

THE TOWER

AUGUST 2025

DECORAH FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
302 W. BROADWAY, PO BOX 221, DECORAH, IA 52101
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Some clarifying questions we were asked, and I ask you to consider include:

What UMC ministries are you connected with beyond the local church? Why or why not?

What can you do to support district and conference leaders?

How is your church better equipped to proclaim and embody the gospel because of the connection?

Welcome to August. In June of this year the Annual Conference was held. While there, we were introduced to the core values that came out of the town hall meetings across Iowa last year with the bishop and her team. These are values that arose in conversations across the state that we as United Methodists strive to live into and that we United Methodists across the state have stated are who we are. There are six total core values for our conference that came out of those conversations. I would like to continue to share one a month for the rest of the year with you along with the questions we were asked to discuss at our tables during the conference so that you might consider them yourselves.

The second core value is connection and being part of a connectional body. “We forge deeper connections, understanding ourselves to be part of a connectional body that is larger than ourselves. We offer our prayers, our presence, our gifts, our witness, and our service in a vital web of interactive relationships.” If we look at this through the Wesleyan quadrilateral we see support for this core value.

SCRIPTURE - 1 Cor 12 “Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.”, Ephesians 4:11-16 “... The whole body grows from him, as it is joined and held together by all the supporting ligaments. The body makes itself grow in that it builds itself up with love as each one does its part.”

TRADITION - “Connectionalism in the United Methodist tradition is multi-leveled, global in scope, and local in thrust. Our connectionalism is not merely a linking of one charge conference to another. It is rather a vital web of interactive relationships. We are connected by sharing a common tradition of faith... a constitutional polity... a common mission... a common ethos.” – Book of Discipline ¶132 – The Journey of a Connectional People

REASON - Connection for United Methodists describes our organizational structure of conferences at various levels. However, early Methodist connection was built in relationships and shared mission, not structure. Connection is a relational understanding that we are interdependent on one another and a belief that the true nature of the church is not encompassed in any one congregation, but how we are bound together to proclaim and embody the gospel.

EXPERIENCE - Structurally, efforts like the United Methodist Committee on Relief or Africa University are supported by and held accountable through our General Agencies and apportionments. But we also know the relational impact of these ministries when Emergency Response Teams show up after a tornado and as we celebrate the gifts of our pastors educated at AU.

Decorah Community Food Pantry: 110 Railroad St.

Thanks for your generosity toward our Congregational Campaign Summer Drive. Nancy Ruen will give updates on how much we have collected for the pantry, as you recall we were hopeful to collect 400 pounds in July! So far in July, we have collected \$465 towards the Farmers Market Coupon program! You are all amazing! Help yourself to a shopping list from the cart in the back of the sanctuary or a table in the fellowship hall. Don't forget that you can drop off any of your extra garden produce directly at the pantry Monday-Friday 8:00 am-3:00 pm. Here is a list of items that are popular during the summer months.

*Ketchup *Mustard *Mayonnaise *Salad dressing *Baked Beans *Salt *Graham Crackers *Cooking oil
*Cereal *Elbow Macaroni * Spaghetti *5# bag Sugar *5# bag Flour *Tin foil



Keeping Landan Folkedahl in Our Prayers



These are a couple of photos from our Blessing Service before Landan was deployed for his service in the National Guard. We pray that he stays safe as he continues serving our country with his strength and kind and loving spirit. We long for the day when he can join us back in our sanctuary. This is his current address:

Landan Folkedahl
TASK FORCE WOLVERINE – NLZ
CMR 1786, A CO

August Birthdays

4th: Virginia Leidahl

4th: Alan Lerstrom

4th: Tyler Shedinger

7th: Gerald Leidahl

8th: Adam Knight

18th: Lyn White

19th: Beverly Nelson

21st: John Gipp

21st: Kathy McKinney

22nd: Tucker Young

27th: Leila Johnson

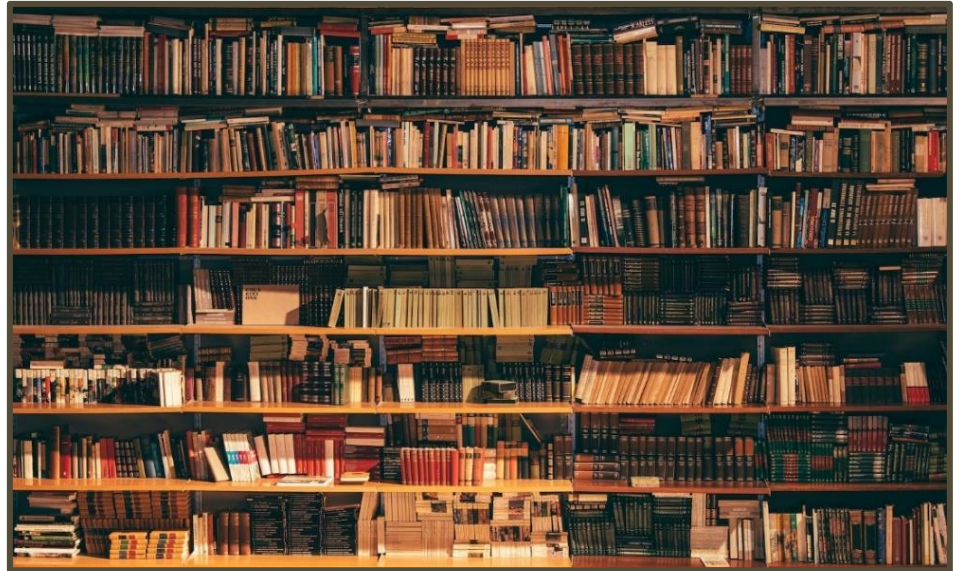
29th: Deborah Bishop

30th: Phyllis Wasta

31st: Micala Folkedahl

July Book Club

Our August book group will be discussing *Real Americans* by Rachel Khong on Thursday August 21 at 2:00pm. We are meeting at Candace Arp's home located at 1344 Coon Creek Road. If you would like to attend please email Jane Hardy at jhardy3333@aol.com or call 563-382-5316.



August Altar Flowers will be provided by Drew Pellett.



Summer Music / Hymn Sing

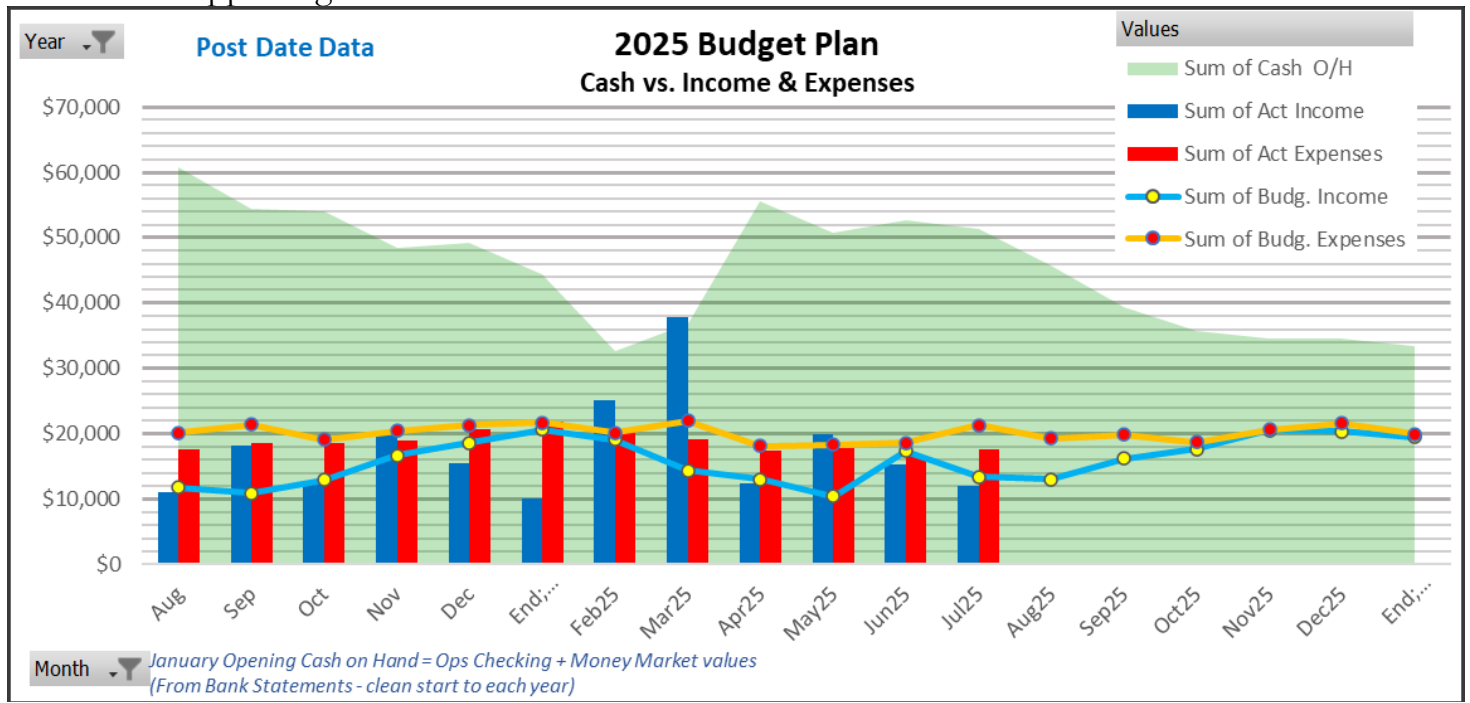
On the 3rd Sunday of the month through the summer, the congregation is invited to participate in a hymn sing. If you have a favorite hymn, write it down on a piece of paper and put it in the basket that's been placed on the bulletin table. Over the course of the summer before choir starts up again after Labor Day, we'll try to sing as many as you wish. You're also invited to participate on any Sunday with your own contribution to the summer music be it instrumental, voice, poem, whistle a happy tune, story, or share something special in your life. Please contact Sally Stromseth in church or call 563-382-4088 if you are interested.

Treasurer's Corner

So, for the August Tower we're going to treat July like last month, i.e., "Directionally Correct." Again, the numbers presented here are only the actual numbers I have so far for the month of July:

- Income is currently at \$12K out of a plan of \$13K...just a bit soft, common for this time of the year.
- Expenses are currently at \$18K out of a plan of 21K.
- The year-end operational cash position is still projected above the \$30K level (easily seen in the chart below).

Here is the supporting chart:



We were able to avoid having to tap into the Trustees' "stop-gap" apportionment funding for July.

With our softer income this month, I did need to move \$5K out of our MMkt account to bolster our Operations checking position. This is actually factored into the chart pictured above.

For the Capital Campaign:

- Great News!! [The loan is paid off!!](#) However, this project is technically NOT closed yet...not until we receive all committed pledges, which will run through/into 2026.
- Your Administrative Council voted to give Gary the authorization to use Trustees earned interest funds to pay off the loan, thereby eliminating the balance of the loan's interest expense.

As always, thanks to each of you for your diligent support of Decorah First UMC!

Blessings to all,

Steve Rarick, Treasurer - Decorah 1st UMC
(847) 830-9891 mobile

United Women of Faith Corner

Our Wednesday, August 6th gathering will be at the church instead of the park.

9:30 coffee

10:00 mat weaving or help with kitchen cleaning

11:30 brown bag lunch & book discussion "The Book Woman's Daughter" by Kim Michelle Richardson. **There are several copies of the book available. Check during coffee time each Sunday in July.

After lunch, we finish any projects necessary.

Quilters will meet each Tuesday morning 9:00 – 11:00.

Mat weaving Wed, Aug 6 & 20 at 10:00.

Please mark your calendars for the September District meeting that we are hosting Saturday, September 27. There may also be a couple days earlier that week to help prepare. More details & sign up sheets will be at our September 3rd UWF meeting.

Announcements:

- ❖ Singing for Justice. Water Street Plaza. Join others in a short round of "Singing for Justice" this Saturday and the 2nd Saturday of the month, August 9, and September 13. Hosted by "Grieving for Gaza". All are welcome!
- ❖ Join us for Breakfast at the All Vets Club. Serving pancakes, scrambled eggs, sausage or ham, hash browns and toast with choice of juice, milk or coffee. Free will donation. Serving 8am-12pm on August 17th. All are welcome.

August Worship Leaders

Coffee Servers:

Liturgist:

August 3rd	Lerstoms & Vande Bergs	Kay Bronshteyn
August 10th	Sara & Steve Luse	Dave Arp
August 17th	Phyllis & Wayne Wasta 70 th Anniversary!!	Deb Tekippe
August 24th	Deborah Bishop	Nancy Ruen
August 31st	Emily Young Johnson & Sweet Young	Syd Stephenson