

NOWATA UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

OCTOBER 2021 NEWSLETTER



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The Radical Shift of Pastoral Ministry

Written by Pastor Jeffrey Rickman

My grandfather was a Methodist minister. He served the Methodist denominations from the 1950s until his retirement in the late 1980s. He did ministry when this denomination was still growing within the US. My grandmother remembers fixing dinner for church members who were invited over to dine weekly. She remembers her husband going out at the same time every evening to introduce himself to people in their neighborhood when he was charged with starting a new church. He itinerated (moved around to different churches frequently) loyally and effectively, eventually serving as a district superintendent in the Oklahoma Annual Conference.

He served at a time of great latitude in the church. The American culture wars began in the 1960s. The Methodists positioned themselves to accommodate everyone on both sides of the divide. They generally decided to play nice until the last couple of decades, resulting in our current buildup to schism. In my grandfather's time in ministry, people still wore their finest clothes to church. Children still attended worship, expected to sit quietly and obediently. Families attended worship and Sunday school regularly, as well as Sunday and Wednesday evening worship services.



A charge to keep I have,
A God to glorify,
A never-dying soul to save,
And fit it for the sky.

— Charles Wesley
A Charge to Keep I Have (Hymn, 1762)

www.nowataumc.org



My parents served in ministry during the transition years between my grandfather and me. I watched as the culture shifted outside of the church, relegating religion to a more peripheral and optional position with respect to our cultural fabric. I watched as technological innovations radically shifted the nature of a pastor's daily life, eventually introducing computer screens where people's faces and voices used to be. I watched as social capital declined for all voluntary associations took hold, people generally choosing more and more to stay at home than to go out and interact with friends and acquaintances. I saw a new program/promotional strategy rolled out in our denomination every few years, building up large, (sub)urban, commercial churches at the expense of salt of the earth ministry. I did not like what I saw in the church, so I left it.

Then Christ called me back. It was simple. I read the bible in earnest and let the Lord speak to me. Or rather, he forced me to listen, and I was changed. I saw that the church is essential to save this world. I saw that the general trends within the North American church, and the West more broadly, have been anemic, suicidal, and, well, reprobate. I saw that, as a believer with my background, knowing what I know, I had no option but to serve in whatever capacity I can.

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"Christ called me back. It was simple. I read the bible in earnest and let the Lord speak to me."

So I'm serving alongside you in a small town that most people of the world have no idea exists. I try to be seen and heard by our world so as to direct them to Christ, but so far people are very good at ignoring. We live in a very different world than the one my grandfather ministered to, with different challenges and threats. Christian ministry has never been easy, but the challenges of our time really are...well...challenging. So thank you for continuing to serve alongside me as we try to minister to our town together. And thank you for taking these things seriously when so many others choose not to. The Christian faith is not meant to be done alone. The more we do this dance together, the longer we walk with Christ, the more meaningful this becomes for me. Thank you.

Find Us Online!

An easy way to promote our church and share about your faith is to share our church's online content. Follow us on Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. We are also airing a new podcast as well! If you are unsure how find our content or share it with your friends, please stop by the church office on a weekday so that Pastor Jeffrey or Sara Beth can teach you how!

Facebook:

www.facebook.com/nowatamethodist

Twitter: @NowataUMC

YouTube: Nowata United Methodist Church

Podcast: Nowata Methodist Podcast

Coming Up in October

- October 3
Deana G.'s birthday
Vicki M.'s birthday
- October 8
Sherri C.'s birthday
- October 9 from 7am-10am
Delaware Methodist Church
Breakfast
- October 12 at 6:30pm
Administrative Board
meeting
- October 18
Merri L.'s birthday
- October 19
Jimmy L.'s birthday
- October 24
Charge Conference at 4pm
- October 31
Potluck after worship

Happening Every Week

Worship: Sundays at 11am

Women's Prayer Group:
Wednesdays at 10:30am

Bible Reading Hour:
Thursdays at 6:30pm

Office Hours: Monday-Friday
from 9am-Noon

Contact Us

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A History of First United Methodist Church of Nowata (Part 2):

Information gathered & compiled by Mrs. Chas E. Shafer & Floy Y. Shafer

In 1903 the first church parsonage was built. By 1906 the church had gained 100 new members and the addition seen here was added onto the existing church building. R.J. Lamb pastored the church from 1903 to 1905 & J.D. Voce pastored the church from 1905 to 1907.

For more information about our church's history you can visit our website:
<http://www.nowataumc.org/history>



New Video: On Wills and Trusts

Pastor Jeffrey and Sara Beth sat down to talk through their own personal experience of establishing a trust. They offer reflections on their experience, what options they considered in the process, and how you may go about establishing your own end of life directives. Watch their discussion and consider the ways you may be a blessing to this community of faith after you die. You can find the recorded video, 'Establishing a Will & Trust Discussion', on our church's YouTube channel.

New Church Directories

It is time to publish a new church directory for our church. This hardback book, including photos of members and constituents of our beloved church, will serve not only as aid to new members as they learn who everyone is, but it will also include our church history, a contact directory, and a section honoring many of our departed members. We are excited to include each you in this new publication.

Pastor Jeffrey and TJ will be taking photos for the directory after worship on Sundays, October 24th and 31st. Please make plans to stay a few minutes after worship to have your photo taken for the directory. If you are not available on a Sunday, you may schedule a time with them during the week on a Wednesday, Thursday, or Friday from 9am-12pm.



Corner of Appreciation

We want to express our appreciation for those who serve our church in various ways on Sundays and throughout the week.

We appreciate Jeff Holt and Amber Staehle reading scripture in worship in September.

We appreciate Mike Staehle greeting folks as they enter every Sunday morning. We also appreciate the work he has done watering the flowers, power washing the sidewalks, and repairing the ice maker.

We appreciate the work Karen Wilson and Taylor Lewis gave in the kitchen on potluck Sunday.

We appreciate Bobby Wilson spearheading and organizing the singing ministry to the local nursing homes.

