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## Pastor

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# THE SPIRIT - ISSUE 06 - JUNE 2026



A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF CHENEY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

## Friends,

I couldn't resist sharing this fascinating news. And please forgive me as I need to talk (one more time) about Lord of the Rings. But it happened: The newly elected Pope (an American citizen from Chicago), Pope Leo put Gandalf in his first Encyclical: Magnifica Humanitas.

First, what is an Encyclical? Wikipedia says (and I paraphrase it a bit), that a papal encyclical is a formal pastoral letter written by the pope. Primarily addressed to Catholic bishops but meant for all people, it offers the pope's authoritative guidance on major moral, social, or theological issues.

In Paragraph 123 of Magnifica Humanitas, Pope Leo quoted Tolkien. That means by putting Tolkien and his writings into an encyclical, Gandalf's speech is now, officially, part of the Catholic Social Teaching. It will be cited in seminary classrooms and theology papers for decades.



Pope Leo wrote:

“The twentieth-century Catholic author J.R.R. Tolkien, in the words of a protagonist [Gandalf] in one of his novels, described our responsibility in this way: “It is not our part to master all the tides of the world, but to do what is in us for the succor of those years wherein we are set, uprooting the evil in the fields that we know, so that those who live after may have clean earth to till.” [J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Lord of the Rings. The Return of the King*, Part III, Book Five, Chapter IX, New York 1965, 190]

And then Pope Leo interpreted that, this way:

“The civilization of love will not arise from a single or spectacular gesture, but from the sum total of small and steadfast acts of fidelity that serve as a bulwark against dehumanization. For this reason, it is worthwhile pausing to reflect on some aspects of how we, each in our own way, can cooperate in building the civilization of love.

And then he proposed five paths, made of small acts of love, on which we can follow daily to make our world better.

- Disarm our words
- Build peace through justice
- Adopt the perspective of victims
- Cultivate a healthy realism
- Revive dialogue and multilateralism

*Continued on next page.*

Maybe that is the real reminder for us, too.

None of us (I assume) will ever write an encyclical. Most of us will never change the world with one grand gesture. We probably won't stand on a battlefield with a wizard staff either. But every day, we are given small opportunities to choose kindness over cynicism, patience over anger, hope over despair, and love over indifference.

And perhaps that is exactly how God works most often: not through spectacular moments alone, but through ordinary people faithfully tending the little piece of the world entrusted to them: A word that heals instead of harms; being a listener before I say what I already thought was right; saying a prayer for someone who needs some hope; stepping out of my own bubble and listen to people who think differently; stepping into difficult conversations instead of shutting them down; being quick to apologize and ask for forgiveness; granting forgiveness... any other ideas?

As Gandalf said, and now apparently Catholic Social Teaching agrees, our task is not to master all the tides of the world. Our task is simply to do the good that is in front of us, in the time and place where God has planted us.

That may not sound heroic. But maybe heaven sees it differently.

And somewhere in heaven, Tolkien is probably smiling quietly and pretending not to make a big deal out of it.

**Pastor Damian**

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## **Pentecost – A Day of Celebration at Cheney UMC**

What a joyful and Spirit-filled Pentecost Sunday we celebrated at Cheney United Methodist Church!

We did not just remember the story of the Holy Spirit coming down to earth and filling people's minds and hearts, represented by our choir anthem, but we also welcomed six new members into our church family.

After participating in a six-hour membership class over several weeks, six people felt called to take the next step in their faith journey and become part of the ministry and mission of Cheney UMC.

We welcomed Andy Anderson, who transferred from the Lutheran Church; Tony Birch, whose faith journey has included the Catholic and Episcopal traditions before joining us; and Mary Jane Shervais, a longtime staff member of our church, who transferred her membership from the Presbyterian Church.

We also received Todd and Rosana Brooks by profession of faith, and it was a special joy to baptize Trenton Hazelbaker during the service in our baptismal tub prepared especially for this meaningful moment.



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As these new members made their vows and commitment to Christ and the church, the congregation were also reminded of their own membership vows. Together we recommitted ourselves to nurture one another in Christian faith and life and to surround our new members with love and care.

Following Trenton's baptism, the congregation was invited to remember their own baptism and the promise that we all belong to God and are deeply loved as God's children. Services like this - and especially the sacrament of baptism - are among the most beautiful and meaningful moments in the life of a church and in the life of a pastor.

A heartfelt thank you goes to everyone who helped make this Pentecost celebration so special: our musicians and choir, the tech team, ushers, decorators, hospitality team, and Macey in the church office for preparing bulletins and organizing gifts. A special thank you as well to Nelson, Stan and Saralynn, Rodney, and Trenton for preparing the baptismal tub and helping create such a memorable and holy experience.

Thank you all for helping make Cheney UMC a place where the Holy Spirit continues to move, welcome, and transform lives.

**Pastor Damian**

## **Mayfest 2026 – Sharing the Spirit of Cheney UMC**

On May 9th, Cheney United Methodist Church once again joined the celebration at Mayfest from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and what a wonderful day it was!

Throughout the day, many members and friends of our church volunteered at our booth, helping welcome people, hand out information, and share the spirit and mission of Cheney UMC with the community.

A special thank you goes to Candace and Mason Dress, along with Mason's friends Lennox and Alex, who spontaneously joined the effort and walked around Mayfest in Cheney UMC shirts with flyers in hand, inviting people to learn more about our church. What a fantastic example of joyful outreach!

Other volunteers at the table included Caren Lincoln, Carol Kriegh, Julie Peck, Kathy Whiteside, and Pastor Damian. Together we met and talked with dozens of people throughout the day, handed out Cheney UMC bags, newsletters, and flyers about upcoming events and ministries, and shared many meaningful conversations.

Of course, events like this are only possible because of the many people working faithfully behind the scenes. A heartfelt thank you goes to Stan and Saralynn Kerr, Patti and Jim Sooy, Mary Engstrom, Rodney Thompson, and Macey Fredenberg, whose creativity and hard work helped organize and prepare everything: from tents and tables to merchandise, flyers, and flag poles.

Most of all, Mayfest reminded us how important it is to meet people where they are. As a church, we are called not only to open our doors but also to step outside of them, to be present in the community, to build relationships, and to share God's love in simple and welcoming ways.

We pray that the conversations, smiles, invitations, and acts of kindness shared that day may stir something in people's hearts and faith journeys. And who knows? Maybe some will find a new church home here at Cheney UMC.

Again, thank you to everyone who volunteered, prayed, or simply stopped by to encourage the team during the day. Your support means so much.

I love this church!

**Pastor Damian**



# THANK YOU!



## Celebrating Our Graduates at Cheney UMC

June is always an exciting season in the life of our church as we celebrate the accomplishments and new beginnings of our graduates!

Every year, Cheney United Methodist Church honors our young people who are graduating from high school, and this year we are excited to also celebrate graduates from college!

We will recognize our graduates during two special worship services in June as we give thanks for their hard work, dedication, and the many ways God has guided them on their journeys.

If you know of a student connected to Cheney UMC who is graduating this year and is not yet on our list, please contact Pastor Damian as soon as possible so we can include and celebrate them properly.

As a church family, we are proud of all our graduates and look forward to praying for them as they begin new chapters in life. Whether heading to college, starting a career, continuing education, or exploring new opportunities, we pray God's blessings, wisdom, and guidance upon each of them.

### Congratulations to the Class of 2026!

**Sunday, June 7 at 10:00 a.m.**

We will celebrate:

**Cheney High School**

Quinten Gainer

Claire Watkins

**Eastern Washington University**

Sophia Mattie

**Sunday, June 21 at 10:00 a.m.**

We will celebrate:

**Cheney High School**

Austin McCrum

**Eastern Washington University**

Maija Angell



## Summer Worship in the Park

Every summer for multiple years now, we meet monthly for worship at Sutton Park in Cheney. We gather together with the Cheney Congregational Church and the Episcopal Church.

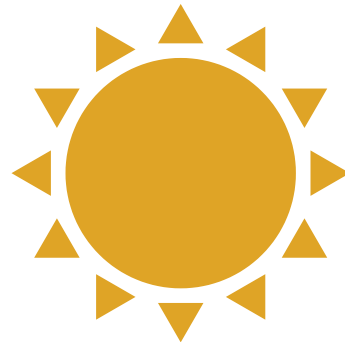
The services start at 10 AM and we ask you to bring a comfortable chair for yourself (and others if you like).

Coffee, cookies/donuts and water will be provided.

In case of a heavy rain, we will inform you where we are meeting for worship.

### The dates for this year are:

- **June 14**
- **July 12**
- **August 23**



## Nominate a Hero

For our fall movie series, we are collecting stories of folks who often get overlooked. We want to highlight those in our community who have secret powers or abilities, or just a massive heart, and celebrate them.

In your nomination, tell us the person's name and a bit about why you want to see them highlighted.

Email the church office with "Hero" in the subject.  
[cheneyumc204@gmail.com](mailto:cheneyumc204@gmail.com)

# June 2026

**Wedding Anniversaries**

9	Carol & Chuck Kriegh
13	Gary & Loretta Glaze
13	Cathy & Pat Sleeth
13	Flint & Mia Simonsen
17	Scarlett & Ash Arlt
18	Valerie & Bill Schillinger
29	Becky Riley & Jane Vandenberg

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2 Meals on Wheels 11am-1pm	3 Choir Rehearsal 7-8:30pm	4 Meals on Wheels 11am-1pm	5	6 Parking Lot Sale
7 Graduate Celebration	8	9 Meals on Wheels 11am-1pm	10 Choir Rehearsal 7-8:30pm	11 Meals on Wheels 11am-1pm	12	13
14 Worship in the Park	15	16 Meals on Wheels 11am-1pm	17 Sassy Senior Society 2-3:30pm Choir Rehearsal 7-8:30pm	18 Meals on Wheels 11am-1pm	19 Juneteenth	20
21 Graduate Celebration	22	23 Meals on Wheels 11am-1pm	24 Choir Rehearsal 7-8:30pm	25 Meals on Wheels 11am-1pm	26	27
28 Mary Jane's Retirement Cantata 3pm	29 Feed Cheney Meal Prep 3pm Feed Cheney Meal at Sutton Park 5:30	30 Meals on Wheels 11am-1pm	Pastor Damian at Annual Conference of the PNW June 23-25.			

**Birthdays**

5 Desirae Glaze	17 Shannon Kenna Wilkey
6 Steve Blomgren	20 Aidan McCrum
7 Andy Anderson	23 Rande Lindner
10 Josephine Kriegh	28 Michelle (Clope) Ray
11 Dave Reagan	28 Shirley Bloom
14 Trenton Hazelbaker	29 Lonnie Lynch

Church Office Hours:	Tues	10am-12:30pm
	Tues	2:30-5pm
	Thurs	6:30-8:30pm
Bible Studies: contact the church office for addresses.		
With Congregational Church* at UMC in June	Thurs	1:15-2:15pm
Leader: Margie Lindner	Mon	2-3pm
Leader: Carol Kriegh	Mon	7:30-8:30pm
Leader: Saralynn Kerr	Tues	7-8pm

Pastor Damian's day off is Friday. Please allow him to enjoy his day off and do not contact him on Fridays. Thank you!

**Sunday, June 07 – 2nd Sunday after Pentecost– 10 AM**

**With Communion**

Pastor Damian Carruthers

Genesis 12:1-9

**Sunday, June 14 – 3rd Sunday after Pentecost**

**Service in the Park – 10 AM**

Location: Sutton Park, 815 Washington St, Cheney

Pastor Matt Goodale

**Sunday, June 21 – Revelation Series -10 AM**

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**The Last Word**

Pastor Damian Carruthers

Revelation 1:1-20

**Sunday, June 28 – Revelation Series - 10 AM**

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**The Last Word on the Church**

Pastor Damian Carruthers

Revelation 2-3

**Sunday, July 05 – Revelation Series - 10 AM**

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**The Last Word on Worship**

Pastor Damian Carruthers

Revelation 4-5

## Declutter for a Cause: Parking Lot Sale!

You know that closet you've been meaning to clean out since...forever? Or that box of kitchen gadgets you swore you'd use but still haven't figured out what half of them do? Well, friends, it's time! The Cheney UMC Annual Parking Lot Sale is happening now!

**When: Saturday, June 6**

**9 AM – 2 PM**

**Where: Cheney UMC Parking Lot**

### What Can You Bring?

If it's clean, in good condition, and someone else might love it, we'll take it!

- ✓ Clothing (that sweater you bought but never wore? Yep, perfect.)
- ✓ Kitchen stuff (pots, pans, fancy cheese slicers—whatever!)
- ✓ Furniture (small enough to fit in a car, please!)
- ✓ Toys & books (because kids need summer entertainment)
- ✓ Electronics (working ones only—no haunted printers, please)
- ✓ Other stuff! Just talk to us!

Drop off your donations at any time (if they are small and clean) at the church. Furniture can be dropped off since May 28th. There is a horse trailer (unlocked) in the Parking Lot for those items.



**\*NAME YOUR OWN PRICE\***  
**CHENEY**  
**UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**  
**204 4TH STREET**



Join us July 19<sup>th</sup> for Sunday worship  
With our Global Ministries Missionary:

**Joy Prim**

She will be sharing about her ministry in Hong Kong

As I've entered this year, my word of the year is **LOVE**:

- **LIVE** my faith in action each day.
- **OPEN** to how God is moving in my life and the lives of others in my community
- **VALUE** each other and each other's contribution. To not take advantage or make someone feel less than because they have less.
- **EMPATHY** each and every day. To work to understand our differences and not isolate someone because of them

I invite you to join with me and embrace **LOVE** in 2026.



There are more than 380,000 Migrant Domestic Workers in Hong Kong.

These workers are from the Philippines, Indonesia, Nepal, and other Southeast Asian countries and Africa, working to provide for their families at home.

They are serving as modern-day slaves, are the lowest-paid employees in Hong Kong, and are often abused.

Come to learn more about the ministry and how we support Joy and the Migrants.

## A New Chapter in Music Ministry

As many of you know, this summer marks an important transition in the music ministry at Cheney United Methodist Church. While we prepare to say goodbye to two beloved musicians who have faithfully shared their gifts with us for many years, we are also excited to welcome a new face into our church family.

First, we want to once again express our deepest gratitude to Mary Jane as she retires after 20 wonderful years as our Music Director. For two decades, Mary Jane has helped lead us in worship, inspired our choir, and shared her incredible musical talents with our congregation week after week. Her dedication, patience, humor, and heart for ministry have blessed this church in countless ways. We are so thankful for the many memories and meaningful moments she has helped create through music.

**Please join us for a special Celebration Cantata honoring Mary Jane's retirement on Sunday, June 28th at 3:00 PM.** This will be a joyful afternoon of music, fellowship, and appreciation as we celebrate her years of faithful service. We hope you will come and help us thank Mary Jane for everything she has given to our church community.

At the same time, we are excited to announce that we have hired a new Music Director beginning August 3rd: Kristina Komarov!

Kristina is a graduate of Eastern Washington University and brings extensive experience accompanying choirs throughout the region. She has also led worship music in several churches and comes to us with both strong musical skills and a heart for worship ministry.

After a thoughtful search process, we are confident we have found a wonderful person to continue the strong musical tradition here at Cheney UMC. We are excited to welcome Kristina and look forward to working alongside her in the years ahead.

Kristina will also be taking over the accompanist position currently held by JoAnna Cockrum.



*Continued on next page.*

**Continued**

While JoAnna plans to fill in occasionally when Kristina is unavailable, this transition also gives us an opportunity to celebrate JoAnna's many years of faithful service as our pianist.

**We will honor JoAnna during our regular worship service on Sunday, August 2<sup>nd</sup> at 10 AM.**

Please plan to join us as we thank her for sharing her talents and dedication with our congregation over the years.

With this new season also comes one small scheduling change: after our regular summer choir break, Choir Rehearsals will move from Wednesdays to Thursdays, beginning September 10th at 7:00 PM.

Transitions can bring both joy and a little sadness, but we are grateful for the ways God continues to guide and bless the music ministry of Cheney United Methodist Church. Thank you to Mary Jane and JoAnna for the many years they have shared their gifts with us, and welcome to Kristina as we begin this exciting new chapter together!

**Pastor Damian and the SPRC Team**



## Summer Camp Scholarships for Kids

Summer break is right around the corner, and while it brings sunshine and a change of pace, it can also be a challenging time for families figuring out how to keep their kids engaged, cared for, and growing.

One incredible opportunity we're blessed to have is Twinlow Camp in Idaho, a place where kids can laugh, learn, make lifelong friendships, and experience God's love in a real and meaningful way. For many of our children, camp isn't just a week away, it's a chance to grow in confidence, deepen their faith, and simply be kids in a safe and joyful environment.

Over the years, Cheney UMC has been able to support families by helping cover the cost of camp or partially, especially for those where finances might make it difficult. With camp fees typically ranging from \$450-\$550, we know this can be a stretch for many households.

That's where our church family comes in.

If you feel called to help, we invite you to contribute to our Summer Camp Scholarship fund. Simply mark your donation with "Summer Camp Scholarship," and know that every dollar goes directly toward helping a child attend camp.

Together, we can Seek, Serve, and Share Jesus Christ giving our kids the chance to experience faith, friendship, and fun in a way they'll never forget.

Thank you for being such a caring and generous community.

**The Church Council**



## **Ordination of Catherine Lyle (Rossman)**

For those of you who have attended Cheney UMC for a number of years you may remember a young woman, Catherine Rossman, who attended our church as a teenager with her younger brothers.

She was a serious young person whose faith journey has led her into the ministry. Catherine will be ordained at annual conference in June and invites us all to celebrate with her. Our support played a role in her journey and it would be wonderful to extend this support again.

## **Carol Kriegh**

**Updated 6/2: The church building for the ordination does not have the capacity to support guests for the ordination. But we are all invited in spirit to attend, and of course pray for Catherine and her future.**

## **Hello Cheney UMC,**

I have served your community either as a campus minister, youth director, office manager, local licensed pastor, reverend, or whatever hat the Spirit asked of me when I was with them.

I am grateful for all the lessons and time you all shared with me over the years. It is a journey not many people like me get the opportunity to walk and learn from. I am honored and deeply thankful.

**God Bless,  
Rev. Catherine Lyle**

**Bite2Go**

Cheney UMC supports 35 Bite2go students through the school year. Thank you for your monthly or yearly support of this program.

At the end of the school year we give each student a hygiene bag with supplies for the summer (and a couple of fun items too!)

If you would like to donate toward the purchase of supplies (about \$150 total) please see **Carol Kriegh or Cheryl Reagan.**



# PRAYER VIGIL

IN SOLIDARITY WITH REFUGEES AND  
IMMIGRANTS HELD IN DETENTION

**07/  
JUNE**  
4:00 - 5:00 PM

JOIN US FOR AN ECUMENICAL PEACE PRAYER VIGIL

HOSTED BY MATTHEW 25 MINISTRIES

Meet at Feast World Kitchen

1321 W 3rd Ave, Spokane WA, 99201

June is Cheney UMC's month to make sack meals for Feed Cheney.

We will put together the sandwiches and bags at 3 p.m. on Monday June 29 at the church. Cookies are needed!

Help is also needed to distribute the meals in the park at 5:30 that evening, please sign up on the Door of Opportunity.



**FREE SACK MEAL**

**INFO FROM THE LIBRARY**

**WHEN**

**5:30 PM MONDAY**

**JUNE 29, 2026**

**For accommodation contact Cheney Parks and Recreation at 509-498-9250 by June 29.**

**WHERE**

**Veterans Memorial Park**

**612 4th Street, Cheney**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION**

**509.498.9250**

**WWW.FEEDCHENEY.COM**



# Newsletter

**204 4th St  
Cheney, WA 99004  
Return Service Requested**

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