

### May 2024 Newsletter "Circuit Rider" for

THE 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.

Telephone: 319.895.6286

www.umcmv.com

Facebook: <u>https://www.facebook.com/UMCMV</u>

### Pondering on the Paha: General Conference



As I write this, the General Conference of the UMC has begun meeting in North Carolina. General Conference is the law-making body for the denomination. It last met in 2019 and voted in more restrictions around gay marriage and gay clergy. I remember having such hopes for General Conference that year, and the deep grief that followed. The Iowa Conference leadership responded by affirming they would not prosecute clergy who officiated at same sex weddings, nor would they prosecute clergy in same sex marriages. Our conference leadership, along with many conferences throughout the world, is not in compliance with our church law (The Book of Discipline).

I take solace in that I'm part of a conference that is committed to affirming LGBTQ lives and loves. No matter what General Conference does, our lowa leadership have made lowa UMC a welcoming place. That said, I long for the denomination to catch up to the lowa UMC.

I just deleted my third attempt to finish this note. I want to be encouraging, uplifting, hopeful. I love the UMC. I understand the dynamics of being a worldwide church, and the impact of the ongoing HIV/AIDS crisis in many countries. I know why some US representative will continue to vote against anything that looks like the full inclusion of LGBTQ persons. Yet, I long for the day when this fight is over.

Pray for our denomination. Seriously, stop what you're doing, and lift up a prayer. Then pray for our LGBTQ neighbors. The constant attack on their rights and freedoms is heartbreaking. I am so glad to live here in Mount Vernon, where people are more tolerant, but I don't want to ever forget that in many places in our state, LGBTQ persons and couples are openly harassed, mocked, and discriminated against. I hate it that our denomination remains complicit in harm. I pray as well, for a heart that never stops loving, even when people are hard to love. Will you join me in prayer?

Thankfully,

Pastor Vicki

### Message Series: Spiritual Disciplines for Ordinary People

What are some practical ways we can follow Jesus? How can we grow a deeper faith life? How can I experience God's grace? All through May we will continue to talk about tools for growing our faith as a church community. We will be using John Ortberg's book "The Life You've Always Wanted: Spiritual Disciplines for Ordinary People," as a resource. Limited copies will be available for \$17. The Life You've Always Wanted: Spiritual Disciplines for Ordinary People

5/5 Jim Baty Preaches , Communion Sunday—Education Volunteer appreciation College Grads blessing

5/12 Mothers Day—Graduate Sunday The Spiritual Discipline of Slowing Ecclesiastes 1:3-8, Mark 6:30-32

5/19 PENTECOST Sunday The Spiritual Discipline of Serving Galatians 6:1-5, Matthew 14:1-21

5/26 Memorial Day Weekend The Spiritual Discipline of Confession Psalm 32:1-5, James 5:1-20

6/2 Vicki on vacation, Jim Baty Preaching

FYI: Summer Worship times changing 2nd service will be at 10:15 AM for JUNE, JULY and AUGUST

Did you miss worship? Check out our online worship at <a href="https://tinyurl.com/weloveUMCMV">https://tinyurl.com/weloveUMCMV</a>



**Our Mission:** To make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

**Our Vision:** Building a healthier faith community with trust, love, and empowerment.

## Our missional priorities (goals) for 2024:

- 1) Create and Install a Covenant for Leadership.
- 2) Increase opportunities for meaningful relationships.
- 3) Improve transparency of governance.



We, as the United Methodist Church of Mount Vernon, are here to say we are making spaces safe and affirming for all people to be themselves and that we are specifically in support of the LGBTQ+ community members. We affirm that those in the LGBTQ+ community are persons of sacred worth, full and whole members of the human family, and are beloved by God.

How to reach Pastor Vicki:

For emergencies, call her cell at 712-563-6094 and leave a message. Otherwise, leave a message at the church at 319-895-6286 or email <u>vicki.fisher@iaumc.net</u>. She will be taking Thursdays as her Sabbath, except in dire emergencies.



### Thank YOU...



To Jim Baty for leading a Town Hall on wider denominational concerns.

To Kit, the Praise Team, and the Choir for creating an incredible ensemble on Confirmation Sunday.

To Confirmation Mentors, Sunday School Teachers, and Youth Group Volunteers for their support of our young people!

To our Trustees and Building Team for their volunteer work around the church.

To Denise Havill for taking time to make the sanctuary shine!

## INTERFAITH DIALOGUE ON CARE OF OUR COMMON HOME

## A COMMUNITY WIDE EVENT SUNDAY MAY 5 1 TO 2 PM ST. JOHN'S CATHOLIC CHURCH

How our faith can inform the actions we take in response to the ecological crisis of today - All community members are welcome!



Chalk the Walk This Saturday May 4th Uptown Mount Vernon Contact Adam Krapfl (319-558-9270) if you are interested in helping! We would love to have any ages help with our square! This is a great community event that we always enjoy be-

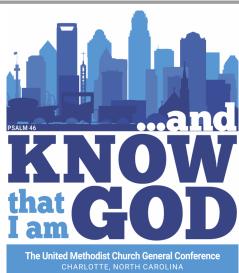
ing a part of!

Julian Johnston Scholarship—Deadline June 10

College students who are entering either their junior or senior year at an accredited 4-year institution for the 2024-25 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 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 2021 or 2022. 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 Monday June 10, 2024. Awards will be announced by June 28th.



### Pray for General Conference: General Conference is April 23-May 3, 2024

General Conference is the worldwide gathering of United Methodist delegates that occurs every four years. This will be the first General Conference since 2019 when the modified traditional plan was passed, increasing the penalties for officiating at same sex marriages and strengthening discriminatory language against gay people. Since General Conference 2019, several Annual Conferences, including Iowa, have refused to enforce these changes. The Iowa UMC is a safe place to be a married gay pastor and to officiate at same-sex weddings. Please pray for General Conference, that delegates might find a new direction for the UMC.



### Lunch & Learn Book Study with Pastor Vicki

Tuesdays 11:30 am to 12:30

### N Common Ground Meeting Room

Tuesday lunch study of the book "The Life You've Always Wanted: Spiritual Disciplines for Ordinary People" from 11:30-12:30. Limited copies of the books are available for \$17. RSVP to save a copy or buy your own!

#### Message Series: Spiritual Disciplines for Ordinary People

What are some practical ways we can follow Jesus? How can we grow a deeper faith life? How can I experience God's grace? Tuesdays at lunch we will talk about tools for growing our faith as a church community. We will be using John Ortberg's book "The Life You've Always Wanted: Spiritual Disciplines for Ordinary People," as a resource. Limited copies will be available for \$17.

How to contact United Methodist Church of Mount Vernon

Office Phone # (319) 895-6286

Email: alisondix@umcmv.com

Website: www.umcmv.com

ONLINE GIVING LINK (or QR code)

https://bit.ly/UMCMVonlinegiving



### **TRUSTEES CORNER**

We would like to give everyone an update on what is happening around the church. Spring is here! Below are a few bullet points:

- · The fountain is up and running
- $\cdot$  We will start working on the landscaping of the south wall
- · Taking care of the updates per the State of Iowa regarding the boilers
- $\cdot$  The boilers (heat) will be turned off sometime this month

Like what has been stated in the Mid-Weeks trustees always have projects that need to be down if you would like to help please give your name to anyone on the trustees. A reminder to shut off Lights in rooms when you are done using them.

Thanks for your help and support. If you have any questions or see anything that needs attention, please let us know. Susan Pisarik Chair, Kevin Woods Co Chair, Kristi Keast Secretary, Warren Havill, Mary Jane McWilliams, Mundo Guardado, Monti Marti, Loren Hoffman and Jay Currie

## Mount Vernon Community Preschool Update: May 2024

As we enter the last month of our school year, we reflect on the wonderful children and families that we have been blessed with. It has been a joy to get to know the families, watch the children grow and be a part of their first experiences with school. Children have learned to follow classroom expectations and how to be a part of a group. They have made new friends and developed a growing sense of independence. We are especially proud of their social emotional growth and self help development. Mornings at preschool have been filled with learning, laughter and love. What a great year! Thank you to the people and congregation of UMCMV for supporting and praying for all the children, families and teachers throughout the year. Thank you to those church members who helped get our classrooms up and running after the construction this fall, who kept it running after a few minor disasters and who check in from time to time to help where they can. This amazing preschool would not be possible without your support! We appreciate you all so much!

Have a wonderful May and a fantastic summer!

- Mrs. Mueller, Mrs. Grunder and Mrs. Whisner







# **Education Corner**



# **Sunday School**

Can you believe we are in our last month of Sunday School already?! We have one day left where we'll learn about how the 12 disciples needed help taking care of their community, so 7 new disciples were chosen to help. The last class date is 4/28 and on 5/5 we have our Volunteer Appreciation breakfast. Camp sign up is still open: Check out the youth group section for more info!

Confirmation Sunday was last week and we'd like to offer sincere CONGRATULATIONS to all of our Confirmands!

Jo Barnes Trulie Breidinger Maggie Cook Levi Dausener Isaiah Hanson Kaedynce Hanson Jaylee Jaspers Landon Johanningmeier Klayton Kahl Adeline Micheel Jacob Stewart Joey Watson







Just Like Me! VBS is coming up June 30th -July 3<sup>rd</sup> so get signed up today at www.tinyurl.com/vbs2024mvl !

# **Rooted Youth Group**

Rooted is almost done for the year! The pat month, the group has talked about Holy Week as well as the Resurrection, played Bingo, and talked about mental health with a licensed therapist. Next comes a service project to help clean up for Chalk the Walk, then it'll be a movie night, and last will be the end of the year celebration. Looking forward, VBS will be taking place from June 31<sup>st</sup> to July 3<sup>rd</sup> and we would love to have your student join us! Our student volunteers tend to be personal wranglers of a few spirited kids, help with stations, and be part of the skits and lessons. If you know in advance your student will be helping, please fill out the contact form at www.tinyurl.com/2024vbsstudentvols.

You can contact Veronica, Pastor Vicki, or the office for more information.



"Human Bingo" had them up and out of their seats. Videos, unfortunately, are not able to be included, but I'm sure the kids are happy nobody can hear them yodeling...

#### For info on camps: please check out these links:

United Methodist camps - Wesley Woods (Indianola) and Okoboji (Spirit Lake) Website: https://iaumc.org/camps

Presbyterian camp - Camp Bear Creek (Wyoming) Website: https://bearcreek.camp/

Lutheran camp - Ewalu (Strawberry Point) Website: https://ewalu.org/

Please contact Veronica or Pastor Vicki to volunteer at 319-895-6286. Regular youth leaders and helpers are always welcome.

#### Thank you!

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.

Get Rooted Youth Group text notifications by subscribing through Remind: <a href="https://www.remind.com/join/hgk7he">https://www.remind.com/join/hgk7he</a>



# Mission Committee May Update

Citizens of our community and state continues to face challenges of fighting hunger. Our Hunger Awareness Forum helped raise awareness of this issue and invited all individuals, organizations, and churches to have dialogues on ways they can help. Keeping in touch with lawmakers is another important process which makes

sure this issue is not forgotten. Our United Methodist Church offers quarterly hunger grants to area churches who apply for support of their ongoing projects. We received a check from the conference for hunger grant distribution of \$225.00- how exciting- every little bit helps! This will be applied to our next bulk food purchase for the SE Linn food pantry.

We are again planning to have a church "presence" in the Heritage Day parade on July 13. If you would like to be a part of this enjoyable event, please let Alison know in the church office.

Our outreach for June is to be a part of the Matthew 25 Transform week in NW Cedar Rapids. We are gathering a volunteer team to represent our church in this effort to support projects designated by the Matthew 25 organizers. The date will be during the week of June 24 - 28; we will choose a day when the most can attend, traveling to CR and working on the repair/building/landscaping project we are assigned. Won't you come with us!?! Again , contact Alison for more information.

Together as a congregation, we continue to make a difference to those around us!

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

#### WE COULD US YOUR HELP!

If you would be willing to donate a few extra minutes to your Sunday morning approximately once a month, we could use your HELP WITH USHERING. It is simply a matter of arriving 20 minutes before the service time, smiling and greeting each attendee and handing them a bulletin. Three ushers are assigned to each service and they also pass the offering plates later in the service and one of them then brings the basket forward to Pastor Vicki. That's it – that's all that is required in ushering for one of our services.

Is this something you could help us with whichever service you normally attend? If so, please call or text Babs Moore, 319-350-2885, and volunteer and she will put you on the schedule.

Thanks for considering this way to give to our church and congregation.

### United Methodist Church of Mount Vernon Calendar May 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 6:00pm Praise team practice, Sanctuary 6:30pm Middle School & HS Youth Group, Seeds of Faith Lutheran Church, Lisbon Iowa 7:30pm Choir re- hearsal, Sanctuary	2	3	<b>4</b> 8:00pm AA / Al-Anon Meetings
<b>5</b> Education Volunteer appreciation Sunday Jim Baty, Guest Message 8:30am Praise Worship, Sanctuary 9:45am Sunday School Classes 11:00am Traditional Wor- ship, Sanctuary 3:00pm Piano Recital, Sanc- tuary & Common Ground Meeting Room 3:30pm Women's Group, Balcony Classroom		Spiritual Disciplines for	8 6:00pm Praise team practice, Sanctuary 6:30pm Middle School & HS Youth Group, Seeds of Faith Lutheran Church, Lisbon Iowa 7:30pm Choir re- hearsal, Sanctuary	9	10	11 8:00pm AA / Al-Anon Meetings
<b>12</b> Senior Sunday 8:30am Praise Worship, Sanctuary 11:00am Traditional Wor- ship, Sanctuary 3:30pm Women's Group, Common Ground Meeting Room	camp party- Common Ground Meeting Room 7:00pm Boy Scouts Meeting, Fellowship hall	14 11:30am Lunch & Learn: Spiritual Disciplines for Ordinary People, Common Ground Meeting Room 1:00pm Staff Meeting, Common Ground Meeting Room 6:00pm Cub Scouts Pack 40, Fellowship Hall 7:00pm Church Council Meeting, Common Ground Meeting Room	<b>15</b> 6:00pm Praise team practice, Sanctuary 7:30pm Choir re- hearsal, Sanctuary	16	17	<b>18</b> 8:00pm AA / Al-Anon Meetings
<b>19</b> 8:30am Praise Worship, Sanctuary 11:00am Traditional Wor- ship, Sanctuary 3:30pm Women's Group, Common Ground Meeting Room	7:00pm Trustees Committee Meeting, Chapel Meeting Room	21 11:30am Lunch & Learn: Spiritual Disciplines for Ordinary People, Common Ground Meeting Room 1:00pm Staff Meeting, Common Ground Meeting Room 6:00pm Cub Scouts Pack 40, Fellowship Hall 7:00pm Finance Meeting, Common Ground Meeting Room	<b>22</b> 6:00pm Praise team practice, Sanctuary	23	24	<b>25</b> 11:00am Family reun- ion - Dennis Studt Family, Fellowship hall 8:00pm AA / Al-Anon Meetings
26 UMCOR Peace with Just Sunday 8:30am Praise Worship, Sanctuary 11:00am Traditional Wor- ship, Sanctuary 1:00pm Boy Scout pancake breakfast - prep/set up- Fellowship Hall 3:30pm Women's Group, Common Ground Meeting Room	cake Breakfast - Fellowship Hall Office closed -	- Fellowship Hall / Youth Room/ Library	<b>29</b> Alison out of office Pastor Vicki on vaca- tion 6:00pm Praise team practice, Sanctuary	<b>30</b> Alison out of office Pastor Vicki on vacation	<b>31</b> Alison out of office Pastor Vicki on vacation	<b>1</b> Pastor Vicki on vacation 8:00pm AA / Al-Anon Meetings

### Lift Up these Prayer Requests throughout the week...

Prayers for Healing:

- For Jon Hartzler's brother, Chris, and his family. Chris is fighting brain cancer. Chris and his wife, Molly, have four children
- For Cathy Stoner, following knee replacement surgery on May 1st, that her recovery will be swift and as smooth as possible
- For Linda Noll who has recently been diagnosed with brain cancer
- For our family and friends who are struggling with mental health issues
- For our friends and family members who are brave every day, facing their health battles

Prayers for Comfort and Strength and Safety:

- For the Clark family as they grieve the loss of Stephanie Clark. The Clark family includes Bonnie Keith, Myrt Bowers, Denise and Warren Havill. Special prayers for Stephanie's parents, Steve and Mary, and her sister, Samantha Zehms
- For the friends and family of Linda Noll, as they walk along side her as she deals with her recent cancer diagnosis
- For Jon and Maggie Hartzler as they support Jon's brother through his battle with cancer
- For all who are grieving
- For those concerned with health issues
- For all who are struggling: emotionally, physically or spiritually

**Prayers for Transition:** 

- For the seniors in our congregation (both high school and college) as families celebrate achievements, milestones reached and also grapple with lots of emotions
- For all teachers, students and administrators, as the end of school year activities can bring stress and heavy workloads
- For all college students as finals for Spring semester approach
- For the leaders of UMCMV as they continue to work on behalf of our church
- For the United Methodist Church, the Iowa Conference and our Mount Vernon congregation

Prayers for our Nation and our World:

- For all who are recovering from the recent tornado damage in Nebraska and Iowa
- For all who have had lives impacted by the trauma of gun violence
- For peace for all nations; Lord in your mercy, hear our prayers
- Prayers that love will spread across this world, that God's love will reach all the world

### Lift Up these Prayer Requests throughout the week... (continued)

Prayers of Thanksgiving and Joy:

- With joy we celebrate our 12 confirmands and their confirmation of faith statements. We are thankful for our newest members at UMCMV
- We joyfully celebrate the baptisms of Willa Turner, Maggie Cook, Kaedynce Hanson and Isaiah Hanson
- It is with joy and thanksgiving that Jim Baty reports that at General Conference there has been a sense of unity and harmony, and the legislative committees have been effective and working together to advance the future of the UMC
- Much thanks for all of our Trustee members and other volunteers who have helped make the renovations to the Education Wing possible, and to all who helped to eliminate the debt for this project. All efforts in this project are recognized with gratitude
- With thankful hearts we praise God for the blessings in our lives, and also take comfort that He knows the yearnings of our hearts



United Methodist Church Mount Vernon 2024 Confirmation Class Front Row: Levi Dausener, Jacob Stewart 2nd Row: Maggie Cook, Kaedynce Hanson, Trulie Breidinger, Josephine "Joey" Watson, Adeline Micheel, Jaylee Jaspers, Josephine "Jo" Barnes

Back Row: Isaiah Hanson, Klayton Kahl, Pastor Vicki Fisher, Landon Johanningmeier

### **Endowment Distribution**

Our endowment funds earned a modest return in 2023. In accordance with our endowment policy, the Endowment Ministry Team requested, and the Church Council approved, a distribution of \$6,000 from the endowment. Endowment distributions must be used for special projects or ministries that are not part of the church's annual budget.

The Church Council will act to approve one or more specific uses of this year's distribution at its meeting in May. In order to be eligible to receive funds from the endowment, the Council agreed on the following procedures and asks everyone wishing to request funds to follow them:

1. All the UMCMV program ministries (Missions, Education, Evangelism, Youth, Stewardship, Worship, Memorials, Membership Care, Peace/Justice) and administrative ministries (Trustees, Staff Parish, Finance, Lay Leadership) are eligible to request funds from the distribution.

2. If there is a request or idea for use of the funds from an individual in the congregation, it must first go through one of the program or administrative ministry teams above.

- 3. All requests must include the following:
- a. name of the project/program/event, etc. to be funded with this distribution
- b. name of the Council member or committee making the request
- c. description of what outcome is expected
- d. estimated cost
- e. availability of other funding sources if full funding from endowment is not possible

All requests should be sent to Alison Dix in the church office by May 7. The requests will be presented to the Council at its May meeting for discussion and a vote for selection.

### Scrip Inventory Available

If you need a last minute gift or are planning a trip to Gary's and forgot to put a card on your last Scrip order – just contact Alison in the church office. Many times there are gift cards on-hand and your request can be filled immediately. Cards currently in stock include: Gary's, Casey's, Arby's, KwikStar, Red Robin, Hardee's, Papa Murphy's, BWW, Panda Ex-



press, and iTunes. If there are additional cards you would like, just place your order on the next date (15th of the month). You will always receive your cards within a week of the order.







# Seeds Taith Lutheran Church

## JOIN US FOR VBS THIS SUMMER!

When:Sunday, June 30th from 5-7:30pm (multi-generational)<br/>Monday, July 1st – Wednesday, July 3rd from 1-4pmWhere:Seeds of Faith, 798 Brenneman Lane, LisbonWho:Pre-K (must be potty trained) through 6th grade as of Fall 2024Registration:Requested but not required by June 16th

https://tinyurl.com/vbs2024mvl



#### Thank you to all who attended our HUNGER AWARENESS EVENT!

Here is the links to the three organizations featured if you are interested in checking them out:

<u>Iowa Hunger Coalition</u> https://www.iowahungercoalition.org/

HACAP Food Bank—https://www.hacap.org/foodres

SE Linn Community Center https://selinn.org/

#### **Graduate Sunday**

We are excited to celebrate our seniors in the month of May. We have 2 Cornell Seniors, Emily Martyka and Anna Newby we will be celebrating May 5. We have several High School Seniors as well from Mount Vernon including:

Rebecca Conrad, Gwen Steine, Jackson Jaspers and Devon Hanson.

There is still time to have your senior included in our May 12 and May 19 celebrations if you are interested– just contact the church office.

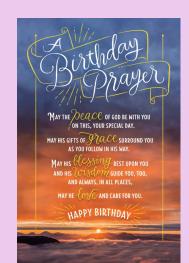


Loren Nydegger	05/02
Beckett Meyer	05/04
Al Shepley	05/04
Eleanor Smith	05/05
Erin Schaller	05/06
Shirley Ryan	05/08
Jackie Wallace	05/08
Trulie Breidinger	05/10
Rick Schwiebert	05/13
Kinsley Kamaus	05/14
Jackie Morrical	05/14
Abner Light	05/15
Eve Light	05/15
Brody Nosek	05/15
Jackson Jaspers	05/18
Marci Schmatt	05/19
Pat Sorgenfrey	05/20
Gretta Zehms	05/20
Lewis Micheel	05/22

### **May Birthdays Happy**

### **Birthday!**

Caleb Smith	05/22
Ann Currie	05/23
Jessica Johanningmeier	05/26
Roger Schnittjer	05/28
Kevin Woods	05/28



## As we wrap up the 2023-2024 Sunday School year, we say Thank YOU to our volunteers!! We appreciate you SO MUCH!

### **Sunday School**

Monica Edwards-Suri Stacey Barber Brittany Booth Denise Havill Warren Havill Jessica Johanningmeier Andy Light Gretchen Light Bill Micheel Courtney Micheel Jamie Smith Karen Stewart Teresa Stewart

<u>Youth Group</u> Jaimie Hanson Teresa Stewart

<u>Children's Sermon</u> LeAnn Briesemeister



THANK YOU for the lives you touch we appreciate you

SO MU



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



**United Methodist** 

Event Coordinator	
Financial Secretaries .Tim Le	gore &
	Jackie Morrical
Treasurers	Mike Kragenbrink
	Alison Dix



We celebrate our Education Volunteers on May 5

We celebrate all women who mother in whatever form that is expressed on May 12!

We celebrate our High School Seniors on Sunday May 12 & 19