



# FEDERATED NEWSLETTER

## Upcoming Events

- ♦ June 4 - Service for Wholeness & Healing, 4pm, Library
- ♦ June 8 - 4 pm to 6 pm "Shred at Fed",  
Northwest parking lot;  
free-will, non-perishable food donations requested
- ♦ June 10 - Men's Fellowship Breakfast,  
8:30am, Fellowship Hall
- ♦ June 12 - 16 - Vacation Bible Camp hosted by Federated
- ♦ June 18 - Start bringing your garage sale items!
- ♦ July 4 - Church office closed
- ♦ July 9 - Youth leave for Mission Trip

If you have articles, events or other information you would like included in the newsletter, you can email it to [fcstaff@federatedcolumbus.org](mailto:fcstaff@federatedcolumbus.org). The deadline for submitting information for Newsletters is the 20th of the prior month, e.g. July 2023 Newsletter deadline will be June 20th, 2023.

## PASTOR'S REPORT

Every few months, I am notified by church members that they received a strange text or email from me. I reply that it was not me; it was a scammer. Unfortunately, church members are often targeted – this is not unique to our church. I suspect that scammers are trying to take advantage of the trusting nature of people who trust God and church leaders. While I am thankful for your trust and support, I would never want you to be deceived by scammers.

Here are some steps to keep from falling for a scam:

- If you receive an unsolicited email/text message that appears to be coming from me (pastor) or another church leader, check to see if it is the correct email address or phone number. Incorrect email/number would be a 'red flag' for being a scam. Unfortunately, some scammers are sophisticated and able to make email/number appear correct.
- Usually, a scammer will make a general request for help. If you reply, then they will be more specific with asking for gift card number or other valuable information. Our church does occasionally ask for help with gift cards (for example, with Vacation Bible Camp supplies), but we will never ask for gift card information over phone or email. When you receive request for financial help, then you can definitely know that it is a scam. Feel free to ignore and/or delete messages. You can let our office know so that we are aware.

I would like to share about other common scams along with practical tips from Brain and Life Magazine (Dec 2022/Jan 2023 issue):

### Tech Support

- **How it works:** While a person is using the internet on a computer or mobile phone, a pop-up message appears saying the device is damaged and needs repair. If the person responds, the scammer requests remote access to the device, or a fee to repair it or to purchase or renew software or security subscriptions.
- **What to do:** Do not respond. "Most tech support services do not proactively reach out to individuals to fix computer issues," says Genevieve Waterman, director of economic security at the National Council on Aging.

### Customer Service

- **How it works:** Reaching consumers by phone call, email, social media, or instant message, the scammers misrepresent themselves as customer support personnel from a financial institution or utility company. "The scammers persuasively ask people to make wire transfers to accounts, purchase large amounts of prepaid cards, or mail large amounts of cash overnight," says Waterman. Often, those responding will be asked to enter personal details such as their Social Security or driver's license numbers. This can lead to identity theft, where perpetrators impersonate the victims to make purchases or otherwise exploit their assets—like submitting health insurance information to get medical care, or filing false tax returns under the Social Security number to show eligibility for benefits.
- **What to do:** "Never give out secure information to an unfamiliar third party," says Waterman. That would include passwords and bank account numbers. Consider subscribing to an identity theft protection service, such as Lifelock (\$10 to \$30 a month), that monitors personal and financial information with real-time email and text message alerts about any suspicious activity.

### Nondelivery/Nonpayment

- **How it works:** Victims make purchases from bogus vendors, so they never receive what they paid for, or they are sent an email or text claiming goods or services were shipped or provided but payment is still due. This tactic is common during the holidays, when scammers exploit people's desire to find products in short supply and make payments in return for quick deliveries.
- **What to do:** Pay close attention to the website or email address—often, it varies from a real company's address by one character, or the extension is different (ggoogle.com instead of google.com, for instance). Always verify an unfamiliar company's existence before making a purchase or submitting any money. “Low price is the top reason people fall victim to nondelivery scams after ‘purchasing’ a product online,” says Waterman. “If the deal seems too good to be true, it probably is.” If you know about fake vendor websites and emails, tell your loved ones about them.

### **Grandparent Fraud**

- **How it works:** Perpetrators pretend to be a grandchild (or other relative) who is in trouble—having been in an accident or arrested in a foreign country—and urgently needs funds. Some scammers even send couriers to pick up cash or gift cards from the victims, says Waterman. That makes seniors vulnerable both financially and physically.
- **What to do:** Tell your older relatives about the scam, and suggest that they delete any emails like this without replying, and if they get a phone call with a message like this, that they hang up immediately and call the grandchild directly. Consider signing up your loved ones for the National Do Not Call Registry <donotcall.gov> to prevent telemarketers and potential scam artists from reaching them.

Entire article on “How to Protect Loved Ones from Financial Scams” can be found here: <https://www.brainandlife.org/articles/how-to-protect-loved-ones-from-financial-scams>

I wish there was a way to stop all scams. Sadly, it seems like scams will continue. Please stay informed and protect yourself. If you experience emotional distress, please talk with someone: I am available for conversation and support.

Grace and peace,  
Edward



## GOVERNING COUNCIL MEETING SUMMARY - MAY

It is a pleasure to be working with such a great group of people on Governing Council. We are working as a team, asking questions, finding answers and learning about all the different areas of church work, committees, building upkeep, policies and procedures, and our church foundation and beliefs.

This month there was discussion on building upkeep and general maintenance. Wilma Arp and Wayne McCormick from Finance and Property Committee presented a Work To- Do list and progress on those projects. Highlighted was the need and recommendation for keyless entry door locks and a three-year project to update the Education Center building. Additional information was requested from Finance and Property committee before approving funds for these two projects.

John McPhail highlighted the activities and the work of the Personnel Committee. They have completed writing a Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual. This is a great resource to have available for all staff, the Personnel committee and Governing Council members. The committee has completed the annual reviews for staff. They have advertised for a Choir Director. This committee supports the Head of Staff and other staff much like a Human Resources department. Please keep the members and work of this committee in your prayers this month.

In other business the Governing Council

- Approved Pastor Edward's updated request for vacation and educational leave.
- Affirmed the Baptism email vote for Helena Rae Griffith on June 11th.
- Brenda and Pastor Edward gave an update of the youth mission trip this summer with Youth Works from July 9 - 14th.
- The Governing Council retreat has been scheduled at the St. Benedict Center in Schuyler on Saturday August 26 from 10:00 am- 4:00 pm. The purpose of this retreat is to develop goals for Federated Church.

Next month the Governing Council meeting will be held on June 27th at 7:00 PM with Stewardship and Pipe Organ Task force committee activities to be shared.

Julie Canaday Graham, Federated Church President



Federated's Annual Garage Sale  
is scheduled for July 29th.  
You can start bringing  
your stuff June 18th!

### *Children's Sunday*

We celebrated the children of Federated Church with bounce houses, face painting and a youth skit on the 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm. Special thanks to Alyse Wolfe for sharing her artistic talents with the younger kids!



### *Graduation Sunday*

Congratulations to our graduates Riley Gausman, Annie Lange and Macyn Norris.



### *Vacation Bible Camp*



June 12<sup>th</sup> -16<sup>th</sup>

8:15 am – 11:30 am

Register in the church office or scan here:



**HELPERS NEEDED!**

Contact Brenda Sand at 402.276.2080 to help with VBC. We can't do it without you!

## OSA MEAL MAKING



The members of Order of St. Andrew cooked and froze 30 meals on March 22nd. These meals are given to congregants who are ill, recovering from illnesses or surgeries or homebound. Please contact one of the committee members if you know of a congregant who may be in need of a meal!

## SOCIAL CONCERNS & MISSIONS

For the months of May and June we will be collecting paper towels and toilet paper for the Center for Survivors. July, August and September will be leashes, Pine sol and Bleach for Paws and Claws; and October, November, December we will be collecting new items --gloves, mittens, scarves, and hats for the Angel Tree. Watch for these items to go on sale! Summer is a good time to stock up.

In July we will be filling hygiene kits for folks displaced by tornadoes, flooding, and other natural disasters. More information to come.

July 15th is Federated's day to help with Habitat for Humanity. Workers are needed. We also need lunch items (sandwiches, chips, cookies, for example) and a snack for the afternoon. We also will need bottled water. There will be a sign up sheet in the Narthex shortly.

The months of October, November, and December still need to be filled for meals for the Rescue Mission.

..."The Son of Man did **not** come **to be served, but to serve,**" Matthew 20:28

**Social Concerns and Missions Committee**

## UPDATING BROCHURES IN NARTHEX

If anyplace you work or volunteer has new brochures (not outdated) please collect some and bring them to church for the rack in the library. Thank you!

**Social Concerns and Missions Committee**

## JOYS & CONCERNS FOR MAY 2023

- ◆ Congratulations to Lucas Miller, son of Nicole & Matt Miller, grandson of Sherry Miller, who graduated from UNO on May 19th with a Bachelor's in Computer Engineering. He has accepted a position with the Kiewit Business Center in Omaha.
- ◆ Congratulations to Tait Jack Anderson, grandson of Pat Anderson, who graduated from Pensacola State College Charter Academy.
- ◆ Congratulations to Lilly Uhlmann, granddaughter of Bobbi Uhlmann, will graduate on May 20th from UNL, majoring in History/Global Studies, minoring in Archeology, as a Chancellor's Scholar with Highest Distinction.
- ◆ Congratulations to Reagan Gausman, daughter of Stuart & Kristen Gausman, who will be graduating May 6th from Midland University with a Bachelor of Arts Management degree with a theatre concentration and a minor in Communications.
- ◆ Congratulations to Coden Prokopec, son of Carrie & Aaron Prokopec, who will be graduating May 6th from Midland University with a Bachelor of Sciences in Nursing degree.
- ◆ Congratulations to Jessica Sand, daughter of Mike & Brenda Sand, is graduating from Doane University this Saturday, May 14th. Jessica graduates with a major in Psychology, and emphasis in Criminology and a minor in Sociology. Jessica has accepted a position with Jenda Family Services as a Family Support Worker.
- ◆ Congratulations to Mitchell Norris, son of Terry and Renee Norris. Mitchell is graduating May 13th from Doane University with a bachelor's in computer science and a minor in music. He will be working at UNL at the College of Business in the IT department after graduation.
- ◆ Congratulations to Christian James (CJ) Pickrel. CJ graduated magna cum laude May 6th from Chadron State College with a business degree. CJ is the grandson of Jan Pickrel.
- ◆ Congratulations to Madison Hill, daughter of Dr. Jennifer Hill (Zoucha) and Chad Hill, granddaughter of Marv & Barb Zoucha. Madison graduated from

University of Kansas with a degree in Biology and a minor in Spanish.

- ◆ Pray for family of Gary McCormick, brother of Wayne & Jill McCormick. Gary passed away on May 17th.
- ◆ Pray for Jan Pickrel who fell and is recovering.
- ◆ Pray for a quick recovery for Brenda Sand, who is recovering from gall bladder surgery.
- ◆ Pray for Rod & Georgia Behlen, Rod had spine surgery on May 9th.
- ◆ Prayers for Rod Behlen who is now recovering from his spine surgery.
- ◆ Pray for Rachael Griffith, daughter-in-law of Annette Griffith, who is recovering from gall bladder surgery.
- ◆ Pray for John Curry who had hip replacement surgery.
- ◆ We would like to thank our Federated family for all the prayers, cards, visits and calls made during the recent death of our precious grandson David. The outpouring of care and support from the Columbus community has been unbelievable and we cannot express our appreciation enough. Carol and Pete Bennett
- ◆ Pray for Leroy Kallweit and family. Leroy has been placed on hospice. Prayers for the Kallweit family, Leroy passed away on May 7, 2023.
- ◆ The family of Leroy Kallweit would like to extend their appreciation for all the kindnesses shown in the last several weeks and since Leroy's passing.
- ◆ **Homestead Presbytery: Auburn**  
Not much has changed since last year at our church so we are still praying for a new pastor. We would also lift up our Lost & Found Creative Ministry Team as they work on their special performances. We pray for continued growth of our congregation and are thankful for all the blessings this past year has brought us.
- ◆ **Homestead Presbytery: Wayne**  
Last fall the Wayne FPC Session approved a new worship format which we call CoffeeHouse. CoffeeHouse is an informal worship service held on the third Sunday of the month. We meet in Fellowship Hall rather than the sanctuary. A member of the congregation leads a time of

## JOYS & CONCERNS FOR MAY 2023 (CONT.)

discussion on a topic/scripture they have selected instead of a traditional sermon. The pastor creates the service liturgy based on the discussion leader's choices. The liturgy is shortened to allow about 25 minutes for discussion. Worshipers are seated at tables of four or five people which leads to rich conversation about the "questions of the day" brought out by the discussion leader. Over the last several months, we've discussed miracles, prayer, what being a neighbor means and requires of us and names for God. FPC members enjoy getting to know one another on a deeper level as well as the coffee and treats available before, during and after worship. We pray that this informal format might encourage visitors to join us. We are also grateful to have our Sunday School restarted and a core group of volunteer teachers. We pray that we might welcome more children and families during 2023.

♦ **Homestead Presbytery: Bancroft** The First Presbyterian Church in Bancroft, NE requests continued prayers for our congregational members and their families' health and wellbeing. Please send prayers for our small church so we may stay open to continue learning God's word and spread God's love for His children to others. We lift our prayers for all who have closed their church doors and all those who continue with small member numbers, similar to ours, but mighty hearts to fight to keep their churches open. We ask for prayers for all small churches in the area as we are heart

broken to hear of so many churches closing. The world being in chaos, our hearts get heavier everyday as God's children of all ages are feeling anxious by all the fighting, lying, killing, shootings, war, viruses, shouting, and humans thinking they are God we pray together with the many believers in Christ that God himself is in control and He loves each one of us individually. We appreciate your prayers and positive thoughts sent our way. Thank you and God Bless America.

♦ **Homestead Presbytery: Beatrice** being commissioned on April 23. She will be starting June 1st. Prayers for the continuing missions of our little food pantry which has been getting a lot of use and to our sweet dreams ministry that provides beds to families in need of a bed for their children.

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

♦ **UCC Living Waters Association:**  
**Norfolk Congregational UCC, Norfolk, NE 68701**  
**Albion Congregational UCC, Albion, NE 68620**  
**Arlington Community UCC, Arlington, NE 68002**  
**Blair Congregational UCC, Blair, NE 68008**

## HABITAT FOR HUMANITY 2023

The Federated designated day for Habitat for Humanity is Saturday, July 15th. We have been asked to bring food---rolls or cookies for a morning break, and sandwiches, hot dogs, etc., chips and something sweet for lunch. We also will provide water.



## MAY CHANCEL FLOWERS

- ~ Chancel Flowers are given by Castner family in honor of their parents' Anniversary! (May 14th)
- ~ Chancel Flowers are given by Gail Wurdeman and Sara Aerni, In loving memory of our parents, Irene & Harold Wurdeman.  
Happy Mother's Day, Mom and Happy Birthday, Dad! (May 14th)
- ~ Chancel Flowers are given for Carol Bottum for her 90th birthday from her family.  
Happy Birthday! (May 21st)

## MAY USHERS/ LITURGISTS & ATTENDANCE REPORT

***All information is for May 1st through May 24th***

Ushers : Bill Royer, Steve McClure,

Sharyn Beard, Mike Beard, Tim Warren

Youth Ushers : Emma McHugh, Ellie Porter

Liturgists : Nicole Miller, John McPhail, Julie Graham

Average Attendance : Thursday Service - 19

Sunday Service - 116

Online Average - 80

Total Weekly Attendance - 215

## H.I.S. PUPPETEERS



HEY, Puppeteers and Puppeteer wanna-bes!!!  
Let me know if you are interested.  
Please contact the church office for Julie's contact information.

## RESCUE MISSION MEALS 2023

Thank you for filling in so many slots for the Rescue Mission meals!  
There are only 3 left- October, November, December.  
This is always the second Friday of the month.

## 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.

This is not an all inclusive list, any non-perishable food items are needed.



## 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..."*<sup>1</sup>

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!

Federated's Helping Hands funds helps individuals and families in our community with things like food, fuel, utilities and rent.

In 2023, Federated has assisted 5 people with rent, 12 families with fuel and a bus ticket for a veteran who wanted to go be with his family. This assistance has totaled \$797.65.

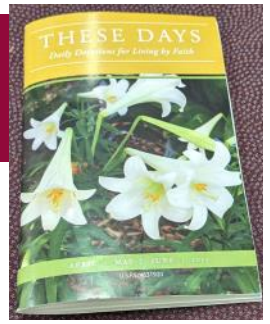
<sup>1</sup> Excerpt from 'In Ministry Together; Federated Church -- A Centennial History; July 2, 1014 - July 2, 2014'; pg. 38-39

## FUNERAL COMMITTEE 2

Co Chairs: Steve & Marcia Dewald, Larry & Sue Mares, Linda & Guy Wheatley, Barb Olson  
Committee Members will be contacted by the Co-Chairs

## SECOND QUARTER *THESE DAYS* 2023 NOW AVAILABLE

*These Days* second quarter booklet is now available  
in the office and the Narthex



## 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, paper towels, and men's deodorant.



## MISSION HEART, INC.

Mission Heart, Inc. is located at 412 "G" Street in Central City. Some donation suggestions include:

Clothing items, Linens, School supplies, Baby items, Sewing supplies, Medical supplies, Over-the-counter medications, Gallon-sized or Quart-sized zipping bags, Travel-sized soaps, shampoos/conditioners & lotions, pill bottles are accepted without labels

For more information, go to: [missionheartworld.weebly.com](http://missionheartworld.weebly.com)



## KEEP COLUMBUS BEAUTIFUL



Keep Columbus Beautiful is an affiliate of Keep America Beautiful. Their mission is to provide education and programs on litter reduction and recycling for the beautification of our community!

To find out where and what you can recycle, go to <https://kcbne.com>

## MEALS ON WHEELS

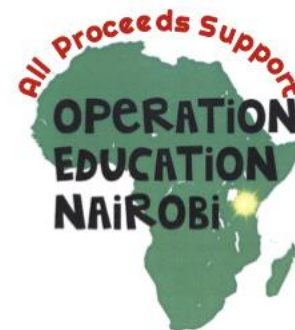


Make sure to sign up for 2023 Meals on Wheels Schedule!  
Please contact Kathy Leischner,  
402-276-7415, [kathy.leischner@yahoo.com](mailto:kathy.leischner@yahoo.com)  
if you can deliver for approximately one hour each day  
during Federated's scheduled week!

## OPERATION EDUCATION NAIROBI



Operation Education Nairobi is now a  
Local Benevolence and has been added to  
the Federated Church Budget for 2023.  
Watch bulletins and newsletters for  
upcoming fundraisers and events!



## 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: Clumping Cat Litter, Clorox, Pine Sol, Paper Towels, Old  
Linens, Stamps, Copy Paper, Dog & Cat Toys, Collars & Leashes, Wet Cat & Dog  
Food, Kitten Food and Milk Replacer,  
Gift Cards from Grocery, Hardware and Farm Stores.

They have a number of animals available, including the ones pictured below.



## FINANCE AT A GLANCE

Contributions - April 2023	
<b>General Funds (Checking):</b>	<b>\$33,913.92</b>
2023 Contributions	\$32,913.92
Misc. Income - Flossie Watson	\$500.00
Misc. Income - Organ Fund	\$500.00
<b>Designated Funds (Savings):</b>	<b>\$4,549.68</b>
One Great Hour of Sharing	\$599.68
Church Bus/Van - Sale of Van	\$3,200.00
Building Maintenance	\$50.00
Landscaping Fund - Commemorative Trees	\$700.00
<b>Memorials:</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>
<b>Interest Income:</b>	<b>\$546.25</b>
Savings	\$546.25

Expenses - April 2023	
<b>General Fund Expenses:</b>	<b>\$32,447.67</b>
Utilities	\$4,601.22
Other Budgeted Expenses	\$27,346.45
Misc. Exp. - Flossie Watson	\$500.00
<b>Designated Funds (Savings):</b>	<b>\$1,375.83</b>
Easter Lilies	\$423.00
Landscaping	\$400.00
Music Department - Bell Choir Music	\$292.82
Helping Hands - Non-Members	\$260.01
<b>Memorial Fund:</b>	<b>\$40.29</b>
Kitchen Supplies - paid to Hy-Vee (Lenten Lunches)	\$40.29



Income	\$39,009.85
Expenses	\$33,863.79
Balance	\$5,146.06



# Happy Birthday!



Beth Sharpe	6/01	Hadley McHugh	6/17
Kevin Kallweit, Marlyn Wurdeman	6/02	Bronwyn Prokopec	6/18
Andree Hoeman, Peg Meyer	6/03	Marilyn Vrana	6/20
Nicole Miller, Kevin Perrin, Karen Whitney	6/05	Taytum Miller, Hailey Rathje	6/21
Tyrone McHugh	6/06	Emily Grant, Mia Grant, Parker Grant	6/24
Pat Scheuneman, Brielle Wolfe	6/12	Ben Vrana	6/25
Antonio Garcia	6/13	John Novotny	6/26
Terry Hoeman	6/15	John McPhail	6/27
Toni Gumm, Hudson Luedtke	6/16	Caleb Hast, Marcene Wurdeman	6/28

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

## Happy Anniversary!

Ardell & Marcene Wurdeman will be celebrating  
their 40th anniversary in June! Congratulations!



## 2023 COMMITTEE CHAIRS AND MEETING DAYS/TIMES

In the table below you can find the 2023 Chairperson 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.

<b>Committee or Group</b>	<b>Chairperson</b>	<b>Meeting Day/Time</b>
Christian Education Committee	Pat Anderson	1st Tuesday of the month, 6:30pm
Endowment Committee	Donna Augspurger	Will meet as necessary
Finance & Property Committee	Terry Norris and Mark Weeder	3rd Tuesday of the month, 6:30pm
Membership & Growth Committee	Jesse Abrego	2nd Monday of the month, 6:30pm
Nominating Committee	Julie Graham	<i>To be determined</i>
Order of St. Andrew	Peg Meyer	1st Monday of the month, 5:15pm
Personnel Committee	John McPhail	2nd Tuesday of the month, 7:00pm
Social Concerns & Missions Committee	Katie Claus	2nd Monday of the month, 5:00pm
Stewardship Committee	To Be Determined	4th Thursday of the month, 5:30pm
Worship & Music Committee	John Lohr and Sue McClure	1st Tuesday of the month, 7:00pm
Youth Ministry Committee	Parker Grant	2nd Sunday of the month, 11:00am
Foundation	Doug Williams, President	Quarterly/as Necessary
Governing Council	Julie Graham, President Alison Wagner, 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  
2704 15<sup>th</sup> STREET  
PO BOX 564  
COLUMBUS, NE, 68602-0564

## JUNE 2023 NEWSLETTER



### **Silent Auction:**

Eggshell Nautilus K 53 N 5 China set, includes 490 pieces;  
***Bidding closes June 4th***

## DECODING THE LITURGICAL COLOR SCHEME

**Green = Presence** 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 times when there is “nothing special” going on in the life of the church (no big festivals or holidays) reminds us that God is present among us, breathing life into us and into our church.