

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF
VAN METER

NEWSLETTER



March
2024

Inside this issue:

Connecting	2-3
A View of Things to Come	4-5
Pancake Supper	6-7
Youth & Children's Ministries	8-9
Admin. Council	10-11
Missions	12
Sharing & Caring	13



Rev. Beth Harbaugh

CHECK US OUT ON THE WEB!

www.vmumc.org

We're on Facebook, too.

OR CONTACT US BY:

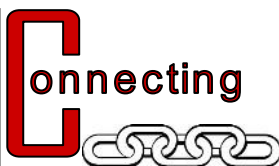
PHONE: 515.996.2572

EMAIL: office@vmumc.com

Worship 10:45 AM

March! Spring will arrive this month. The seasons are changing and it feels like time is moving more quickly than ever, *Marching on*. Maybe it is all the changes that we are experiencing. Technology and information are changing faster than ever and it is a lot to take in. But much is the same. The seasons are much the same. The human body has not really changed much in 100,000 years. Not even the capabilities of our human brains have changed much. The brain and nervous system have the miraculous ability to translate and integrate and organize all the feelings and information (mostly subconscious) that is coming in through all the human senses. When we take the time to realize just how much data this is that our miraculous body can handle, we know that there is a Spirit that connects it all, individually and socially, beyond any single human's ability to consciously understand it.

Why is it important to care about this? Well, there are those who want to work with these new understandings for the betterment of all human life and the environment, and there are those who do not. What is needed for humanity to continue to live well is claimed by the



Holy in Jeremiah 29:11:

"For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope."

We have been given the ability to use our God-given abilities to discern together what these plans are for the Holy to give us a future with hope. Then, through Christ, we have been given a witness of how to go about it: with love and integrity.

That sounds like marching orders to me! Each of us has received some understanding of the plans that the Lord has for us, for ourselves but more importantly for all humanity; we are each called to share what we have learned through our various spiritual gifts.

This Lenten season, I am called to share what I learn as I integrate scripture, theology, and other evidence-based learnings on the subject of how we learn and teach. It is important for all of us to share

what the Holy is calling us to witness to others, especially on how our children are being raised and taught.

We may each think that there are other people who know more than we know, but the reality is that it is our integrated understanding that is most important. We have many social and cultural experiments” that we have learned from being together as a society and even as a species. Why not take the time to listen to one another, especially to those who find understanding through evidence-based and time-tested research and study. But all of us need to get the basic understanding so that we can move forward as a community within other communities in the wisest way.

As Christians, we feel that this way is for each to care, to strive to understand, and to connect our common understanding. All of us have access to this capacity, these miracles that are our body, mind, and spirit. Our marching orders are to not sell this short! We are not to give away our response-ability to use it and not let it be used or abused by others.

There is certain wisdom and practical knowledge that we can

trust, especially when it is tried and true; and there is some that we simply can't. Science and theology tell us that it is the evidence-based that we can have the most faith in. Christian scripture and discernment have given the world helpful social norms. Let us work together to figure out what is most important for us to learn together to integrate for our common understanding about love, life, and the future of humanity that the Holy has been gradually developing for a long, long, long time.

I have faith in what John Wesley used as a method of integrating personal experience, the experience of others, world-wide traditions, time tested scripture, and our God-given ability to reason. I think that this is a great method to discern with one another. Let's create some discussion groups to explore what our God is planning for us to discern together for a greater common understanding of the Holy Plan for us!

We have our marching orders.

Rev. Beth

Lay Servant Training

The Iowa UMC Conference is offering a foundational course on lay servant ministries. It is for lay people who are neither certified lay servants nor certified lay speakers, and is intended as a foundation for all further courses in lay servant ministries. The course is presented in three parts and will be virtual.

Saturdays, March 2, 9, & 16
9:00 AM - 12:30 PM
online

registration required

contact the church office
for a registration link

Registration through our district is free but participants must purchase their own book, *Lay Servant Ministries* (Sandy Jackson), (about \$12). We can help you order the book if needed.



Spring Forward

Daylight Saving Time begins Sunday, March 10. Remember to set your clocks forward.



A View of THINGS TO COME

Easter Sunrise Breakfast

Early risers who attend the Easter Sunrise service at 6:30 AM are encouraged to stay for our traditional Sunrise Breakfast. If you can bring something to the table, let us know. There will be a signup sheet on the in the entryway.



Easter Fun

During the Easter Sunrise breakfast, we'll have crafts, games, and Easter baskets with treats for the young ones.

During the 10:45 AM service, we'll have a special Easter Sunday School lesson.



High Tea and Fellowship

Ladies of the church are invited to spend a relaxing afternoon of fellowship with your friends drinking tea and sampling treats. Come celebrate the arrival of spring (and take a break from tax preparations) with a traditional high tea, featuring scones, finger sandwiches, and a selection of pastries.

April 13

3:00 PM – 6:00 PM

Board and Batten LLC

1408 Walnut St.

Dallas Center

\$40 (+tax)/person

**purchase tickets online
by April 7**

There are a limited number of seats, so please buy your tickets early. If you want to learn more, talk to Marva DeBoer. (Also, she'd like to know who has signed up.)



S.W.A.G. Youth Activities

Anyone in middle school or high school is welcome to join in our youth activities.

March 3, 17 6:30-7:30 PM

Middle school youth group meeting at the church

March 10, 24 6:30-7:30 PM

High school youth group meeting at the church

Youth Service Project

Sunday, March 10

12:30-4:30

The youth groups (S.W.A.G.) will be volunteering at the Bidwell Pantry. Meet at the church at 12:30.

Youth Fellowship Outing

Tuesday, March 26

The youth group will be heading to Spare Time for pizza and bowling.

Help us spread the word.

Anyone interested in a service project or an outing should text Courtney at 515-619-3968.

February Pictures

Pictures from the February service project and fellowship outing are on page 9.

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper

Almost \$600
was donated
for the families
and others
affected by the school
shootings in Perry.
We served at least 90
people.





Fun fellowship with crafts, games, and lots and lots of pancakes.



Here's what's going on with Children's Ministries and the youth group:

Children's ministries:

J.A.M. is going strong and is well-attended. The children recently memorized John 3:17 and have begun working on Psalm 119:105.

VBS planning and prepping have begun. We will open registration on March 18.

Courtney has been teaching pre-school Bible lessons on Fridays to the **Kids Care** kids.

Sunday School has been happening nearly every Sunday. Kiddos who attend have been enjoying the lessons.

Youth Ministries:

We'll have a community **service mission** to Bidwell on March 10, when we will help organize the food pantry. We will be bringing bags to donate that the missions team has been collecting.

The youth group will be going on a **fellowship outing** to Spare Time for pizza and bowling on March 26. The first youth group night will be Sunday March 3rd. (See page 5 for more.)



J.A.M. time is full of activities; crafts and games keep the children happily engaged while they learn.





Youth Service

The youth made treats for families staying at Ronald McDonald House.

Youth Fellowship

The church sent 28 youth (and four adult escorts) to an exciting and energetic concert of Christian music at Winter Jam 2024.



VMUMC Admin. Council Meeting Minutes

February 8, 2024

In attendance: Reverend Beth, Heidi Meyers, Ty Doggett, Dan Redmond, Terry McNace, Lindsay Dea, Connie Cooper, Courtney, Jess Jaspers

Terry McNace opened the meeting with prayer and a devotional.

Votes approved via email since last Admin. Council meeting:

- * Adding Courtney on the Youth checking account passed on 1/14
- * Consensus to cancel worship reached on 1/14.
- * Motion to apply for Foundation grant passed 1/26.
- * Nominations for committee positions passed on 1/31

Secretary Report:

The minutes were approved as submitted.

Treasurer Report:

Budget was approved as submitted. We discussed separating Kids' Care from the church budget. More discussion will follow.

Old/New Business:

Trustees updated the Safe Sanctuary policy and brought it before the Ad Council. Terry McNace proposed, Dan Redmond seconded the motion. The revised policy was approved.

Children's Ministries:

J.A.M. is going strong! Lots of fun every Wednesday night.



VBS curriculum has been purchased. This year's theme is SCUBA from GROUP publishing. VBS will be June 17-21 from 1:00-3:30 PM. This information has been shared with the church and community. We already have volunteers signed up to help. Students can start signing up on March 18.

Youth ministries:

2/2: 28 students attended Winter Jam and had a great time.

2/11: A group of students are going to the Ronald McDonald House to help clean and make snacks and treats for families staying there.

3/3: We will hold our first Middle School youth group night.

3/10: We will hold our first High School youth group night.

3/10: We will be going to the Bidwell Food Pantry to volunteer.

3/26: We will be going to Spare Time for a night of fun and fellowship.

Kids' Care:

Six openings for the summer. All field trips are planned. Jess was able to negotiate lower prices this year. Another bus driver was hired for the summer.

We are fully staffed now and for the summer.

Mission/Outreach:

Pancake supper monetary donations will go to the families and others affected by the school shooting in Perry. Our church is supporting a Hope House room financially and with scripture. Easter Sunday Services are still being planned. We do plan on having our traditional sunrise breakfast.

Finance/Stewardship:

Christy has passed out all 2023 giving statements. We were happy to welcome Lindsey Dea as the new financial chair.

Trustees:

Upgrading lighting: After a long search, we have found a contractor and the work can be done soon. To prevent our floors from being damaged so easily, we are going to refresh the floors more frequently so they won't have to be stripped as often. The partitions in the women's restroom will be repainted soon. We will be fertilizing the yard where Kids' Care children play, hoping to reduce the amount of exposed dirt. We will be purchasing a new laptop for the new pastor.

SPRC:

SPRC met with DS Ron Carlson on February 5 in the first step to choosing a new pastor. They let Ron know what qualities they felt that our church needed in a pastor. Leslie, Miranda, Heidi, and Ty

attended the meeting. The new pastor will have the choice of living in the parsonage or having a housing allowance for another place to live.

SPRC would like to look into the idea of creating a more smart-phone-friendly website. They will ask Shirlee for her input. The trustees will have the final decision in this matter.

SPRC updated our weather cancellation protocols, which Ad. Council approved.

Lay Leader:

Heidi's second semester classes of seminary are going well. Her first semester of seminary went well, too!

Pastor:

Rev. Beth purchased a new curriculum called *The Character Effect* that will go with programming being used at VM schools. This will also provide her Continuing Education for the year. Her meeting with the school about the new curriculum is scheduled for Friday 2/9.

The next meeting of the Administrative Council is March 5 at 6 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Courtney
Acting Secretary



Mission of the Month: Families Forward

This month's mission is in support of Families Forward, a merger of **Bidwell Riverside Center** and Hawthorn Hill. The original four programs — Bidwell Pantry, Child Development Center, New Directions Shelter, and The Home Connection — remain, working together to provide compassionate, life-changing assistance to families and their path to self-sufficiency.

The Missions team will be joining with the youth group in their March 10 trip to Bidwell Pantry where they will help organize donations. (*details on page 5*)

The Bidwell Pantry helps families put food on their tables and clothes on their backs, reducing the strain the families are experiencing, enabling them to focus on other ways they can help themselves.

Bags for Bidwell

The Bidwell Pantry needs used grocery bags to help pantry guests carry their groceries. The bags



can be paper, cloth, or the usual plastic. Since the pantry serves an



average of 5,000 individuals a month and each shopper uses 2-3 bags, they need a *lot* of bags.

There's a tub in the entryway where you can put your donated bags. We plan to continue collecting these throughout the year, so please keep collecting them.

Adel Good Samaritan Food Pantry Donations

Toothpaste is the personal item for the month. Place your unopened donation in the marked tub in the church entryway.



GOOD SAMARITAN
FOOD PANTRY

**those under
medical care
or recovering**



*Peggy McDonald,
Keith Gunzenhauser,
Chuck Keltner, Raeann Thomas,
Nyla Peeler, Melvis Jimmerson,
Gene DeBoer

**those living with illness, abuse,
struggle, or other challenges**

those in harm's way

(in war zones, first responders,
medical professionals)



March Anniversaries

Bill & Susan Mauermann
Greg & Lisa Blumhagen



March Birthdays

Jane Bishop
Sheryl Van Syoc
John DeBoer
Kevin Hess
Diane Gillespie
Kathy Solverson
Rebecca Hulse
Dan Redmond
Molly Comer
Luke DeBoer
Andrea Tiedeman
Dusty Schultzen
Porter Doggett
Dana Muzney
Marie Lowman
Glenn Wemer
Lola Simpson
Jax Jaspers



*Kids' Care kids enjoy the
snow while they can.
Before February was over,
it reached 76 degrees in
Van Meter.*