

FEDERATED NEWSLETTER

July 2026; Volume 60; Issue 7

UPCOMING EVENTS

July 2 & 5 - Communion, Hymn Sing, Birthday Recognition

July 3 - Church office closed

July 4 - Independence Day

July 11 - Men's Fellowship Breakfast

July 13 through 17 - Garage Sale prep

July 18 - Annual Garage/Bake Sale

From the Pastor's desk

Here is a surprising song that appeared in my playlist. The song title ("I am not God") surprised me. Of course, we are not divine. Yet, there is comfort in our humanity. We cannot do all that God can. While God is infinite, we are finite. This realization leads us to depend on the One who can heal and make us new.

Song lyrics are below. You can find the song on YouTube (search for "Jess Ray I am not God").

Grace and peace,
Edward

"I am not God" by Jess Ray

VERSE 1
There are answers that I do not have
There are choices that I cannot make
There are limits to what I can give
There are limits to what I can take
There are forces that I can't control
There are factors that I cannot see
There's a future that I do not know
There is truth beyond what I believe

CHORUS
I am not God
Oh what a sweet relief
I am not God
It's not riding on me
I am not God
The world isn't in my hands
I am not God

VERSE 2
There is someone
who can heal your wounds
There is someone who can set you free
There is someone who can make you new
There is someone and it isn't me

CHORUS

BRIDGE
I am…
A sign in the desert
A mouth with a message
A broken reflection
An evergreen tree
A mute that is talking
A lame woman walking
A widow who won't stop knocking
An image I'll be
But …

Music Ministry Director

While our regular ensembles take a well deserved break during the summer months, music continues to be an important part of worship at Federated Church.

This summer our handbells have been sent out for refurbishment. After many years of faithful use, they are receiving some much needed attention and maintenance. We look forward to welcoming them back in excellent condition and hearing their beautiful sound in worship again this Fall.

Our Summer Special Music program is underway and we are still looking for musicians to help fill several Sundays throughout the summer. Vocalists, instrumentalists, small ensembles, families, and musicians of all ages are welcome to participate. Whether you would like to share a solo, play an instrument, or perform with others, we would love to have you involved. These special performances help enrich our services and showcase the many talents within our congregation.

If you are interested in providing special music this summer, please contact me or sign up in the Narthex. Sharing your musical gifts is a meaningful way to contribute to worship, and we would be grateful for your participation.

In Christ,

Stuart Gausman
Director of Music Ministry

Thank You from Membership & Growth Committee

We want to send out a special Thank You to our drivers on Saturday, June 20th for our Nebraska Passport excursion to David City and Lincoln. Pastor Edward and Julie Graham drove us to our stops and even picked us up at the doors when it started to rain.
After our first stop in David City, we were too early so it became our last stop of the day. We headed to Lincoln and went to the Museum of American Speed which required quite a bit of walking. Tim Warren helped out the cane users so they could keep up. We highly recommend this museum to adults and children.
Our next stop was for lunch at Honest Abes before we headed to the State Capitol. The gift shop at the Capitol was closed, so we moved on to the High Society Cheesecake shop. No one could refuse a slice of cheesecake.
Our last stop was back to David City. The Agrarian Art at the Bonecreek Museum. We saw several vendors showing their art using different materials.
We arrived back in Columbus around 4:30 pm. I especially want to thank those church members who gave the Nebraska Passport adventure a try - Bobbi Uhlmann, Marilyn Vrana, Brenda Wardman, Kathy Leischner and myself.
Everyone enjoyed this special day!

Ruth Lind
Membership & Growth

Christian Education / Youth

VBS was held the week of June 1st at First United Methodist Church - an ecumenical event - hosted by Federated Church, St. Luke's UCC and First United Methodist Churches. We had 61 kids - 3 years - 6th grade - who searched the Alaskan Wilderness to find True North. Throughout the week, kids learned that when they wonder, feel alone, feel powerless, need hope, or need help - we can TRUST JESUS. Bible verses & stories came from the Gospel of Matthew. Each day these themes were explored in the following sessions: bible story, crafts, science, missions, rec, & music. The 5th/6th grade field trips included a tour of Hy-Vee, tour of Police Station, Escape Room, Bowling and Axe in the Box.

The week wrapped up with a program and a hot dog lunch. The kids collected 308 food items for the food pantry (152 pounds), 77 jars of peanut butter and jelly for the back-pack program, and $120.00 in the coin vortex to be divided between these missions.

Thank you to the volunteers from Federated Church who helped make VBS a success:
Science: Nicole Miller - leader, Dylan Bradley - helper
Missions: Doris Augspurger - leader, Lyla Bradley - helper
Rec: Brenda Sand, Eliot & Hunter Yang, Ryland & Bronwyn Prokopec - leaders
3 Year Old Leader: Aysha Cook, Sunnie Yang,
Preschool Leader: Anjel Garcia Lopez
Kindergarten Leader: Jackie Marker
2nd Grade Leaders: Kim Swierczek, Karen Grabowski
4th Grade Helper: Meg Weeder
Slide Show - Pastor Edward
Coordinator - Julie Graham/Brenda Sand
Set-Up/Clean-Up: Beatriz Garcia-Lopez, Israel Salcedo. Anjel Garcia-Lopez, Yang Family, Sarah Bettenhausen, Harold Stevens, Kristin Gausman







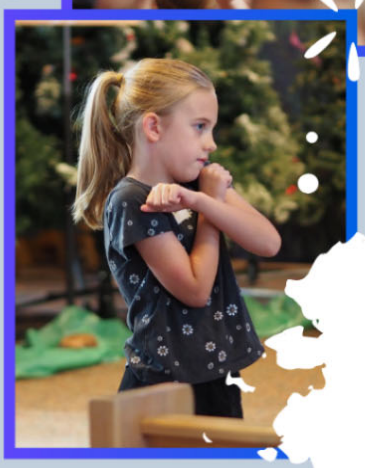
Vacation Bible Camp 2026

















Message from our Governing President

As I reach the halfway point in my year as Governing Council President, I continue to be deeply impressed by the willingness of our congregation to share so generously of your time, treasures, and talents. Your commitment to our church community is evident in so many ways, and it is a blessing to witness.

I am also continually reminded how fortunate we are to have Pastor Edward as the spiritual leader of our church. His faithful guidance, compassionate care, and steady presence are true gifts to all of us - and having his wife, Sunnie, walking alongside him is truly the cherry on top. Her warmth, support, and ongoing presence enriches our congregation more than words can say.

As our nation marks its 250th birthday, this is an especially fitting time to reflect on the freedom we have to practice our faith openly and without fear. This is a right every person should enjoy, and one we must never take for granted.

Looking ahead to our summer activities and the second half of 2026, please know how humbled and grateful I am to serve as your Governing Council President. Thank you for the trust you have placed in me and for all the ways you continue to strengthen the life and ministry of our church.

Bob Arp

Governing Council Summary

Your Governing Council met on Tuesday, June 23, 2026 at 7 p.m. for their monthly meeting.

The meeting was called to order by Bob Arp, President and Edward Yang gave the opening prayer. The Committee discussed the President's report, the Pastor's report and the Finance & Property report. The new marquee should be installed before the end of the month and the office staff will receive training on the operation of the new equipment. The roof repair and new shingles is complete. It has been inspected and appears to have been done very well. The security cameras for the three entrances of the church has been put on hold. We are waiting on a government grant to fund this project. The gym and the Fellowship Hall tile areas will be deep cleaned and recoated on August 3rd. The carpet tiles for the entire office area, the southwest entry area and the coat room will be installed after the garage sale. We are still receiving quotes.

We discussed all that the Membership & Growth committee is doing in preparation of Columbus Days. Nila Novotny will purchase a couple new banners that can be used throughout the year. Discussion of our church website and how to proceed. We will continue to update and use our current website. Steve Heinisch will visit with individuals about building a new, modern and improved site for the church. If there is anyone interested in this project please contact Steve Heinisch. Contribution statements will be printed the first week of July and placed in the Narthex for pickup.

The personnel department finalized a new job description for the pastor. It was accepted and approved. It's been a very busy June.

There is no Governing Council meeting in the month of July. The next governing council meeting will be August 25th.

Kathy Zywiec, Secretary

Homestead Presbytery/UCC Living Waters prayers

♦ June 7 *Pawnee City*

Prayers are requested for the well being and prosperity of the Pawnee City congregation. May they continue to grow as a caring and nurturing Christian community, as well as individuals, focusing on prayer, Bible study and worship.

♦ June 14 *Primrose*

Prayers are requested for the well being and prosperity of the Primrose congregation. May they continue to grow as a caring and nurturing Christian community, as well as individuals, focusing on prayer, Bible study and worship.

♦ June 21 *Schuyler*

Prayers are requested for the well being and prosperity of the Schuyler congregation. May they continue to grow as a caring and nurturing Christian community, as well as individuals, focusing on prayer, Bible study and worship.

♦ June 28 *Steele City*

We are so blessed by our partnership with Wymore, through joint services, activities, and deepening friendships. We continue to seek opportunities of outreach to our own Steele City community, including a kids game booth and downtown worship service for the annual Steele City Flea Market this summer. Christmas Eve always offers a special occasion for families in our small town to join in our worship. Pray that we rise to the task of loving our neighbors and lifting our praise to God.

UCC Living Waters Association:

- Creighton Faith United UMC/UCC (Creighton, NE 68729)
- Elgin Park Congregational UCC (Elgin, NE 68636)
- Fremont First Congregational UCC (Fremont, Ne 68025)
- Hartington First Congregational UCC (Hartington, NE 68739)

Ushers/Liturgists & Attendance Report (through June 28, 2026)

Ushers: Bill Royer, Stephanie Johnson, Georgia Behlen

Liturgists: Jackie Marker, Julie Graham, Sue McClure

Average Attendance :

In-Person Thursday Service: 21, 20, 15, xx

In-Person Sunday Service : 75, 79, 54, xx

Online Average Weekly Views: 221, 217, 218, xxx

Joys & Concerns for June 2026

- Pray for John Hahn and family, as John is currently having some health issues.
- Congratulations to Rod & Cindee Wachter on the birth of their grandson, Waylon Woods Wachter. Parents are Alex & Liz Wachter. Waylon was born on June 2, 2026.
- Pray for Shannon Lempeck, sister of Stephanie Johnson, she is suffering from liver disease.
- Congratulations to Reuben & Denise Hughes on the birth of their granddaughter, Monroe Mae Marie Alther, born on June 4, 2026. She is welcomed home by her parents, Brian & Shelby Alther, along with brothers, Holden and Case. Great grandmother is Donna Engquist.
- Pray for Mike Sand as he had his back surgery on Monday, June 15th and is now recovering.
- Pray for Carol Bottum who fell. She has asked for no visitors while recovering.
- Congratulations to Mitchell & Brea Griffith on the birth of their daughter, Malia Marie Griffith, born June 18, 2026. Grandparents are Bob & Annette Griffith. Pray for minor heart condition that will require surgery.

Activity Spotlight

Federated Church has many activities during the year that are sponsored by congregants - planning, setting up, attending, clean up, promoting, speaking, reading, serving, going above and beyond to do something for Federated Church.
This month's activity spotlight features the Communion Servers. Federated Church offers communion elements the first Sunday of each month and the preceding Thursday evening. The volunteers who help with Communion prepare, serve and cleanup on our Communion days. Thank you to all the wonderful people who have volunteered, you are truly appreciated!
If you would like to send your "activity" suggestion to the church to be added to our monthly newsletter, please send to fcstaff@federatedcolumbus.org, call the office at 402-564-2812 or just stop in the office and visit.

Daily Devotion books

THESE DAYS: DAILY DEVOTION books for July, August & September 2026
are available in the narthex and the church office!

Social Concerns & Missions

Social Concerns and Missions Committee is collecting
LEASHES, PINE SOL AND BLEACH
PAWS & CLAWS
July, Aug., Sept. 2026

Habitat for Humanity Build

Federated folks will once again supply water for the Habitat for Humanity Build beginning in August. We did this last year and it was very much appreciated. Hy-Vee mails coupons once a month with water for $1.99, and that would be a good time to buy water for this purpose. You may bring it anytime and place it outside the office, on the east wall. We will deliver the water in early August.

Join Teammates



Federated Church's Helping Hands Funds

Did you know… *"In the spring of 1975 Federated Church hosted and helped organize the Helping Hands Organization of Columbus…"* This gathering collaborated the efforts of a number of community groups and created low-cost housing, as well as a number of other wonderful outreaches to our community. This is where our "Helping Hands" funds were started!

In June we helped 3 people with gas and 1 with food.

2026 Columbus Rescue Mission

Federated Church prepares meals to the Rescue Mission the second Friday of each month. The new Rescue Mission is located in the old Mory's Haven, on 15th Street and 12th Avenue. Meals should consist of a main dish, a salad or vegetable and bread or rolls. Dessert is not necessary but always appreciated. Suggestions include tacos, soup, sloppy joes, casseroles, spaghetti, lasagna, pizza, burritos, enchiladas, or whatever you'd like to take. Because you need to plan for 25 people, it is a good idea to pair up with someone. The meal should be there by 5:00 p.m.

Katie Claus, Chair of Social Concerns & Missions Committee

All months have been taken - THANK YOU VOLUNTEERS!!!!

Platte County Food Pantry

The Platte County Food Pantry, located at 3020 18th Street in Suite 13 (Old Hospital). If you are in need of assistance, you can call at 402-563-4544. Some donation suggestions are: canned and boxed foods: soup, macaroni and cheese, ramen noodles, pasta and pasta sauce, veggies and fruits; staple food items: peanut butter, jelly, pancake syrup, crackers, tuna, rice, flour, sugar.



Weekly Email to Congregants

Do you receive our weekly MailChimp email? If you don't, but would like to, please contact the office and we will get you added to the list!

Newsletter News

Do you have something to share? We want to hear from you! If you would like an article added to our newsletter please contact us by email, phone, mail, or stop by in person. The deadline is the 20th of the month. Anything received after that date will go in the following months newsletter. Email: fcstaff@federatedcolumbus.org, Phone: 402-564-2812, Mail: 2704 15th St. PO Box 564, 68602

Membership & Growth Small Groups

Do you enjoy concerts, plays, or any upcoming arts and events in Columbus?
However do you stay home because you do not want to attend alone
and would rather go with others?
Here is your chance to go with others. The Membership and Growth
Committee Is getting a group of people together to attend these events.
If you are interested, please contact Ruth Lind and leave your name, phone number and email address. I will add your name or names to the list and will contact you when the next event comes up. If there is something you would like to see or attend, please give us your ideas.
Please contact the church office if you need Ruth's contact information.

Summer Special music

Special music for Sunday service has started.
There is a sign up sheet in the Narthex.
Singing, dancing, playing an instrument, any musical talent
you have would be welcome! If you know of an outside group that would like to share their time with us on a Sunday morning - that would be great!

Funeral Committee #3

Funeral Committee 3 Co-Chairs: Katie Claus, Barb & Paul Sanderson, Rick Porter
Committee Members will be contacted by the Co-Chairs.

Garage Sale Time Coming Up This Summer

The date for the Garage Sale will be July 18th

You can start dropping off your items now. Go to the office and someone will open one of the EC doors so you can unload your items. Linda Wheatley and Kathy Leischner will be the chairs for the 2026 garage/bake sale. This is a huge activity and many people are needed to make the event a success. Please help in any way you can. You are appreciated.
Remember there are some items we do NOT accept: televisions of any kind, computer monitors, mattresses & box springs, air conditioners, dehumidifiers, refrigerators, freezers, firearms, ammunition and baby car seats.





The Healing Starts With YOU. Become a Foster Parent

At Building Blocks we believe:

- Personalized Support to Foster Parents significantly decreases placement disruptions.
- Respite services are essential to rejuvenate the Foster Parents and give the Foster Family and Children a break.

Quality placements play a major role in the success of the child. That's why we consider the needs and personality of each child when matching him or her with our carefully selected foster parents.

Building Blocks Foster Care

Offering Foster Care Services in 50 counties across Nebraska.

Cherry - Brown - Rock - Keya Paha - Boyd - Holt - Blaine - Loup - Garfield - Wheeler - Custer - Valley - Greeley - Sherman - Howard - Buffalo - Hall -Kearney - Phelps- Adams - Harlan - Franklin- Webster - Merrick - Polk - Butler - Saunders - Hamilton - York - Seward - Knox - Antelope - Cedar - Dixon - Dakota - Pierce - Madison - Wayne - Thurston - Burt - Cuming - Stanton - Boone - Nance - Platte - Colfax - Dodge - Washington - Clay - Nuckolls

Building Blocks for Community Enrichment, Inc. is a non-profit organization founded in 1998. Children were seen separated from their biological families by hundreds of miles simply because there were so few foster homes in their local area. Building Blocks recruits, licenses, and supports foster homes in Northern and Central Nebraska. Building Blocks aims to make Foster Parents successful by providing them training and support as they care for youth in our area.

Call us toll free: 1-800-689-0945
www.buildingblocksforkids.org

Center for Survivors

The Center's needs often change due to shortages or surpluses of certain items. Please call ahead if you have questions regarding needs, 402-564-2155.
At this time, the Center is in need and accepting donations for the following NEW personal hygiene products: shampoo, conditioner, liquid body wash, deodorant, makeup removing wipes, facial tissues, toilet paper, and paper towels.

Keep Columbus Beautiful

Keep Columbus Beautiful is an affiliate of Keep America Beautiful.
To find out more information go to https://kcbne.com

Meals on Wheels

Make sure to sign up for 2026 Meals on Wheels Schedule!
Please contact Kathy Leischner if you can deliver for approximately one hour each day during Federated's scheduled week!

Erna R. Badstieber Paws & Claws Adoption Center

Paws & Claws Adoption Center (The Platte Valley Humane Society) is located at 2124 13th Street. The hours are Monday through Friday, Noon to 4:30pm, and Saturdays Noon to 3:30pm.
You can call 402-562-5683 to meet your future pet! Regular needs include: Clorox, Pine Sol, Paper Towels, Old Linens, Stamps, Copy Paper, Gift Cards from Grocery, Hardware and Farm Stores.
They have a number of animals available, go to https://www.pawsandclawsne.org!


Goose


Cereal


Crybaby



7/03	Aurora Irby	7/19	Shirley Johnson, Kaitlynn Warren, Nicholas Warren
7/04	Eliot Yang	7/20	Mark Garcia Lopez
7/06	Ruth Schlobohm	7/21	Rodger Grisham, Lucas Miller
7/07	Terry Millard	7/24	Meg Weeder
7/12	Cooper Luedtke, Michael Mohr	7/26	Rae Fulton, Steve Heinisch, Coden Prokopec
7/13	Madden Luedtke, Byron Meyer, Tessa Miller, Barbara Sanderson, Kathy Senior	7/28	Placido Campos Jorge
7/17	Lauretta Dixon	7/29	Michael Sand
7/18	Drew Wolfe		

If you see a mistake or missing information on the birthday list, call the church office so we can update our records.

Financial Summary (May 16 - June 15, 2026)

Income	
General Funds (Checking):	**$37,679.31**
Total General Fund	$37,679.31
Memorials:	**$50.00**
Undesignated	$50.00

Designated Funds (Savings):	**$1,608.75.00**
Sale of Books/Youth Mission Fund	$43.25
Pentecost	$310.00
Calvin Crest camps	$100.00
Youth Fund	$522.50
Rent (voting polls)	$40.00
Vacation Bible Camp	$20.00
OGHS - One Great Hour Sharing	$300.00
Misc. Income	$23.00
Wedding/Special Event fee	$350.00

Expenses	
General Fund Expenses:	**$40,666.26**
Homestead Presb., UCC, LWA	$876.60
Office Supplies (postage, phones, copier leasing, equipment, advertising, etc.	$1,379.31
Utilities	$1,998.19
Custodial Supplies	$70.48
Vacation Bible Camp	$396.13
Grounds Care	$1,066.00
Board of Pensions	$3,441.47
Insurance Board	$7,086.50
Bookkeeping fee	$550.00
Pulpit Supply	$450.00
Music	$95.83
New Equipment/Upgrades	$1,482.29
Staff Salaries	$21,773.46

Designated Fund Expenses:	**$48,893.48**
Patriot Roofing	$48,629.75
Café LaFed supplies	$38.73
Helping Hands	$225.00

2026 Committee Chairs and Meeting Days/Times

In the table below you can find the 2026 Chairperson(s) and meeting days and times for each committee. If you belong to a committee and have not heard from your chair, please contact them for information. If you do not have any contact information for them, you can call the office for assistance.

Committee or Group	*Chairperson*	*Tentative Meeting Day/Time*
Christian Education Committee	Brenda Sand	1st Tuesday of the month, 6:30pm
Endowment Committee	Marcia Grant	Will meet as necessary
Finance & Property Committee	Terry Norris	3rd Tuesday of the month, 6:30pm
Membership & Growth Committee	Nila Novotny	2nd Monday of the month, 6:00pm
Nominating Committee	Bob Arp	*To be determined*
Order of St. Andrew	Peg Meyer	1st Monday of the month, 4:30pm
Personnel Committee	Marilyn Vrana	3rd Monday of the month, 5:00pm
Social Concerns & Missions Committee	Katie Claus	2nd Monday of the month, 5:00pm
Stewardship Committee	Linda Wheatley	Will meet as necessary
Worship & Music Committee	Steve Heinisch	1st Tuesday of the month, 7:00pm
Youth Ministry Committee	Max Porter	2nd Sunday of the month, 11:00am
Foundation	Doug Williams, President	Quarterly/as Necessary
Governing Council	Bob Arp, President Steve Heinisch, VP	4th Tuesday of the month, 7:00pm

Reminder to all Chairpersons: If, for any reason, your meeting has been postponed, rescheduled, cancelled or changed to a different day of the month or time, please contact the office staff regarding the new schedule. Thank you!

FEDERATED CHURCH
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Joie Taylor

325 SW 7th Street

Stuart, IA 50250

July 2026 Newsletter

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Decoding the Liturgical Color Scheme

Green During the majority of the church year, which is commonly called "ordinary time," the color that you will find is green. Because the color green is so often associated with life, the use of green during the seasons and the time where there is "nothing special" going on in the life of the church (no big festivals or holiday) reminds us that God is present among us, breathing life into us and into our church.