



August 2024 *Circuit Rider Newsletter*

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

Pondering on the Paha: **Heritage Days**

Another Heritage Days is in the books, and fall planning is starting to pick up. My thanks to the Finance Team and the Missions Team for sharing the love of Christ through food and drink! We passed out over 400 bottles of water, plus numerous invitations to church. We served a lot of food, with smiles, despite the oppressive heat and humidity. Thanks to everyone who donated time and money to share the joy of Jesus with our community!

A 2019 survey by Religion in American Life, only 2% or 3% of people attended church because of advertising, while 85% went after being invited by a friend or relative. What about folks who have gone missing from worship? A study from the Lewis Center on Church leadership revealed the following, “Overall, 41% of the formerly churchd said they would return to the local church if a friend or acquaintance invited them. Younger adults are even more influenced by the power of the invitation. Approximately 60% of those 18–35 would consider returning to church if someone they knew asked them to come back.” A personal invitation from you is the most effective way to get people in the doors. A warm and genuine welcome from you is the best way to help folks connect once they are here.

As we start thinking about fall, I want you to pray about saying “yes”. Yes to helping in our children’s ministries. Yes to being a part of music ministry. Yes to inviting a neighbor, or calling a friend who’s been absent from worship. Yes to being the first impression of the church by ushering. Yes to serving in leadership or helping with building and grounds. We have a lot of people working faithfully, but there’s room for more!

What an amazing Heritage Days we shared! I can’t wait to see what we accomplish next!

~ Pastor Vicki



Pastor's Letter

Message Series:

“Creating Community: Why can’t we just get along?”

In this 8- week series, we will address the stresses of living in community. Why are there so many arguments? Why are people so petty? Why am I afraid to confront them? Why is it so hard to get along? People have been fighting ever since Cain and Abel (and we all know how that ends). Even in the times of Jesus, the disciples fought and bickered. How can we have a healthier church community? How can we have better fights with our loved ones? How can we avoid personal attacks even as we work on interpersonal conflicts? We will begin with scripture each

week and add new tools to the relationship toolbox each week. If you want to go deeper, I’d suggest Crucial Conversations Tools for Talking When Stakes Are High by Patterson and “Worth Fighting For” by John Pavlovitz.

Creating Community: Why can’t we just get along?



A 8 Week Series on the stresses of living in community.

Why are there so many arguments?

Why are people so petty?

Starting Sunday July 7 @ UMCMV

8/4 Alison Dix Preaching, Communion Sunday (Who are you more like– Jonah or Jesus?)

8/11 “What if I do nothing?” (Courage)

Scriptures: Psalm 31:8-9, 2 Samuel 12

Worship Question: What conflict have I been avoiding, that God wants me to face?

8/18 “Relationship CPR: Just the Facts”

Romans 12:16-21, Romans 16:17-20

Worship Question: What bad communication habits will I change?

8/25 “Relationship CPR: Not again!”

Ephesians 4:1-7, Matthew 5: 21- 26

Worship Question: How will I work to heal relationships this week?

9/1 TBD

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



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 10:15 am

Online at 8:30 & 10:15 am

www.umcmv.com/online-worship

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 vicki.fisher@iaumc.net. She will be taking Thursdays as her Sabbath, except in dire emergencies.



Thanks to our Trustees and Building and Grounds Teams!

The benches and rocks make a lovely change to our parking area! Thank you!



Choir Director and Custodian Search

Our Staff Parish Relations Committee has been interviewing candidates and hopes to have some announcements for the church soon! Please pray for the right people at the right time. Please continue to generously support our church, as finances are often a strong consideration in hiring. Thanks!



Craig Arians asked us to share this information with our congregation:

JOHN ARIANS CELEBRATION OF LIFE

SATURDAY, AUGUST 10, AT COMMUNITY BIBLE CHURCH

9:30 VISITATION

11:00 SERVICE

12:00 LUNCH

1:00 BRIEF SERVICE AT MOUNT VERNON CEMETERY

Church Council Recap from Chair, Jim Baty

Greetings UMCMV Community in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. I trust that your summer has presented moments of joy and peace. I also realize that there has been so many moments of stress, anxiety and grief throughout our community and our connectedness outwardly. May God's presence be known to each of you in both the feast and the famine.

In this message from your Council Chair, I wish to express my gratitude and joy for what church leadership has accomplished this summer. Our last meeting featured a collective voice reciting liturgy to install a covenant for this church, beginning with each of our commitments. This covenant will make its way throughout our community of faith as you are invited in increasing concentric circles to join with it; as it becomes part of the visible message we convey to all sharing our spaces; and as it faces outwardly to those curious about us, visiting our website. This was a big lift in our goals this year along with increasing our transparency of leadership and function, along with continuing to grow the meaningful relationship opportunities here. Specifically, Pastor Vicki and our Co-Lay Leader, Ann Coe poured their hearts into this work resulting in something that is as much a strong statement of our faith and our beliefs as it is a covenant for how we will endeavor to abide.

I am also grateful for the spirit of volunteerism that continues in this community of faith. I have witnessed first hand the commitment to talking and praying as small groups have visioned new ideas along with renewing some of our most meaningful opportunities for engagement. Like you, I have also witnessed the loving commitment of our Trustees in maintaining and improving our property along with the patient and persistent management by our Finance Committee committed to putting your generosity to work while keeping us in a positive financial position. Most of all, I am grateful and my heart is overflowing with joy as I have worshipped with a vibrant cross section of this congregation each and every week.

Grace and peace as you finish your summer. Jim Baty, UMCMV Ad Council Chair

Thank you's to all the **Behind the Scenes**

Thanks to Brittany Booth for cleaning up the Sunday School rooms and Christian Education office!

Thanks to Kevin Woods for mowing our very challenging grounds, plus working in the sound booth!

Thanks to Denise Havill for your volunteer time sprucing up the sanctuary!

Thanks to our Trustees for locking up each night!

Thanks to everyone who volunteers to keep the grounds looking nice!

Thanks to Barb Shepley for taking care of hundreds of details.



Lunch & Learn with Pastor Vicki

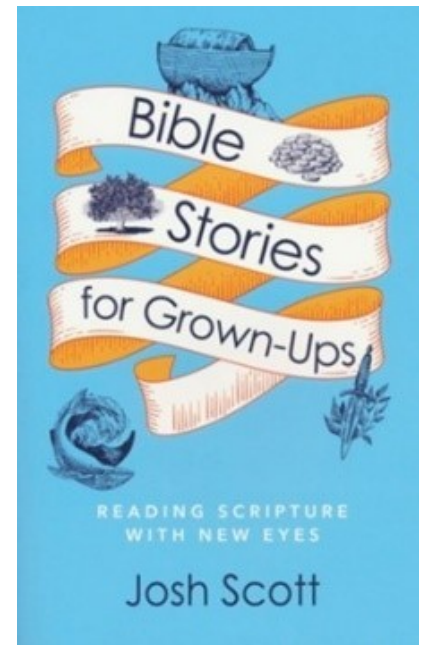
Tuesdays 11:30 am to 12:30

Common Ground Meeting Room

Started in July– continuing through August 27 on Tuesdays

Bible Stories for Grown-Ups: Reading Scripture with New Eyes by Josh Scott

Join Pastor Vicki on Tuesdays over lunch as we look at some of the most famous stories in the Bible. This seven week study begins July 9 and will meet on Tuesdays in the Common Grounds from 11:30-12:30. Books are \$18.



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>



Confirmation Class

Families of Youth Grade 7 and up,

Recently you received an email about Confirmation. It has been the practice of the United Methodist Church of Mount Vernon to offer Confirmation classes to students in grades 7 and up. Last year, we had a combined class of 7-8th graders in Confirmation. Confirmation requires 20 hours of class time, plus Sunday worship attendance on 14 occasions in the school year, plus participation in Sunday School and/or Youth Group. We are in the process of deciding if we have a small Confirmation class this year, or wait a year for a combined class.

Do you want your student to participate in Confirmation this year? Please reach out ASAP.

Thanks, Pastor Vicki

TRUSTEES CORNER

Air Conditioners are on in the Sanctuary, Narthex, Common Ground and Fellowship Hall. Please keep all doors closed to these rooms so they can stay cool. If you should open any windows or plug in any fans in the church, please shut them or unplug them when you leave the room, if you are not able to do that, please ask someone else too.

A reminder to shut off Lights in rooms when you are done using them thanks.

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
Mundo Guardado
Loren Hoffman

Mary Jane McWilliams
Monti Marti
Jay Currie

Sunday September 1— our worship services will go back to

8:30 am Praise Worship

11 am Traditional Worship



Inclusion Team: Join us!

The United Methodist Church of Mount Vernon has a small team working on growing our message of inclusion. We hope to focus on training, education, signage, messaging, and out-

reach. To learn more, contact Kim Schwiebert at pk.schwiebert@live.com.



Mission Committee August Update

Our committee has been busy giving to our surrounding community during the summer!

Matthew 25

We sponsored a work team of 5 congregation members who gave a day of their time to work together helping a Cedar Rapids resident through a Matthew 25 “Transform Week” project. Our group says they would do it again – and felt the experience was organized, needed, and appreciated. We hope to repeat this experience next year.

Mission of Hope

We served about 120 meals to individuals and families who suffer from food insecurity in Cedar Rapids. Our team noticed the number of children in attendance, especially school aged children, who seemed especially excited about the food provided.

Heritage Days float

Thanks to the 20 congregation members who passed out 400 bottles of water, candy, waves, and smiles to our community. Our identity stickers on the water said “Be Refreshed” and invited parade watchers to attend our worship!

Meals on Wheels

In August we will again deliver Meals on Wheels to local residents in cooperation with SE Linn. These week-day meals provide nutrition, a check in visit, and a socialization opportunity to community members.

Although our summer schedules change, we can continue to provide Christian love and support to our community.

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



Church Council Goal Discussion on “Increase opportunities for meaningful relationships”

Our second goal for 2024 is to “Increase opportunities for meaningful relationships.” Our Church Council has several small teams exploring the following paths to creating more opportunities to connect:

- **Service Sunday:** We need more leadership to make this vital ministry happen in the spring.
- **Life Groups:** Were a meaningful way to connect that we want to revisit.
- **Pictorial Directory:** We want to tool to help us get to know each other and help us connect.

As these teams move from dreaming and praying, to formulating actual plans, there will be need for help. If you’d like to be a part of organizing any of these, please reach out to Pastor Vicki or drop a note by the office. Thank you! It’s exciting!

United Methodist Church of Mount Vernon Calendar August 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3 8:00pm AA / Al-Anon Meetings
4 Alison Guest message & communion 8:30am Praise Worship, Sanctuary 10:15am Traditional Worship, Sanctuary 3:30pm Women's Group, Common Ground Meeting Room	5 6:30pm Entre Nous Book Club, Common Ground Meeting Room	6 11:30am Lunch & Learn with Pastor Vicki- Bible Stories for Grown Up, Common Ground meeting room 1:00pm Staff Meeting, Common Ground Meeting Room 7:00pm Worship meeting, Common Ground Meeting Room	7 Pastor Vicki on vacation 6:00pm Praise team practice, Sanctuary	8 Pastor Vicki on vacation	9 Pastor Vicki on vacation	10 Pastor Vicki on vacation 8:00pm AA / Al-Anon Meetings
11 8:30am Praise Worship, Sanctuary 10:15am Traditional Worship, Sanctuary 3:30pm Women's Group, Common Ground Meeting Room	12	13 11:30am Lunch & Learn with Pastor Vicki- Bible Stories for Grown Up, Common Ground meeting room 3:00pm MVL CDG Volunteer Appreciation Party - Fellowship Hall	14 6:00pm Praise team practice, Sanctuary	15	16	17 10:00am Sauerkraut Days Parade: Rooted Youth Group walking in Parade 8:00pm AA / Al-Anon Meetings
18 Blessing of Backpacks (at both Services) 8:30am Praise Worship, Sanctuary 10:15am Traditional Worship, Sanctuary 3:30pm Women's Group, Common Ground Meeting Room	19 7:00pm Trustees Committee Meeting, Chapel Meeting Room	20 11:30am Lunch & Learn with Pastor Vicki- Bible Stories for Grown Up, Common Ground meeting room 7:00pm SPRC Meeting, Common Ground Meeting Room	21 6:00pm Praise team practice, Sanctuary 6:30pm Evening book club, Staff Offices meeting table	22	23	24 8:00pm AA / Al-Anon Meetings
25 Rally Day Worship, Potluck, and Fun at Bass Farms 3:30pm Women's Group, Common Ground Meeting Room 4:30pm Missions meeting & Team meal, Babs Moore Home	26	27 11:30am Lunch & Learn with Pastor Vicki- Bible Stories for Grown Up, Common Ground meeting room 7:00pm Finance Meeting, Common Ground Meeting Room	28 6:00pm Praise team practice, Sanctuary	29	30	31 8:00pm AA / Al-Anon Meetings

PRAYER LIST—August 2024—Keep these requests in your prayers...

Prayers for Healing:

- For Joan, (sister-in-law to Clint Stanerson) who recently received a stem cell transplant. This is a vital time for Joan, and prayers are requested that the transplant is successful
- Prayers for Ron Coe (and Ann) as he continues to recover from heart surgery
- For Mark McAndrew who fell and suffered a head injury. Prayers for Mark (and his wife Deena) as he continues recovery at home
- For Jon Hartzler's brother, Chris, and his family. Chris is fighting brain cancer.
- For Linda Noll who is receiving treatment for 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 Mark Hollingsworth (cousin to Judy Hartman) and his family. Mark is receiving Hospice Care
- For the families, congregations and colleagues of Rev. Chuck Layton and Rev. Carol Mart (United Methodist Pastors) who were both killed in a car accident on July 7th
- Prayers of safety for all who are traveling and vacationing, as summer draws to an end
- For the friends and family of Linda Noll, as they walk along side her during this difficult time
- 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 all teachers, students & administrators as they prepare for the new school year
- 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 our nation, prayers for peace and unity
- For all who have been impacted by the flooding in Iowa, Lord, please be with each one affected and let them feel your presence in their lives
- For the war between Israel and Hamas to come to an end, and for those who have lost their lives, have lost their loved ones and who fear for their lives
- For the residents of Greenfield, Iowa, as they continue to work hard to recover from the tornado that devastated their community
- For all who are recovering from the tornado damage in Nebraska and Iowa
- For all who have had lives impacted by the trauma of gun violence

PRAYER LIST (continued)

- 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

Prayers of Thanksgiving and Joy:

- Congratulations to Marci and Jeff Schmatt, as they recently welcomed grandson, Albert Anthony Giegerich VI into the world!!!
- We give thanks for another wonderful Heritage Days food booth. Thanks to all who worked hard to make this a fun and successful event
- We are thankful for all the volunteers that help keep our church clean, well maintained and welcoming to others
- With thankful hearts we praise God for the blessings in our lives, and also take comfort that He knows the yearnings of our hearts



**Do you want to learn more about
Life Groups? Keep reading!**

Life Groups FAQ

1. What is a Life Group? A private group of people to live life with - building connections, providing support for one another, growing in faith and sharing life's ups and downs.
2. How often do they meet? We're thinking weekly or every other week to get started.
3. If I was in a life group before, would I be in the group? So much has changed since we last offered life groups. We plan to change things up a little so we can meet new people.
4. Where do we meet and for how long each meeting? Life groups are typically held in someone's home but the church would be available as well. 60-90 minutes is about the typical length of a life group meeting.
5. What do we do in a life group? We can share our highs and lows, pray with and for each other and grow our faith.
6. How do we decide who should be in each group? When we complete the sign-up, we will pray over the list and let the Holy Spirit guide placement into groups. Check the sign up for more information about timing and preference. We'd like to form intergenerational groups with opportunities for everyone to get to know someone new from our church. And your children are welcome!
7. What is the timeline? We will be sharing information and recruiting during August and early September. We hope to start groups in late September or early October.
8. How can I get involved? We're looking for people interested in joining a group, hosting a group and/or facilitating a group. Look for the sign-up in the church bulletin or call the office for more information.
9. Who can I ask to learn more about these groups? Babs Moore, Ann Coe and Kim Guardado are all helping to facilitate the groups. Ask any of us for more information.



Education Corner



Blessing of Backpacks

AUGUST 18TH, 2024
BOTH SERVICES
ALL AGES ARE WELCOME

Bring your backpack or school bag and receive a special blessing tag and gift to start your school year!

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED... Rooted Youth Group and Sunday School Teachers and Helpers needed! Meal help needed Wednesday nights for Youth Group. (We host about 12 Youth Group meetings here, there rest are at the other two churches.) - Talk with Pastor Vicki and she will get you connected to the Education Team for either!

SAVE THE DATE:
Sunday School starts Sunday September 8, 2024.

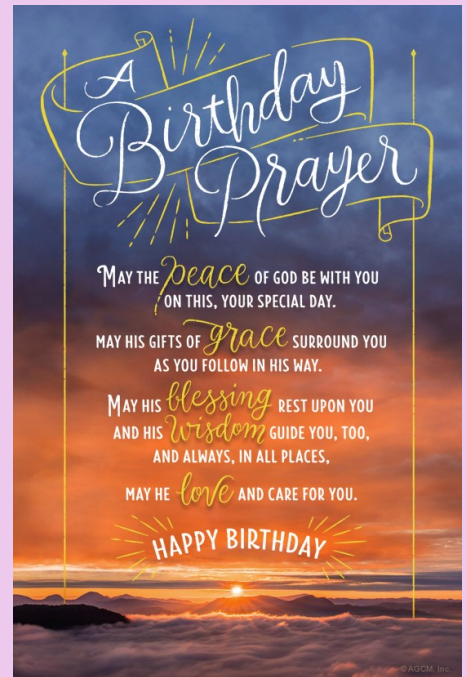
Christian Education and Youth Ministries Director Update: Starting August 13! Welcome Mandy Moellering!

Mandy Moellering lives here in Mount Vernon with her husband Mike, and three children (Max-21, Laila-19 and Spencer-15). Mandy is a pre-school educator at Bright Starts Christian Preschool in North Liberty, and comes to us having served as a Director of Children’s Ministry for several years at FUMC of North Liberty. Mandy is passionate about teaching tiny humans about God’s love, encouraging children and youth ministry through their participation in Worship and serving their neighbors. Mandy’s favorite VBS song is “My Lighthouse”, and her favorite mission trip was to aid flood victims in Greeley, Colorado. In her extra time Mandy enjoys Disney World, arranging flowers and theatre of all kinds!

August Birthdays

Happy Birthday!

Jason Anderson	08/03
Candice Jeffrey	08/06
Diane Legore	08/06
Sandra Sill	08/06
Renee Nydegger	08/08
Isaac Dausener	08/09
Emily Stoner	08/09
Judy Van Cleve	08/09
Beth Johnson	08/11
Kailey Shannon	08/13
Marc Mohn	08/14
Jen Stanerson	08/14
Lauren Swartzendruber	08/17
Loren Hoffman	08/19
Kyler Shannon	08/19
Kim Guardado	08/23
Jim Engelbrecht	08/24
Jaimie Hanson	08/26
Mandy Moellering	08/27
Landon Johanningmeier	08/30
Keaton Kutcher	08/31



Scams:

Pastor Vicki, Bishop Kennetha, and our church will never ask you to buy gifts cards. There are a number of email and text scams out there. Thanks for your generosity through electronic giving, on-line giving, mail in gifts, and Sunday offering!

Donate to help save a child's life- he needs a Bone Marrow Transplant!

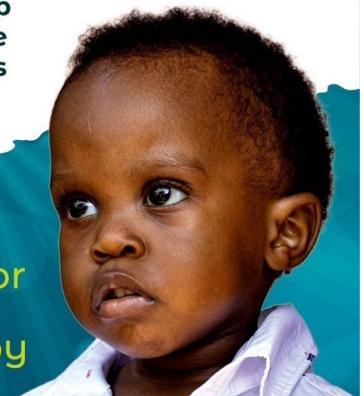
Per Jim Baty: Please think about assisting me in this effort! I have set up a GoFundMe fundraiser for this little boy, Kato Killian from Uganda. He is the nephew of one of the delegates that I've mentioned in my reports. They are desperately seeking funding to help him survive sickle cell anemia. <https://bit.ly/4cdcJZ2>

Save Kato's Life

Together for Kato Killian: Help Kato Get the Life-Saving Bone Marrow Transplant He Needs

Kato, a precious 5-year-old, has been diagnosed with Sickle Cell Disease, a genetic disorder that affects hemoglobin production. His only hope for a cure is a bone marrow transplant, which is possible with your support.

The Goal: **\$50,000** for a Life-Saving Operation in India by December





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 Vicki Fisher
Praise Team Director	Clint Stanerson
Kid's Ministry & Director of Youth Ministries.....	Mandy Moellering
Congregational Care Coordinator	Julie Baty
Office Manager.....	Alison Dix
Nursery Care	Melissa McNeese
Director, Adult Handbell Choir . . .	Kristi Keast
Organist	Karen Stoll
Chancel Choir Director	
Choir Accompanist	Deb Forbes
Event Coordinator.....	Barb Shepley
Financial Secretaries	Tim Legore & Jackie Morriscal
Treasurers	Mike Kragenbrink Alison Dix



**All Church Event
 @ BASS FARMS**

**Sunday
 August 25**

Worship @ 10 am

Brunch Potluck

**RALLY DAY - Sunday School
 Registration
 & Family FUN**