

Pastor's column September 2023

¹⁵ He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" ¹⁶ Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." ¹⁷ And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven. ¹⁸ And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it. **Matthew 16:15-18**

¹⁰ According to the grace of God given to me, like a skilled master builder I laid a foundation, and someone else is building on it. Each builder must choose with care how to build on it. ¹¹ For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ. **1 Corinthians 3:10-16**

Greetings from the pastor's desk,

If Redfield had a theme for this summer, it should be "under construction." It has been somewhat of a maze to get from our house to the church with the streets dug up replacing sewer and water lines in our neighborhood and throughout the town. The street we might have been able to take one day would be closed the next day. I might start down one street that I had traveled the day before only to find it blocked, forcing me to turn around and find another route.

In many ways, under construction might be the theme of our UCC South Dakota Conference and the Tri-Conference. The decline in church attendance has led to a decrease in giving for many of our churches. OCWM (Our Churches Wider Mission), which is the main source of income to keep our conference and the Tri-conference functioning, has decreased significantly as local churches are struggling just to keep up with their own operating expenses. Our conference and Tri-conference are in the midst of restructuring staff to cut costs. We are also in the process of looking at how we might promote giving for those who can financially do so.

Under construction could be the theme of our church as well. No, we are not doing or even contemplating any physical construction work on the building. But with the decline in church attendance that has taken place over the past few decades due to societal changes and accelerated by Covid, the local church needs to re-think how we are to be the church in worship and fellowship to meet the needs of today's families and individuals. One of the ways we are attempting to meet the needs of young families is through Wednesday night Sunday school with a meal and worship service. The Long-Range Planning committee is also attempting to be pro-active in looking ahead into the future.

The reality is that the theme for our faith should always be "under construction." We should always be attempting to grow and change in faith as circumstances in our lives dictate that we must. We should always be working on strengthening our relationships with God and with one another. We are never done building when it comes to our faith and our relationships. I am one who likes to enjoy and take satisfaction in a finished project. That is not a luxury that we can enjoy when it comes to our faith understandings and our relationships with God and with others. There is always more work to be done.

This summer's construction projects have reminded me that patience, an openness to the work that is in process, and the hope that in the end it will better fit the needs of the people it serves, are necessities to cope with the disruptions to my routine. It is a good reminder that patience, openness, and hope are three things that are necessary as we continue our work "under construction" of our conference, our church, and our faith. There might be times when we find the way we would like to go is blocked. We might find we need to back up and try another way. In the end, it is our hope that the results will better fit the needs of those who are served.

Blessings & peace,
Pastor Keith

Moderator's Message

I just wanted to share the Teacup Story this month. God's blessing to each of you....Deb

The Teacup Story

There was a couple who used to go to England to shop in the beautiful stores. They both liked antiques and pottery and especially teacups. This was their twenty-fifth wedding anniversary.

One day in this beautiful shop they saw a beautiful cup. They said, "May we see that? We've never seen one quite so beautiful."

As the lady handed it to them, suddenly the cup spoke. "You don't understand," it said. "I haven't always been a teacup. There was a time when I was red and I was clay. My master took me and rolled me and patted me over and over and I yelled out, 'let me alone,' but he only smiled, 'Not yet.'

"Then I was placed on a spinning wheel," the cup said, "and suddenly I was spun around and around and around. Stop it! I'm getting dizzy! I screamed. But the master only nodded and said, 'Not yet.'

"Then he put me in the oven. I never felt such heat!" the teacup said. "I wondered why he wanted to burn me, and I yelled and knocked at the door. I could see him through the opening and I could read his lips as He shook his head, 'Not yet.'

"Finally the door opened, he put me on the shelf, and I began to cool. 'There, that's better,' I said. And he brushed and painted me all over. The fumes were horrible. I thought I would gag. 'Stop it, stop it!' I cried. He only nodded, 'Not yet.'

"Then suddenly he put me back into the oven, not like the first one. This was twice as hot and I knew I would suffocate. I begged. I pleaded. I screamed. I cried. All the time I could see him through the opening, nodding his head saying, 'Not yet.'

"Then I knew there wasn't any hope. I would never make it. I was ready to give up. But the door opened and he took me out and placed me on the shelf.

One hour later he handed me a mirror and said, 'Look at yourself.' And I did. I said, 'That's not me; that couldn't be me. It's beautiful. I'm beautiful.'

"I want you to remember, then," he said, 'I know it hurts to be rolled and patted, but if I had left you alone, you'd have dried up.

I know it made you dizzy to spin around on the wheel, but if I had stopped, you would have crumbled.

I knew it hurt and was hot and disagreeable in the oven, but if I hadn't put you there, you would have cracked.

I know the fumes were bad when I brushed and painted you all over, but if I hadn't done that, you never would have hardened; you would not have had any color in your life.

And if I hadn't put you back in that second oven, you wouldn't survive for very long because the hardness would not have held.

Now you are a finished product. You are what I had in mind when I first began with you."

~ Author Unknown

Financial & Attendance Reports

Avg. Attendance at in-person Sunday services: **42**
Avg. Weekly YouTube views in August: **15**
Avg. Weekly Facebook reach in August: **85**
Average Weekly offerings for August: **\$1,501**
Avg. budgeted expenses require a weekly
income of \$3,025.

Our Church's Wider Mission

Total OCWM "blessings" for August - **\$625**
Total OCWM "blessings in 2023- **\$6,925**
2023 goal is **\$10,000**

Live-Streamed Church Services are available each Sunday on YouTube and Facebook. Subscribe to the "First Congregational UCC Redfield, SD" YouTube channel or follow our Facebook page "Redfield First Congregational United Church of Christ" @RedfieldUCC to receive notices of when each service starts to stream. If you have trouble finding our service on-line or if you'd like to leave an e-mail address, please call Becky in the Church Office at #472-1590.

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Meeting Scheduled for
Monday, September 11:
Trustees will meet at 5:00 p.m.
Cabinet will meet at 6:30 p.m.

August Cabinet Meeting Minutes

Treasurer's Report: OCWM is at \$6,299.99 to date. Angela will send a letter requesting a payout of the CDs coming due at Cornerstone to invest the funds locally at a higher interest rate.

Trustees: Curtis Jandel will plant grass after we are sure construction is done. The weekend's rain leaked in under the breezeway doors again. The trustees could look at getting estimates for redoing the breezeway since the wood is rotting on the inside. If they get estimates this fall, maybe work could start in the spring.

Diaconate: The diaconate and the CE committee are planning an outdoor worship service Sept. 10 for Rally Day. They will also host a picnic that day. Will use the North Shelter. Afterschool care is using the basement classrooms. Will need to develop some guidelines so that FLOW can use the space too.

Christian Education Committee: FLOW is tentatively scheduled to start Sept. 13th. They will always need help with meals. Would like a head organizer to make sure plans and volunteers are in place for meals. The committee is looking for four leaders/shepherds, a craft leader and a music leader. The committee is busy filling these spots. Pastor Keith will do the story time.

Mission Committee: The committee hasn't met since May. A total of \$405 was raised from our church to donate toward the "Period Pack" project completed at General Synod this year.

Memorial Committee: Nothing much to report.

Flower/Decorating Committee: Going well.

Nominating Committee: Will meet soon. Jan Conyers will be on the Christian Ed. committee.

Music Committee: Looking to change the bylaws for this committee to include the organists, pianists and anyone else who would like to be on it, without term limits.

Usher's Report: No report

Women's Fellowship: Cleaned the kitchen on July 6th and had an impromptu meeting. They have decided to hold a rummage sale Oct. 20-21. New pitchers have been purchased to replace some of the pitchers without lids, etc.

Long Range Planning Committee: Last meeting was cancelled. Will meet Aug. 21 at 6 p.m. As they consider changes to the bylaws, they may recommend that committees find their own replacements.

Pastor's Report: Pastor Keith will be attending a Suicide Prevention Conference this Thursday and Friday. He will also attend a first responders' summit in Oacoma on Aug. 25th. Last Friday, he gave a couple, who were without a car, a ride to Eagle Butte.

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Outdoor Church Service/Rally Sunday

Rally Sunday kicks off with a special outdoor church service on September 10th in the Redfield City Park (North Shelter) at 10:30 a.m. with a cookout/potluck following. Burgers and hotdogs will be provided. Bring a hotdish, salad, or desert to share. It should be a fun time of enjoying the last of summer with food/fellowship and a play area for the kids. Please bring your own lawn chairs.



FLOW starts Sept. 13!

The schedule for all Wednesday night FLOW evenings will be:

- 5:00pm-5:50pm- FLOW for Children 4 years through 6th grade
- 5:50pm-6:20pm- Free will donation meal in Fellowship Hall provided to children, family members, UCC members, and anyone who wants to join in.
- 6:25pm-6:55pm- Worship- 30-minute service for anyone to attend.
- 7:00pm-8:00pm- 7th grade and up have class.

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FLOW Meal Sign-Up Sheet in Fellowship Hall

A sign-up sheet is available in the fellowship hall to volunteer to either make or prepare a meal for Wednesday nights or to serve and clean up from the meal. (This would be a fun service to sign up with friends to host a meal.) If we all pitch in and provide/serve a meal, we would be doing a great service to our church families. If you have any questions, contact Jaime Mogen, Ashley Schiferl-Zens, Jan Conyers or Pastor Keith. Thank you for the generous giving of your time and/or meal supplies!

7th-8th Grade Teacher Needed

The Christian Education Committee is looking a 7th-8th grade teacher for the upcoming church school year. Please contact Jaime Mogen, Ashley Schiferl-Zens, Jan Conyers or Pastor Keith to let them know of your interest. Thank you for your part of sharing Jesus with the children of our church!



Feed Your Soul to Meet

Feed Your Soul will be meeting **September 25 at 6:00 p.m.** in the fellowship hall. Join in the fellowship and fun! This women-led group is open to anyone, no matter what age.

September Mission of the Month

Blanket Sunday on Sept. 17

\$10.00 can donate a blanket to a refugee or someone left homeless by a natural disaster



Picture from Sarah Rozell's Baby Shower on Aug. 19th. L to R: Julie, Sarah, Katie and Addison Rozell

THANK YOU TO:

... The CE committee and all the volunteers that prepared the church school classrooms for the start of FLOW (Faithful Learning on Wednesdays)
...Nancy Johnson for maintaining the beautiful flowers in the courtyard area this summer.

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Please Pray for our members & friends who reside in care facilities:

Eastern Star Home:

Susan Kayl, Paul Klebsch,
Asst. Living –Donna Bushong, Lois Groft, Duane Sanger, Marilyn Schmidt

Lakeside: Adrienne Versteeg, Jo Wood

Home: Les Wienbar



Please keep in your prayers:

Jo Wood, Don Gabriel, Lyvie Roach,
Kathy Ludwig, Lisa Jandel,
Terry Houghtaling, Peggy Ellis, Sally Nuhsbaumer,
Carl Jones, Pat Issacson, Dr. Susan,
Jacki Schaffer, and Monique Diz

Remember to pray for military service personnel.

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IN SYMPATHY

... to the family of Bob & Marvelle Paulsen at the passing of Bob's mother, Shirley Paulsen, on August 23rd. Her funeral service was held Aug. 30th at Redfield United Methodist Church.

...to family and friends of Audrey Cardella, who passed away Monday, August 28. Audrey's funeral service was held on Sept. 2nd at Hyke Funeral Home with Reverend Keith Kraft officiating.

...to the family of Dave & Shawn Nichols at the passing of Dave's mother, Shirley Felchle, on Aug. 29th. Her funeral service will be on Tuesday, September 5th at Our Savior's Lutheran Church.

The **Grief & Loss Support Group** will meet on the third Wednesday of the Month. The next meeting will be on Sept. 20 at 10:00 a.m. in the UCC chapel. The Support Group is open to all.

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Redfield MISYA

(Mental Illness/Suicide Yearly Awareness)

Walk



Walk with us at the Redfield MISYA (Mental Illness/Suicide Yearly Awareness) Walk on Sunday, September 24th at the Redfield City Park and Armory. Gather at the Redfield Armory Lobby at 3 p.m. If you would like to donate in support of the walk, checks can be made to: American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP). For more information, contact the church or Pastor Keith Kraft.

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Pastor Keith and Deb Kraft have started a **Suicide/Mental Illness Family Support group**.

They will be meeting at 4:30 PM Sunday September 24 in the chapel area on the east side of First Congregational UCC at 125 E 7th Avenue of Redfield. These gatherings are open to any and all whose lives have been touched by suicide or mental illness within their families or friends.

Area IV Senior Nutrition Program

If you need exercise or enjoy helping your neighbor, the Senior Nutrition Program is looking for volunteers to deliver noon meals to homebound seniors in our community. It takes approximately 1.5 hours to help get these delivered, Monday – Friday. If you are able to volunteer, please call Cyndi at 605-472-0155. Lunch is provided and mileage is available upon request.



Rummage Sale



Now might be the time to start cleaning out closets and storage areas in preparation for the UCC Fall Rummage sale scheduled for October 20th-21st. Items for the rummage sale can start being dropped off on Sunday, Oct. 15th.