

January 2024

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Pastor's Corner

For many reasons, this has been a hard year for a lot of churches and people. It's also a time of change for Rapid City First with Rebecca and I showing up this month. This is a time when people often make resolutions for the new year. Whether you make resolutions or not, it's a good time for serious reflection on where our life has been, where it is, and where we want it to be. As Christians, we know that God has a plan for us. We can take advice from Scripture on how to go through this process. Here's one spot: "Not that I have already obtained this or have already reached the goal, but I press on to lay hold of that for which Christ has laid hold of me. Brothers and sisters, I do not consider that I have laid hold of it, but one thing I have laid hold of: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal, toward the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus" Philippians 3:12-14 (NRSVUE emphasis mine)

The first thing Paul admits is that he hasn't already obtained perfection. We need to understand that God is okay with our flaws. He knows what effect sin has on our lives and that is why He sent His Son into the world to redeem us. But it's okay that you are not where you hoped you would be at this point in time. None of us are. But here is the most important part! Paul says, "But one thing I have laid hold of: forgetting what lies behind..."

" This is a key thought. Paul is saying that there can't be significant improvement in his life until he puts aside what is behind. What he's saying is that he has to forgive and forget what lies behind him before he can move forward. If God has forgiven and forgotten our sins, why do we continue to carry them around? Right now, let's stop for a minute and reflect on the last year. Let's give up any ugliness that still hides there and put it on the cross. Now, let's walk away in the freedom of that forgiveness. Feel the load being removed from your shoulders? Don't look back again. Paul says that now that he has forgotten what lies behind he "straining forward to what lies ahead." He presses on! The imagery here is of a runner straining for the finish line. As we look to the coming year, Paul tells us not to be dragged along through time but to strain toward goals and plans that we have made. Here is where successful resolutions are made. Personally, Rebecca and I want to thank you for your prayers for us during this time of transition. We believe we are fulfilling God's plan in accepting the appointment in Rapid City. Join me as we appreciate what lies behind, but strain forward towards new adventures in mission here at Rapid City First in the new year. May God richly bless your New Year!

Pastor Rich

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

**Monday to Thursday
8 AM to 2 PM**



RAPID CITY FIRST
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
629 Kansas City Street
Rapid City, SD 57701

You may call the
church at:
605-342-4498

Leave a message any
time and we will get
back to you as soon as
we can during office
hours. You can also
email the staff using the
following email
addresses.

*If you would like to be part
of the mass church email
or
prayer chain please email:
admin@rapidcityfirst.org.*

Church calendar of events
can be found on the wall
of the church office, on
the website and on our new
app!! If you are needing
church space for an event
or meeting let us know and
we will get it
added to the calendar.

Pastor Rich: pastorrich@rapidcityfirst.org

Anne Torgerson: rcfumcchildrensministry@gmail.com

Hannah O'Donnell: hannahrcfirst@gmail.com

Lauren Holderfield: lauren@rapidcityfirst.org

Kotti Wickard: finance@rapidcityfirst.org

Diane Ketel: dkketel@live.com

Margot Burton: 343-1832

Kay Rypinski: k_rypinski@hotmail.com

General inquiries or prayer requests: admin@rapidcityfirst.org

STAY CONNECTED!!

Web site: www.rapidcityfirst.org

Live Stream: www.rapidcityfirst.org

(usually opens 5-10 minutes before the service)

Facebook Live: www.facebook.com/rapidcityfirst/

YouTube Channel: www.youtube.com/channel/

First Church Studies Facebook\Page:

www.facebook.com/RapidCityFirstUMC/

Church App: Go to app store on any iPhone or An-
droid and download FUMC (Rapid City) app onto
your phone/device.

FINANCIAL NEWS

Happy New Year! Our Leadership Team/Finance team is pleased to report that we have completed the year in great shape. We met all our financial obligations and we ended the year carrying over \$15,000. Some other good news is that we didn't have to use any of our reserve funds to help us end the year. Many have given above and beyond during this time frame.

Thank you for your faithful giving to God!

As we move into 2024 we approved a \$507,000 budget at our Annual Charge Conference. This year we are looking at two goals in our financial area.

1) One Goal is to pay our apportionments in full. We have been at the mark of giving 8% of our apportionments. This year our goal is to share 13.5% of our income received as ministry and mission through the Dakotas Annual Conference in our apportionments.

2) In our 2024 budget we will need to use some reserves to reach our ministry goals but our goal is to try to limit the use of our reserve funds. One gift we have received is from the Dakotas Annual Conference. Pastor Rich's Pension and Health costs will be covered by the Conference. This is another way our connectional system is helping us move towards financial and ministry wholeness during this time in the life of our congregation.

Again, we are grateful for the faithfulness of each one of our members and friends in your giving to God through Rapid City First! We celebrate the ways we are able to share the wonderful leadership, ministry and programs of our church in sharing the good news of Jesus Christ. THANK YOU!

TRADITIONAL IRA

Did you know if you have a Traditional IRA you must begin taking require minimum distributions (RMDs) from your Traditional IRA when you turn 72 or if you are 73 as of Jan 1, 2023? If this your situation we would invite you to consider making a gift to God through our church. See Pastor Rich or Kotti Wickard for more information.

CONNECTIONS

“For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them.” - Matthew 18:20
Serve and Grow Opportunities in the New Year

Mission Possible Wednesdays will resume on January 24, 2024. The C.I.A. Café will be open for family dinner at 5:30 pm followed by opportunities for all ages to learn, grow and serve. ***Great things are happening at Rapid City First UMC*** and there are several ways that church members can participate in the life of our Wednesday evening ministry.

Hospitality Individuals are needed to help plan, prepare and clean at the C.I.A. (Church in Action) Café. If you are interested in sharing your ideas for dinner and prep, cooking a portion of the meal, or helping to set up and take down, please contact Anne Torgerson at rcfumcchildrensministry@gmail.com. There will be a sign-up sheet for hospitality in the church parlor beginning in January. You don't have to be an expert in the kitchen to be a member of the hospitality team! It is a great opportunity to learn new skills in cooking, planning and presenting, to share your own unique and creative ideas and meet members of your church.

Adult Discipleship As we grow in our Christian walk, it becomes vital to continue to study God's word and how it applies to our everyday life. It is also imperative that we contemplate ways to serve our community. As a member of the Adult Discipleship Team, you can help plan adult education and service opportunities. This team is a wonderful opportunity to give voice to your ideas for the direction and discipleship possibilities that you would like to see take shape in our church. If you are interested in being a member of the team, please contact Anne Torgerson at rcfumcchildrensministry@gmail.com. You don't have to be an expert or make a commitment to teach or lead. All that is required is an interest in discipleship growth for our congregation.

Children and Youth Education This team will assist the staff in planning programs and dates that will make the most effective use of our resources while continuing to provide quality programming for children 0 – 18 years old. Have a voice in determining the scope and direction of Sunday School, confirmation classes, youth retreats, children's service opportunities, vacation bible school and community outreach. This is not a commitment to lead or teach classes, this is a commitment to ensure that we provide the youngest members of our congregation with a firm foundation in faith that will carry them throughout their lives. If you are interested in being a member of this team, please contact Anne Torgerson at rcfumcchildrensministry@gmail.com.

Safe Sanctuary and Volunteer Training All volunteers that are interested in working with children in 2024 are invited to come to training on Wednesday, January 17 at 6 pm. Safe Sanctuary Training is required for working with children and youth. If you are unable to attend this meeting, individual sessions can be arranged. The training can also be done independently by using the on-line tools available on the church website. Please contact Anne Torgerson at rcfumcchildrensministry@gmail.com for more information.



**MISSION
POSSIBLE
KIDS**

*Operation:
Golden Valentine*

**HELPS US SPREAD LOVE TO
OUR SENIORS AT ECHO
RIDGE. WE WILL BE
CREATING 95 VALENTINES
TO DELIVERY FEB 7TH**



END OF
MISSION POSSIBLE
RECAP

**70 pairs of sock
to Children
home**

**60lb of food to
Feeding
SouthDakota**

**Spreading
holiday cheer
to Echo Ridge**

**30 lb of food to
WAVI plus
clothes and
blankets**

**THANK YOU FOR MAKING 2023 MISSION POSSIBLE KIDS
GREAT**

Looking forward to
another great year!

Happy New Year



**Playdate at the Church January 4
from 10am to Noon**

MMO will start back January 9





HAPPY
NEW
YEAR!

WE LOOK FORWARD
TO YOUTH STARTING
BACK WEDNESDAY,
JANUARY 24, 2024

3rd Sunday Offering



About Love INC

Started in 2001, Love In the Name of Christ **mobilizes local churches to transform lives and communities in the Name of Christ (OUR MISSION).**

OUR PURPOSE is to walk alongside people on their journey to wholeness through mutual service, education, friendship, and prayer.

OUR VISION is to see people thriving in healthy relationships where they know their value, purpose and place in Christ and our community.

Because of God's love, our organization, our activities and our relationships will demonstrate (OUR VALUES):

- ◇ You are loved
- ◇ You belong
- ◇ You have choices
- ◇ You have something to offer
- ◇

Love INC of the Black Hills is part of a national movement, you can learn more about that at www.loveinc.org.



PRIMETIMERS MONTHLY LUNCH MEETING



Lunch at OLIVE GARDEN
Friday, January 26

11:30 am

SIGN UP IN PARLOR

CONTACT MARGOT WITH ANY QUESTIONS: 342-4498

Schedule through September

February 9th- Valentine Party 1:30pm in parlor

February 23- On The Boarder, 11:30

March 29th- Millstone (north) 11:30

April 26th- Long Horn Steakhouse, 11:30

May 31- Perkins, Rushmore Rd. 11:30

June/July off, no luncheons

August 23- Picnic in the park, 11:30

September 27- Old Chicago, 11:30

UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH

Thank you

Thank you **to all** who attended the 2023 UWF Christmas “Party,” and made it so enjoyable: those who furnished refreshments or door prizes, served and cleaned up, set up and entertained, and donated gifts for Abbott House Therapeutic Homes in Rapid City.

Urgent

If you are a UWF member that has had a change of contact information, please notify Sharon Hansen who is preparing the UWF 2024 Yearbook. shar3526@msn.com

Pledge?

“January is pledge month.” That’s a customary UWF announcement at this time. Yes, we are curious about any amount of money a member may be considering to set aside to give to UWF causes or projects, but more interesting is: what would you be excited about helping accomplish as a local organization this year? What are ideas you have for projects or fellowship? Is there a something you would like to see a group of women doing to benefit women, children, or youth of our community?

What can we help you organize and support inline with the UWF mission statement? Talk to anyone of the Leadership Team, or come to the Leadership Team meeting at 9:00 am, January 10, 2024, in the church parlor.

United Women in Faith Mission Statement

United Women in Faith seeks to connect and nurture women through Christian spiritual formation, leadership development, creative fellowship, and education so that they can inspire, influence and impact local and global communities.

Dates to Remember

January 10—Leadership Team, 9:00 am, church parlor

January or February—UWF Sunday, TBA



NEED HELP WITH SUBSPASH

Want to learn more about our APP?
Do you need help setting up or changing your giving
information on Subsplash?

You can visit Hannah during these office hours with your
log in information and she can help you!

Mondays 10:30am-noon
Wednesdays 4:30-5:30pm

Need to meet at a different time? hannahrcfirst@gmail.com

January Worship Themes and Scripture

January 7:	“New Beginnings”	Matthew 2:1-12
January 14:	“Ordinary People”	John 1:43-51
January 21:	“God’s Plans”	Jonah 3:1-5, 10
January 28:	“Coming Close To God”	1 Corinthians 8:1-13

January: How You Can Give!

Give Online

Link to give online: <https://secure.subsplash.com/ui/access/>
Give one time or sign up for recurring giving

Text to Give

RCFIRSTGIVE to 1-888-364-GIVE (4483) in order to receive a reply
with the link to give with

Scan the QR code

Using your phone’s QR app or hover over using your phone’s camera
(find in bulletin, on card in pews, and on offering boxes)

Send a Check

629 Kansas City Street, Rapid City, SD 57701

*please make sure to leave a memo when giving to
specify where your funds should go*