

# May 2025

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
319 DOWNTOWN PLAZA  
FAIRMONT, MN 56031-1776

**Nonprofit**  
**U.S. POSTAGE PAID**  
**Fairmont, MN 56031**



First Congregational UCC  
319 Downtown Plaza  
Fairmont, MN 56031



WHEELCHAIR  
ACCESSIBLE



*First Congregational  
United Church of Christ  
Fairmont, Minnesota*

Rev. Cory Germain  
Minister

Christina Hainy  
Administrative Assist.

Joyce Jorgenson  
Choir Director

How to reach us....

Church Office  
507-235-5382

Hours: Tuesday—Friday  
9:30 a.m.—12:30 p.m.

**E-mail**

[uccsecretary319@gmail.com](mailto:uccsecretary319@gmail.com)

**Web Site Address**

[www.fairmontucc.org](http://www.fairmontucc.org)

**Rev. Cory Germain**  
**Office Hours:**

Monday 9:30 a.m.—12:30 p.m.

Tuesday 9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Wednesday 12:30 p.m. through  
evening meetings & activities

Thursday 9:30 a.m.—12:30 p.m.

Rev. Cory's phone: 507-399-8282

**Worship Hours**

**Worship 10:00**

**Sunday school 11:00**

**Communion the second  
Sunday of every month.**



# May 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				<b>1</b> 11:30 MRCI (FS/HH) 1:00 TOPS (Ch)  —Meals on Wheels delivery—	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b> 9:00 Women's Coffee & Conversation (HH) 2:00 Highway Cleanup day
<b>4</b> 10:00 Worship 11:00 Sunday school & Adult Sunday school <b>12:00 Sunday Funday</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b> 10:00 Lakeview Communion  5:30 Sanctuary reserved for comm. choir	<b>7</b> 5:30 Mission Board 6:00 Worship Board 7:00 Choir	<b>8</b> 11:30 MRCI (FS/HH) 1:00 TOPS (Ch) 5:30 Hospitality Board	<b>9</b> 7:00 Community Choir performs at Red Rock	<b>10</b> 12:00-3:00 Oliver's Grad party at Yacht Club
<b>11 Mother's Day</b> 10:00 Worship with <b>Graduate Celebration</b> Communion 11:00 Sun. school	<b>12</b> 5:30 Hospital Foundation	<b>13</b>  6:00 Facilities Board	<b>14</b> 5:30 Diaconate Bd. 5:45 CE Board 7:00 Choir	<b>15</b> 11:30 MRCI (FS/HH) 1:00 TOPS (Ch)	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b> 9:00 Youth Theater auditions (HH)
<b>18</b> 10:00 Worship <b>LAST Sunday school/ Bowling party</b>	<b>19</b> <b>9:00 Council agenda items and June news-letter items due</b> 5:30 Yth. theater parent meeting	<b>20</b> 10:00 Goldfinch Communion	<b>21</b>  5:45 Church Council 7:00 Choir- <u>last</u>	<b>22</b> 11:30 MRCI (FS/HH) 1:00 TOPS (Ch)	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b> 5:00-7:00 Imagine Martin's Swine Derby & our Heavenly Delights
<b>25</b> 10:00 Worship Blessing Box	<b>26 Memorial Day</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b> 11:00 June news-letter assembly  <b>5:30 Free Community Meal</b>	<b>29</b> 9:30 Bible Study 11:30 MRCI (FS/HH) 1:00 TOPS (Ch)	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b> 4:00-7:00 Faith's Grad party at the Kotewa home

## *The Reverend's Ruminations - May 2025*

It seems hard to believe that the long, reflective, journey of Lent is now in our past. Even the excitement and joy of Easter morning — slightly drizzly, yet mild as it was this year — may seem to have come and gone. But they are not. Easter may be just a long weekend on the calendar to some, who see only an opportunity to hide little plastic eggs, gorge on chocolate, or get together for a fancy meal with family. But you and I didn't come to church just to show off a brightly-colored tie, a frilly new dress, or our finest Easter bonnet; we came to remember (or be jarred into recognition of) Jesus present in our own lives.

Sometimes we take it for granted, and forget what an incredible sacrifice Christ made for us. Sometimes bread is just a dietary staple. Sometimes grape juice is just a refreshing drink filled with healthy antioxidants. But when we gather around Holy Communion as we did on Maudy Thursday and Easter Sunday, these same elements that we might take for granted in our refrigerator become a sacrament that unites us with fellow believers here in our own congregation, around the world, and — most importantly — with our risen Savior.

When we experience Jesus during special seasons like Christmas, Lent, or Easter, our senses become awakened to experience even our surroundings in a whole new way. Similar to Mary's experience outside the tomb, we are awakened to the physical, emotional, and communal experience of Jesus in our midst — through the taste of the communion elements, the familiar scent of the sanctuary, the stirring melody of a favorite hymn, the feel of the Bible on your lap, and the wooden pew at your back. I pray that the Easter morning story of Christ's resurrection would never cease to be the bedrock of your faith. May it be a faith you are willing and eager to share with others!

Yes, I realize that even the original apostles struggled, finding the women's excited proclamation of the empty tomb that first Easter morning "[like] an idle tale, and they did not believe them" (Luke 24:11). Our challenge now, like that of Peter and the apostles, is not only to remember Jesus' resurrection, but to continue believing and applying its joy in our lives. Sitting in fuller-than-normal pews on Easter Sunday, it was easy to believe in and affirm Jesus' resurrection with a rare UCC "Amen." But what about when someone lets you down, or a friend or loved one suddenly dies, or something you gave up during Lent seems now to be even more tempting than before? Will Easter then be just a distant memory? I hope that you are always ready to boldly proclaim, "He is risen," and then articulate what that means for your Christian faith journey.

Here in our sanctuary, it's encouraging to see some new faces from time to time. Sure, sometimes they are just visiting relatives, whether for Easter or a special event like graduation, but other times a visitor may come church shopping or just be visiting in town. I hope that no matter the occasion, you have taken an opportunity to make them feel welcome. As followers of the Risen Christ, we have two basic calls in our Christian life. The "great commission" (to go and make disciples of all the nations, as referenced in Matthew 28) calls us to be fishermen — a job some of you might love doing on the lake, but which can feel a little awkward the first time it's done for people. Fear not, if a bunch of real-life fishermen and laborers could do it in Palestine, then any of us can do it too!

As I glanced back at some previous newsletters, I came across May of 2020, and can hardly believe that only five short years ago we were weeks from what we hoped would be the end of the state's extended *Stay Home MN* order. After several months of restrictions on group gatherings and careful social distancing, the tide of new COVID-19 infections in Minnesota finally seemed to be turning. Online worship services and Zoom council / board meetings had become a "new normal" for us by that time — something none of us are eager to repeat!?! I concluded my May 2020 "Rumination" by saying, "Though we haven't been able to gather in person, I continue to hold each of you in my prayers. We are working our way through this together, and I am confident that we will emerge as an even stronger congregation than when we began!" I hope you agree that we have indeed emerged stronger only a few short years after that struggle, as evidenced by our 2025 congregational theme: **Our Church is a Family, and We Are Stronger Together!**

Yours in Christ,

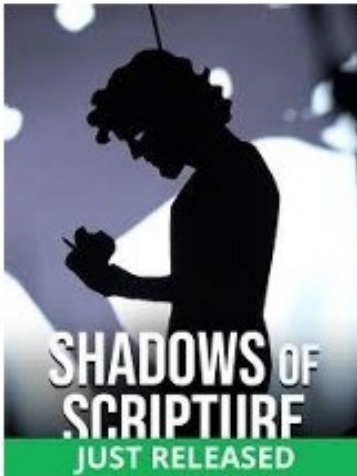
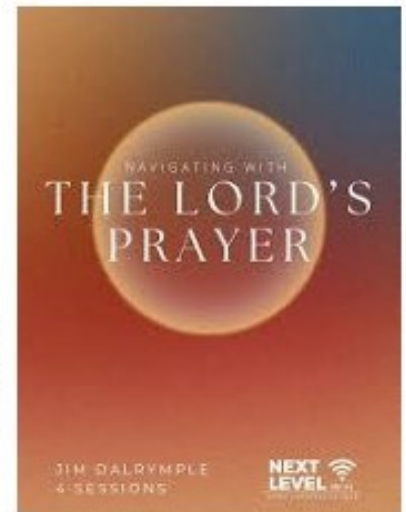
*Rev. Cory Germain*

# rightnow MEDIA

Worship services from First Congregational UCC are available & searchable by date alongside the other great content on the [free rightnow MEDIA website & app](#)!

How did you learn to pray? I know that after the simple "Come, Lord Jesus" table prayer, the first prayer I ever truly committed to memory was the Lord's Prayer. In our congregation, we've updated one of the stanzas in the last 18 months or so, but no matter your preferred wording (debts, trespasses, or sins), I bet the Lord's Prayer holds a special place in your prayer life. Have you ever wondered how this foundational prayer may have influenced (or still be guiding) your understanding of communication with God? Unpack it in four short episodes of ***Navigating with the Lord's Prayer***:

*Jim Dalrymple (New Testament & Church Leadership professor at Ozark Christian College) asks, "How does the Lord's Prayer shape how we pray, and how we live?" Praying like Jesus can keep us on the true path as we navigate life. Jim discusses how various aspects of the model prayer aligns us with God's heart.*



NEW on **rightnow MEDIA** is an imaginative presentation of several key events of our scriptural journey that offers a unique view accessible to any age. Yes, it's narrated by kids, but the production quality will draw in parents and grandparents too! Take a look at the eight engaging episodes entitled ***Shadows of Scripture***:

*Ancient stories come to life through timeless, imagination-provoking shadow puppets, unveiling the enduring thread of God's promises. From creation to eternity, each episode reveals how faith, trust, and redemption weave together in the grand narrative of Scripture, ultimately pointing to Jesus and God's plan for redemption.*

\*Do you still need your own **FREE rightnow MEDIA** account, or would you like to share this great resource with a friend?

There are 3 convenient ways: Go to <https://app.rightnowmedia.org/join/FCONG>

Text **FCONG to 49775**, or scan this QR code with your smartphone camera or code reader—>



Once logged in to your **FREE** account, you can click directly on "First Congregational UCC" near the top of the page to access the "Fairmont Worship Services" channel, or "Pastor Cory's Picks"—which is where you'll find videos I've recommended here, as well as others that interest me. Stay tuned... the list grows as I discover new picks! If you've discovered a show or video on **rightnow MEDIA** that you think others would enjoy, email me and I'll promote it in next month's column.

~ Pastor Cory





**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UCC  
FAIRMONT, MN  
CHURCH COUNCIL MINUTES FOR 4-16-25**

**Members Present:** Kay Campe, Cynthia Celandier, Amanda Forstrom, Christina Hainy, Cindy Huset, Catherine Johnson, Sue Kruse, Larry Lasch, and Tara Thedens. **Members Absent:** Carol Barrick and Abby Shoen.

**Ex-officio Members Present:** Pastor Cory. **Ex-officio Members Absent:** Dara Bliesmer, Asst Treasurer

The Council met in Heritage Hall at 5:45 PM. Moderator Kay Campe called the meeting to order, and Pastor Cory led in prayer.

Motion to approve the minutes from the meeting on 3/19/25 was M/S/C. (Amanda Forstrom/ Larry Lasch)

**Treasurer's Report** Catherine Johnson reported that online giving is going well with a little over \$11,000 donated online this year. Linsey Preuss, our Edward Jones financial advisor, will speak about our investments. A motion to receive the treasurer's report was M/S/C. (Larry Lasch/Sue Kruse)

**OLD BUSINESS:** Upcoming fundraisers were discussed. For Interlaken Heritage Days, June 14, we will have a breakfast outside, pie & ice cream social (prices stay the same) and activities on the front lawn during the parade (lawn games & freeze pops). Imagine Martin is having pig races on May 24. We will have bacon desserts from 5:00-7:00 PM that night.

**NEW BUSINESS:** We discussed the Situational Support Review from the MN Conference.

**INVESTMENT REVIEW:** Linsey Preuss, our Edward Jones financial advisor, said that we have three funds invested with them: Cornerstone, General and Capital. The present volatile market outlook and our thoughts for future investment were discussed.

**Pastor's Report:** Pastor Cory reported on his activities and upcoming commitments.

**BOARD REPORTS:**

**Christian Education:** No representative. The May 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday Funday will be used to make Mother's and Father's Day gifts. There is a celebration of our graduates on May 11th. The last day of Sunday school and an all-church bowling party is on May 18th.

**Hospitality:** Tara Thedens stated that the board is serving lemonade/coffee and cake for the graduate celebration. They purchased a hand mixer for the kitchen and are planning to purchase a roaster and possibly a pasta pot and new pots/pans. They have been making plans for the pie & ice cream social. There will be signup lists for ingredient donations and help with baking and serving soon.

**Facilities:** Larry Lasch reported that three carbon monoxide detectors have been installed, one for each level of the church. They have been reviewing vendor's contracts from this year. Snow removal and lawn care costs will stay the same. Cleaning services will increase by 50 cents/hour. The hole in the alley was discussed. A motion was made that the area right next to the church will be a no-parking zone was M/S/C. (Catherine Johnson/Sue Kruse) Hopefully, this will give cars extra space to drive around the hole.

**Diaconate:** Sue Kruse did not have an update more than their minutes stated.

**Mission:** Amanda Forstrom said that the May blessing box will go towards our youth campers. Signups for Meals on Wheels (May 1-15) and the highway cleanup (May 3) are in the back of the church. Discussed if we still want to do future highway cleanups and how to involve more people.

**Worship:** Cindy Huset reported that they served over 129 meals at the community meal in March. They would like to suggest that takeout orders are only available after possibly 6:00 PM to speed up the line.

**OTHER:** Catherine Johnson, Kay Campe, Pastor Cory, and Christina Hainy met to discuss and explore our online program ChurchTrac regarding a church directory.

Moderator Kay Campe adjourned the meeting, and Pastor Cory closed in prayer.

Respectfully submitted, Christina Hainy, Church Clerk



## Let's Get to Know Our Church Family...

### Question #3: Where have you lived?

Everett Hanning	Granada farm, East Chain farm, Mesa AZ, Yuma AZ
Zach Ashland	Fairmont
Dolores Gronewald	Granada on farm, Fairmont - 3 different places
Sandi Smith	WA, CA, IA, MN, TX, LA, MS
Tim Campe	Welcome, Sioux Falls, Fairmont
Marcia Musser	Sherburn, Rochester, Fairmont
Cheryl Ashland	Waseca, Mankato, Fairmont
Cynthia Celander	On Dylan's farm, Northome, Britt IA, Blue Earth, Worthington, St James, Marshall, Keliher, and now Fairmont
Kay Campe	Truman, East Chain, Winona, Mankato, Sioux Falls, Fairmont
Ellen Germain	Kentucky, Pipestone MN, Winnebago MN, Fairmont MN, Wiesbaden, Manheim Germany
Carol Barrick	Litchfield 18 yrs, Hutchinson 39 yrs, LaGrange IN 17 yrs, Fairmont 1 yr
Lela Hanning	Granada Farm, Granada City, Mesa AZ, Yuma AZ
Margo Weaver	South Minneapolis, St Peter, GAC College, Kentucky - Knox County, PA - Lancaster
Randy Musser	Fairmont, Mankato
Christina Hainy	SD-Watertown, Clark, Spearfish, Rapid City, Harrisburg, Brandon, Brookings, Aberdeen, Madison, IA-Dubuque, MN-Fairmont
BonnieSue Bennett	always in Minnesota

**Our goal for 2025 is to grow stronger, closer & more supportive as a church family!! There's still time to turn in your questionnaire! Get one off the table by the office or in the back of the sanctuary.**

## CE NEWS:

**Sunday, May 4th: Sunday Funday at noon**

**Sunday, May 11th: Graduates Celebration**

**Sunday, May 18th: Last Sunday school with Bowling Party Celebration for ALL church members (sign up at church!)**

## MISSION MINUTE:

**May's Blessing Box is for our church's youth summer campers.** We had several kids of various ages participate last year, and they are excited for camp this summer. This offering is to help offset some of the camp fees and just how much depends on the funds available and the number of kids. Please let us know if you have any questions. Thank you for your consideration of this giving opportunity!

**Setting up online giving to  
First Congregational UCC,  
Fairmont**

See the links on our church  
website, [fairmontucc.org](http://fairmontucc.org),  
or  
Scan the QR code



Or use this web address:

<https://firstconougcc.churchtrac.com/give>

You will be taken to our ChurchTrac page where you will be asked to sign in or create an account. ChurchTrac will link you to Stripe, the secure payment system.

Giving can be done through your checking account or by credit card.



**Thank you** to Kathy Jorgensen, Margo Weaver and Catherine Johnson for assembling the April newsletter!

-Christina

**Be looking this month for a signup sheet at church for supplies for the Pie & Ice Cream Social (& BBQs!) We will be serving up refreshments on Saturday, June 14th during Interlaken Heritage Days!**

**If you would like to provide treats and coffee after a church service, please sign up in the binder on the back table of the sanctuary.** Please ask a hospitality board member (Terri Luetgers, Rebecca Lunz, Sherry Larson, Donna Grotte, Jon Neitzel or Tara Thedens) if you have any questions.



# MEMORIALS

Date	Memory/Honor of	Designation	From
30-Mar	Memory of Georgia Malo		Dolores Gronewald
30-Mar	Memory of Georgia Malo	Capital Fund	Carolyn & Larry Thompson
6-Apr	Memory of Melva Lou Tonne		Bonnie Johnson
6-Apr	Honor of Bill Cowing's birthday	Starfish	Les Heinrich
6-Apr	Memory of Peggy Heinrich	Starfish	Les Heinrich
13-Apr	Memory of Allison Zoeller-Brown	Starfish	Lorie & Conrad Zoeller



## May Partners in Ministry:

**Diaconate: Sue Eisenbacher**

**Usher: Michael Rowan**

**Readers:**

**4th:** Ellen Germain

**11th:** Amanda Forstrom

**18th:** Marilyn Forstrom

**25th:** BonnieSue Bennett

## June Partners in Ministry:

**Diaconate: not announced**

**Usher: Jon Neitzel**

**Readers:**

**1st:** Dolores Gronewald

**8th:** Carol Barrick

**15th:** Carolyn Thompson

**22nd:** Ace/Deb Adams

**29th:** Eric B. Johnson

## Hy-Vee & Fareway Report as of Report as of 20 April 2025

During the last 9 weeks, \$17,417.26 (8.71%) worth of Hy-Vee slips were received. After 19 weeks, Hy-Vee is at \$87,714.42 (43.86%) toward the 18<sup>th</sup> goal which is \$200,000.

During the same time, \$7,768.35 (5.18%) worth of Fareway slips were received. After 108 weeks, Fareway is at \$120,407.24 (80.27%) toward our 5<sup>th</sup> \$150,000 goal. It could take 30 weeks to reach the 5<sup>th</sup> \$150,000 goal.

This program started the first of March 2011, so any slips from then until now can be used. Slips from 2019 were received during this period of time. Any Fairmont Fareway and Hy-Vee food store register slip can be used. Slips from Hy-Vee Fast & Fresh (Gas), Coffee Shop, Food Service, and Pharmacy help us toward the goal. Delivery slips/sheets can also be used. Thanks to all who bring/mail the slips to the church, or mailing them or dropping them off at my house. Even the very small amounts help.

Reported by;  
Jim Bock





# Women's Coffee & Conversation

**SATURDAY, MAY 3RD**

**9:00 - 11:00 AM**

**HERITAGE HALL**

**JOIN US FOR SCONES,  
FRESH FRUIT, COFFEE  
& CONVERSATION**



FAIRMONTUCC.ORG



# May Free Community Meal

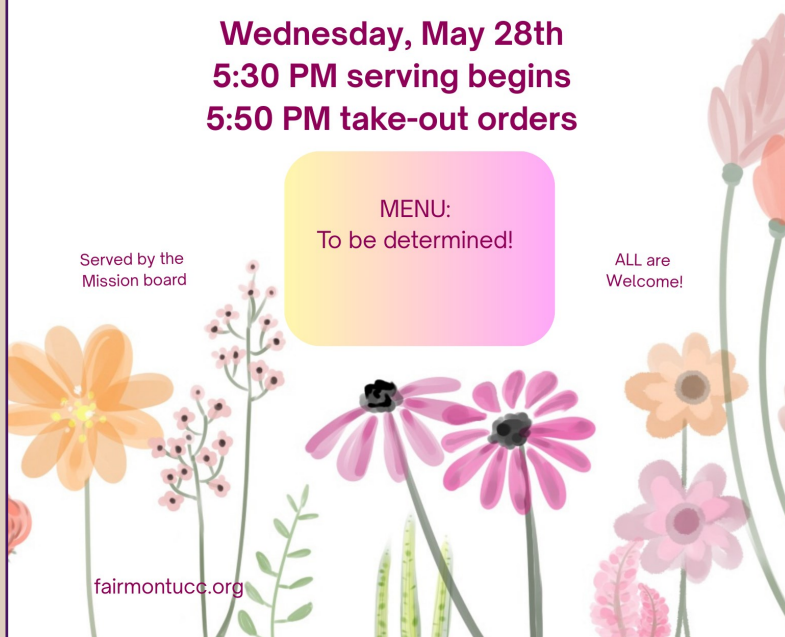
**First Congregational UCC  
319 Downtown Plaza**

**Wednesday, May 28th  
5:30 PM serving begins  
5:50 PM take-out orders**

**MENU:**  
To be determined!

Served by the  
Mission board

ALL are  
Welcome!



fairmontucc.org

fairmontucc.org





To Pastor Cory, friends & church family,

I would like to thank you all for the opportunity to work with you! It has been wonderful to help the church and to be a part of it all. Sadly though, I am putting in my 2 weeks notice to go to another job. My last day will be 4-4-25. Once again, thank you.

Forever Grateful,  
Sandi Smith

We have been asked to serve our Heavenly Delights at the Swine Derby on Saturday, May 24th from 5:00 to 7:00 PM! Be looking for upcoming information about donating ingredients and helping with baking and serving!

# Imagine Martin's Swine Derby

Squealing to the Finish Line!

W 1st Street Downtown Fairmont - May 24th 2025 5 to 7pm



## Hedrick's Pig Races

Get ready, Martin County for you're about to witness a pig-tacular event like no other! Bring your friends and family to celebrate community, competition, and a whole lot of fun.

Mark your calendars and prepare to root, cheer, and laugh along as our pigs take center stage!



Please submit good news to the newsletter to share with our church family! Honor roll, Dean's list, participating in club or team activities, etc. We **love** to hear what is happening in each other's lives! Email the office at [uccsecretary319@gmail.com](mailto:uccsecretary319@gmail.com), call (507) 235-5382, or stop in!



Cameron Germain will graduate May 3, 2025 from Buena Vista University in Storm Lake, IA with a B.A. in Music Production and a minor in Psychology. His fiancée, Bella Hoffmann, will also graduate from Buena Vista University that day with a B.A. in English and a minor in Studio Art. She has been accepted to an online master's degree program in Creative Writing and Editing at Emerson College of Boston, MA. They are planning a November 2026 wedding.



Haley (Harder) and Jared Green welcomed a baby girl, Lennon Bradley Green, on April 8th! Grandparents are Brad & Vonnée Cone, and Great-grandma is Jan Cone. Congratulations!!

### **Congratulations to our high school graduates, Faith Kotewa and Oliver Thedens!!**

They will be graduating from Fairmont High School on Sunday, June 1st. Faith plans to attend Mankato State University seeking a degree in finance. Oliver plans to attend University of Minnesota, Twin Cities and to major in biology. They will be honored on Sunday, May 11th during the worship service.

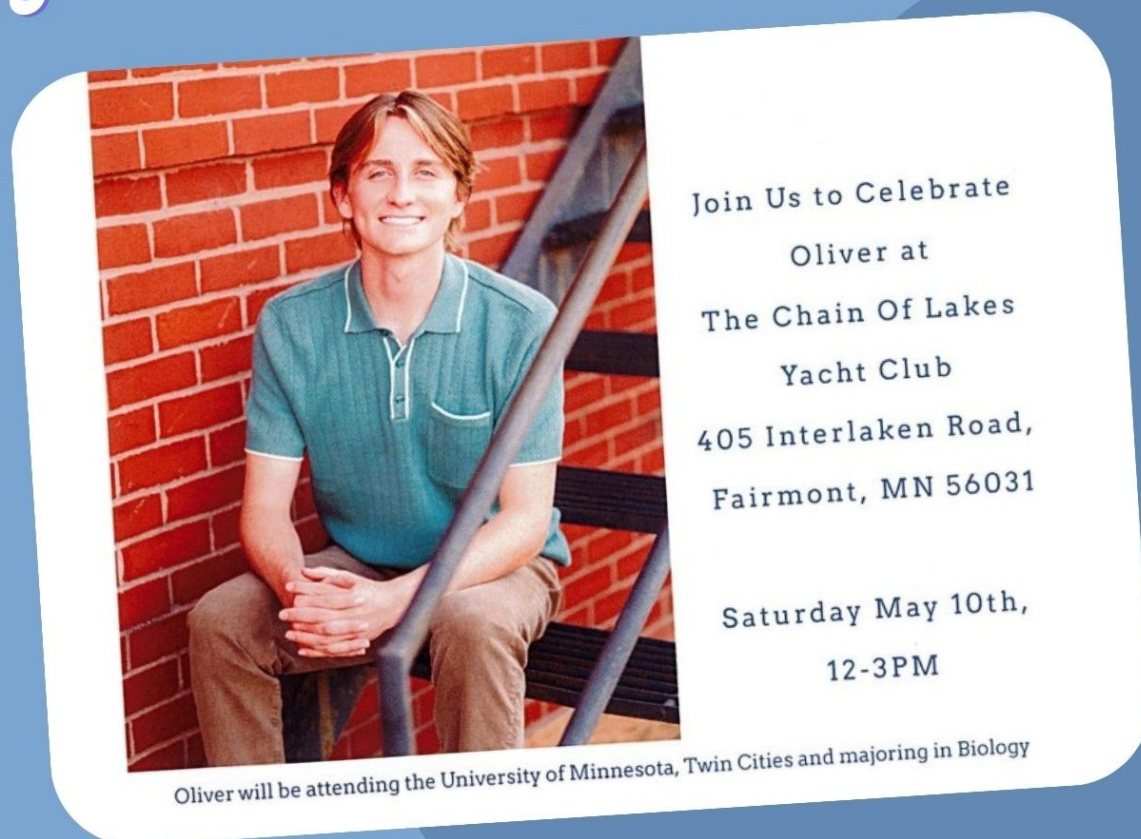


**Promo Video:** Please send **10 second video clips of church events** to Abby Shoen at her email, [abby.shoen43@gmail.com](mailto:abby.shoen43@gmail.com). Abby is graciously planning to compile them into a promotional video for our church!



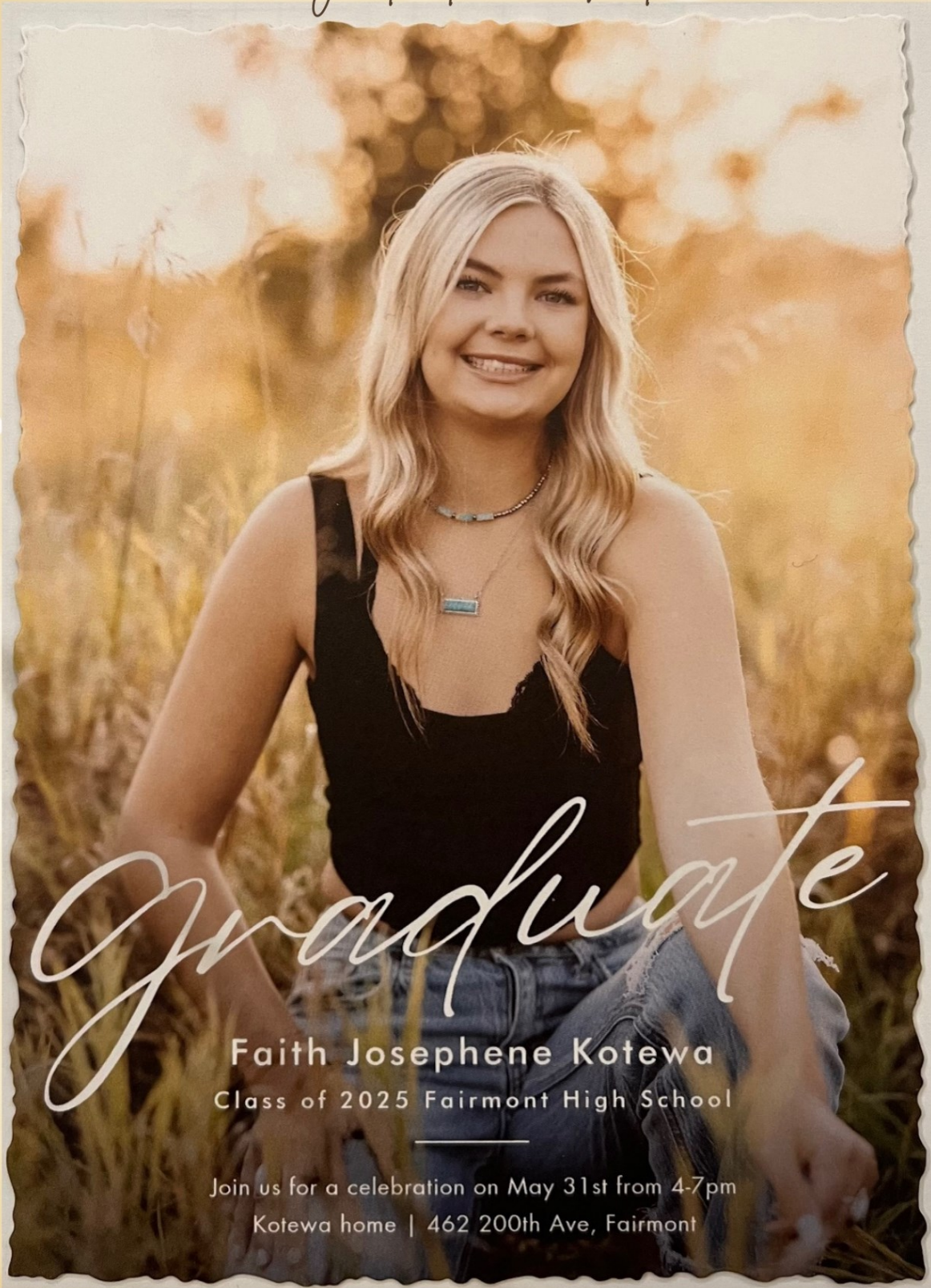


**HAPPY**  
*Graduation!*





*Congratulations, Faith!*



*Graduate*

Faith Josephene Kotewa

Class of 2025 Fairmont High School

Join us for a celebration on May 31st from 4-7pm

Kotewa home | 462 200th Ave, Fairmont



# May 2025

## Birthdays:

- 1 Kamara Cone
- 4 Louis Goerndt
- 6 Jodi Kuhlers
- 9 Justin Thedens  
Grace Kotewa
- 10 John Roiger
- 12 Andrea Thate
- 13 Sherry Larson
- 15 Larry Thompson  
Carolyn Thompson  
Hanna Johnson
- 16 Dylan Celandier
- 19 Dr. Alice Maday
- 20 Anne Wenz
- 21 Jim Chipman
- 23 Maia Goerndt  
Reagan Shoen
- 24 Lisa Meschke  
Paxton Rachuy
- 25 Lorie Zoeller
- 26 Jim Hatch
- 31 Cory Hainy

## Anniversaries:

May 1	Kevin & Kelly Moller	43 years
May 3	Kris & Wendy Ziemer	28 years
May 3	Michael & Kara Rowan	11 years
May 6	Larry & Carolyn Thompson	59 years
May 6	Randy & Marcia Musser	48 years
May 9	Tom & Kathy Jorgensen	55 years
May 17	Izzy & Pauline Cruz	40 years
May 25	John & Sherry Larson	51 years
May 25	Robert & Rebecca Lunz	1 year
May 28	Dave & Sue Eisenbacher	14 years
May 30	Dave & Karen Cone	28 years

**If your birthday or anniversary is not listed or is incorrect, please notify the church office.**