dish, or dessert to share with others at the potluck and remain after the meal to hear reports on what we've accomplished in 2023 and look forward to what lies ahead for 2024.

*You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness. ~Eph. 4:22-24*

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You are invited to begin your Lenten journey with a time of prayer in the worship space at Wyoming Church. The church will be open on Wednesday, February 14 from 5-6 PM. You're welcome to stop by any time during that one-hour window and receive from Pastor Holly the mark of the cross in ashes on your forehead or the back of your hand and then spend some time in prayer in the worship space. Prayers and readings will be provided for you to use in that time of prayer and/or to take home with you to read later.

Wyoming United Methodist Church

Messenger



January/February 2024

### Worship Services

In January and February, we will be talking about Jesus, his early ministry, baptism, calling his disciples and healing those who were ill. In mid-February we'll be talking about Gratitude and how being grateful is a subversive practice that has transformative power in our lives and in the community. Come and see!

#### January 7

Everything Changes  
Mark 1:4-11

#### January 14

Follow!  
John 1:43-51

#### January 21

Rev. Tom Biatek,  
guest preacher

#### January 28

Denny Hebrink,  
guest preacher

#### February 4

Raised Up  
Mark 1:29-39

#### February 11

A Glimpse of Glory  
Mark 9:2-9

#### February 18

Bathing in Gratitude  
Mark 1:9-15

#### February 25

No More Fear  
1 John 4:16-21

### Guest Preacher Rev. Tom Biatek

Sunday, January 21, we have the privilege of hearing from Rev. Tom Biatek, who retired as lead pastor at Path of Grace UMC in Maplewood. Previous to his time at Path of Grace, he has served in Albert Lea, Chanhassen, Excelsior, and Hennepin Avenue as well as other churches outside of Minnesota. He currently lives in Lino Lakes with his wife, Jill. We look forward to his words for us on the 21st!

### What is Shmita?

Pastor Holly will be gone for two Sundays in January, fulfilling a part of the Shmita training which is required for every United Methodist pastor in Minnesota. Shmita is Hebrew for "sabbatical" or "year of jubilee." Over the past year, she has, with other clergy in Minnesota, participated in five 1-to-2-day gatherings plus 3 gatherings with a small clergy cohort group. This year-long Shmita process includes required boundary and ethics training as well as an assessment process mandated by the Book of Discipline (United Methodist rule book). These final two weeks of the Shmita process is a solo spiritual retreat intended to give participants time to tend to the soul, listen to God, and work on a development plan designed to help participants continue to learn and grow as pastors.

### Welcome New Members!

On Sunday, December 17, we welcomed new members to our congregation, though each of them is new in name only as each of them has been a part of our congregation for over a year or more:

Val S. moved into the area over a year ago when she retired from working with the Community Action Agency providing emergency services on the Iron Range. She was a member of Hope Community Presbyterian Church in Virginia, Minnesota. In her retirement she is enjoying gardening and reading.

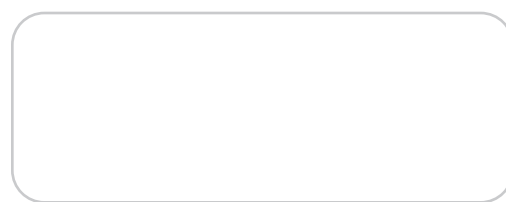
Betty M. is a local physician who enjoys reading, bridge, and swimming. Her husband, Ralph M., is an OB/GYN physician who enjoys bagpiping, flying, hunting and scuba. They're former members of St. Peter's Church in Forest Lake.

Taylor B. works in Project Management and likes sports and he joined with his wife, Kim, who enjoys reading. Together they're raising 3 children. The two of them share a love for camping, hiking and kayaking and Kim reports that she's been to 38 National Parks!

Welcome to these new members.  
We're glad you are here!



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## From the Pastor...

I'm writing this article in the "in-between" time after Christmas and before New Year's Day. Not a lot of people are coming into the office, so I can work without distraction, and yet it seems my brain has taken a vacation from thinking. I'm struggling to write because a part of me is wanting to snuggle under the covers with a good book while eating all the chocolates in our house. And at the same time, I want to look at the blessings this past year has had and look forward to all the new year holds for us.

Let me start by saying how grateful I am to have been in ministry with you this last year. Together we welcomed people into our space for food and hospitality (Stagecoach Day, Fall Dinner, New Pathways hosting) and blessed those in need (Strong Missions, Food Shelf, Lakes Center for Youth and Families, etc.). With the pandemic behind us the future is bright with possibilities.

As we begin a new calendar year together, we can be grateful that God is not done with us

yet, that there are still new things to be done and new ways. We've talked in various settings (at the Thankquet and in worship) about Fresh Expressions, a new initiative of our Minnesota Conference to reach out to those outside of our walls and engage in appreciative conversation about how God is moving in our lives. We'll be talking more about Fresh Expressions as the year goes on as we seek to better understand how we can be Christ's light out in the community.

Lent comes early this year, beginning with Ash Wednesday on February 14, culminating in Easter on March 31. Our Lenten study and sermon series will be guided by Diana Butler Bass' book called "Grateful: The Subversive Practice of Giving Thanks." I hope you'll join in as we learn more about gratitude.

In closing, let us pray together this prayer of John Wesley, a covenant prayer that sets the tone for our attitude and desires for the coming year:

### A Covenant Prayer in the Wesleyan Tradition

I am no longer my own, but yours.  
Put me to what you will, place me with whom you will.  
Put me to doing, put me to suffering.  
Let me be put to work for you or set aside for you,  
Praised for you or criticized for you.  
Let me be full, let me be empty.  
Let me have all things, let me have nothing.  
I freely and fully surrender all things  
to your glory and service.  
And now, O wonderful and holy God,  
Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer,  
you are mine, and I am yours, so be it.  
And the covenant which I have made on earth,  
Let it also be made in heaven. Amen.

## Please Notify the Pastor

Please notify Pastor Holly if you hear of anyone facing illness, major surgery or is lonely and wants a call. Call or email the office or pastor and let them know of the need. Thank you!

## Thank Yous

Thanks to all who sent my family and me Christmas gifts and cards and goodies. I am so grateful for your kindness. I really appreciate them and I really appreciate you! -Pastor Holly

Thank you to everyone who dropped in to wish my family and I a Merry Christmas! And thank you for the thoughtful gifts too! -Michelle

## Celebrations

### January

#### Birthdays

- 1-1 Tom S.
- 1-2 John K.
- 1-3 Lois J.
- 1-5 Matthew B.
- 1-9 Kim B.
- 1-11 Johnny K.
- 1-14 Steve T.
- 1-15 Ben P.
- 1-17 Pat K.  
Virginia M.
- 1-18 Axie T.
- 1-19 Jessa E.
- 1-26 Dorothy B.

#### Anniversaries

- 1-1 Taylor & Kim B.
- 1-7 Dave & Holly A.

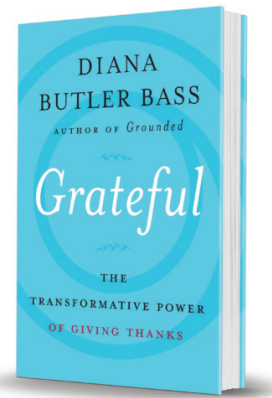
### February

#### Birthdays

- 2/4 Taylor B.  
Alan K.
  - 2/6 Abby J.
  - 2/7 Lisa S.
  - 2/9 Rich R.
  - 2/11 Wade R.
  - 2/13 Jim P.  
Jeannine Q.
  - 2/14 Rick K.
  - 2/20 Mike K.
  - 2/24 Deb H.  
Donna L.
  - 2/25 Nancy K.  
LeAnne P.
  - 2/27 Jasper B.
  - 2/28 Katie A.  
Trevor J.
  - 2/29 Tristan S.
- #### Anniversaries
- 2/15 Buck & Yvonne B.
  - 2/27 Norb & Deb H.

## Lenten Study

You are invited to participate in our Lenten Study this year as we read together through Diana Butler Bass' "Grateful: The Subversive Practice of Giving Thanks." In this book, Bass acknowledges that though we find gratitude is good, many of us find it hard to sustain a meaningful life of gratefulness. As a cultural observer and theologian, Bass takes on this "gratitude gap" and offers up surprising, relevant, and powerful insights to practice gratitude.



Starting Thursday, February 15, we'll meet for 6 weeks (through March 21) from 7-8:30 each Thursday night, studying a different aspect of her book and her message. In mid-January we'll have a signup sheet for this Lenten Study. Participant books are \$15 each.

## Joy Bells Joy!

Thanks to all for your overwhelming support of families in need this Christmas. You stepped up this year to help 8 local families with 21 children. We were not only able to provide \$75 for each child and youth in the family and provide the family a full Christmas Dinner, we were also able to provide them with an additional \$50 gift card to each family to purchase food at Bruce's. You are overwhelmingly and amazingly generous, Wyoming United Methodist Church! Thanks to all who put everything together and especially to Nancy who coordinated all of the gift giving! Well done good and faithful servants!

### Christmas Offering

Thanks to all who rose to the challenge and gave to the Christmas Offering for Strong Missions in Costa Rica and New Pathways shelter for families experiencing homelessness. Thanks especially to those who donated an amount equal to what you spent on Christmas presents for your friends and family this year! Your generous hearts are blessing those in need! For those who have yet to donate, it's not too late. Please get your donations in during the early part of January for this worthwhile ministry.