



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.

www.umcmv.com

email: umcmv@mchsi.com

December 2017



Pastor's Letter

*For a child has been born for us, a son given to us;
Authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace
-Isaiah 9:6*

These words from Isaiah announce and celebrate the birth of a new king. Written against the backdrop of Assyrian captivity, they predict a kingdom of peace and justice. As we begin Advent, I invite you to ponder the names of the Messiah and Jesus' fulfillment of those titles:

Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. For two thousand years, Christians have claimed Jesus as the Messiah of Hebrew Scriptures. But although Jesus was wise beyond measure and the Word enfleshed, he did not necessarily meet the expectations of a mighty king. Instead Jesus presented a new vision of leadership and prosperity, "It requires an uncommon wisdom to interrupt the foolish practice of business as usual" (Brueggemann).

The season of Advent presents an opportunity to pause and reflect on the birth of Jesus and his relevance for contemporary culture. While the world is constantly in motion and telling us what we need, our Wonderful Counselor invites us to slow down and "interrupt the foolish practice of business as usual". As a baby wrapped in bands and laid in a manger, Jesus was love and peace incarnate. Later in life, Jesus refused to compete with the power of Rome on the terms of Rome, "My kingdom is not from this world" (John 18:36). Through the narrative of his birth, life, and death, Jesus asks us to consider our own embodiment of love and peace. Interrupting business as usual opens up new possibilities that were thought to be impossible: forgiveness, generous sharing, humility, and the denial of self for the sake of a neighbor. During this holiday season, let us reconsider what is possible and the uncommon wisdom of our Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, and Prince of Peace.

Wonderful Counselor, thank you for fulfilling Isaiah's vision and showing us that a different life-giving order is possible. Make me an instrument and active part of your alternative realm on earth. Amen.

Blessings, Pastor Mark Johnson

Resource: Brueggemann, Walter. *Names for the Messiah: An Advent Study*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2016.

WORSHIP SCHEDULE

**8:30 am Praise
Worship**

9:45 am Sunday School

10:30 am Fellowship Time
Common Ground

**11am Traditional
Worship**

Sunday December 24

**Combined Worship
9:30 am Christmas
Hymn Sing**

**Christmas Eve
Candlelight Worship
With Communion
5:30 pm & 9 pm**



FINANCIAL PEACE UNIVERSITY

Led by Angie Watson -9 Week Training

Starting January 9, 2018 Tuesdays 6:30 to 8:30 PM

Class to be held in the Balcony Classroom

Childcare will be provided - GET SIGNED UP TODAY!

When you purchase a *Financial Peace University* (FPU) membership, you receive all the class materials and access to the FPU online resources you need to succeed. Your membership means that you can attend the FPU class as often as you like. Spouses and engaged couples can attend together with a single membership, and teens living at home are welcome to attend with their parents. Classes are held once per week for nine weeks. Classes are 1 1/2- 2 hours long. First half of class Dave Ramsey teaches on the DVD. During the second half, class members come together for a small-group discussion and hands-on activities. Group members support and encourage each other as they work to change their financial futures.

Sign up for this class by going to: <https://fpu.com/1052842>

This gets you signed up for our class and you get a \$20 discount off the regular price. If you're interested in learning more about the class, contact Angie Watson (angie-watson@hotmail.com or 319-430-3519).

EVENSONG



In the busyness of our lives, especially during the time between Thanksgiving and Christmas, the one thing we fail to do the most is to take a moment to breathe, to rest, to reflect. That is what Evensong is about. Come light a candle, sit quietly and meditate as light music falls around you.

This special Advent offering for our community is from 5:30 to 6:00 pm, and weekly on Tuesdays, December 5, 12 and 19.

We invite you to come, slow down, if only for a moment, and listen to the Holy Spirit.

Tuesdays 5:30 to 6:00 pm -Dec. 5, 12 & 19

December Worship Schedule

Dec 3 - 2nd Sunday of
Advent

Dec 10 - 3rd Sunday of
Advent

Dec 17- 4th Sunday of
Advent

Advent: A time of
paying attention in the
midst of waiting...



With 2 services on the evening of Christmas Eve, we decided to do a combined Christmas Hymn Sing on the morning of Christmas eve to start of our Sunday and to allow for the evening services to be our main focus.

December 2017 Anniversaries

Love is patient, love is kind, it isn't jealous, it doesn't brag, it isn't arrogant, it isn't rude, it doesn't seek its own advantage, it isn't irritable, it doesn't keep a record of complaints, it isn't happy with injustice, but it is happy with the truth. Love puts up with all things, trusts in all things, hopes for all things, endures all things.



1 Corinthians 13:4-13

Brian & Jo Nowak-	12/12
Roger & Marilyn Schnittjer	12/21
Sherryl & Harry Osborn	12/23
Kraig & Pam Hunter	12/28
Beth & Preston Johnson	12/28
Al & Barb Shepley	12/28

Happy December Birthdays!



Samantha Back	12/01
Gregg Glenn	
Matthew Morrical	12/03
Cody Connolly	12/05
Claire Light	
Bill Meyer	
Weston Mitchell	
Mackenzie Kraus	12/07
Justin Light	
Becker Reinken	12/10
Trude Elliott	12/11
Alaina Pospisil	
Vern Sand	12/12
Nicole Knapp	12/13
Carew Kamaus	12/14

Joyce Loomis	12/15
Denae Steine	12/16
Oscar Krapfl	12/20
Tyler Roos	
Todd White	12/22
Floyd Rekemeyer	12/23
Kim Schwiebert	
Trevor Baty	12/26
Denise Havill	
Stephanie Boggs	12/27
Brogan Meyer	12/28
Donna Walters	12/29
Teresa Bothell	12/30
Russell Yeater	
Ethan Wenz	12/31

Holiday Tea and Cookies



You are invited to join the United Methodist Women on Thur. Dec. 14 at 10:00am in the Common Ground. Come enjoy some holiday tea or coffee and treats, music and reflection. We will also prepare some "goodie plates" to be delivered to members of our church family who may need a bit of holiday cheer. Please bring 2-3 dozen cookies, candy or a favorite holiday treat for the goodie plates. Participants will also be able to take home an assortment of goodies. This is a great event to get you into the holiday spirit. Everyone welcome. If you can't make the event but could help deliver the "goodies" and share a little time with some folks, please let us know. We usually deliver about 20 plates. It would be a great opportunity for a family holiday project. Any questions please call Barb Shepley at 895-6566.



Angel Tree

We have tags for gifts for families adopted by SELCC, and coat donations for Mission of Hope in Cedar Rapids. Tags are available Sunday November 26 through Sunday, December 3rd.

This is a wonderful way to help those that are less fortunate this holiday season in the spirit of generosity and caring.

United Methodist Church of Mount Vernon

www.umcmv.com

Project 60

Join Lisbon's High School Student Council to celebrate the holiday season with our annual Project 60 lunch! There will be music, door prizes, and bingo.



December 7th, 2017
Festivities will begin at 11 A.M.

Project 60 will be held in the
Lions' Den
235 W. School Street
Lisbon, Iowa

Anyone 60 or older is welcome
to attend.

Please RSVP by December
1st with Cathy Whitman
319-455-2106, ext. 226

Email Ellen Johanns with any questions!
ejohanns@lisbon.k12.ia.us

Daily Advent Scripture Calendar is available!

Enjoy God's word as part of
the waiting for the Christmas to
arrive and celebrating all that is
Christ in our lives.

(Click above to go to calendar-
included in printed version)

2017 Charge Conference Recap

Every year, churches throughout the Iowa Annual Conference hold a Charge Conference where any member of the church is invited to come and participate in the administrative reporting for the year. Given that there are administrative requirements to these conferences, there is automatically an air of indifference and even disinterest in general on the part of congregations heading into these events. Truth be told, the majority of the work is done ahead of time and it consists of a wealth of information about the health and direction for the ministry of the church. However, every so often, the Charge Conference ushers in a chance to see new energy and to feel the impact of the larger ministries of the local church through to the global church.

This year's Charge Conference was conducted as a "cluster", which means that several churches in our local region were gathered together under the direction of the District Superintendent. For those of us in Mount Vernon, we had the blessing of serving as host for this year's cluster and we welcomed congregations from Olin Community-Oxford Junction, Wyoming, Anamosa, Coggon and Lisbon. District Superintendent Rev. Kiboko Kiboko presided over the cluster and welcomed all to our sanctuary. For the first hour of the afternoon, Rev. Kiboko brought these churches together to talk about the mission work being done and the highlights of each ministry. The cluster was also introduced to the resources being developed by the Conference as Gabe Dorrell, Rev. Erling Shultz and Rev. Karen Nelson were given time to address the assembly. It is both an exciting and a challenging time in the ministry of the church, yet these reports evidence the power of the Holy Spirit continuing to move among the local churches and inspiring the conference to focus energy for greater support.

At the conclusion of the cluster assembly, our church representation gathered to officially document the summaries and conduct the official action to conclude the 2017 reports. For our church, this was presided over by elder, Rev. Leonard Ranson. In a very efficient and succinct manner, we moved through pastoral support forms, goal statements for each of our UMCMV ministry teams and official reports from Trustees and Staff/Parrish Relations. If you would like to see any of this information, I would love to make it available to you and to discuss any of the information.

Perhaps of greatest interest to me during this year's Charge Conference was the pastoral support forms. Each year our church conducts the preparation for the coming year of support that figures into our annual budget. This includes salaries, travel and education funding and a line item for insurance. In the rapidly changing environment of health insurance, we were particularly concerned about the value of these line items. We are blessed right now with professional experience in group health and this gave us a chance to make inquiry into the seemingly inflated benefit numbers. During the Charge Conference and the days that followed, we learned that being part of the United Methodist Church extends an opportunity for supporting the pastoral ministry of the church in a way we had not known before. In addition to the salary, housing allowance, travel and education funding, churches contribute to the general health and benefit of the ministry through what is actually a Pastoral Benefits Package, commonly misconstrued as a health insurance line item. Support for all pastors is unified through this package that includes retirement funding, coverage for poor health of any family member and the comfort of health insurance for life. The United Methodist Church establishes pastors in churches using an appointment process. Each church, based on their needs, is paired with a pastor(s) with gifts and graces that best match those needs as determined by the Bishop and her/his council. Such matches bring with it different levels of experience, health, family status and more. The freedom to appoint pastors based on the best fit and need is supported by our abiding relationship in a Conference that does not place undue burden on a small church or sacrifice the opportunities for all, including pastors. There is a grace we have found in this deeper understanding of our commitment to pastor support that has come through the important process of Charge Conference. I'll have more for you on this and the definition of apportionment soon.

Peace to you, Jim Baty UMCMV Chair of Church Council

Danforth Class to Begin New Study

The Danforth Class is beginning a study of the book “America’s Original Sin” by James Wallis next Sunday. James Wallis is a pastor, a Christian author of more than ten books, and teaches at Georgetown University. He has been hailed as an Evangelical prophet. This is his latest book which has been called “a powerful act of Spirit-led truth-telling”. He is particularly concerned about racism and white privilege. It is also on the UMW recommended reading list. The Danforth class meets Sunday mornings in the 5th floor balcony classroom next to the elevator. All are welcome!



Endowment Update Third quarter 2017

Do you know a United Methodist who has everything he/she can use? One who lives comfortably with what they have, needs no more stuff, and may be trying to live more simply? If the Alternative Christmas Market doesn't seem quite right, consider a gift to UMCMV's endowment funds in honor of the recipient! Gifts to our endowment can be made any time by anybody in any amount: just write a check to the church, specify it's for endowment, and send to the office or put in the collection plate. To honor a friend or family member, just note this fact when submitting your check, and the Endowment team will send a note of thanks to you or to the honoree, whichever you prefer.

Recall that the principal of the endowment is never spent: income is distributed from time to time depending on our investment returns, so funds given to endowment live there in perpetuity and a gift to honor a loved one stays there to support the church for many generations.

Endowment is forever!

CAN YOU MAKE A QCD OUT OF YOUR RMD?

If you are 70½ years old or greater, you know you have to take a required minimum distribution (RMD) from your retirement accounts each year. RMDs are required from all Individual Retirement Account (IRA) types except Roth IRAs, in the year in which you turn 70½ and each subsequent year. Additionally, RMDs may be required from qualified retirement plans such as 401(k)s and 403(b)s.

Legislation passed by Congress at the end of 2015 made permanent the tax treatment of retirement-plan distributions donated to charity. To receive this favorable treatment, the account owner must be 70½ or older, and the donation must be made directly from the IRA to a qualifying charity. That makes it a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD) under IRS rules, and the distributed amount is not taxable to the IRA owner, whether or not you itemize deductions on your tax return. You can donate all or a portion of your RMD. The United Methodist Church of Mt. Vernon is a qualifying charity to receive QCDs. Contact the custodian of your IRA or retirement plan to

***Scrip Shop Open on
Sunday, December
10th***



Bring your cash/check to church on Sunday, December 10th and purchase Scrip inventory. There will be a table set up in the narthex between services.

Circuit Rider Deadline for January will be December 21, 2017. Please let the church office know what information you would like included in the Circuit Rider and feel free to email us at adix@mediacombb.net - Thanks!



**Congrats to the Care Ministers
who were commissioned this
month!**

**Jim Baty
Lisa Davis
Pam Hunter
Nyla McCall
Ruth Miller
Barb Shepley**



Christian Education Updates



Save the date: Wednesday, December 20 @ 5:30 PM
Caroling and a meal hosted by
Children's Sunday School and Youth Group

No Sunday School on
Sunday December 24
& Sunday December 31st



*Decorating our hearts and
home*

In the midst of waiting...

December 3, 2017 4 to 6:30 pm

*Come join us as we prepare
Our House and Hearts for Advent.
Singing & fun activities for all ages.*

A Meal is being provided- come and enjoy!

As you contemplate a year-end gift

If you wish to make a yearend gift to the church, consider donating securities from your investment portfolio. The church can accept any negotiable securities: stocks, bonds, mutual funds. A gift of securities benefits the donor two ways: you receive the usual charitable tax deduction, and you avoid capital gains tax on the sale proceeds. This is especially helpful if you own securities that are worth substantially more than you paid for them. To get this favorable tax treatment, it is important that the securities are given to the church before they are sold. The church will sell them, and the proceeds can go to any church fund that you choose.

Janet Griffith at RBC Wealth Management handles the church's securities account. Call her at 368-7006, or contact the church office.



Surviving the Holidays

No matter how long it's been since your loved one died, grief can make the holidays a painful time. But there's hope. Join us for an encouraging seminar that will help you survive the holidays and discover new reasons to enjoy them again.

Sunday, December 3rd 6:30 - 8 pm



Curious about ringing a bell?

Our bell choir has 2 openings looking for a person wanting to explore the bells.

Each ringer covers 2 bells. Reading music is helpful, but we can work around it too!

We have men and women ringers. Contact the office if interested!

Church Offices will be closed for the Christmas Holiday on Monday December 25 and Tuesday December 26. We will also be closed Friday December 29 and January 1st for the New Years Holiday. Thanks!

Check out our website--

www.umcmv.com

We now have Sermons online...

www.umcmv.com/video-library-of-services/



Keep up to Date! [Check out our online calendar!](#)

Here is the [LINK](#)! Thanks!

Special Offerings for December

December 3	SE Linn Bulk Food
December 10	SE Linn Bulk Food
December 24	Christmas Eve Offering



Special Giving in November

Neighbors in Need	\$ 511
Youth AV Project	\$ 1,370
Memorials: All Saints Sunday	\$ 70

Life-Giving Christmas Market:

Heifer Project	\$ 842
JFON	\$ 430
Matthew 25 Hub	\$ 515
SE Linn Hams	\$ 415
Potters for Peace	\$ 108
Ten Thousand Villages	\$ 1,338

THANK YOU!

You are a Generous Congregation!

Scrip Update

Thanks to all those who have participated in the Scrip Program! So far we have raised over \$1,970 for the general operating expenses of the church! Orders are due on the 1st and 15th of each month. Put the order form/check in the collection plate or drop them off in the church office.



We have hearing assistance receivers available starting this Sunday! Check in with the Sound Booth to pick one up!

Use Scrip for Christmas Gifts!

Ordering scrip is an easy fundraiser for the church. Consider giving gift cards as holiday thank you gifts, teacher gifts and stocking stuffers! Ordering Scrip is convenient as the gift cards are delivered directly to you!

Stephen Ministry



During this holiday season, we may experience many emotions. If you are grieving the loss of a loved one or are going through a stressful time, the holidays can be filled with sadness and pain instead of joy. Remember that you are not alone and your Stephen Ministers are here for you. We will listen, pray, comfort, and share the love of Jesus. If you, or someone you know, would like to meet with a Stephen Minister, please contact Cathy Stoner at 319-551-6666 or the church office at 895-6286.

Prayer List

Prayers for Healing:

- Tom Traynor (Matt Traynor's father - recovering from a fall)
- Dale Martin (stage 4 cancer - nephew in-law to Guy Booth)
- Grandmother (to Maura Arnold - recovering from a stroke)
- Dick Peters (home recovering)
- Normagene Robertson (recovering from fall - Jim Baty's grandmother)
- Marion Lehman (to strengthen weak bones, prayers that therapy will help)
- Beth Johnson (chemotherapy treatments)
- Tiffany Snodgress (continued struggles with her health)
- Rohn Shepley (beginning chemo and radiation therapy)
- Hayes Hofmeister
- Mike Duroe (for strength during rigorous cancer treatments)

Marsha Light



Prayers for Loss:

- The family of Randy Dittmer (brother-in-law to Ray and Nancy Reasland)
- The family of Jeff Butterbaugh (wife - Kristine, sons - Cam and Rylan)
- The family of Greg Goodell (co-worker of Amy Guardado, Kim Ott and Kim Stoner)
- The family of Kaye Briesemeister (Eric Briesemeister's mother)

Prayers for Comfort and Strength:

- For all who are mourning the loss of a family member or friend
- Brooklyn and the Wattleworth/Myers/Whitley family

Prayers for Safety and God's Guidance:

- For all who are traveling during this Thanksgiving holiday week
- Staff Sergeant Thayer Studt and his unit, serving overseas in the US Army
- For all students (preschool through college)

Prayers for Transition:

- For all who are mourning the loss of a loved one as we enter this holiday season.
- For those in the midst of changing seasons of life.
- Dustin Clapp (home from incarceration - please pray for him as he transitions back into mainstream life. Also prayers of strength and comfort for his family members as they support him.)

Prayers for Sustenance:

- Agape Ministry in Cedar Rapids (leader Abraham Boniface)
- UMC MV Stephen Ministers and care receivers
- UMC MV pastors, staff, lay leader, and committee members
- UMC MV Life Group ministry
- Women at the Well United Methodist Church, Pastor Lee Schott, and the women of Iowa Correctional Institute for Women

Mission of Hope in Cedar Rapids, volunteers and attendees

Prayers for our World:

- For victims of violence
- For all who have been traumatized by the hurricanes, wildfires & earthquakes.
- The United Methodist Church
- Unity among all humanity

Prayers of Thanksgiving and Joy:

- Prayers of Thanksgiving that Belinda Sheldon (Tyler Roos' sister) has completed cancer treatment and no further treatment is needed at this time.
- Six congregation members have completed Care Ministry Training and were commissioned on Sunday, November 19th.
- For all the blessings God provides us, both seen and unseen.
- An enthusiastic confirmation class, currently coordinating a coat and clothes collection for a refugee program in Cedar Rapids.

December 2017 Worship Assistants

December 3rd at 8:30am (Praise Service)		December 3rd at 11:00am (Traditional Service)	
Parking Lot SW Door Greeters:	Gabi Guardado	Parking Lot SW Door Greeters:	Mike Stewart
West Door Greeters:	Amy Guardado	West Door Greeters:	Jim Wallace
Worship Assistants:	Tyler & Taya Roos Family	Worship Assistants:	LaFollette Family & TBD
Coffee Host:	Sue Pisarik	Lector:	Babs Moore
Communion	Lauren Swartzendruber & TBD	Communion	TBD
Nursery:	Kim Schwiebert	Nursery:	Brittany Booth
Slide Presenter:	Diane Legore	Slide Presenter:	Cot Graber
December 10th at 8:30am (Praise Service)		December 10th at 11:00am (Traditional Service)	
Parking Lot SW Door Greeters:	Donna & Darrell Jordan	Parking Lot SW Door Greeters:	Suzette Kragenbrink
West Door Greeters:	Eric Briesemeister	West Door Greeters:	Mike Kragenbrink
Worship Assistants:	Stephanie Frantz & TBD	Worship Assistants:	Jody Stewart Family
Nursery:	Emily Davis	Lector:	Karen Stewart
		Nursery:	Brittany Booth
Slide Presenter:	Diane Legore	Slide Presenter:	Dick Jacobs
		Coffee Host:	Denae Steine
December 17th at 8:30am (Praise Service)		December 17th at 11:00am (Traditional Service)	
Parking Lot SW Door Greeters:	Babs Moore	Parking Lot SW Door Greeters:	Al Shepley
West Door Greeters:	Sharon & Walt Krambeck	West Door Greeters:	TBD
Worship Assistants:	Darrell & Donna Jordan	Worship Assistants:	Morrical Family
		Lector:	Judy Stine
Nursery:	Marissa Cranston	Nursery:	Brittany Booth
		Slide Presenter:	Jackie Wallace
Slide Presenter:	Bonnie Moore	Coffee Host:	Mary Jane McWilliams
December 24th 9:30am (Christmas Eve Morning - Combined Service)			
Parking Lot SW Door Greeters:	Babs Moore		
West Door Greeters:	Tena & Jacob Pratt		
Worship Assistants:	Stephanie Hotz Family & Steve Miller		
Lector			
Nursery:	NO NURSERY		
Coffee Host	Sherryl Osborn		
Slide Presenter:	TBD		
December 31st at 8:30am (Praise Service)		December 31st at 11:00am (Traditional Service)	
Parking Lot SW Door Greeters:	TBD	Parking Lot SW Door Greeters:	TBD
West Door Greeters:	TBD	West Door Greeters:	TBD
Worship Assistants:	Eric & LeAnn Briesemeister Family	Worship Assistants:	Nydegger Family
		Lector:	TBD
Nursery:	Emily Davis	Nursery:	Cindy Strong
		Slide Presenter:	Dick Jacob
Slide Presenter:	Diane Legore	Coffee Host:	TBD



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	Joy Mitchell
Associate Pastor/Christian	
Education Director	Mark Johnson
Sunday School Coordinator	Brittany Booth
Congregational Care Coordinator	Julie Baty
Office Manager/Newsletter	Alison Dix
Admin. Asst./ Membership	Jo Harman
Nursery Care	Melissa Oxley
Praise Team Director	Ben Klaus
Director, Adult Handbell Choir	Kristi Keast
Organist/Pianist	Karen Stoll
Chancel Choir Director	Joleen Woods
Custodian	Rosa Moss
Maintenance & Repair Director	Trustees
Wedding Coordinator	Barb Shepley
Financial Secretaries	Richard Jacob, & Jackie Morrical
Treasurers	Mike Kragenbrink Alison Dix



Paying attention in the midst of waiting...



Christmas Eve Services

Candlelight with Communion
5:30 and 9:00 PM