



Speaking the Truth in Love

There are seasons when it seems the world is coming apart at the seams. Our neighborhoods, our nation, and our world bear the scars of suspicion, division, and distrust. Every day we are bombarded by voices demanding our attention, urging us to choose sides, fueling our fears, and tempting us to confuse loudness with truth. In the midst of such turmoil, Paul's words to the church at Ephesus are both comforting and challenging: "We must no longer be children, tossed to and fro and blown about by every wind of doctrine [or politics or feigned outrage], by people's trickery, by their craftiness in deceit scheming." (Ephesians 4: 14, NRSV)

As followers of Jesus Christ, we are called to something deeper than reaction. We are called to discernment. We are invited to test every spirit against the character of Christ—the One who came not to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through Him. That calling requires humility enough to ask difficult questions of ourselves. Are we speaking because we genuinely desire another's healing and restoration? Or are we merely trying to win an argument? Are we hoping to reconcile relationships, or

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simply recruit others to our own way of thinking? The difference matters.

Our United Church of Christ heritage reminds us that we are a covenant people. We are not held together by unanimous opinions or perfect agreement, but by God's grace and our shared commitment to follow Jesus together. That journey requires room for honest disagreement, patient listening, and mutual respect. The Moravian wisdom has long served the Church well: "In essentials, unity; in non-essentials, liberty; in all things, charity." Charity—love expressed through mercy, kindness, and humility—is not an optional virtue. It is the very atmosphere in which truth can be heard and lives can be transformed.

Paul tells us that when we speak the truth in love, the whole Body of Christ grows stronger, "joined and knit together by every ligament with which it is equipped" (Ephesians 4: 16, NRSV). Our words, then, should never seek to dismember the Body by creating factions, nursing resentments, or hardening hearts. Instead, they should become instruments of God's reconciling work, allowing truth to fall not like the hammer of condemnation but like the healing balm of mercy and justice that restores what has been broken.

In a culture that rewards outrage, perhaps the Church can offer something better. May we become better listeners than screamers, more patient than demanding, and more gracious than condescending. May we remember that every person we encounter bears the image of God, even when we disagree. For whenever we choose compassion over contempt, understanding over accusation, and reconciliation over division, we bear witness to the One who

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has first reconciled us to God and to one another in Christ.

May our lives proclaim not only what we believe, but also the gracious way in which we believe it.

In Christ,
Pastor Todd

ANNOUNCEMENTS and INFORMATION

PRAYER LIST: World, National, and Local leaders. Paula Cottrill; Rodger, Michele (parents), and Dylan Slott (spinal cord injury); Grayson Chapeau; Pat Patterson (cancer); Rhian Elmid (sponsored child); Elsie Hanson; Angie Riggs (friend of Lorie Umphrey – 3rd round of cancer battle); Les Turgeon; Lorrie Loobey (Jo Hansen's sister) and Martina Loobey (Jo Hansen's niece) for health concerns; Marna Bergstrom for recovery; John Daum; Hilda Locke; Joyce Collins; Carolyn Greenfield; Karen and Bob Collins; June Klinkel; Leo Orme; Family of Roberta Wolf (Summer DiGioia's mother); Family and congregation of Pastor Chuck Aurand; Beth Novotny (knee replacement); Lynne Quissell (spinal stenosis).

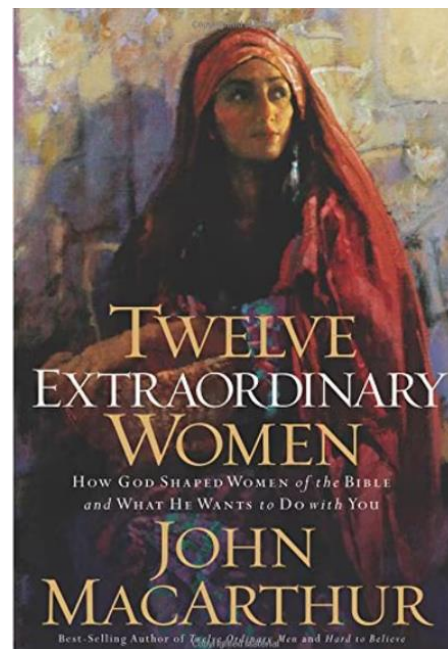
Please let Shirley B. know if you have any updates or additions.

DEACONS' MEETING: A Deacons' Meeting is scheduled for **Sunday, August 9**, after the worship service.

COUNCIL MEETING: A Council Meeting is scheduled for **Sunday, August 23**, after the worship service.

ANNOUNCEMENTS and INFORMATION

BIBLE STUDY: There are many stories of women in the Bible, and they all have lessons to teach us. Our Fall Bible Study will give us a chance to learn about 12 of these extraordinary women (Eve, Sarah, Rahab, Ruth, Hannah, Mary, Anna, the unnamed Samaritan woman, Martha & Mary, Mary Magdalene, and Lydia). **The Bible Study will meet on Tuesday afternoons at 1:30 pm in the Fireside room and will run for 11 weeks from September 1 through November 10.** (11 weeks because the sisters Martha & Mary are covered together.) Each session will be standalone, so if you can't make it to all of them it's ok. You can read the stories in the Bible and participate in the discussions in the sessions, but to get the most out of the study you'll need to get a book (*Twelve Extraordinary Women: How God Shaped Women of the Bible and What He Wants to Do with You* by John MacArthur) – they're available on Thriftbooks.com, Amazon.com, Walmart.com, Christianbook.com, etc. We'll also be making a group order to save on postage – if you'd like to get in on that order, please get in touch with the office (605-642-8253 or ucc1@rushmore.com) by August 10. Join us for our study of Twelve Extraordinary Women – no signup required, just come as you can!



Everyone is welcome!

ANNOUNCEMENTS and INFORMATION

PASTOR'S OFFICE HOURS: Pastor Todd's office hours are from **8:00 am – 12:00 noon on Tuesdays**. Feel free to stop by the office, or call (605-642-8253) if you would like an appointment.

CHURCH RUMMAGE SALE: The dates for the church rummage sale have TENTATIVELY been set as follows:



- Friday, Sept 18 -- 12:00 noon – 6:00 pm
- Saturday, Sept 19 -- 8:00 am – 1:00 pm

Gather your rummage items, **price them**, and bring them to the church any time before Wednesday, September 16. No clothing items or shoes, please!

If you can help set up for the sale on Thursday, September 17, please let Shirley Jenssen know or contact the office at 605-642-8253 or ucc1@rushmore.com . We'll start at 8:00 am, but will probably be at it for hours, so any time you can come would be great.

We'll also need **lots** of help on the days of the sale itself. There will be more information about this in the September Inspire.

Thanks, everyone! Let's make this a successful event for the church.

ANNOUNCEMENTS and INFORMATION

MISSIONS NEWS: We will continue to provide food for the Good Shepherd Clinic on the third Monday of the month. Volunteers are still needed for 2026. We have been contacted recently regarding a slight change in the food. The GS Clinic is now treating patients with dental issues. As a result, many of them are unable to eat the crunchy fruits and vegetables that we are providing. The clinic has now asked us to substitute some soft items for the raw crunchy items. For example, instead of 8-10 snack bags filled with raw veggies they are asking for a large bottle of fruit or veggie juice. Instead of the crunchy fruits they are asking for 8-10 individual fruit or Jello cups. The GS Clinic will provide cups and plastic spoons for serving these items. If you have any questions in regards to this change, please contact Marcie Nuenke at 605-717-7808 (home #) or 605-63-9719 (cell #). **THANK YOU FOR VOLUNTEERING.**

PASTOR'S OFFICE COMPUTER: The total price for the office computer, including software, installation, and accessories, was \$838.74. We received \$800 in donations, and Women's Fellowship will cover the remaining \$38.74. Thank you, everyone!

POTLUCK: We will be holding a Potluck brunch on Sunday, September 13 after the service to welcome Pastor Todd and his wife Kim to our congregation. More information will be available in the September Inspire. A signup sheet will be available on the glass case starting September 1. Everyone is encouraged to attend this celebration!

ANNOUNCEMENTS and INFORMATION

SUMMER SUPPER SERIES: Thank you to everyone who participated in the Summer Supper series for 2026. We had Food, Fun, and Fellowship as we listened to five wonderful presentations and shared five great meals together in July. Thanks to the presenters, those who supplied food, and everyone who attended for making this a successful event!

FELLOWSHIP HALL TABLE DECORATIONS: Everyone enjoys the monthly decorations on the tables in the Fellowship Hall! We rely on volunteers to decorate them and currently need a volunteer (or volunteers) to decorate the Fellowship Hall tables in December. If you would like to volunteer, please get in touch with the office at 605-642-8253. Thank you!

OUR DAILY BREAD: The Our Daily Bread booklets for September, October, and November are available on the glass counter. The booklets provide:

- Daily connection with Scripture
- A guide for reflection and prayer
- Encouragement for every season

The Our Daily Bread online application is also available at the Apple and Android application stores and can be downloaded for free. It includes the daily devotionals as well as a lot of additional content. There is even an option where it will read the daily scripture and devotional to you!

ANNOUNCEMENTS and INFORMATION



CONGRATULATIONS:

At the Special Congregational Meeting held on Sunday, July 12, the congregation unanimously voted to ask Pastor Todd Jones to be our permanent pastor. Congratulations to Pastor Todd and to our entire congregation!

HYDRANGEAS: The white hydrangeas in the Memorial Garden are in full bloom this summer! They were a gift from Joyce Nelson several years ago.



USHERS/GREETERS AND LITURGISTS: Please consider volunteering to be an usher/greeter and/or a liturgist during August and the rest of the year! The signup sheets are on the glass counter.

ANNOUNCEMENTS and INFORMATION

MORE MISSIONS NEWS:

IT'S BACK-TO-SCHOOL TIME! The UCC Missions Committee is launching its annual **School Supply Drive** and will be gathering supplies for K-5 students in need. Collections will run for 3 weeks (**August 2nd, 9th, & 16th**) and will be delivered before school begins. As local children prepare to return to the classroom, we have a wonderful opportunity to help ensure all students have the tools they need to succeed, to relieve part of the financial strain of parents/teachers, and to experience the joy of giving. Please help us fill the bins with supplies to support every child with an equal opportunity to learn, grow, and thrive.



When: Sundays August 2nd, 9th, & 16th

Where: drop-off bins at the back of the sanctuary

What's Needed:

Glue sticks
Markers/Crayons
Colored pencils
1" 3-ring binders
Notebook dividers
Solid-colored pocket folders

Dry-erase markers
Kleenex
Paper towels
Wet wipes
Gallon zip-locked bags
Small zip-locked snack bags

Do NOT need:
Spiral notebooks
Loose-leaf paper
Glue bottles
Pencils
Rulers

- Snacks (peanut-free) Suggestions: fruit snacks, applesauce pouches, cereals, crackers, granola bars
- Water bottles (re-usable) Each student uses one throughout the day to encourage drinking more water/less trips to the water fountain.
- Ear buds--Students use during classroom I-pad activities.

When students excitedly walk into school on their 1st day, your generosity opens the door to a successful year ahead. Thanks for your continued support to our community's children and to Spearfish Elementary Schools. –
Missions Committee

~~ August 2026 CALENDAR ~~

Sun	Aug 2	9:30 am	Worship/Communion/Fellowship School Supply Drive
Tue	Aug 4	9:00 am	Coffee Time/Devotions at Edgewood
Wed	Aug 5	10:45 am	Chapel at Edgewood
Sun	Aug 9	9:30 am	Worship/Fellowship School Supply Drive Deacons' Meeting
Tue	Aug 11	9:00 am	Coffee Time/Devotions at Edgewood
Sun	Aug 16	9:30 am	Worship/Fellowship School Supply Drive
Tue	Aug 18	9:00 am	Coffee Time/Devotions at Edgewood
Sun	Aug 23	9:30 am	Worship/Fellowship Council meeting
Tue	Aug 25	9:00 am	Coffee Time/Devotions at Edgewood
Sun	Aug 30	9:30 am	Worship/Fellowship



August Anniversaries

Aug 14 Trudy & David Crawford
Aug 20 Cindy & Alan Merkel

Happy Anniversary!

August Birthdays

Aug 4 Nevaeh Covell
Aug 6 Rory Zimbleman
Aug 17 Kathy Eddy
Aug 26 Gianni Digioia

Happy Birthday!



If your birthday or anniversary is missing or wrong, please let the office know so we can update our records. Thank you!

Pastor Todd's Office Hours:

T 8:00 am – 12:00 noon

Shirley's Office Hours:

M-F 8:00 am—12:00 noon

August Liturgists

Aug 2 Rosalie Aslesen
Aug 9 Jim Hood
Aug 16 René Stewart
Aug 23 Lorie Umphrey
Aug 30

August Ushers & Greeters

Aug 2 Katie Hood
Aug 9 Katie Hood
Aug 16 Katie Hood
Aug 23
Aug 30

July Attendance & Facebook Viewers

July 5 46 / FB Viewers: 1
July 12 40 / FB Viewers: N/A
July 19 45 / FB Viewers: 4
July 26 40 / FB Viewers: 3

August Good Shepherd Clinic Volunteers

Fruit: Norma Riggs
Veggies: Marcie Nuenke

August Altar & Tables Committee

Altar: Connie Zimbleman
Tables: Kathy Eddy, Marcie Nuenke

INSPIRE

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