



LOVE FIRST

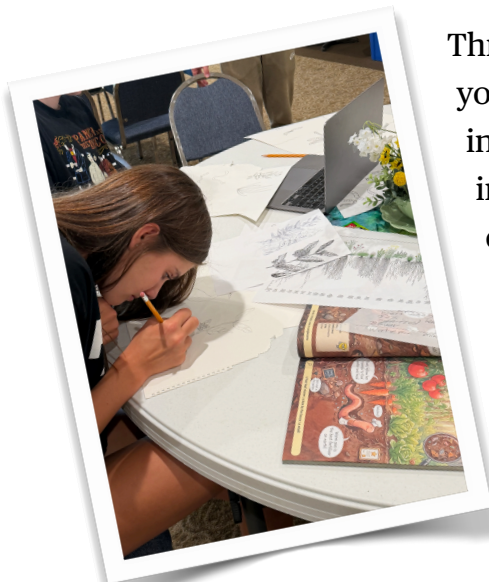
lovefirstumc.org

August 2026 NEWSLETTER

Many adults and youth are working side by side to create **three evenings of Eco Experiences** filled with discovery, creativity, and connection for all ages!

Each night invites us to explore a different part of the natural world:

- **Monday, August 17: Heart** - Discover what it means to love the earth and deepen our kinship with the land.
- **Tuesday, August 18: Cranes** - Meet the oldest and tallest residents of our prairie as we learn about the remarkable sandhill cranes that call our property home.
- **Wednesday, August 19: Roots** - Journey beneath the surface to uncover the hidden rhythms that nourish life and remind us that strong communities, like healthy prairies, are rooted in connection.



Throughout August Eco Experiences, you'll enjoy hands-on activities including drum making, crane-inspired art, prairie exploration, nature crafts, storytelling, and a joyful community drum circle to bring our time together to a close.

Whether you're 5 or 95, come experience the beauty of our prairie, make new friends, and discover the wonder waiting just outside our doors!

Register: lovefirstumc.org/camp or the QR code

Love First United Methodist Church - Sartell

Eco Experiences

For all ages
August 17, 18 & 19
5pm-8pm
1107 Pine Cone Rd. S Sartell
Dinner provided each night!

Come Learn!
Come Explore!
Come Play!

Register Today lovefirstumc.org



In the middle of July my family and I were 30 minutes north of Ely on the Echo Trail enjoying Burntside Lake. It's a beautiful spot with a



Coyote Contest: Jim & our still un-named friend a staring contest. Submit photos & name suggestions!

beautiful camp and we enjoyed the warm weather, the dips in the lake, the paddles and hikes and songs that we sang. Two days later, after we were home, we heard that the fires had doubled. The air turned red, the skies were black, and the pictures looked apocalyptic. Of course the air here in Sartell wasn't great either. And I found myself feeling almost guilty that we got to be up there during a beautiful week and enjoy the edge of the boundary waters as it was – instead of as it will be. When I find myself in those moments, I try to catch myself. I breathe deeply, and I try to switch the guilt, which has nothing to do with me, into gratitude for the time we had and a determination to continue to work to care for this earth. It can be overwhelming as we see all of the natural disasters made worse by climate change, so we throw up our hands. And yet, God continues to call us to be stewards; to be caretakers; to be partners with God's creation for the health and wholeness of the whole earth. In August we'll have our ECO Experiences / ECO Camp on the 17th, 18th, and 19th with an outdoor worship service the following Sunday. We will explore this land; we will learn about the animals here; we will delight in God's creation and the ways God brings healing and joy when we are together with nature in play and thanksgiving. It is way more than three evenings of activities. We are building relationships with each other, with God, and with the earth so that we can continue to work for a healthier future together. I hope you will participate, lead, and/or delight with us in August!

Pastor Leah

lrosso@fumcscr.org



Join in the gift economy at Love First!

Do you have extra?

Do you have a need?

Check out the Gifting Wall!

AVAILABLE NOW:

- plantings & flower pots
- books
- veggies

LOOKING FOR: -example

- kayak lessons



AUGUST WORSHIP SCHEDULE



SUNDAYS

9:30AM AT FUMC

Livestream available: lovefirstumc.org

AUGUST 2ND

Holy Communion
Matthew 14:13-21

AUGUST 9TH

Outdoor Worship: Blessing of Animals
Psalm 18

AUGUST 11TH

LABYRINTH WORSHIP
at 7:00PM

AUGUST 16TH

Something for Every Body series
Matthew 20:1-16

AUGUST 23RD

Outdoor Worship
Matthew 18:21-22

AUGUST 30TH

Something for Every Body continues
Matthew 18:15-20

SEPTEMBER 6TH

Something for Every Body continues
Matthew 15:21-28

Did you miss a Sunday or would you like to see your favorite sermon again?
We have an ARCHIVE of videos available: lovefirstumc.org/archive

Be A Voter!

The first opportunity to ***Be a Voter*** is the August 11 Primary Election. Voters in the Primary select which candidates advance to the November Election. Voting in the Primary increases the likelihood that your preferred candidates will appear on the ballot in November.



On the ***Secretary of State's*** website sos.mn.gov under the heading ***Elections & Voting***, are all the resources needed to register to vote, check your voter registration, update your registration if you have moved or changed your name since the last election, find your polling place, request an absentee ballot, track your absentee ballot, see who is on your ballot, etc.

In Minnesota we have voting options. Voting in person on August 11th, requesting and voting via an Absentee Ballot (must be received by August 11th), In-Person Absentee Voting started June 26, and Early (in-person) Voting started July 24th. Both In-Person Absentee and Early Voting are available at the Benton or Sherburne County Government Centers and in Stearns County at the Stearns County Service Center. Other locations are St Cloud and Elk River City Halls. In Stearns County, starting August 4, additional sites for voting open up. Check sos.mn.gov for locations and hours.

When voting In Person Absentee your ballot will be sealed in an absentee ballot envelope and counted during the absentee ballot counting process. Early Voting allows you to put your completed ballot into a tabulation machine just as you would on Election Day.

Create your voting plan now. Be a Voter.

Adam at Annual Conference in June.



CLOTHING DONATIONS NEEDED

FOR ST. CLOUD PRIDE IN THE PARK CLOTHING EXCHANGE

DROP OFF YOUR DONATIONS

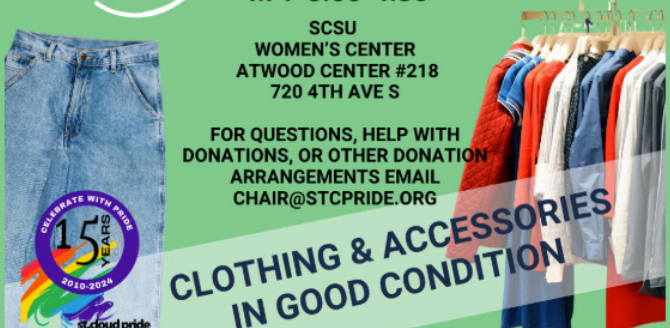
NOW-SEPT. 11

M-F 8:00-4:30

SCSU
WOMEN'S CENTER
ATWOOD CENTER #218
720 4TH AVE S

FOR QUESTIONS, HELP WITH DONATIONS, OR OTHER DONATION ARRANGEMENTS EMAIL CHAIR@STCPRIDE.ORG

CLOTHING & ACCESSORIES IN GOOD CONDITION



Third Year for the Ruth Family Serving Third Saturday Community Meal!

This was the third year Janet & Andy Ruth and family have done the July Third Saturday meal as a family service project in honor of Janet's birthday. They served 92 meals including 36 take out meals. Thank you Ruth family: Leslie, Andy, Nadia, Britta, Miles, Tom, Trish, Lilly, Dan, Wilhem, Sim, Weston, Janet & Andy! See their photos below with their Janet tattoos!

Our meal count has been less during the summer. We are serving about 100 meals unlike the 120-150 we had last winter. Please consider volunteering for our 3rd Saturday Meal. Use the OR or email below.

Questions? kitchen@fumcscr.org

Signup QR



Donation QR



NAMI MENTAL HEALTH WALK

September 12th

Wilson Park, St. Cloud

Check in beginning at 9 a.m.

Walk begins at 10:00 a.m.

Walk with us to support those whose lives have been impacted by mental illness. Bring your stories of loved ones to share. Walk with us to bring awareness to the need for mental health funding and legislation and to support NAMI in providing invaluable services and life-changing programs and comprehensive education.



On the 3rd Saturday each month FUMC serves a free meal to anyone who stops by. **Come eat the next meal on August 15th.**

The August menu is: brats/hot dogs, pasta salad, carrot sticks & dip, dessert bars

Other Community Meal locations & times:

- 📍 Place of Hope (511 9th Ave N) serves 7:30am, 12:30pm and 5:30pm each day.
- 📍 Salvation Army (400 Hwy 10 S) serves Monday-Friday from 11:30am–12:45pm
- 📍 Salem Lutheran (90 Riverside Dr SE) serves the 1st Saturday each month from 11:30am–1pm
- 📍 Newman Center (396 1st Ave S) serves the 2nd Saturday each month from 11:30am–12:45pm
- 📍 Bethlehem Lutheran (4310 CR 137) serves the 4th & 5th Saturday each month from 11:30am-12:45pm
- 📍 St. Augustine's (443 2nd St SE) serves the 3rd Sunday each month from noon–1pm.
- 📍 St. Mary's Cathedral (823 1st S S) serves the last Sunday each month 4:30-5:30pm



Join the Conversation: Children's Council Meeting

Whether you have a passion for direct volunteering, a heart for strategic planning, or just a deep love for the children of Love First, **you are invited** to our meeting.

- **When:** Sunday, August 9
- **Where:** Church Library
- **Who:** Anyone and everyone!

All are welcome to come, listen, and learn more.



Celebrating Amanda

Sunday, August 23rd we will be honoring Amanda during and after worship.

**CARD BASKET
OF BLESSINGS
FOR AMANDA**
DROP YOUR CARDS / NOTES



TO BE GIVEN TO HER
ON SUN AUGUST 23

During this month, please drop a note or card in the basket near the ConneXion table. Cards are available for you to write a message. We will give her all your messages on Sunday, August 23.



High School Ice Cream Social

Join our Play Date Meet Ups!

(Monthly meet ups for families, variety of locations and activities)

August 8th at 9:00am

Playtime and a craft for kids at

Watab Creek Park in Sartell

7 Riverside Ave N

Rain location FUMC

All ages welcome,
current ages 0-6 years.

**Contact Caitlin
for more info:**

playdate@fumcscr.org





Help us make some noise!

Before you recycle those empty coffee cans and ice cream buckets, consider giving them one more adventure!

We're collecting **clean, empty coffee cans (with lids if you have them)** and ice cream buckets to transform into homemade drums for children's programs and community events. Today's coffee can could become tomorrow's rhythm, laughter, and joyful music.

Drop your donations off in the church nursery anytime. Thanks for helping us turn everyday items into extraordinary experiences!

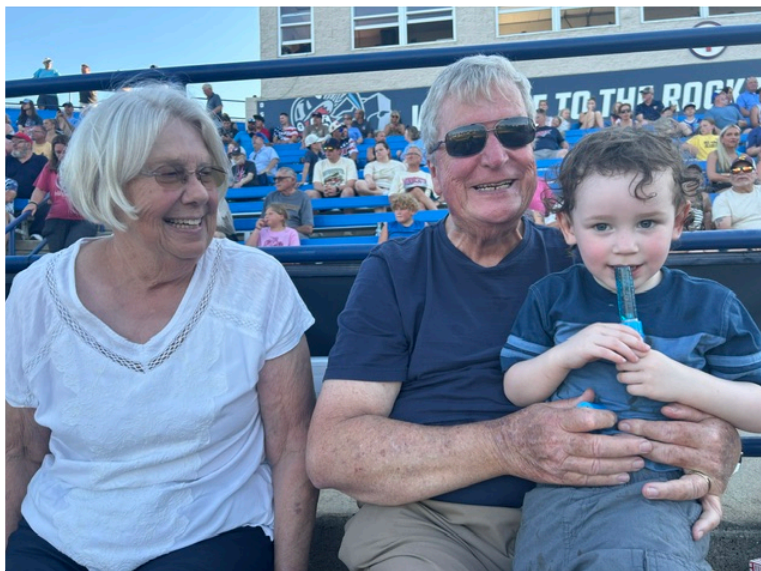
Eco Camp 2025 Memories - Join us this year for more Eco Experience fun!





**BIG QUESTIONS.
NO ANSWERS**
Monday, August 10
10am church library

**How important
is curiosity
to faith?**



**Fellowship Footsteps
Walking Club**

August 8th & 22nd at 5pm
Sartell Community Center
Meet in the parking lot to walk around the lake.
Questions? Email Joshua at walking@fumcsr.org



*The United Methodist
Men's group had a
night out together at
a Rox game!*

*Seems like the
youngest attendee
had a night of treats
too. 🍷*

PLANT & PRAIRIE WORKDAY: AUGUST 15TH
Trimming & pruning trees/shrubs, mulching, fertilizing, weeding.

Work anytime from 9am until noon. Bring your work glove and hand tools for weeding & digging. Then all are welcome to stay for lunch at the FREE Community Fellowship Meal!

***United Women in Faith Coat
Collection for Emma Norton Services
August 1- September 13***

Please bring your donations of winter coats (NEW and GENTLY USED) to be hung on the coat rack marked EMMA'S COATS between August 1 and September 13. Last year there were over 100 coats given to Emma Norton services from the Area UWF.

We are also accepting hats, mittens, gloves, and scarves.

The residents at both Emma's Place and Restoring Waters are so thankful for your donations each year.

NOTE: If anyone has extra hangers in your closet, we could use those for hanging here at church.



EVERY THURSDAY FOR 8 WEEKS

STARTING SEPTEMBER 24

6:00 TO 8:30

Love First UMC library



This is a free 8-session educational program for family, loved ones and friends of a teen or adult living with a mental illness. Family-to-Family is an evidence-based program that improves coping and problem-solving abilities of people closest to a person living with a mental illness. It is not intended for individuals who are living with a mental illness themselves. Led by trained family members who have been there, this program provides information and strategies for taking care of the person you love, includes presentation, discussions and interactive exercises, as well as support and connection among peers.

Please **REGISTER** with Chuck, class leader, at (320) 251-0804 to ensure the class is a good fit.



August Communion Offering will be received by Feeding Area Children Together

Here in Central Minnesota, 1 in every 5 students do not know where their next meal will come from.

Going hungry as a child causes an increased risk of

learning and behavioral challenges. Feeding Area Children Together (FACT), bridges the gap for students when school is not in session through three services:

- **FACT PACKS:** Distributed before weekends and breaks, these packs provide full meals and high quality snacks.
- **FACT Pantries:** Housed within our schools, these provide shelf-stable food for both our students and families.
- **Break Boxes:** Filled with fresh food and pantry staples, these boxes feed our families over longer school breaks, lasting one week or longer.

Each menu contains a variety of fruits, vegetables, and proteins. It does not contain chips, cookies or candy. All menus are peanut-safe and do not contain pork products. FACT Packs are provided to K-8 students free of charge at the schools served. Feeding Area Children Together is not a government program. FACT is a predominantly volunteer-run organization funded by individuals and local businesses. All money donated goes directly to purchasing food and the minimal supplies needed to help feed our students experiencing hunger.

Communion Offering QR: Use the drop-down menu to select "Communion"



Enso Diako Performance
Sunday, August 30th
after worship in the sanctuary

*In sponsorship with the Initiative Foundation's
2026 Joy & Connection Grant*



New to Love First?

We'd Love to Meet You!

Whether you're wondering about our ministries, looking for ways to get connected, or hoping to meet a few friendly faces, this is a relaxed, no-pressure opportunity to learn more and build some new relationships.

No presentations. No expectations.
No strings attached—just coffee, conversation, and a chance to connect.

August 2nd after worship in the library.

Why I Give - Jahar Schultz

Church has not always been a place where my family felt close or connected. Growing up, finding a sense of belonging was challenging. Not all churches shared the same views or perspectives, and at times I found it difficult to be part of a church community whose beliefs felt misaligned with my own.

Fast forward 30 years, as our new family grew, Amanda and I realized how important it was to surround Winnie and Hani with people whose values, thoughts, and actions aligned with ours. We spent months searching for a church home, and when we finally found FUMC, we knew it was the right place.

For the first time, we felt truly welcomed. We felt like we belonged and had finally connected with people who were deeply passionate about inclusion. That sense of belonging is why I give to the church. I am inspired by the passion our members have for making the world more sustainable, healthier, and, most importantly, safer for those in need.

Our family tries to give in many ways, and we pray that our gifts help further the church's mission of providing support, care, and access to those who need it most.



High School Ice Cream Social



JUNE FINANCIALS

	Actual as of 6/30/26	2026 Budget	% of Budget
Revenue	\$300,438.44	\$718,859.00	41.79%
Expense	\$333,323.09	\$726,531.55	45.88%
Difference	(\$32,884.65)	(\$7,678.81)	

JULY COMMUNION OFFERING

Habitat for Humanity
will receive our gifts of \$880

The QR code is available if you
would like to donate to the on-going
budget or communion offering.





First United Methodist Church
of the St. Cloud Region
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lovefirstumc.org

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First United Methodist Church
of St. Cloud Region



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lovefirstumc.org

The church office is open Monday thru Friday: 8:30am - noon

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