



**First United
Methodist
Church
First News
January 2025**



FIRSTCHURCH

4 Second Ave SE, Watertown, SD 57201

For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again. So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! – 2 Corinthians 5:14-17

The Old Has Gone, The New Is Here

One of my all-time favorite movies is Christopher Nolan's *Batman Begins*. It's a movie about how the millionaire, Bruce Wayne, goes from being an orphaned child, to a crimefighting vigilante named Batman, fighting for the citizens of Gotham City who have experienced various injustices. Part of why I enjoy this movie is due to the way that Bruce Wayne is able to reinvent himself as someone working for a cause much bigger than himself. He takes on an entirely new alter ego. He turns from his life of luxury to a life of fighting for others on the streets of Gotham. As the film goes on, we see the two identities of Bruce Wayne and Batman fighting for dominance in his life. It's hard for him to hold on to one identity while living in the other.

As we start into the new year, we may find ourselves a bit like Bruce Wayne, trying to reinvent ourselves by making all kinds of drastic changes to our life. Changes like hitting the gym more, starting on a new diet, resolving to read more, think more positively, or limit our daily use of social media and TV. We look ahead to the new year and think about the ways that we want our life to look different than the previous year and what things about ourselves we want to improve. Like our scripture, we say "The old has gone, the new is here!" While we all start these things with good intentions, we know that most of the time, these changes don't last.

The truth is that it is hard to totally reinvent ourselves like Bruce Wayne did with his persona as Batman. Eventually, the identity of who we are outweighs the person that we are trying to be. This is in part due to the way that we go about launching these changes in our life. We don't construct them gradually, like building a building, laying out plans, gathering the materials, and slowly building from the ground up. Instead, we try to inject change into our lives instantly, jumping into the freezing waters of a new reality that is jarring to remain in.

In January, our worship series called, "Constructing a Life," will focus on the ways that we are called to live as disciples of Jesus Christ, loving God with all that we are. We will explore how challenging and all-encompassing being a follower of Jesus can be. We will examine what it takes to commit to Jesus for life.

So, join us in worship and look for upcoming small group opportunities to start 2025 by constructing our life around our love for God. Let us be compelled by Christ's love!

-Pastor Bryce Blank

IN THIS ISSUE	
A Word from our Pastor	1
Calendar	2
Announcements & Events	3-4
Fall Festival at First Church	4
First Finances	4
First Kids-First Squad	5
First Youth	6
Leadership Team Minutes	7
First Family & Friends	8-9
Grow Group Information	9
Worship Hours—Meet the Staff	10

**** Wednesday Night Schedule**

5:15 pm Community Meal—All are Welcome
 5:30—6:30 pm Bell Choir Rehearsal / 6:30—7:30 pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal
 6:00-7:10pm First Kids (K-4th) - First Squad (5th-6th) - First Youth (7th-12th)
 6:00 pm Intro to Jesus Bible Study with Pastor Sara—Church Lounge
 7:10—7:30 pm Family Worship in Fellowship Hall

January 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 New Year's Day Holiday Office Closed No Church Activities	2 Home Communion 10 am Women's Bible Study	3 Office Closed	4 7 am Back Room Boys Church Lounge 9 am Late Risers Stone's Restaurant 3:00 pm Band Rehearsal 5:00 pm Worship
5 8:30 am Worship 9:30 am Adult Bible Study—Lounge 10 am Worship <i>11:20 am Intro to Jesus (The Gospel of Mark) Bible Study—Lounge</i>	6 1:15-3:15 pm Coffee, Cookies & Conversation—Church Lounge 5:30 pm Women of Grace	7	8 9:15 am Embracing God Bible Study—Lounge Winter Kickoff 5:15-Community Meal 6:00 pm Family Movie Night 6:00 pm Intro to Jesus (The Gospel of Mark) Bible Study—Lounge	9 10 am Women's Bible Study	10 Office Closed	11 7 am Back Room Boys Church Lounge 9 am Late Risers Stone's Restaurant 3:00 pm Band Rehearsal 5:00 pm Worship
12 8:30 am Worship 9:30 am Adult Bible Study—Lounge 10 am Worship <i>11:20 am Intro to Jesus (The Gospel of Mark) Bible Study—Lounge</i>	13 1:15-3:15 pm Coffee, Cookies & Conversation—Church Lounge	14	15 9:15 am Embracing God Bible Study—Lounge 6:00 pm Intro to Jesus (The Gospel of Mark) Bible Study—Lounge <i>**See Above for Regular Wednesday Night Schedule**</i>	16 10 am Women's Bible Study	17 Office Closed	18 7 am Back Room Boys Church Lounge 9 am Late Risers Stone's Restaurant 3:00 pm Band Rehearsal 5:00 pm Worship
19 8:30 am Worship 9:30 am Adult Bible Study—Lounge 10 am Worship <i>11:20 am Intro to Jesus (The Gospel of Mark) Bible Study—Lounge</i>	20 1:15-3:15 pm Coffee, Cookies & Conversation—Church Lounge	21 11:30 am Lunch a Bunch 5:30 pm Leadership Team Meeting	22 9:15 am Embracing God Bible Study—Lounge 6:00 pm Intro to Jesus (The Gospel of Mark) Bible Study—Lounge <i>**See Above for Regular Wednesday Night Schedule**</i>	23 10 am Women's Bible Study	24 Office Closed 6:00 pm Young at Heart Group (see page 3)	25 7 am Back Room Boys Church Lounge 9 am Late Risers Stone's Restaurant 3:00 pm Band Rehearsal 5:00 pm Worship
26 8:30 am Worship 9:30 am Adult Bible Study—Lounge 10 am Worship <i>11:20 am Intro to Jesus (The Gospel of Mark) Bible Study—Lounge</i>	27 1:15-3:15 pm Coffee, Cookies & Conversation—Church Lounge	28	29 9:15 am Embracing God Bible Study—Lounge 6:00 pm Intro to Jesus (The Gospel of Mark) Bible Study—Lounge <i>**See Above for Regular</i>	30 10 am Women's Bible Study 4:30 pm Missions Meeting 7:00 pm Trivia Night at the Church (See page 3)	31 Office Closed	February 1 7 am Back Room Boys Church Lounge 9 am Late Risers Stone's Restaurant 3:00 pm Band Rehearsal 5:00 pm Worship

Weekly at First Church
Mondays

1:15—3:15pm Coffee, Cookies & Conversation—Church Lounge

Wednesdays

5:15 pm Community Meal—Everyone Welcome

5:30—6:30 pm Bell Choir Rehearsal

6:30—7:30 pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal

6:00 pm—The Gospel of Mark Study—Lounge

6:00—7:30 pm First Kids (K-4th Grade)

6:00—7:30 pm First Squad (5th-6th Grade)

6:00—7:30 pm First Youth (7th—12th Grade)

7:10—7:30 pm Family Worship in Fellowship Hall

Thursday Bible Study

10:00 am Women’s Bible Study

Friday—Office Closed

Saturday

7:00 am Back Room Boys—Church Library

9:00 am Late Risers—Stones Restaurant

3:00 pm Praise Band Rehearsal—Sanctuary

5:00 pm—Contemporary Worship

Sunday

8:30 am Traditional Worship

9:30 am Adult Bible Study—Church Lounge

10:00 am Blended Worship

11:20 am—The Gospel of Mark Study—Lounge

Monthly at First Church
1st Monday of the Month

5:30 pm Women of Grace Bible Study—Lounge

2nd Tuesday of the Month

5:30 pm Leadership Team Meeting

3rd Tuesday of the Month

11:30 am Lunch-A-Bunch at Pizza Ranch

1st, 3rd, & 4th Wednesday of the Month

9:15 am Embracing God Study Group—Church Lounge

2nd Wednesday of the Month

Morning Glories Women’s Fellowship/Mission Group

9:00 am in the Church Lounge

1st Thursday of the Month

Home Communion

Seasonal—See Notes at the Right

30’s/40’s Group & “Young at Heart Group”

Please note that anyone is welcome at any time to drop in to any of the above noted groups.

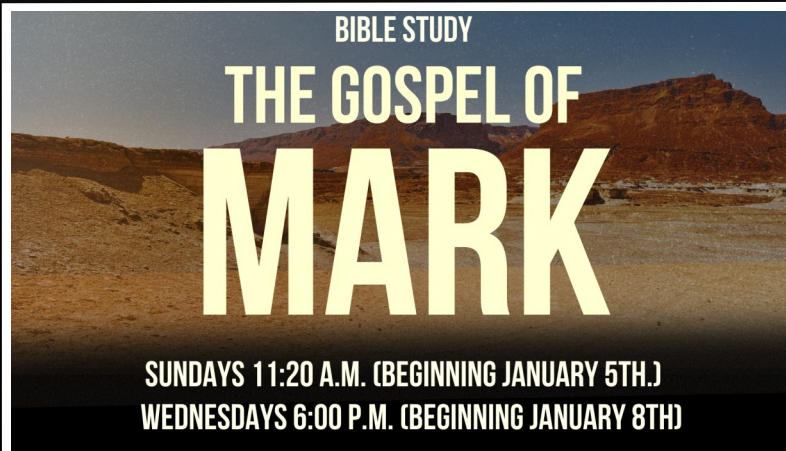
Mission of the Month for January:
LaGonave Alive—A Haiti Ministry

- Education—Scholarship, Uniforms, Books, Etc.
- Healthcare—Mobile Clinics serving elderly Etc.
- Women, Children, Elderly—Feeding programs, Christmas gifts for children, Women’s Village, Etc.

You can give online: www.watertownfirst.church/giving and select Mission of the Month.

Thank you for your support!

CONNECT | GROW | SERVE


Intro to Jesus: The Gospel of Mark

Join Pastor Sara in digging into Mark’s good news. Read the story of Christ from the oldest Gospel written. If you’re just learning the story, or want to dig in deeper, join us Wednesdays or Sundays in the Lounge.

When: Sundays 11:20 a.m. starting January 5th.
Wednesdays 6:00 p.m. starting January 8th.

Call the church office to sign up. 605-886-4427

**Trivia Night at First Church for the 30’s/40’s Group
January 30th—7:00 pm Fellowship Hall**

Calling all of you who might fall into this group, please join us! This group shares similar life experience and loves conversation and fun. Bring a team or gather with new friends to compete around pop culture, current events and other trivia fun. Please let us know if you will need nursery to we can be prepared.

office@watertownfirst.church

**Young At Heart Group (formerly 50’s’60’s)
Friday, January 24th—6:00 pm**

If you grew up with Gomer Pyle, Andy Griffith, I Dream of Jeannie, the Beach Boys, Jaws, and if you know who Gumby is, this group is for you!

Join us on Friday, January 24th at 6:00 pm at Cloud Nine for food & fellowship. We’ll order off the menu and spend time chatting. Please RSVP to the church office office@watertownfirst.church or 605-886-4427. Best to get a head count for our reservation. But if you decide to come at the last minute, please feel free to join us! The more the merrier!

Thank You! We want to share a special thank you to our Leadership Team for their work this last year. Thank you for all you do caring for and leading our church. We especially thank Barb Brinkman, Debbie Engels and Lee Rycraft for their years of service as member of the Leadership Team here at First Church. Thank you for your commitment to Christ and your years of service leading this church.

Pastor Sara McManus and Pastor Bryce Blank



First Church Children, Youth & Families Christmas Carolers visited Jenkins, Maple Place & Townview.

First Church Finances

Oct-24	Income	\$ 29,129	\$ (65,097)
	Expense	\$ 39,527	
	Difference	\$ (10,398)	
Nov-24	Income	\$ 40,414	\$ (61,608)
	Expense	\$ 43,904	
	Difference	\$ (3,490)	

There are several methods available for giving. You can mail your tithe and offerings to the church at:

First United Methodist Church,
PO Box 1416, Watertown, SD 57201

or give online at:
watertownfirst.church/giving

Or use the QR Code to give online now!
Thank Your for your support of First Church!



For a more detailed copy of the budget, please contact the church office.

NOTE: To meet our 2024 budget in full each month, we need a monthly income of \$40,383. The chart above reflects our giving, actual expenditures, and YTD cash flow. Thank you for your generosity and support of First Church!

FIRSTKIDS & FIRSTSQUAD

THANK YOU—THANK YOU!

THANKS to everyone who participated in our night of caroling. It is always fun to see residents eyes light up when they see not only the kids singing but how it brings all of us together.

THANK YOU to all of the kids who participated in the Christmas Program . You all did a fabulous job!

THANK YOU to everyone who helped with the Christmas Program. It was a fun time, and we enjoyed sharing Classic Christmas with all of you.

A HUGE SHOUT OUT to Alayna for helping find and make ornaments for Christmas Eve Service.

THANKS to everyone who has volunteered and is helping with Wednesday Nights on a regular basis and is also helping on Jenkins Nights.

Service Project Helpers Needed...

I am reaching out because we have a need for parents to help with a service project at Jenkins on the 1st Wednesday of each month. We are looking for parents to help take the kids and hang out with them while they are over at Jenkins.

While the kids are at Jenkins, the staff there help facilitate games/activities. Our adults are there to help monitor and assist as needed with our kids as they get to know the residents and play games with them.

Our group is at Jenkins from 6:15pm to 7:15pm. Please let me know if you would be interested in helping volunteer with our Jenkins service nights.

Lori Jurgens lori@watertownfirst.church

Children's Ministry—Looking Ahead

WEDNESDAYS

- **January 1—Happy New Year**
⇒ NO First Kids
- **January 8—Winter Kickoff**
⇒ Family Movie Night at the Church
- **January 15—Jenkins Night**
⇒ K-6th will visit Jenkins
- **January 22 & January 29**
⇒ Regular Program Nights

SUNDAYS

- **January 4 & 5—No Children's Church**
- **January 11 & 12—Children's Church Resumes**

HEADS UP—

- **Wednesday, February 12—NO First Kids**
⇒ Youth will be hosting their annual "A Night To Remember" fund raising meal

Wednesday Night Schedule

5:15-5:50 Community Meal

5:50-5:55 Round Up and Get Ready to Head to Classrooms

6:00-7:05 Cook Hall K-3 Grade
Room off Cook Hall 4-6 Grade

7:10-7:30 Worship in Fellowship Hall-
Families are welcome to come & join.

We continue to need volunteers for the Children's Church on weekends and in the nursery on weekends. Please reach out if you are interested in helping out with Children's Ministry.

Contact Lori Jurgens at
lori@watertownfirst.church
Or call the church office 605-886-4427
Thank you!

If you have any question about our Children's Ministry Program, please contact

Lori Jurgens lori@watertownfirst.church
or Sandy Middleton sandy@watertownfirst.church

FIRST YOUTH

Upcoming Events!

- January 1—No Youth Group—Happy New Year
- January 8—Winter Kickoff
- January 15—Confirmation Mentor Night
- January 25/26— Winter Connection in Fargo, ND
- February 5—Confirmation Mentor Night
- February 12—A Night to Remember Event
- February 21/22—Confirmation Camp

Summer Mission Trip Chicago, Illinois



Our youth mission trip participants are working hard on fundraising plans. The cost of our trip is \$600 per person and we have some creative opportunities coming up for those who would like to support our team going on the trip! Along with financial support, we ask that you join in praying for the members of our team and those we will partner with in Chicago. Thank you for all of your support!

First Youth Snapshot:

December was a fun month for the youth group. We discussed the story of the nativity and how many details are different from what we might think. The Clark UMC Youth Group joined us for these discussions. Our confirmands learned about Christmas traditions and the importance of the Christmas story to our faith. We closed the semester off with a Christmas party featuring cookie decorating and making Christmas cards for the residents at Jenkins and First Church residents at other assistant living centers. We also joined in caroling with the children and community members at Jenkins, Townview, and Maple Place. We are looking forward to what 2025 brings!

Please keep our mission team in your prayers:

- | | |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| Ava Fiebelkorn | Denver Jenner |
| Avery Anderson | Gracie Ries |
| Cady Weidner | Jason Kasperek |
| Caleb Clark | Justyn Jones |
| Camden Weidner | Tieson Jenner |
| Cortlyn Paulson | Bryce Blank |
| | Lori Jurgens |
| | Madison Weidner |

Winter Connection!

When: Friday, Jan. 25th and Saturday, Jan. 26th

Where: Fargo, North Dakota

What: Winter Connection is an opportunity for youth to gather, share, worship, and serve others!

Cost: \$40 per person

Register: **Each youth must register themselves on the Dakotas Conference website under Winter Connection.**



Youth Serving at the Community Christmas Concert

Register: To ensure the safety of our students as we start, please take a moment to fill out a registration form for each student. This must be done again each year. The form can be found on the website. www.watertownfirst.church/first-youth.

Children's Christmas Program at First Church. Thank you to all the kids. You did an amazing job! Thank you to the parents who shared your children with us on this glorious day!



Joseph & Mary:
Miles Fordham & Macy Ward

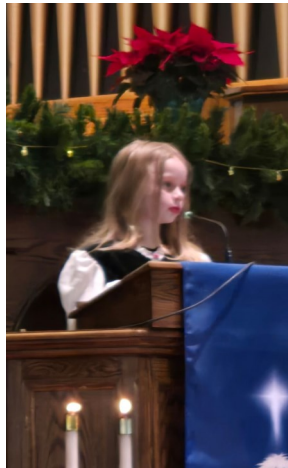


Wise Men:
Keagan Kasperek, Teddy McManus, Rylen Rosendahl

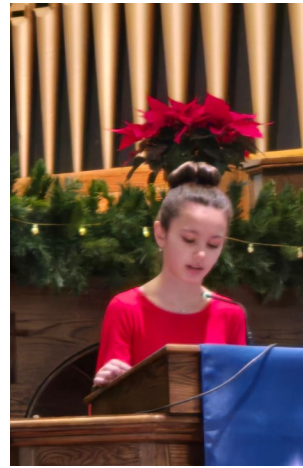


Shepherds:
Noah Weidenbach & Isaac Solum With Joseph (Miles Fordham)

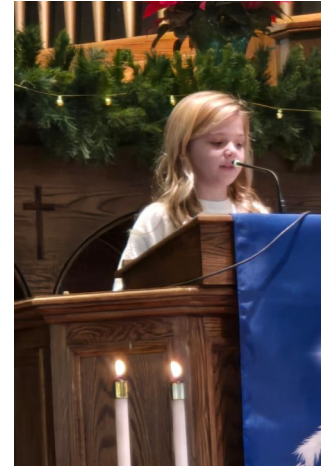
Some of the Christmas Program Narrators. They all did a fantastic job!



Eleanor McManus



Kaelee Ward



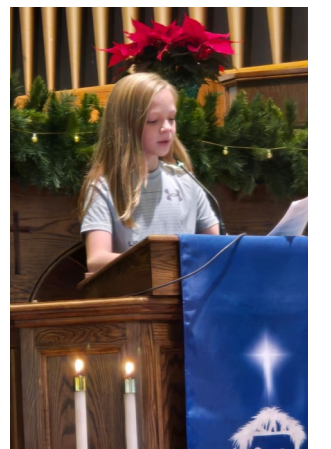
Libby Olerud



Sadie Arnold



Annie Olerud



Tyson Clark



Our prayers and deepest sympathy go out to:

Family and friends of Bernie Boadwine who passed away on December 10, 2024. He was Grandpa to Quinn & Sydney Boadwine who are in our First Kids Program here at First Church.

Family and friends of Kimberly “Kim” Dunbar who passed away on December 13, 2024. Kim was mother to Tony Norton.

Arlin Schumacher and other family and friends of Scott Brandenburger who passed away on December 21, 2024. Scott was a son-in-law of Arlin’s.

OUR CHURCH FAMILY IN ASSISTED LIVING OR NURSING HOMES

Edgewood Assisted Living 901 14th Ave NE—Watertown, SD 57201	Audrey Rhodes #416—Wes Larson #411 Bonnie Lien #105—Karen Ostrander #424 Karyl Wishard #415
HSC Spruce 1 PO Box 7600—Yankton, SD 57078	Ordean Stern
Jenkins Living Center 215 S. Maple—Watertown, SD 57201	Adelia Thorn #225 Lillian VanDykhurst #363 Alice Johnson #419
Stoney Brook Assisted Living 500 16th Ave NE—Watertown, SD 57201	Margie Gertsen #33—Betty Mohror #34 Jean Bevers #26—Janice Pavli #49 Dorothy Irwin #59
The Village of Harmony Hill 2533 Prairie Park Trail SE—Watertown SD 57201	Wayne Leiner #211
Wilmot Care Center 501 4th St—Wilmot SD 57279	LaVonne Nelson
Roetell Senior Housing 108 S Smith—Clark SD 57225	Marilyn Vogt #4

Watertown Memory Care Support Group (formerly the Alzheimer’s Support Group)

January 8, 2025 (Note Date Change)
“Dementia Updates” by Aaron Shives, MD, Prairie Lakes Brown Clinic

February 5, 2025
“Financial Planning for Long Term Care” by a Representative of VRS P.C.

PLEASE NOTE: *The Watertown Memory Care Support Group continues to meet at the Watertown Event Center for their meetings. Please enter through the Event Center doors. Thank you! We meet the first Wednesday of each month at 7:00pm. For more information contact Connie Lake at cl.memory.group@gmail.com.*



Birthday	Happy Birthday To...
2-Jan	Heidi Hartford
2-Jan	Joanne Singrey-Johnson
2-Jan	Aidyn Melville
3-Jan	Jerry Miller
3-Jan	Bradley Hanson
4-Jan	Marissa Willett
6-Jan	Averie Halajian
7-Jan	Nancy Titze
7-Jan	Kensley Bingen
8-Jan	Brandy Fenenga
8-Jan	Tom LaFramboise
8-Jan	Kaleb Boughton
9-Jan	Doug Waldner
9-Jan	Clara Wight
9-Jan	Joshua Barr
10-Jan	Connie Lake
11-Jan	Kara Heagel
11-Jan	Wayne Becking
12-Jan	Avarie Soupir
13-Jan	Brenda Jongbloed
13-Jan	Matthew Leadabrand
14-Jan	Harper Koistinen
15-Jan	Jeremiah Leadabrand
15-Jan	Katie Leadabrand
15-Jan	Beth Luckhurst
15-Jan	Jackson Kahre
16-Jan	Marianne DeLong
17-Jan	Avery Anderson
17-Jan	Beau Anderson
17-Jan	Jamie DeBoer
17-Jan	Izzibella-Marie Willett
20-Jan	Sandee Prouty-Cole
20-Jan	Catherine Leadabrand
21-Jan	Zachary Foust
21-Jan	Lillian Fox
21-Jan	Grace Jurgens
22-Jan	Roberta LaFramboise

Birthday	Happy Birthday To...
23-Jan	Sarah Caron
23-Jan	Wayne Wegner
23-Jan	Katherine Mielitz
23-Jan	William (Bill) Hoffman
23-Jan	Jonathan LaFramboise Boettcher
24-Jan	Tieson Jenner
24-Jan	Dorothy Peterson
25-Jan	Jacque Johnson
25-Jan	Kris Edwards
26-Jan	Donald Riley
27-Jan	Buddy LaFramboise
27-Jan	Ernest Wight
27-Jan	Weston Mayer
28-Jan	Ronald Aker
28-Jan	Larry Schnoor
28-Jan	Dorothy Schurrer
28-Jan	Lydia Buckley
28-Jan	Carla Willett
29-Jan	Briana McElhany
30-Jan	Clark Hanson
31-Jan	Cadence Weidner
31-Jan	Harley Stavick
31-Jan	Daxxyn Larson



Anniversary	Happy Anniverary To...
2-Jan	Chad & Kim Miller
18-Jan	Randy & Sandy Middleton
25-Jan	Fred & Carolyn Wilkens
27-Jan	Chad & Brooke Hanson

First United Methodist Church
P.O. Box 1416
Watertown, SD 57201**RETURNED SERVICE REQUESTED**

January 2025

FIRST NEWS

MEET THE STAFF**Senior Pastor**

Rev. Sara McManus

Associate Pastor

Rev. Bryce Blank

Office Manager

Pearl Geffre

On-Call Pastor

Rev. Elmer Brinkman

Children's Ministry**Coordinators**

Sandy Middleton

Lori Jurgens

Director of Worship &**Discipleship**

Alayna Nelson

Nursery Care

Meaghan Wharton

Organists

Blair Titze

Lesa Dahl

Bell Choir Director

Rena Mack

Music & Chancel**Choir Director**

Blair Titze

Custodian

Beth Schutt

Wedding Coordinator

Kathy Mielitz

Worship Hours

Saturdays at 5:00 pm—Contemporary Worship

Sunday at 8:30 am—Traditional Worship

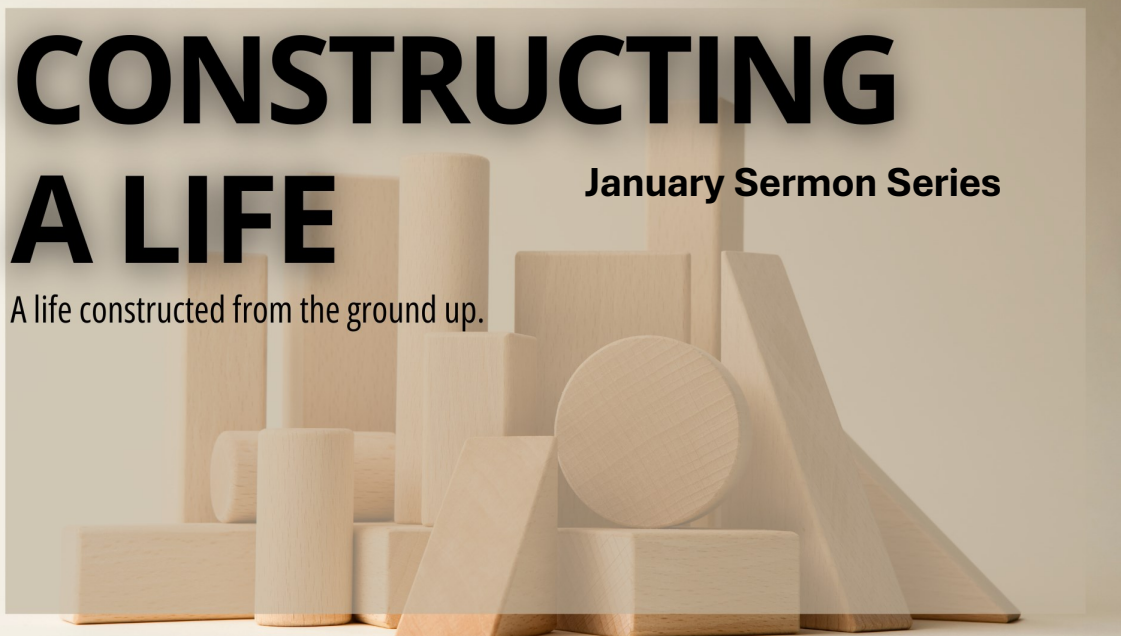
Sunday at 10:00 am—Blended Worship

CONSTRUCTING

A LIFE

January Sermon Series

A life constructed from the ground up.



FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH • 4 2ND AVE SE • PO BOX 1416 • WATERTOWN, SD 57201 • 605-886-4427

office@watertownfirst.church • www.watertownfirst.church<https://www.facebook.com/watertownfirstumc>