



August 2020 First Connection

Dear First Family!

We are approaching the month of August; a month that is bringing so much anxiety for many. Many parents and guardians are struggling with decisions of whether to allow their children to go back to school face to face or do digital learning. There is an enormous pressure still in the workforce as it pertains to unemployment and the sustainability and viability of businesses. Finally, there are decisions to be made whether if and when we may be ready to have face to face worship.

On July 15th, I put together a Covid-19 Strategic Response team; a team that consists of the worship team, SPRC, Trustees, and staff. With the steady rise of COVID-19 cases, we made a recommendation to the Church Council to not resume face to face worship until potentially October; providing it is safe to do so. In the mean time, a couple of things that we will be doing to prepare for opening is adding a 8:30 digital weekly worship experience beginning in September. This will allow the worship team to get back into our “normal” routine for a month; before potentially opening the church in October. Our worship team is committed to bringing dynamic worship, teaching and preaching each week. We thank you for your presence and your patience as we move forward together.

Lastly, our hearts are still heavy with the passing of our Sharon Johnson. Currently, there are teams exploring how to continue the legacy and life of Sharon Johnson; not just within our church community, but throughout the city of Lincoln. As you continue to read this month’s newsletter, you will note towards the end; a memorial tribute section remembering our Sharon. I thank you for the ways that you have expressed your concerns, prayers and presence during this time.

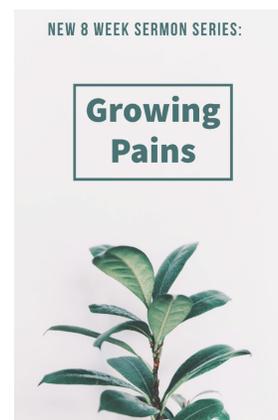
So First family, the future is certainly uncertain. However, what I am certain of is that together, we will get through anything. The Holy Spirit continues to move in this community in ways that leaves me speechless. I anticipate a day where these times will come up in our conversations as memories of how we got through with the grace of God on our side. So keep pressing on; keep planting seeds of God's love and grace for *See, I am doing a new thing. Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? Isaiah 43:19*

Flower Ministry Newsletter August 2020

During July, floral arrangements have included flowers, greenery, interesting twigs and branches, and origami sculptures from Bill and Margrethe Ahlschwede, Elaine and Glenn Johnson, Lois and Doug Wilson, Marty and John Eischeid, and Judy and Les Lane. Thank you for sharing beauty from your gardens with the church family.

The altar bouquet on July 26th was placed in memory of Sharon Johnson, a long time member of the church family.

If others of you would like to provide Sunday flowers, the Flower Ministry would love to hear from you. Flowers, greenery, and grasses are welcome gifts. It doesn't have to be a big bouquet. The flower committee is happy to supplement from our gardens to go with whatever flowers you would like to give for worship services. Bringing nature's beauty into sacred spaces can give rise to memories of



New 8 week Sermon Series: “Growing Pains”

Purpose: To take the Congregation through the lectionary scriptures and name

gardens and significant occasions in times past and create more connections among us in these present days.

If you would like to purchase flowers, local grocery stores are one source of attractive and moderately priced bouquets.

Just let Marty (402-466-6680) or Judy (402-937-4914) know of your interest and we will provide more information and get you on the church calendar.



Hunger and Poverty Response Ministry

For I was hungry, and you gave me something to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave me something to drink; I was a stranger and you invited me in. Matthew 25:35

Munden Parlor is an especially cozy spot now that the Lydia Patterson Institute books are on display. You may just want to bring your to-go cup, settle into a comfy

the growing pains that may occur in our lives as it pertains to isolation, stewardship, family systems and more!

August 2:

First Lesson: Psalm 17: 1-7
Gospel Lesson: Matthew 14: 13-21
Sermon: Growing Pains: Isolation

August 9:

First Lesson: Psalm 105: 1-6; 16-22, 45b)
Gospel Lesson: Matthew 14: 22-33
Sermon: Growing Pains: Fear

August 16:

First Lesson: Genesis 45: 1-15
Gospel Lesson: Matthew 15: 10-20, 21-28
Sermon: Growing Pains: Maturity

August 23

First Lesson: Exodus 1:8-2:10
Gospel Lesson: Matthew 16: 13-20
Sermon: Growing Pains: Faith

August 30

First Lesson: Psalm 105: 1-6, 23-26, 45c
Gospel Lesson: Matthew 16: 21-28
Sermon: Growing Pains: Suffering

September 6- 8:30 service

Epistle Lesson: Romans 13: 8-14
Sermon: Growing Pains: Self in Community

chair nearby and spend time reading one of the books before making your gift selection for students attending LPI. After making your purchase decision, you may give the money to Laura in the Church Office. We are grateful for your commitment to our church school, Lydia Patterson Institute, and for your investment in their library in recent years. Mike Sterns estimates that we have given over two hundred fifty books. Thank you, Church!

The First UMC team serving Matt Talbot the second Saturday of each month continues to welcome about fifty five guests with boxed lunches. If you feel called to help with this ministry, please contact Liz Zeff.

On behalf of Huntington Elementary, we would like to thank you for supporting students and staff. Your gifts bring smiles to many people. Your thoughtfulness has warmed hearts. As you know, another school year is about to begin. This year will be unlike others as there is the challenge of a pandemic. If you feel called to assist Huntington Elementary, Alan Eighme has shared that you may do so by writing a check to First UMC with Huntington/LPS Foundation in the memo. Or, you may give your donation through

September 6- 10:45 service

First Lesson: Psalm 149
Gospel Lesson: Matthew 18: 15-20
Sermon: Growing Pains: Community

September 13; 8:30 service

Epistle Lesson: Romans 14: 1-12
Sermon: Growing Pains: Forgiving Ourselves

September 13- 10:45 service

First Lesson: Exodus 14: 19-31
Gospel Lesson: Matthew 18: 21-35

September 20- 8:30 service

Epistle Lesson: Philippians 1: 21-30
Sermon: Growing Pains: Being Generous

September 20- 10:45 service

First Lesson: Psalm 105: 1-6, 37-45
Gospel Lesson: Matthew 20: 1-16
Sermon: Growing Pains: Being Thankful

September 27- 8:30 service

Epistle Lesson: Philippians 2: 1-13
Sermon: Growing Pains: Being

September 27-10:45 service

First Lesson: Psalm 78: 1-4, 12-16
Gospel Lesson: Matthew 21: 23-32
Sermon: Growing Pains: Living

the Lincoln Public Schools Foundation website. On the main page of the site is a GIVE button. Clicking on the button will take you to a page to submit a donation. For the donation to go to Huntington Elementary, under the heading Donate To, you will choose Other. Then type in the other field Huntington Elementary. Thank you in advance for any donation you may make. Stay safe. Stay healthy. God bless.

Submitted by Alan Eighme,
Peggy Hall



Dear Church Family and Friends,
I know I'm not alone in carrying a very heavy heart with the passing of Sharon Johnson. Almost 13 years ago, I met Sharon when I returned to First Church to attend the Saturday Morning Reading Group. For five years, I was nurtured and nourished by this group, in large part, because of the humble



**DR. JOHN
SPILKER
MINISTER OF**

**MUSIC & LITURGY, SOCIAL
JUSTICE, LEADERSHIP**

First UMC family, with heavy hearts, we mourn together the death of our beloved sister Sharon Johnson. When Lily and I started attending First UMC Lincoln in January 2018, Sharon always found us to give hugs and check on our souls. We were navigating divorce and a transition to a new religion that would be more open and accepting. Sharon made life brighter. When Lily started singing in choir, Sharon helped her find a short robe. This meant the world to Lily,

souls, including Sharon, that shared in the experience. I affectionately referred to her as our biblical encyclopedia. She added historical context and connected us to similar scripture references. Sharon valued hymns as an expression of prayer and an extension of scripture. She was a voracious reader and brought valuable insights to our discussions. Her life experiences, some not very easy, brought a deep perspective and appreciation for others.

Sharon lived her steadfast faith, her trust in God was unwavering, and her commitment to community was a gift to so many of us. Some might place Sharon on the margins yet I suspect that's why she knew how to welcome others and be a faithful servant. She spoke truth - OK, she may have even blurted it out in a service - and you may not have agreed with it, yet it was and is her truth. . . To be honored and respected. She carried a story in her soul - we all do. I am grateful I had the opportunity to be a character in her story and a sister in Christ on this path.

We all have a story to share, an experience to process, an inner truth waiting to be revealed. If you are looking for a place to connect in a small group, come join us for Compassionate Conversations: Pause and Prayer. Our time together has become a safe space for

because she often gets teased at school for being short. When my grandma died in November 2019, Sharon checked on me every week and bore witness to the mystery of my grief and recovery. As we grieve the tremendous loss of Sharon, let us reach out to each other, especially as we are distanced due to COVID-19. Our recovery won't be quick or easy, because Sharon's presence has been intricately woven throughout the fabric of First UMC for so many years. I ask God to bring us together and move through us to nourish each other during this time.

This month, school workers and students (and all their friends and loved ones) anticipate the start of the school year, as the COVID-19 pandemic health crisis rages around us. Surely everyone experiences uncertainty, challenges, and lots of emotions right now. God is with us, strengthening and blessing us, as we struggle together. I'm here to minister via phone or Zoom. Give me a call. I see you and I care. It is not easy to find new ways of adapting as change remains the constant. Please let me know what you need.

ANTIRACIST EQUITY AND EDUCATION

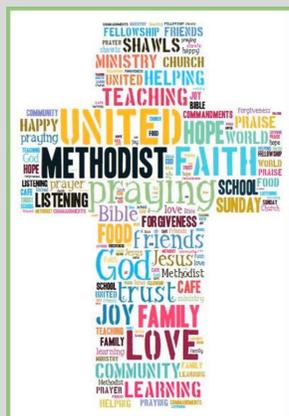
As part of our reconciling ministry, I share with you my commitment to antiracist equity, which I continue to update with online learning resources: <https://bit.ly/2YsN3UQ>.

sharing; learning and engaging in dialogue - deep listening for understanding; and practicing being present to God, to ourselves, and to others. We are finding comfort, connection, acceptance, belonging, honesty, and gratitude in our conversations.

We plan to continue through August. Please join us on Tuesday evenings, 6:30 - 7:45 through August 25, 2020. You are welcome for one or all sessions. If you want to join in the ZOOM conversation or have questions, please contact Terri Storer at tstorer@neb.rr.com

Dearest Living God, guide us to plant seeds of love, mercy, grace, and peace just as our sister, Sharon, did with the same resolute trust in doing your will on earth as it is in heaven. Amen.

Terri Storer
Certified Spiritual Director
Certified Boundless
Compassion Facilitator



When the Great Plains Conference was formed, the leaders charged with melding

- Every Thursday at 6pm, I represent First UMC Lincoln in “Courageous Antiracism Clergy Conversations.” Rev. Annettra Jones hosts Methodist Pastors on Facebook Live and I post the link to our page. Please join us at any time. I’m learning from other pastors as we read Understanding and Dismantling Racism by Joseph Barndt.

SMALL GROUPS

- As part of our fall Wed evening First UMC offerings, I plan to host a Weekly Racial Justice Small Group via Zoom, likely on Wed at 6pm (to honor the usual small group time). Currently, I anticipate our first book will be Understanding and Dismantling Racism by Joseph Barndt. If you’d like to join us, email me: john@firstumclincoln.org.
- “Compassionate Conversations: Pause & Prayer” is a strengthening spiritual experience via Zoom. Would you like to try it out? We would love to have you join us. Email Terri Storer.

Terri Storer, Lea Ann Johnson-Kappes, and I continue to collaborate to reimagine possibilities for small groups during COVID-19 and beyond. What ideas do you have? Zoom? Small patio visits at home? Let us know what you

the United Methodist Women traditions of the Nebraska, Kansas East, and Kansas West Conferences chose to focus on the concept of journeying together in five areas:

- Journey in Action
- Journey in Faith
- Journey in Giving
- Journey in Learning
- Journey in Growth

We strive to map out our unit's path on these journeys, but sometimes life forces a detour. That is what is happening this year. Some things have had to be postponed, like our garage sale, which will now be held in the spring of 2021. Other activities are going to happen, but with some modifications. Our nut sale, UMW Sunday, and our November unit meeting will all happen as scheduled, but with some changes.

Some annual events, however, have had to be cancelled in the interest of safety. Our May guest night and our September unit meeting, the Blue River District Spring Event, Mission u, and the Great Plains Conference UMW Annual Meeting all fall into that category. Sadly, so does Mission Christmas 2020. The current uncertainty makes it difficult to plan and execute an event of that scale that we believe would be both safe and successful, so we have decided to take a one-year break.

Please remember that taking a different route is not the same

need, what ideas you have, what's on your heart and mind right now. Email me: john@firstumclincoln.org. I'm here to help and support!

PHONE TREE MINISTRY continues their work during social distancing. Many thanks to those of you who call to minister to our members who don't have email access. We are so blessed to have such a strong church community. I owe a debt of gratitude to Peggy Hall for co-coordinating this important ministry.

DOWNLOADING ZOOM

If you have questions, or need help, call me and I will help you get set up. I can even do house calls with my mask on.

- To make meetings easy: Small group leaders would email you a "Zoom website link" that you can click. If Zoom is downloaded & installed on your device and you are signed in, the link will take you straight to the meeting.

1. Open your computer's internet browser and navigate to the Zoom website at <https://zoom.us/>.

2. Scroll down to the bottom of the page and click "Download" in the web page's footer.

3. On the Download Center page, click the blue "Download"

as halting the journey. All our UMW members are encouraged to keep looking for ways to fulfill our charge to be in mission to women, children, and youth around the world. Our Purpose asks us to "develop a creative and supportive fellowship". That's never been more important than it is now.



Dear First Church Family:

The last five months have been exceptionally difficult and challenging. I never imagined that the world, and our country, would be gripped by a pandemic. I never thought that lives would be lost to a virus. Or, that the world economy would be shaken to its core. I never imagined that individuals and families would lose jobs and income. That there would be long lines of people seeking food or wanting to get tests. That our schools and universities would close, that face masks would be needed, and a new term, "social distancing" would become commonplace in our everyday language. I never imagined any

button under the section labeled "Zoom Client for Meetings."



Report of the Stewardship and Finance Committee to the Church Council July 20, 2020

The Stewardship and Finance Committee has continued to meet during the last several months during the pandemic and the church building closure via ZOOM. The following are the topics that have been the focus:

- Financial Status
- Refer to the Income/Expense spreadsheet for the period January 1, 2020 through July 20, 2020. General Fund income for that period is \$226,619 compared to the Annual Budget total of \$500,000, with total income of \$318,938 for all programs including Trustees. Expenses for that period total \$225,636

of these things happening because of a virus.

There have been times over the last several months, where I have lost faith and have been gripped by fear. There was one day in late March while in my house, I found that I could not breathe. I was very dizzy. I was sweating profusely. My stomach was upset. I could not think or concentrate.

I needed fresh air, so I went outside into my backyard. I tried to catch my breath and I could not. I bent down and I put my hands on both of my knees and I tried to just calm down, but I could not.

Finally, something came to me and it was not new. Many of you have heard me say this on Sunday mornings over and over again. The voice said- "Let us pray the prayer that the Lord has taught us."

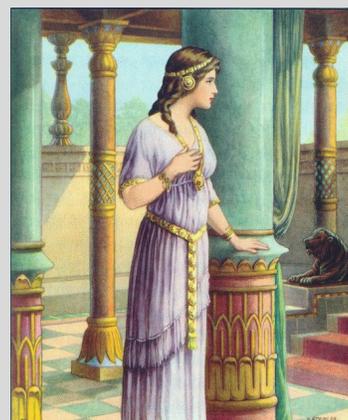
I prayed the Lord's prayer. I asked God for guidance, mercy and for God's will to be done.

I then prayed the Serenity prayer. I asked God to help me accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change those things I can, along with the wisdom to know the difference.

During this time, I thought about my Mom and my Dad and a certain calm came over me.

and an additional \$22,487 for the Trustees. Currently there is a positive balance of \$70,815.

- The Committee has been monitoring the church giving during this closure period from all sources and it has continued to be steady and positive.
- The church applied for and received a \$50,000 loan under the Paycheck Protection Program created to help keep workforces employed during the COVID-19 crisis. It is anticipated that the loan will end up nearly 90% forgivable.
- The church's Mission Shares are now paid through the first half of 2020, totaling \$23,296.
- The committee reviewed and considered the various proposals for the technical updating of the Sanctuary to improve the ability for live streaming of the worship services and also for the accommodations needed when attendance is allowed to return to the Sanctuary.



I remembered, just as I had been taught by my parents, that God had brought me safe thus far and God would continue to do so.

I got up from my bent over position. I said thank you Jesus. I got busy and I continued with my day with renewed faith and hope.

As a child, I remember my Mom would always sing “Blessed Assurance” during the day at home. It did not matter if she were cooking, ironing, dusting or whatever, she would break out singing that song with vigor and a deep belief in those words. She believed in her salvation through God’s blessed assurance. Do you know that I sing that song myself during the day and I feel better?

The other song, that touches me is, “It is Well with My Soul.” I can sing that song and I feel renewed. I still sing that song throughout the day and it lifts my soul.

First Church we have lost some sainted souls from our congregation during the last few months. Our world and our country are being challenged. Sometimes good news is hard to find. I am here to say that in leaning on God’s everlasting love, and with God’s blessed assurance, our souls will be fine, and our best days are yet to come.



Girls and their parents or mentors are invited for this Women of the bible study!

The bridge between Sunday school to teen and young adult can be a challenge for our girls. As girls it is also a time as a pre-teen and teen that your relationship begins to change with your parents and possibly with God. This bible study is designed to help with that transition and to continue to keep the relationship our girls have with Christ growing. It is called Just Us.

This study will partner girls and their important people in their life, perhaps a mom, dad, or female mentor to help them learn about their faith and how we can take certain women from the bible and learn more from them.

Through the use of Zoom technology, we will meet online together, laugh, talk, pray and share. **Join us starting**

God Bless you all

Larry Williams
Lay Leader

REMEMBERING OUR SHARON



Obituary for Sharon R. Johnson

Sharon Renee Johnson of Lincoln, Nebraska, was born April 13, 1951 in Boston, Massachusetts, and died on July 23, 2020, at the age of 69, in Lincoln, NE, a victim of random gun violence. Sharon grew up mostly in small towns in eastern Nebraska until at the age of ten when her family moved to Williams Bay, Wisconsin for five years, then moved to Evansville, Indiana. She graduated from Benjamin Bosse High School in 1969 and went on to receive a B.A. in English from the University of Evansville. After college, she proudly served in the National Guard and held a

Tuesday August 4th at 7pm-8pm for our Zoom meeting ID is 826 257 3350 and enter a password of 9qsFW6.

First week - study of Naomi and Ruth

Second week - Mary and Martha

Third week - Esther

Fourth week is based on several passages in the bible and how we as women can relate to them and use them in our faith journey. **If you can only make one session or all, you are welcome to join us!**



Hi,

I've known Sharon since pretty

variety of jobs over her working life.

Well known for her cheerful attitude, her emphatic pronouncements on a variety of subjects, and her fierce hugs, Sharon had a generous heart. As a vital and much-loved member of Lincoln's First United Methodist Church community, Sharon served in many capacities: singing in the choir, playing the organ, piano, flute, and hand-bells; volunteering in the church office, helping with the newsletter and with communion, and acting as the unofficial welcome committee. Sharon also shared her joy of music as a volunteer, playing piano at multiple nursing homes and assisted living facilities. She called out the numbers for Bingo for her friends at her apartment complex every week. As an avid reader, she was thrilled to learn that the libraries in Lincoln had re-opened.

Sharon is survived by her mother Penny Johnson; eight of her eleven siblings: Glenda Redworth, Carolyn Strongheart, Debbie McKinnon, Roxie Schwall, Mary Ellis, Janet Stephens, Rodger Moore, and Dori VanVlack; her aunt Carol Kalkwarf and her aunt Ruth Spencer, as well as her siblings'

much the first day I came to First Church about 13 years ago. She always greeted me with a hug and a smile.

I was involved in a few different groups with her. I think my favorite was First Saturday nooners. A few of us got together the first Saturday of every month to have lunch at different restaurants. It was always fun to see where we would end up!

Sharon will be missed in so many ways. She was extremely knowledgeable about the Bible. She loved working with the children learning the movements and songs they performed.

Thank you for all the great times and being a good friend! May you rest in peace.

Shannon Hickenbottom

Hello,

My former husband Tom Stanley, was the custodian and Building Supervisor at First Church for many years. We were active members and raised our son, Nick at First Church.

We have many memories of Sharon. Her giving spirit, singing in the hallways, doing yardwork, talking/commenting on the sermon during the sermon, and knowing the children by name.

We are saddened by her

spouses, numerous cousins, many nieces and nephews, and church family members. She is preceded in death by her father Kenneth Johnson, and three of her siblings: Gary Johnson, Lou Davis, and Jeff Cannon.

While it is currently difficult for all of us to gather together in large groups, a Celebration of Life for Sharon will be held outside by her congregation at the First United Methodist Church when it is safe to do so in the future.

Low-Income Bus Pass Program in Honor of Sharon Johnson

As a memorial to Sharon Johnson, her covenant group members John Eischeid and Coleen Seng are working on a low-income bus coupon program with Star Tran. Details are still being worked out. If you would like to contribute to this memorial for Sharon, send your check to First United Methodist Church and on the memo line mark it Sharon memorial - bus fund.

Coleen and John have been in the covenant group with Sharon since April of 1987, over 33 years. They met every Monday at 5:00 pm. They wish to honor Sharon's life by helping other low-income bus riders. Watch for more details...

sudden loss of life.

Sincerely,

MJ Stanley Jobes

I didn't know Sharon, or the men who committed her murder. However, I'm saddened and enraged by the senselessness of it, as well as whatever circumstances may have precipitated this tragedy. As always, I asked, "What can I (a 74-year old woman in Cortland) DO?" I march for children in cages on the border, and for the rights of those who are not treated equally in our society. At least I can contribute to Sharon's memorial. My heart is with you in your grief.

Sincerely,

Kathy Long Hegler

Dawn Williams (niece)

Heaven gained another angel yesterday - rest in peace, Aunt Sharon! I will miss hearing your great stories and amazing hugs! I love you very much!

Kasey Voisard (great-niece)
My great-aunt was shot and killed yesterday by a pointless drive by. She never harmed anyone, sweetest lady ever. This is so unfair.

Kathy Baker Lutz (high school family friend)

I remember Sharon as an excited presence in your home when we were growing up. I can see her giggling and smiling as she helped Penny in the kitchen, both at your house and at the lake. I couple Penny



Sharon Johnson was tragically shot on a city bus and died Thursday. I am blessed to have called Sharon a friend, fellow church member, organ student.

You might know Sharon different ways....she rode the bus almost every day, she was in the organist community...she volunteered at multiple nursing home and assisted living facilities.

Always advertising and supporting local library fundraisers, playing piano various places, providing music for chapel services for various chaplains around town, playing flute, handbells, singing in choirs, active in multiple Bible studies, the Corinthians Sunday School class and her Covenant Discipleship group, and more at First United Methodist in Lincoln. Sharon had been a

and Sharon in my mind; I felt a thread of sameness between them. There were always projects and jobs assigned at your house, and Sharon eagerly addressed those. I've been imagining her on that bus, sitting contentedly, oblivious of her fate, of her nearness to eternity, and I am comforted that her passing was swift. Such a sweet soul need not suffer.

Marge Adams

Sharon was such a kindly soul and such a resourceful person. I remember playing Mah Jongg with her, talking with her at Thanksgiving, and enjoying her contributions to the book group in November every year.

Margaret Duplechan

What tragic news. Guess she fulfilled her duties here and the Lord needed her elsewhere.

Maureen and Judy

Of course, we remember Sharon at our book group meetings. Like you, she always spoke her mind and was full of interesting details about other things she was reading. I sat next to her at a couple of after book club dinners and always enjoyed talking to her. She had a simple sweetness about her.

Pat Tiller

I remember Sharon especially on Mah Jongg nights when she visited you and Marion. She was wicked smart.

faithful volunteer at many places at various times, including Southlake Village and Lancaster Manor Rehabilitation....I would attend events at various churches when possible, and often there she would be - supporting and worshiping with others. Baptist....UCC....Methodist....Sharon was a faithful Christian just glad to be with others. The early service at First church won't forget all the wonderful music she shared....playing piano, flute, faithfully singing in the early service choir with Rosemary Thornton. She faithfully helped served communion at that service for many, many years.

I will never forget the first Sunday that Tom and I visited the Methodist church. Sharon came over and was one of the first people to welcome us and with a huge smile on her face say "Welcome, I am SO glad you are here!"

Though she struggled with some disabilities and financial difficulties, she was a selfless person, demonstrating the love of her Savior in ways that put others first.

One night in one of the musical groups Sharon was a part of, a young person shared a prayer request and how they were struggling. Sharon, who barely had enough \$ for her own expenses, handed me a donation/gift to anonymously give to that young student. I

Mary Ann and Joy

Sharon was such a joy to anyone that met her. We remember meeting her a few years ago at your wedding.

Lisa & Isabel

Your sister was such a sweet soul. Please give Penny a big hug from us.

Kim Bowman

I enjoyed Sharon's company during her November visits to book club. We sat beside one another last fall at the library and at the restaurant. She always had interesting insights into our book selections and was knowledgeable about a variety of subjects. It is so sad that this gentle soul is no longer with us. She had the sweetest smile.

Elaine Aiton

Sharon was a joy and a bright spot in your family. The pictures were full of love especially the one with Mouse.

Rosie Kaplan

I remember sitting next to Sharon at one of your gatherings and enjoyed chatting with her.

Marlene

The fact that animals loved her is a testament to her beautiful character.

Diana

Sharon was a good competitor at Mah Jongg.

was so moved by her selflessness, taking the parable in the Bible, where the widow who has almost nothing, gives what little she has. I am reminded of Jesus' words that the woman had given more than others with all their riches.

After she and I had only done organ lessons for a few weeks, she took part in an OLLI organ class where she played for other retired individuals. I'll never forget the huge smile and joy on her face when she shared her music with others. It inspired a few others to take an interest in taking some organ lessons. Sharon loved music and loved sharing it with others.

One of my favorite memories of my time of full-time church ministry was an "anybody, everybody" worship time that my friends Cindy Newsham and Ben Leypoldt helped me put together. We had a wide diversity of people involved. Some who came included those who had disabilities in the church. Sharon faithfully came every week, played piano, helped set up chairs/other things as needed. If a new person came in to the room, Sharon would make sure to go over and greet them. She was a hugger....even if you had just met, she was going to give a hug, sharing that immense joy and love of people she had right away!

Maru

I really enjoyed Sharon's company whenever we overlapped at Thanksgiving dinner. I thought she was funny and always had very interesting things to say. She seemed to me like a peaceful and confident person who was comfortable around people.

Megan

We liked Sharon. She was very sweet, and we thought she had a great, understated sense of humor.



Prayer List

For the Family of Sharon Johnson

Jim Neumann, home

Ron Gaddis, hospital

Dixie Gannon, St. Elizabeth, room 546

Cindy Newsham, home

Maxine Case, home

For the Family of Joyce Ryan

For the Family of Rosemary Thornton in the passing of her husband Mel.

Elaine Brown, Bryan East

Lauree Turner, home

Richard Voeltz, Gateway Vista

Jeremy Hickenbottom, home

Lester Shaw, Kiley Taylor's dad.

Jim Neumann, home

Sharon loved children, though she didn't have any of her own. She was a faithful volunteer every year I led, or was a part of, vacation Bible school. There she would be, doing the motions to the songs right along with the children, laughing and singing, reminding all the adults.....these children were the reason we did what we did. I know the Lord brought Sharon into my life to prepare me for a new ministry with rearing children. She taught me patience, love, compassion, selflessness, friendship, and so much more.

"Whoever has done this for the least of these my brothers and sisters has done it for me." Few people exemplify this more than my friend Sharon.

Well done Thou good and faithful servant Sharon - enter into the joy of the Lord! You have "fought the fight" and "finished the race" well! I look forward to the day we get to sing in that heavenly choir together (and if there's a hand bell part, I know you will be the first to volunteer!)

In Christ,
-Brent Shaw--"For God so loved the world..."

Sondra Atkins, home
Roscoe Shields, Van Dorn
Legacy
Emajane Crossley,
Lancaster Manor Rehab
Dorothyann Haar, 11405 Farnam
Circle, Omaha
Jim Leypoldt, home
For the family of Daugherty,
Frank



August Birthdays

1 Kathy Cummins
Kevin Korell
2 David Zeff
Milt Schmidt
Tobias Baxter
3 Kelly Allen
5 Jahiem Curry
Jaquez Curry
Nick Haag
6 Caroline Caldwell
Nolan Caldwell
Erik Fegter
Judy Berger
7 Alan Eighme
Jan Blue
Jon Francis
8 Brandon Eslick
Marcus Vculek
Tobin Louderback
9 Jeremy Jurey
Shannon Fegter
10 Arien Martin
Brad Vculek



FINAL THOUGHTS

First Family, I know we have been through so much. I want to thank you for your continued prayers and support through these uncertain times. We are prayerfully waiting to return to face to face worship and are hoping to be able to do so soon. In the meantime, we will continue to be adaptive in how we do ministry.

I lift up a huge thanks to our Board of Trustees and all of the individuals/families who have contributed towards our new sound system. I would be remiss if I did not give thanks for the families whose loved ones have transitioned on and have designated Memorial funds towards the updating of our sanctuary along with supporting our children and youth ministry programs and more!

Please note that in regards to our Sharon, there is a designated Memorial fund underway for her. Several people have given in honor of Sharon. Her life and legacy will live on. If you are interested in contributing to Sharon's Memorial Fund, please contact Laura at the Church office.

Carol King
Catlyn Sheldon
11 Emma Vculek
Randy Gettman
12 Amy Bartolome
Ande Hill
Deb McGuire
13 Ebb Munden
Ethan Memming
14 David Beatty
Grace Bartolome
Lori Hanson
Sumalee Karr
15 Katherine Lent
16 Sean Hall
17 Linda Stevenson
18 Connie Million
Ed Schneider
Micah Wythers
Mindy Vyhnaek
19 Lou Gaddis
20 Logan Allen
Madelyn Eilers
21 Bill Venhaus
Garrett Hanneman
Sharon Eighme
22 Becky Williams
Missy Leypoldt
23 Beyna Taylor
Dan Howell
Ken Mohr
Tyler Francis
24 Sara Hanna
25 Kailey Seitz
26 Jeff Koepke
Terry Lange
27 John Helter—adult
Tom Schwindt
28 Richard Flanigan
31 Richard Voeltz



**JOIN US FOR WORSHIP ONLINE SUNDAYS @ 1045 AM
BEGINNING SEPTEMBER WE WILL HAVE TWO ONLINE
WORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES ON SUNDAYS @830am &1045am**