



First United Methodist Church Faith & Fellowship Newsletter May - June 2026



Have you heard the latest dirt?

People are plotting something BIG. Seven plots, to be exact, filled with squash, tomatoes, and leafy greens. And every Wednesday in May and June from 6:30–8:30 pm, we want you to be part of the cover-up crew. Seeds don't grow themselves, they're buried, hidden, covered. What looks like ordinary gardening is actually an underground effort to support our community. It won't stay buried for long, eventually it all comes to the surface.

Even if you can't help with the big cover-up on Wednesdays, we have an offer you can't refuse. You can finance the dirty work. \$50 pays off a whole plot, \$5 covers a row, \$1 buries a hill. All of the dirty money that you fork over will be funneled straight into this seedy undertaking. Seeds ain't the only thing that needs financing, there are plants and fertilizer, and somebody has to pay off the city for the water.

No backroom meetings. No paperwork. Just show up, start digging, and see how much you can bury. It's efficient. Almost too efficient.

And when the product is ripe, we are prepared to deliver the goods. Quietly. Systematically. From those seven plots out into the community, reaching neighbors through a distribution ring of local hunger ministries. Distribution is part of the design.

Come get your hands dirty, or provide a little something to grease the wheels. You might even want to do both. The sense of satisfaction in working together and helping our neighbors will absolutely make it worth your while.

Some people will say it's just a garden. But others will notice the pattern. The plots. The digging. The cover-ups.

The whole thing is organized! We can bury it all for now, but it's going to grow into something bigger. Hopefully we don't have a mole, but there is definitely a plant that's going to get whacked.

You can't ignore it. The roots run too deep.

COME AND BE PART OF THE DIRTY WORK!

Communitygarden@norfolkumc.org

[Facebook.com/CommunityGardenNorfolkNebraska](https://www.facebook.com/CommunityGardenNorfolkNebraska)



Celley - a.k.a. "The Stalker"

TUESDAY AT 5:30 PM EVERYBODY Eats

Free Meals to Go!

Late in 2025, Dalene and Erin Johnson came to the church seeking permission to start a hunger ministry. Since that time, the Mission/Evangelism Committee has joined in the effort, serving free hot meals to those in need every Tuesday night through our Everybody Eats program.

A ministry that began by serving approximately 20 individuals has now grown to serving over 50 people each week. These families are incredibly grateful, as many do not always have access to a nutritious, hot meal due to financial challenges or other circumstances. Children may receive meals during the school year, but the upcoming summer months can leave a gap. Even if the school district provides meals during the break, transportation to the school can present a challenge.

Please consider helping provide community members with one fresh, healthy meal each week.

A portion of the Christmas Eve offering has helped cover food costs, but we are in need of additional support.

You can help by:

- Donating fresh fruit
- Preparing a hot meal
- Assisting with serving on Tuesday evenings

If you feel called to support this important ministry in any way, please contact Marilyn at mkudera1682@gmail.com or contact the church office at 402-371-2785.

Thank you for helping us care for our community. The families we serve are truly grateful.

Let's face it, EVERYBODY EATS, but only if food is available.

CONFIRMATION



We are excited to welcome our newest members. Khloe McKenna Todd, Serenity Colwell Clemens, Brayden Richard Brandt, and Amelia Irene Wragge.



Once again, we will be host the Pancake Feed and Bake Sale. Proceeds from pancakes support a variety of outreach and mission projects while the bake sale will be used by our United Women in Faith.

We will be looking for volunteers to set up, prepare and serve pancakes, donate baked goods, supervise sales and donations as well as clean up. Please be prepared to sign up when the clipboards are circulated.

We are also sharing a parade float with the Westridge congregation to promote our shared Vacation Bible School.

Give Twice for One Price



Do you need a gift for Mother's Day, Father's Day, a graduation, a wedding, or a birthday? Scrip Cards make gift giving easy and help the church at the same time.

Scrip Cards are available for most national chains and many local establishments. We keep the most popular cards on hand for immediate sale, and with advance notice we can order cards for almost anything.

When you buy a gift card through Scrip, you pay the regular price, your recipient gets a gift they can use, and the church receives a commission at no additional cost to you. It is a simple way to give twice with one purchase. You can also use Scrip Cards for your everyday essentials.

The church share of a Scrip purchase varies by merchant. For example a \$100 Hy-Vee or Lou's card nets \$3.00; while a \$25 card to Franklin's Bistro or Culver's equals \$2.50. These commissions are admittedly small, but when they are multiplied by additional church members purchasing additional cards they allow us to do big things.

Scrip proceeds help meet special needs at the church, and they will soon be used toward a major maintenance project scheduled for this spring and summer.

The purchase of gift cards is not tax deductible. However, donations made to the Scrip program will be included on your giving statement.

Thank you for your ongoing support, and new participants are always welcome. For more information, contact Dixie at 402-371-8826.

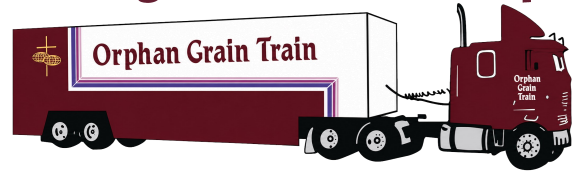
GRADUATION RECEPTION

MAY 10

9:30 AM

FELLOWSHIP HALL

Sorting Clothes at 1:00 pm



Friday, May 29, June 19 & June 26

So, what exactly do we do when we volunteer at Orphan Grain Train? You guessed it, we sort clothes. Glamorous? Not really. Important? Absolutely.

Orphan Grain Train receives a tremendous volume of donated clothing, but not every item is immediately usable. Some clothes are clean, wearable, and ready to go. Some need to be washed. Some need minor repairs, such as missing buttons, holes, broken zippers, or loose hems. Some have reached the end of the road and cannot be used. Some are brand new and still have tags or labels that need to be removed.

As a general rule, we should only donate clothing if we would feel comfortable having a friend or family member wear it. That does not mean everything has to be perfect, but it does mean donations should be clean, usable, and respectful of the person who may receive them.

After the unusable items are removed and the clothing that needs extra attention has been sorted accordingly, the wearable clothing is sorted by category and season. Some items are made available to people here in the Norfolk community. Others are packed into boxes and sent wherever there is need.

Most of the sorting is standing work, but packing clothes into boxes can often be done while seated. There is always plenty to do, so even volunteering for a short time helps. The sorting happens every day from 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM, and people are welcome to drop in and help.

Our church has set aside the last two Fridays of each month at 1:00 PM as a time when we can volunteer together. But keep in mind that we all have busy lives, so there is always a chance there might not be others from our church when you arrive. Either way, Orphan Grain Train will have work for you to do, and it will make a difference.



Westridge United Methodist Church will welcome a new pastor in July. Pastor Juliet Chirowa is a native of Zimbabwe and will graduate in May from Garrett-Evangelical Seminary in Chicago. Presently, she has no household items. Our pastors are helping furnish the parsonage precisely because she is not our pastor. We hope to welcome her to Nebraska while avoiding any unintended awkwardness connected to the furnishings.

Juliet is married with children and she hopes for her family to join her when immigration policy allows. All donated items will become hers, with the encouragement to "pay it forward." If she does not need or can no longer use an item, she may donate it to charity if its condition permits.

Please let our pastors know if you have an item to share. Donations will not be needed until approximately July 1.

Mercy Meals

June 15 at 6:00 PM

Mercy Meals is a simple, fast-paced service opportunity for all ages. Kids, youth, parents, grandparents, and church members of every generation can work side by side to make a real difference. Together, we will pack meals that will be sent overseas to help feed people in need. The work is hands-on, easy to learn, and meaningful. It is the kind of service where everyone can help, and every packed meal matters.

Why come? Families can serve together. Kids and youth can practice compassion in action. Adults and grandparents can model faith through service. The work moves quickly, keeps everyone involved, and makes a global impact right here in our community.

Come be part of something bigger than ourselves. A little time, a willing heart, and a few busy hands can help send food and hope across the world.



Summer is coming, and so are ball games, vacations, lake weekends, family visits, and all the other good things that make summer full.

Automated giving is a simple way to keep your generosity steady, even when your schedule is not. Once it is set up, you do not have to remember a check, find an envelope, or catch up after being gone. Your giving continues automatically, and the church can count on steady support for ministry, mission, staff, utilities, building care, and all the work we share together.

It is easy for the giver and helpful for the church. Who doesn't love a win-win, like finding an open pew on Christmas Eve, and it is a good one in the back?

There are two easy ways to set up automatic giving:

You may contact the church office at 402-371-2785, and we can help set up an automatic withdrawal.

Or, use the our mailing address with your bank's bill pay option.

First United Methodist Church
406 West Phillip Avenue
Norfolk, Nebraska 68701

Summer is a season of movement, rest, travel, and renewal. Automated giving helps keep ministry moving too. It is one small step that makes a steady difference.



Structural Maintenance

You may have noticed workers on lifts conducting necessary repairs near the front entrance of the church building. Some pieces of the facade have deteriorated and could fall, posing a safety risk.

About five years ago, we addressed a serious water leak in the steeple, sealed and tuckpointed a large portion of the building, and replaced the worst pieces of the cornice. Because of budget constraints, elements that were still serviceable were repaired and left in place. Now we have additional cracking, chipping, and breaking, creating a hazard zone in an area where people gather in front of the church following weddings and funerals. Due to safety concerns, the trustees and finance committees agreed the repairs could not wait.

We know that the church is not the building. The church is the people, the mission, the worship, the service, the welcome, and the love of Christ lived out in the world. But this building does matter. It is where we gather. It is where babies are baptized and children learn they are loved by God. It is where prayers are spoken, songs are sung, meals are shared, grief is carried, hope is renewed, and people find a place to belong. For generations, this building has been a center for ministry. Maintaining it is not about preserving brick and stone for their own sake. It is about caring for a place where people care for the community.

This project requires about \$35,000 beyond what the annual maintenance budget can cover. We were only able to move forward because our operating and building reserves could serve as a backstop. That is why reserves matter. They allow us to respond quickly when something urgent arises. Now we need to replenish those reserves so we are ready for the next need, opportunity, and season of ministry.

We are asking everyone to prayerfully consider an additional gift to the building fund, above regular giving. Redirecting gifts from the operating fund to the building fund does not help in this case. Funding our budget remains essential for our ongoing mission and ministry, including the first portion of these repairs that comes from the budget.

This is one of those moments when the whole congregation comes together. Some will be able to make a major gift. Others may give a smaller amount that represents just as much faithfulness and sacrifice. The goal is not equal giving. The goal is shared commitment.

Together we can do this. We can care for the building without confusing it for the church. We can maintain what has been entrusted to us without losing sight of the mission it serves. We can meet this need, strengthen our reserves, and continue making room for worship, welcome, service, and grace.

Please help in any way you can.

KID MIN

Children's Sunday School "In the Garden" May 3

The Sunday School classes are heading outdoors, weather permitting. Both classes will learn about God's creation while planting and exploring together. The kids will be digging, planting, and getting a little messy, so please dress accordingly.

If it rains, we will garden indoors.

Children's Sunday School Last Day May 10

What a joyful and faith-filled year it has been in Sunday School. From the very first day to our final lessons, our children have been growing in faith, friendship, and love for God in so many meaningful ways. Thank you to everyone who helped make this year possible.

Pure Joy and God Squad at The Meadows 5:30 PM, May 6

Our Pure Joy and God Squad kids will share some love with residents at The Meadows by delivering May Day flowers, including handmade LEGO creations.

It will be a simple, joyful way to brighten the day and share kindness with our neighbors.

Pure Joy, God Squad, and Youth End-of-Year Picnic at Central Park 5:00 to 7:00 PM, May 13

All kids and youth are invited for a fun evening of food, games, and celebration. Drop off anytime after 5:00 PM. Food arrives at 6:00 PM. We plan to meet in the southwest corner of the park, if available. Bring a blanket if you would like.

Pick-up is at 7:00 PM.

Please RSVP so we can plan food: Amanda at 402-841-8840 or Tammy at 402-750-7722.

Vacation Bible School July 19 to 23 5:30 PM Meal / 6:00 PM VBS

Get ready for an unforgettable adventure at Snowball Mountain Challenge VBS 2026. Kids will become "Challengers" in a winter-themed experience full of games, surprises, and powerful lessons about faith and resilience. Led by an energetic Activities Director and Ollie the Arctic Seal, kids will explore stories of courage and hope while learning: "I can do all things through him who strengthens me." Philippians 4:13 This mountaintop experience will be packed with laughter, learning, and lasting faith. We are excited to partner with Westridge UMC for this special week.

Congratulations Lola Conway!

She received the Kiwanis Church Youth Recognition for 2026.

The Youth group donated items and packed 12 bags for children in local foster care.

They also chose favorite bible verses and made collages.

Our last meeting will be a picnic on May 13th at Central Park.

We will get together in June to play pickleball.


Youth



First United Methodist Church

May - June 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
26 Children's Sabbath 8:30 AM Worship Service - Sanctuary 9:45 AM Kid's Sunday School -Floor 2 9:45 AM Retirees and Wannabes Adult Sunday School - Room 110 11:00 AM Worship Service -Sanctuary / Online	4/27 2:00 PM Beatitudes Study - Room 110 6:00 PM Beatitudes Study - Online 6:00 PM Finance - Fellowship Hall 7:00 PM Ad. Council - Fellowship Hall 7:00 PM Troop 122 - Wesley Hall	4/28 1:00 PM Staff - Room 110 5:30 PM Everybody Eats - West Entry 6:30 PM Open Door - Fellowship Hall	4/29 5:30 PM God Squad Pure Joy - Room 201 6:30 PM Youth - Fellowship Hall	4/30 6:45 AM Early Risers for Christ - Wesley Hall	5/1	5/2
5/3 8:30 AM Worship Service - Sanctuary 9:45 AM Kid's Sunday School -Floor 2 9:45 AM Retirees and Wannabes Adult Sunday School - Room 110 11:00 AM Worship Service -Sanctuary / Online 12:00 PM Wesley Hall reserved	5/4 2:00 PM Beatitudes Study - Room 110 6:00 PM Beatitudes Study - Online 7:00 PM Staff Parish - Room 110 7:00 PM Troop 122 - Wesley Hall	5/5 1:00 PM Staff - Room 110 5:30 PM Everybody Eats - West Entry 5:45 PM Trustees - Room 110 6:30 PM Open Door - Fellowship Hall	5/6 5:30 PM God Squad Pure Joy - Room 201 6:30 PM Youth - Fellowship Hall 6:30 PM Community Garden Blessing & Planting Night	5/7 6:45 AM Early Risers for Christ - Wesley Hall	5/8 Wesley Hall reserved	5/9 Wesley Hall Reserved
5/10 Mother's Day / Graduation 8:30 AM Worship Service - Sanctuary 9:30 AM Graduate Reception - Fellowship Hall 9:45 AM Kid's Sunday School -Floor 2 9:45 AM Retirees and Wannabes Adult Sunday School - Room 110 11:00 AM Worship Service -Sanctuary / Online	5/11 1:30 PM UWF - Wesley Hall 6:30 PM Children & Youth Team - Fellowship Hall 7:00 PM Troop 122 - Wesley Hall	5/12 1:00 PM Staff - Room 110 5:30 PM Everybody Eats - West Entry 6:30 PM Open Door - Fellowship Hall	5/13 5:30 PM God Squad, Pure Joy, & Youth Picnic - Central Park 6:30 PM Community Garden	5/14 6:45 AM Early Risers for Christ - Wesley Hall	5/15	5/16 Wesley Hall reserved
5/17 8:30 AM Worship Service - Sanctuary 9:45 AM Retirees and Wannabes Adult Sunday School - Room 110 11:00 AM Worship Service -Sanctuary / Online	5/18 4:00 PM Stephen Ministry - Room 110 7:00 PM Troop 122 - Wesley Hall	5/19 1:00 PM Staff - Room 110 5:30 PM Everybody Eats - West Entry 6:30 PM Open Door - Fellowship Hall	5/20 6:30 PM Community Garden	5/21 6:45 AM Early Risers for Christ - Wesley Hall 10:00 AM - Bel Air 11:00 AM - St Joe 5:15 PM Mission/ Evangelism - Room 110	5/22	5/23
5/24 8:30 AM Worship Service - Sanctuary 9:45 AM Retirees and Wannabes Adult Sunday School - Room 110 11:00 AM Worship Service -Sanctuary / Online	5/25 Memorial Day Church Building Closed	5/26 10:00 AM Farm & Ranch Clinic - Room 110 1:00 PM Staff - Room 110 5:30 PM Everybody Eats - West Entry 6:30 PM Open Door - Fellowship Hall	5/27 Annual Conference 6:30 PM Community Garden	5/28 Annual Conference 6:45 AM Early Risers for Christ - Wesley Hall	5/29 Annual Conference 1:00 PM Mission - Orphan Grain Train	5/30 Annual Conference
5/31 8:30 AM Worship Service - Sanctuary 9:45 AM Retirees and Wannabes Adult Sunday School - Room 110 11:00 AM Worship Service -Sanctuary / Online	6/1 7:00 PM Troop 122 - Wesley Hall	6/2 1:00 PM Staff - Room 110 5:30 PM Everybody Eats - West Entry 6:00 PM Reserved - Wesley Hall 6:30 PM Open Door - Fellowship Hall 7:00 PM Trustees - Room 110	6/3 6:00 PM Reserved - Wesley Hall 6:30 PM Community Garden	6/4 6:45 AM Early Risers for Christ - Wesley Hall	6/5	6/6
6/7 8:30 AM Worship Service - Sanctuary 9:45 AM Retirees and Wannabes Adult Sunday School - Room 110 11:00 AM Worship Service -Sanctuary / Online	6/8 7:00 PM Troop 122 - Wesley Hall	6/9 1:00 PM Staff - Room 110 5:30 PM Everybody Eats - West Entry 6:30 PM Open Door - Fellowship Hall	6/10 6:30 PM Community Garden	6/11 6:45 AM Early Risers for Christ - Wesley Hall	6/12	6/13
6/14 8:30 AM Worship Service - Sanctuary 9:45 AM Retirees and Wannabes Adult Sunday School - Room 110 11:00 AM Worship Service -Sanctuary / Online 12:00 PM Ice Cream Social - Wesley Hall	6/15 4:00 PM Stephen Ministry - Room 110 4:00 PM Mercy Meals 7:00 PM Troop 122 - Wesley Hall	6/16 1:00 PM Staff - Room 110 5:30 PM Everybody Eats - West Entry 6:30 PM Open Door - Fellowship Hall	6/17 6:30 PM Community Garden	6/18 6:45 AM Early Risers for Christ - Wesley Hall 10:00 AM - Bel Air 11:00 AM - St Joe 5:15 PM Mission/ Evangelism - Room 110	6/19 Newsletter Deadline 1:00 PM Mission - Orphan Grain Train	6/20
6/21 8:30 AM Worship Service - Sanctuary 9:45 AM Retirees and Wannabes Adult Sunday School - Room 110 11:00 AM Worship Service -Sanctuary / Online	6/22 6:00 PM Finance - Fellowship Hall 7:00 PM Ad. Council - Fellowship Hall 7:00 PM Troop 122 - Wesley Hall	6/23 1:00 PM Staff - Room 110 5:30 PM Everybody Eats - West Entry 6:30 PM Open Door - Fellowship Hall	6/24 6:30 PM Community Garden	6/25 6:45 AM Early Risers for Christ - Wesley Hall	6/26 1:00 PM Mission - Orphan Grain Train	6/27
6/28 8:30 AM Worship Service - Sanctuary 9:45 AM Retirees and Wannabes Adult Sunday School - Room 110 11:00 AM Worship Service -Sanctuary / Online	6/29 7:00 PM Troop 122 - Wesley Hall	6/30 1:00 PM Staff - Room 110 5:30 PM Everybody Eats - West Entry 6:30 PM Open Door - Fellowship Hall	7/1 6:30 PM Community Garden	7/2 6:45 AM Early Risers for Christ - Wesley Hall	7/3	7/4 July 4th Pancake Feed & Bake Sale


First United Methodist Church
 406 West Phillip Ave.
 Norfolk, NE 68701-5250

Love God
 Love People
 Make a Difference
 Make Disciples

Non-Profit Organization
 US Postage
 PAID
 Permit 204
 Norfolk, NE 68701



WORK NIGHTS
EVERY WEDNESDAY AT 6:30

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL
 July 19-23
 5:30 PM Meal
 6:00 PM VBS



LAST DAY MAY 13



Children's Sunday School
 9:45 AM
 Last Day May 10




SNOWBALL MOUNTAIN CHALLENGE
 FIND YOUR STRENGTH IN GOD



PURE JOY
 Last Day May 13
 Wednesday at 5:30 PM

PANCAKE FEED & BAKE SALE
 7:30 AM - 1:00 PM

PROCEEDS SUPPORT MISSION & OUTREACH
JULY 4
 CALL THE CHURCH OFFICE TO VOLUNTEER


Youth Group
Last Day
May 13
Grades 7-12
6:30 PM Wednesday