



# **Monthly Newsletter The Circuit Rider**

**UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF MOUNT VERNON**

304 1st Street SW, Mount Vernon, IA 52314

*Our mission is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.*

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**April 2023**

## Pastor's Letter

Friends,

I experienced a “God Wink” yesterday after worship. In the message for Sunday, I had talked about looking for the crocuses in the midst of the heaviness of losses these past few months. I shared that I knew that the crocuses would show up in nature’s timing, but my heart needed that sign of spring, of life, of new life.

And, would you know, after worship as I was walking into the parsonage from the garage, there they were, in all their glory. And I found myself smiling. I received it as God’s impeccable timing (and humor!), and as a symbol of hope.

Friends, in these next days we will be walking with Jesus in his last days as he makes his way to Jerusalem, where he knows he will lose his life. We will shout the hosannas as he enters the city, join with the disciples around that last supper, watch as a disciple betrays him for thirty pieces of silver, and bear witness as he is flogged and spat upon, nailed to the cross and dies for the sake of the world that he so loves.

But like the crocuses that come up every spring as witness to new life, we know that that is not the end of the story. We know that on the third day Jesus broke the power of sin and death in resurrection glory.

The words to the hymn Now The Green Blade Riseth, by J.M.C. Crum, proclaim this hope and promise:

When our hearts are wintry, grieving, or in pain,  
Jesus’ touch can call us back to life again,  
fields of our hearts that dead and bare have been:  
Love is come again, like wheat that springeth green.

May you celebrate the newness of life in this season. May you find signs and symbols that speak to your heart of resurrection and life, and may you join with the saints throughout the ages in proclaiming the Easter Acclamation: “Christ is risen! Christ is risen, indeed”

On the Journey, Pastor Terra





For all who worship with us...  
we are so blessed to have you with us on  
Sunday mornings

**In person at 8:30 am or 11:00 am**

**Online at 8:30 am**

[www.umcmv.com/online-worship](http://www.umcmv.com/online-worship)

## Mount Vernon Community Preschool April 2023 Update

Preschool children have been busy **playing** - interacting with friends is the best, **cooking** - in March, each child made a pizza and enjoyed a tasty snack, and **creating** - painting, building and pretending is the best way to learn! The relationships the children have formed with the teachers and each other is a joy to be a part of.

We are thankful for your continued prayers and support as we finish out our school year.



# **Introduction letter from our new Pastor Pastor Vicki Fisher**



Hello Mount Vernon UMC!

Grace and peace to you in Jesus Christ, our hope and salvation! Thanks to everyone who has reached out with words of welcome. Transitions are not easy, even if they are exciting. Your kindness means a lot!

I have been serving the United Methodist Church for almost 24 years, at 4 different appointments: Graettinger, Sac City, Manning/ Manilla, and am currently at Spirit Lake. I love helping churches develop leadership and ministries that reflect their unique calling and values. I am excited to hear about God's call on your lives!

The centrality of the United Methodist teaching of grace changed my life and continues to inform my ministry. I want others to experience the wonder of being part of God's work to bring God's kingdom on earth as it is in heaven. I'm known as someone with deep compassion for the hurting. I am called to stand in solidarity with the LGBTQ community. I am excited to be following Pastor Terra, as I know her heart and her work. I pray that I can build faithfully on the work she has so lovingly done among you.

Mark and I have been married for 27 years. He will be teaching high school math at Lone Tree come fall. We have two young adult children. Hannah is a band teacher in Nebraska. Kory (they/them) is a community college student. Kory will be moving with us and is looking at continuing education opportunities in the area. We also have a sweet and silly beagle, Skully.

In my free time, I can often be found outdoors hiking or kayaking. I am looking forward to exploring eastern Iowa! I love reading, science fiction, and action adventure movies. I am a bit of a Bible nerd and I love asking questions. I have a B.S. Ed. with endorsements in Biology and Physics from the University of Nebraska-Kearney, along with an MDiv. from Sioux Falls Seminary. I am so thankful to be joining you this summer!

Joyful in the journey, Pastor Vicki Fisher

(712)-563-6094 [vicki.fisher@iaumc.net](mailto:vicki.fisher@iaumc.net)





***Palm Sunday April 2  
& our Communion Sunday  
8:30 am Praise Service &  
11:00 am Traditional Service***

***Stations of Jesus' Life Wed., April 5 12 to 6 pm  
& Thursday, April 6 12 to 7 pm***

***Good Friday Worship April 7th @ 6:30 pm***

***Holy Easter Sunday April 9, 2023***

***8:30 am Praise Service  
11:00 am Traditional Service***



APRIL 7, 2023

**GOOD FRIDAY WORSHIP**

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH  
OF MOUNT VERNON

6:30 PM WORSHIP



As we prepare for Easter Sunday, we walk the Stations of Jesus' life.

Let us walk with Christ as he journey's to the cross...



***Stations of Jesus' Life  
Wed., April 5 12 to 6 pm  
& Thursday, April 6 12 to 7 pm***

## Missions Committee April Update



### *YOU ARE ALL INVITED:*

You are all invited to be in Service for Christ in our community on Sunday, April 30th. We have been asking you to save the date, and now we're sharing the details! In place of our regular Sunday morning schedule, we will share a yummy breakfast (reservations needed on the Service Sunday form) in Fellowship Hall, join in a brief worship service, and then go forth for a morning of working together to make a difference in the lives of those in our community. We ask you and your family to sign up on the forms in the narthex or in our recent mailing, sharing your preferences so you can be assigned to teams with other congregation members, Cornell students, and youth group families. Families will be assigned to teams together, and child care will be provided for children 4 and under from 8 AM to 12 noon in the nursery.

Also included in these locations is a postcard on which YOU can suggest a friend, neighbor, or acquaintance which could be served by a team of workers during our Service Sunday event. These postcards will tell us who, along with community organizations, might benefit from a helping hand. The postcards need to be returned by Sunday, April 23 to allow us time to contact the suggested recipients, make team assignments, and gather supplies for needed projects. There will also be fleece blankets to tie and housekeeping/landscaping tasks to complete at the church, so there are ways for everyone to be involved as we connect with each other and contribute to our community.

Should you be unable to join us on April 30th, please consider making a financial contribution to cover costs for supplies and expenses. Just designate the check or cash to this event.

Please complete the registration materials today and plan to be involved!

Sincerely, Your Mission Committee: Vern and Arlene Sand, Mary Jane McWilliams, Jen Hoffman, Renee Nydegger, Barb Shepley, Alison Dix, Karen Stewart



# Sunday school

We started March with our last parable lesson then we hit Spring Break. We came back to end March with the Last Supper. Grades Preschool through 7<sup>th</sup> made bread and drank grape juice in Fellowship Hall together while learning about the Last Supper. Check out their recreation of Da Vinci's The Last Supper below! Our last unit of the year will have the Faith Word "Resurrection", which covers Palm Sunday, Easter, Emmaus, and the Ascension. The Unit Verse will be Luke 24:6a, "He isn't here, but has been raised". We will end April with Service Sunday; we hope to see everyone there!





# Youth group



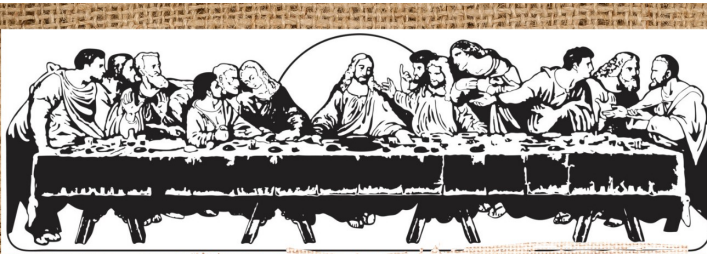
Youth group has been meeting Wednesday evenings from 6:30pm to 8pm. This month started with our 3 churches' pastors sharing with us information about their different denominations: Lutheran, Methodist, and Presbyterian. The biggest take away for the kids was that all three pastors were women and had similar shoes. The next week we started a short series on the Bible. After that was Spring Break, then we came back

to finish brushing up on the Bible. We ended the month learning family favorite games that are well loved by a few of our leaders.

Also, did you know we are on social media? You can follow our pages at <https://www.facebook.com/UMCMVRooted/> for Facebook and <https://www.instagram.com/rootedumcmv/> for Instagram! These pages will include updates and pictures.

Please let Veronica ([veronicafisher@umcmv.com](mailto:veronicafisher@umcmv.com)) if you have any questions, concerns, or comments.





Among Friends:  
A Dramatic Adaptation of the  
Last Supper  
Sunday April 2nd at 7:00 pm

United Methodist Church of Mount Vernon  
304 1st St. SW, Mount Vernon, IA 52314

## LAST SUPPER RE-RENACTMENT

ON APRIL 2  
7:00 PM

Thirteen men have been working hard for many weeks now as they prepare a special experience for us which will be presented in our sanctuary on Palm Sunday evening, April 2. You will want to reserve this date on your calendar and perhaps let your friends and neighbors know of this opportunity.

*Among Friends; A Dramatic Adaptation of the Last Supper*, will be presented that evening at 7 p.m. This short play (just 25 minutes long) was written in the late 1980's by Dennis Damon-Moore, a former member of our church, as a result of his being asked to direct a play on the Last Supper in his church at that time in Wisconsin. Unable to find a suitable play, he read all the Gospels for a month and then wrote the adaptation himself. The play has been performed frequently at that church and many others since then. It is merely a suggestion of what the discussion and even arguments might have been around the table among the Disciples and Jesus during the Last Supper.

This will be the fifth time we have presented it here in Mt. Vernon, starting in 2000. It was last performed in our church in 2018. There will be some cast members from past performances and some new faces as others have moved away or had previous commitments preventing their participation this year.

Please make **Palm Sunday evening, April 2, 7 p.m.** an important step as you start your spiritual journey during Holy Week this year. You will be thankful you did!



# United Methodist Church of Mount Vernon Calendar April 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
<b>2</b> Communion Sunday Palm Sunday 8:30am Praise Worship, Sanctuary 9:45am Confirmation Class, Balcony Classroom 9:45am Fellowship Time, Common Ground Meeting Room 9:45am Sunday School Classes 11:00am Traditional Worship, Sanctuary 3:30pm Women's Ministry Connection & Conversation, Common Ground Meeting Room 6:00pm Final run through, Among Friends, Sanctuary 7:00pm Among Friends, Last Supper reenactment	<b>3</b> 10:30am Bill Bowers Funeral Service, Sanctuary 6:30pm Boy Scouts, Fellowship Hall 7:00pm Entre New Book Club, Common Ground Meeting Room	<b>4</b> 9:30am Staff meeting, Common Ground Meeting Room 9:30am Women's bible study, Balcony Classroom 6:00pm Cub Scouts, Fellowship Hall	<b>5</b> 12:00pm Stations of Jesus Life, Sanctuary 6:00pm Praise Team Practice, Sanctuary 6:30pm Youth Group, Fellowship Hall 7:30pm Chancel Choir Practice, Sanctuary	<b>6</b> 12:00pm Stations of Jesus Life, Sanctuary	<b>7</b> 6:30pm Good Friday Tenebrae Worship, Sanctuary	<b>8</b>
<b>9</b> Easter Sunday 8:30am Praise Worship, Sanctuary 9:45am Confirmation Class, Balcony Classroom 9:45am Fellowship Time, Common Ground Meeting Room 9:45am Sunday School Classes 11:00am Traditional Worship, Sanctuary 3:30pm Women's Ministry Connection & Conversation, Common Ground Meeting Room	<b>10</b> 6:30pm Boy Scouts, Fellowship Hall	<b>11</b> 9:30am Staff meeting, Common Ground Meeting Room 9:30am Women's bible study, Balcony Classroom 6:00pm Cub Scouts, Fellowship Hall	<b>12</b> 6:00pm Praise Team Practice, Sanctuary 6:30pm Youth Group, Fellowship Hall 7:30pm Chancel Choir Practice, Sanctuary	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>16</b> SE Linn Bulk Food Offering 8:30am Praise Worship, Sanctuary 9:45am Confirmation Class, Balcony Classroom 9:45am Fellowship Time, Common Ground Meeting Room 9:45am Sunday School Classes 11:00am Traditional Worship, Sanctuary 3:30pm Women's Ministry Connection & Conversation, Common Ground Meeting Room	<b>17</b> 6:30pm Boy Scouts, Fellowship Hall 7:00pm Trustees Meeting, Common Ground Meeting Room	<b>18</b> 9:30am Staff meeting, Common Ground Meeting Room 9:30am Women's bible study, Balcony Classroom 6:00pm Cub Scouts, Fellowship Hall	<b>19</b> 6:00pm Praise Team Practice, Sanctuary 6:30pm Youth Group, Fellowship Hall 7:30pm Chancel Choir Practice, Sanctuary	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>23</b> Confirmation Sunday SE Linn Bulk Food Offering 8:30am Praise Worship, Sanctuary 9:45am Confirmation Class, Balcony Classroom 9:45am Fellowship Time, Common Ground Meeting Room 9:45am Sunday School Classes 11:00am Traditional Worship, Sanctuary 3:30pm Women's Ministry Connection & Conversation, Common Ground Meeting Room	<b>24</b> 6:30pm Boy Scouts, Fellowship Hall	<b>25</b> 9:30am Staff meeting, Common Ground Meeting Room 9:30am Women's bible study, Balcony Classroom 6:00pm Cub Scouts, Fellowship Hall	<b>26</b> 6:00pm Praise Team Practice, Sanctuary 6:30pm Youth Group, Fellowship Hall 7:30pm Chancel Choir Practice, Sanctuary	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>30</b> Service Sunday 8:30am Breakfast - Fellowship Hall 9:45am Fellowship Time, Common Ground Meeting Room 3:30pm Women's Ministry Connection & Conversation, Common Ground Meeting Room						

## Lift Up these Prayer Requests

### Prayers for Healing:

- For Beth Johnson who is receiving treatment for cancer. Prayers that the side effects will be manageable and that the treatment will be successful. We pray for Beth's resilience, spirit and courage as she continues to fight cancer
- For Fred Lehman, who is doing pretty well, but does need lots of rest. Prayers for increased stamina are requested
- Continued prayers for Summer Brand, who is fighting Lymphoma. Prayers for continued courage, hope and endurance during treatment for Summer
- Continued prayers for Barb Neal (mother of Abby Bock) as she fights breast cancer. Prayers for her mental and physical strength as she battles through treatment
- For all our friends and family members who are fighting the battle against cancer
- Prayers for Comfort and Strength:
- Continued prayers for Phyllis (Kristi Keast's mother) for comfort of body and mind
- The the family of Bill Bowers, as they mourn his passing. We hold all family members close to our hearts during this time, especially his wife, Myrt Bowers
- For families in the generational squeeze of aging parents, child care and grandchildren care
- For those concerned with health issues
- For all who are struggling: emotionally, physically or spiritually
- For those suffering silently with anxiety and depression
- For this church, this building, these people, and ways to love on and stay connected with one another
- For all not mentioned by name who are mourning the loss of a family member or friend
- Prayers for Transition:
- For college students as their Spring Semester is in full swing
- We pray for our new pastor, Vicki Fisher, that will be joining us in July. Prayers for Pastor Fisher and her family as they prepare for their move. Prayers for our hearts to embrace and welcome our new pastor and look to the future with hope and excitement for the ministry that lies ahead
- Prayers for Pastor Terra as she looks forward to and begins her transition into retirement
- Prayers for the Bishop that as been assigned to the Iowa Conference, Bishop Keneetha Bingham Tsai has been assigned to our conference and we look forward to welcoming her into our midst and offer prayers for her during this time of transition
- Prayers for all students, teachers, school staff and administrators
- For the leaders of UMCMV as they continue to work on behalf of our church
- For the United Methodist Church: including the global church, the Iowa Conference and our Mount Vernon congregation



## PRAYER LIST continued

Prayers for our Nation and our World:

- For the families in Tennessee grieving over a school shooting and loss of lives
- For families and communities devastated by tornados in Mississippi
- For all impacted by the earthquake in Turkey and Syria
- Prayers for all who have had their lives traumatically affected by gun violence
- Pray for peace in our world. Specifically for the people caught in the tragedies of war in Ukraine and Russia. Lord in your mercy, hear our prayers
- Pray for peace and love for all humanity

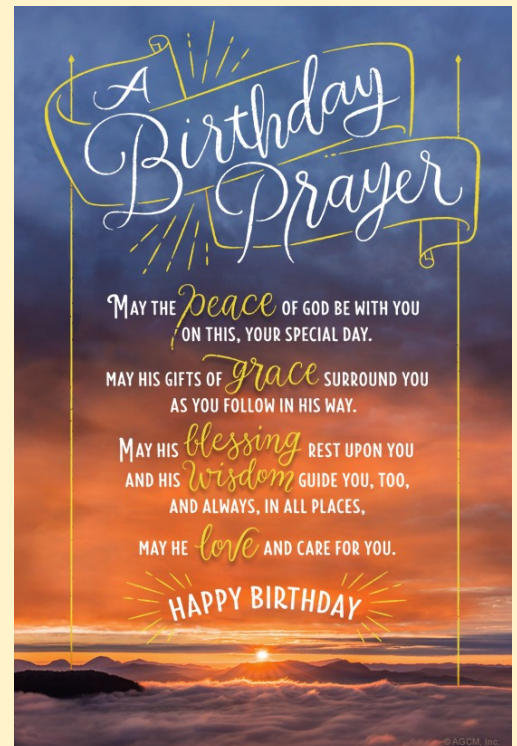
Prayers of Thanksgiving and Joy:

- It is a joy that Amongst Friends will be presented on April 2nd. Gratitude for Babs Moore for leading this group of men in this presentation and for the fellowship that has arisen from this time together
- Thanksgiving for Spring that is arriving, and the sun that is shining
- With thankful hearts we praise God for the blessings in our lives
- We are thankful for our confirmation class
- What joy that youth group is an ecumenical effort including UMCMV, Seeds of Faith and First Presbyterian Church. We are thankful for the way God is at work within this group

Marilyn Meyer	04/01
Scott Johanningmeier	04/02
Arlene Sand	04/03
Clare Nydegger	04/04
Jacob Pratt	04/06
Kim Stoner	04/07
Calvin Kragenbrink	04/08
Jack Kragenbrink	04/08
Sydney Pratt	04/10
Mike Stewart	04/10
Courtney Micheel	04/11
Amy Conrad	04/12
Jean Lehman	04/14
Benjamin Nydegger	04/14
Stacey Barber	04/15
Kyle Jaspers	04/17
Connie Stoltz	04/18
Gretchen Beckhelm	04/19
Kara Stineman	04/20
Annie Leopold	04/24
Becky Mohn	04/27

### April Birthdays

**Happy  
Birthday!**





## **CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR SENIORS!!**

**Congratulations to the high school seniors & college grads in our congregation. Our church family will recognize, pray over and celebrate these graduates on Sunday, May 14th. Below are the seniors we will be honoring. Please help us make our list complete and call the office if you think of a senior that needs to be included in this recognition and celebration.**

**Michael Briesemeister**

**Jesse Schwiebert**

**Ben Nydegger**

**Ethan Stanerson**

**Cohen Kamaus**

**Owen Rushford**

**Ben Merlak**

**Gavin Reinken**



## **Julian Johnson Scholarship Available**

College students who are entering either their junior or senior year at an accredited 4-year institution for the 2023-24 academic year and who are members of the United Methodist Church of Mount Vernon are eligible for the Julian Johnston Scholarship award administered by the church's memorial committee.

Julian Johnston, a former Mount Vernon businessman, provided for this scholarship in his will as appreciation for money he received from this church to enable him to finish his education at Cornell. Dividends from his Chevron stock given to the church provide the funding for this scholarship. Awards may be \$500 or \$1000 depending on the number of chosen applications and the actual funds available

Applicants need to 1) fill out a demographic information, 2) write a one-page letter describing the financial need and their career goals, and 3) provide a letter of recommendation to be considered by the evaluation committee. Application letters were emailed to our church members who were high school graduates in 2020 or 2021. Other eligible members may request application information from the church office. There is no age limit. Completed applications must be received by the church office by Friday June 2, 2023. Awards will be announced by June 30th.

## TRUSTEES CORNER

Trustees would like to ask that if you (members, committee chairs, organization chairs, etc) when setting up or having a meeting, class, practice, etc. please have it put on the church calendar. This will help us to know when to lock up the church, we do sometimes go thru the church and lock up early if nothing is on the calendar. If you are having a meeting you may want to check to see if anyone in your group has a key.

Weather is getting nicer so please if you should open any windows, to close them when you leave the room or meetings also just a reminder to turn off lights.

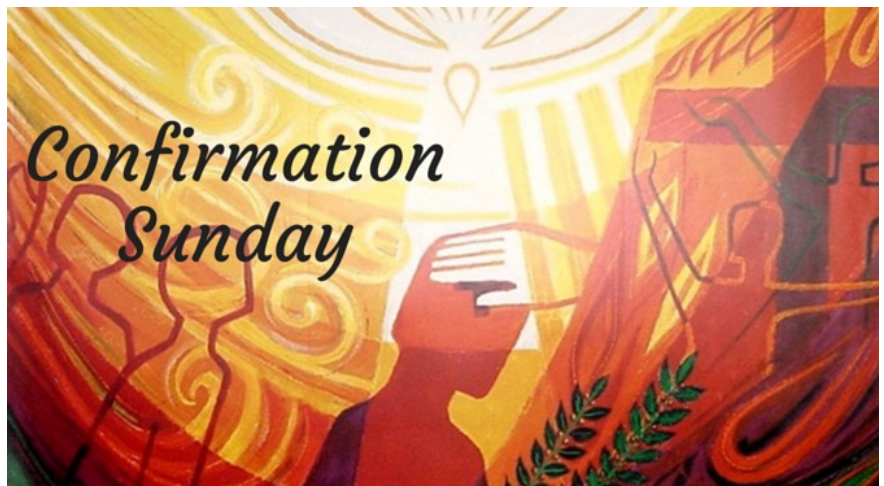
Thanks for your help and support. If you have any questions or see anything that needs attention, please let us know.

Jeff Walters, Kevin Woods, Susan Pisarik, Kristi Keast, Warren Havill, Mary Jane McWilliams and Mundo Guardado

### Confirmation

Sunday

April 23



The Church will celebrate Confirmation Sunday on April 23rd. We have six 8<sup>th</sup> graders

who have been part of this year's class. Each Confirmand will be sharing a "This I Believe" Statement with the congregation. We will have a group of students at both services who will share their statements as part of our work and their witness during worship.

Please join me in praying for our Confirmands as they continue to prepare for this day when they take for themselves the vows that were made at their baptism.



United Methodist Church of Mount Vernon  
304 First Street SW  
Mount Vernon, IA 52314  
RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



## ***United Methodist Church of Mount Vernon Staff***

Senior Pastor . . . . . Pastor Terra Amundson  
Praise Team Director-.... Clint Stanerson  
Christian Education Director  
& Director of Youth Ministries...Veronica Fisher  
Congregational Care Coordinator Julie Baty  
Office Manager/Newsletter . . . . . Alison Dix  
Nursery Care. . . . . Melissa Oxley  
Director, Adult Handbell Choir . . . Kristi Keast  
Organist Karen Stoll  
Chancel Choir Director Joleen Woods  
Choir Accompanist Denae McGrath  
Custodian . . . . . Night Shift  
Maintenance & Repair Director . . . . . Trustees  
Wedding Coordinator..... Barb Shepley  
Financial Secretaries . . . . . Richard Jacob,  
Tim Legore & Jackie Morrical  
Treasurers . . . . . Mike Kragenbrink  
Alison Dix



Spend Easter Sunday at  
United Methodist Church  
of Mount Vernon  
Sunday April 9 -- 8:30 AM & 11 AM