



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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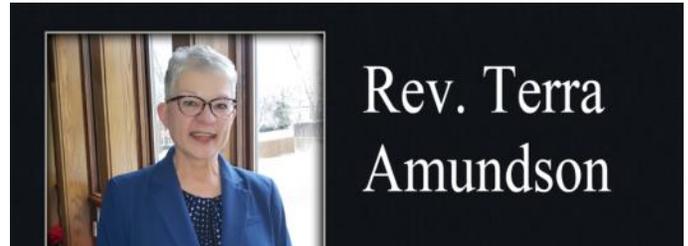
July 2020



Pastor's Letter

Beloved in Christ,

We are here! After what seems like many long months, we are beginning to get settled, exploring Mt. Vernon and Tipton, where Jay is serving, and already falling in love with you. You have been on my heart and in my prayers ever since I met with the Staff-Parish Relations Committee this past winter. I am excited to be you pastor.



A few tidbits about me as we begin to build relationships. Jay and I will be celebrating 42 years of marriage this August (yes, we were babies when we were married). We have one son, Aaron, who is married to Laura, and their children are Abigail, age 9, and Elliot, age 7. They live 13 miles up the road in Cedar Rapids. Aaron is the Director of Groundswell at Matthew 25, and Laura is a Sign Language Translator.

Jay and I are both second-career pastors, beginning our twenty-second year of pastoral ministry. I have worked in the church, either as a volunteer or, in the years before entering pastoral ministry, as a Christian Education Director in Oskaloosa, IA.

My seminary experience was at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary in Evanston, IL, where I received a Master of Theological Studies in Religion, Personality, and Culture. My emphasis was in Pastoral Care and Counseling. My education continued after I became a pastor to receive the equivalent coursework for a Master of Divinity. I was ordained in 2006.

I have directed vocal and hand bell choirs of all ages, and I play the piano and flute. One of my happy places is accompanying worship.

Other hobbies are walking, knitting, and drinking coffee – lots of coffee!

My intention in these next months is to get to know you, to hear your stories, to fall even deeper in love with you as individuals, and as a congregation. Let us discern together God's vision for the United Methodist Church of Mt. Vernon in this place and time.

Grace and Peace,

Pastor Terra

For the sake of safety and health,
our building is currently closed.

**We are assessing the situation weekly and
hope to reopen soon.**

If you need support, someone to talk to, or other assistance, we are here for you.

Pastoral Support Contact Pastor Terra Amundson 712-304-1517

Congregational Care Contact Julie Baty 319-533-2349

Communications Contact Alison Dix 319-573-4801

JULIAN JOHNSTON SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED

Three members of the United Methodist Church of Mount Vernon have been awarded Julian Johnston Scholarships of \$500 each for the 2020-21 academic year.

Trenton Baty, son of Jim and Julie Baty, will be a senior at Hope College in Holland, Michigan. He is majoring in Business and Psychology.

John Cooper, son of Randy and Tammy Cooper, will be a senior at the University of Northern Iowa. He will receive a degree in Business.

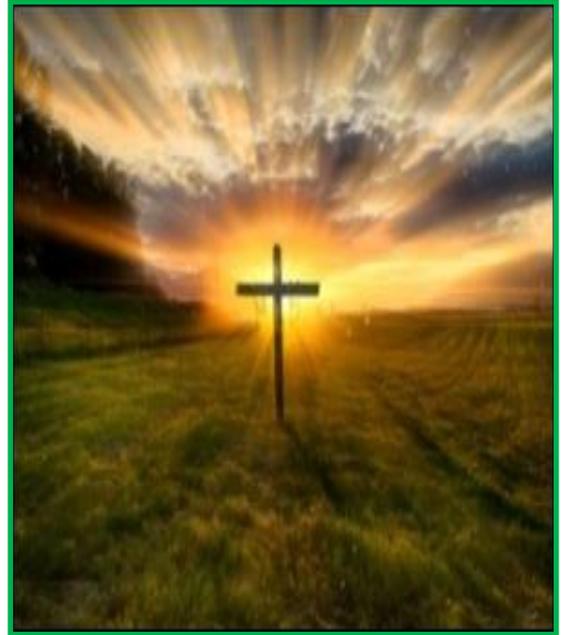
Matthew Morrical, son of Andy and Jackie Morrical, will be a junior at Cornell College. He is majoring in Computer Science.

The scholarship was established by Julian E. Johnston, a well-known Mount Vernon businessman. Mr. Johnston was very appreciative of the financial support he received as a Cornell College student during the 1930's from the local Methodist Church and set up this scholarship to help others. This is the 23rd year of offering this scholarship.

Diane Legore, Chair, Julian E. Johnston Scholarship Fund, United Methodist Church of Mount Vernon

WORSHIP

Sermon & Worship Video
10 AM Sundays



Check it out online!

**Also music,
Children's sermon and extras are
on that worship page as well!**

<https://www.umcmv.com/covid-19-umcmv/>

Check out Jim Baty's Facebook page to join in the Praise sessions —they will be held Sunday nights after a 2 week break for the holiday– Thanks to all the musicians helping with this! They are so uplifting and it is fun to hear!

Also there is a page for all our Children's Sermons, so check that out:

<https://www.umcmv.com/young-disciples-messages/>

As well as our Sunday School Page with activities for Kids!

<https://www.umcmv.com/sunday-school-virtual-learning/>

A Note from Kim Guardado, Church Council Chair



What an exciting time for our congregation! We have a new pastor that is very excited to get to know all of us! We are in the middle of a beautiful summer! And we all continue to learn new ways to connect using technology! These are amazing times! So much of what we are experiencing are things we could never believe. What I'm feeling about wonder, excitement, fear and anxiety must have been what Mary felt like when she was preparing to give birth to Jesus, our savior. Who would even believe this was happening? Would she be prepared to deal with all the change and problems that could come up? Would she ever be the same? Maybe, like me, you are feeling some of these same feelings. I can't believe we're here. Is this the new normal? Will any of us ever be the same?

We, like Mary, are experiencing things we could never imagine. There's one verse from Luke 2:19 that keeps coming to me about how Mary responded to her changes. "But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart." I've been pondering a lot lately. But am I treasuring these things? Extra time with the kids, or less hustle and bustle of the summer, or more quiet time with my family. I haven't always treasured these things in my heart. It's up to us to find the positive in our situation. Mary endured all that hardship because she trusted God to take her through the trials. Can I do the same? Can we all trust God to find the treasure?

These are exciting times! How can we get to know Pastor Terra? When will we be able to worship together again? There are still a ton of questions and not enough answers. But how about we try to treasure where we're at and be glad in our situation? I have faith in our congregation and faith that God will bring us through this crazy time. Church council is working on a plan and timeline to reopen for worship when it will be safe. We are also working on some opportunities to meet Pastor Terra and learn about how she wants to lead our church family to new depths on our faith journey. Stay tuned for more as we search for answers & make a plan to treasure our time together.

In Christ!

Kim Guardado

As always, please feel free to reach out to me with any questions or concerns.

319-215-5334

kimguardado2018@gmail.com



GRADS 2020 Parade in Mount Vernon—CONGRATS!!



Pastor Joy Farewell Parade





From Bishop Laurie to the Clergy and Laity of the Iowa Annual Conference:

I want to thank you for your faithfulness over these last months as we have had to learn a new way of being the church as a result of COVID-19. We have now entered a new phase where we are considering re-entry plans for in-person worship in our local churches. One of the questions we hear often is whether we have to wear masks to worship.

Rev. Dr. Lanette Plambeck, who is our Director of Clergy and Leadership Excellence and leads our COVID-19 Response Team, has written an important article called, "To Mask Or Not To Mask: That is the Question." I commend Dr. Plambeck's article to you as we continue to put the safety of our most vulnerable people at the forefront of our coronavirus response. - Thank you, Bishop Laurie Haller

To mask or not to mask, that is the question

By: Rev. Dr. Lanette Plambeck

With the questions regarding reentry and mask-wearing, Bishop Laurie and I thought it would be helpful to share with you what is influencing our decision-making process in the Iowa Conference. The purpose of this letter is to respond to four questions local church leadership is wrestling with around to mask or not to mask:

Does mask-wearing help prevent contracting or spreading COVID-19?

Our response is based on learnings from the medical webinars we are attending for the Crisis Response Team which is guiding the Iowa Conference reentry process and recommendations. These webinars are hosted by medical, epidemiological, and HVAC (heating, ventilation, and air conditioning) professionals. One primary area they are currently aligned in is the importance of mask-wearing during the pandemic.

While medical-grade masks can be worn to **protect the wearer** from getting infected, unless there is a medical reason to do so, we ask that you do not use N95 or surgical masks as there is a critical shortage of these items for our healthcare workers and first responders. Those who are high risk may be advised by their physician to wear a medical-grade mask.

You may see several medical reports and epidemiologist updates on how cloth masks and non-medical grade masks can be worn to **protect others** from being infected by the wearer. When we talk about mask-wearing at church gatherings large and small, the mask donning is to prevent transmission to others, and this is their most important use whether in churches or your larger community. If we lower the likelihood of one person infecting another, we are actively engaged in the reduction of transmission.

When you are wearing a mask, your breath works in partnership with your cloth mask to trap a large number of these aerosols in the fabric, stopping the aerosols that carry the virus from being released into the air. When aerosols are in the air, they are so minuscule that when we inhale the fabric itself cannot prevent the Covid19 virus from getting through the fabric. Wearing a mask lowers the number of aerosols emitted into the air by the one exhaling who can unknowingly be an asymptomatic carrier or in the early stages of the disease. Wearing a fabric or non-medical grade mask is about caring for the other; when another wears a mask it is their care for you.

Ugh! Wearing a mask is uncomfortable and annoying. How does our Christian duty to one other intersect with the recommendation to wear a mask? *"Dear friends, let's love each other, because love is from God, and everyone who loves is born from God and knows God."* 1 John 4:7 CEB These words, along with the Great Commandment, along with many other words of scripture call us to love and care for one another, even at the expense of our personal preferences or comfort. From the beginning of the Church, this has been understood as the duty of every Christian. This responsibility is important for us to remember amid the COVID-19 pandemic. The act of wearing a mask, combined with maintaining appropriate distance, is an act of love and Christian care. We wear masks not to protect ourselves, but to protect others in the event we might have contracted the virus. None of us would want to expose one of our family members when we can take precautions to prevent it. Even more so, we would not want to jeopardize the members of our congregations who are at greatest risk of the virus. This is a minor inconvenience when placed next to the sacrifice of Jesus, our Lord.

(continued on Page 7—>)

Being told to wear a mask feels counter to my rights of liberty and freedom.

As we have listened in on the debate on wearing or not wearing masks, the objections to wearing masks tend to be more ideological and emotional than scientifically driven. To not get caught in a debate that divides more than unites, we have leaned into what mask-wearing can mean as a spiritual practice in this unprecedented time of the pandemic.

As a spiritual practice, to don a mask is to proclaim love of neighbor, especially our most vulnerable neighbors. In Matthew 25, Jesus implores us to care for “the least of these” and when we do so, we are caring for him.

Wearing a mask has also become a Micah 6 moment. By humbling oneself and even risking critique or ridiculed by others, one can bear up under people’s stares or remarks knowing their mask has become an outward and visible sign of God’s grace working in and through us. Many have found that choosing to wear a mask as a spiritual practice has deepened their faith, has improved their listening, and increased their commitment to their neighbors during this time of the pandemic.

Additionally, wearing a mask is a form of mercy and action in that since we do not know if we are asymptomatic or in early stages of the virus and since we do not know if those we are around will go home to people who are going through chemotherapy, are immunocompromised or are otherwise medically vulnerable, one’s choice to wear a mask is a way of extending care to those sheltering at home. We hope and pray for the time when wearing protective face masks is no longer necessary. But we also hope that these Matthew 25 and Micah 6 lessons God is teaching us through this practice of mask-wearing remain an integral part of our life of faith in the Iowa Conference.

How do you respond to the “have faith not fear” dilemma?

When I think of the “have faith not fear” chant, I think of the many times we read the words, “Do not fear” in Scripture. But I do not think mask-wearing is about fear over faith; it is more about loving our neighbor. The parable of the Good Samaritan comes to my mind in this question. This parable is about compassion and sacrifice. It is about the willingness of the Samaritan to go out of his way and do what others would not; a willingness to give of his resources to care for another; a willingness to sacrifice his own immediate needs and preferences to consider the good he can do immediately before him.

Midrash Moment

Hebrew Bible Scholar, Vanessa Lovelace defines **midrash** as “a Jewish mode of interpretation that not only engages the words of the text, behind the text, and beyond the text, but also focuses on each letter, and the words left unsaid by each line.”

In a Midrash Moment, one of our Ministry Directors turned to the story of the Good Samaritan and offered one group of folks a simple test: “Everybody wear a mask for 5 minutes. Now, remove them. Pass your mask down one person. And now put on your neighbors mask.”

There were looks of discomfort and hesitation. The Director said, “We cannot see what we cannot see. We do not know what we do not know. If you are not comfortable wearing your neighbors mask, you should be as uncomfortable breathing their air. Also, were any of you worried about passing your mask to your friend, because you might have COVID-19, but don’t yet know it? Then protect your friend and ask them to not put on your mask.”

They continued with the words, “To best protect those around you, you should be committed to wearing a mask every time you gather in public spaces. As we walk down the street, enter the public square, or come to church, we can easily forget that we are called to be God’s witnesses in the world. Wearing masks is one way of being a witness and looking after one another.’

At that moment in the meeting, as people consider their own and their neighbor’s mask, one of the older gents said, “I guess we are wearing masks people.”

To the people of the Iowa Conference, I commend to you the question of Jesus raised in this parable in this Midrash retelling of the Good Samaritan story, “How can we be a neighbor to one who could become a victim of this unseen threat?” Those in the room replied, “Be like the ones who show mercy and wear a mask.” Jesus told them, “Go and do likewise.” Please send your questions to: iaumccares@iaumc.org.

DID YOU KNOW... History of United Methodist Church of Mount Vernon

...Continuing our review of the music in the church, the UMC choir continued to thrive through the years and also reflected the changing styles of church worship.

As you may recall through the past months of articles, the two greatest influences on the early growth of the Mount Vernon UMC were the early rural pioneers of the area, their devotion to the Circuit Riders, the availability of building materials and knowledge, and their desire to have a moral influence on the developing "Pinhook" community. Early Methodists prided themselves on the number of Main Street bars they closed! The story was told that Elder Bowman was determined to build a church in "Pinhook" because it was notorious as a bad neighborhood! He is supposed to have said, "We will build a church there, get the people converted and make good citizens of them, or we will drive them out of town."

That influence was greatly enhanced by the first brick Methodist church building and the leadership provided by the major landowners and emerging community leaders with names such as William Brackett, Elder Bowman, A. B. Kendig, H. D. Albright, Thomas Craig, and William Hayselett. Many of them were organizers in their various "stations", including Pilot Grove, Linn Grove South, Yankee Grove, Sugar Grove, Martin's Creek, Big Woods and Rome.

Once that moral influence was established, the church's focus turned to enhancing the worship experience for all who came....hence the building of the present stone church which connected the emerging Cornell College with the business district of the community. A huge part of that experience was the church choir which drew heavily from the music departments of the emerging Cornell faculty.

With the move of the choir loft to the front of the church rather than the back balcony, the "esteem" of the choir rose accordingly. Of course, it also meant the formality of choir robes....first black "vestments" with white "cottas" which were carefully washed and ironed by Mrs. Marcia Conrad of the Ladies Aid Society "as a service of love". Later in 1939, new wine-colored vestments with white satin stoles replaced them, followed in the 1960's with brown vestments, purchased by individual choir members. And of course, the choir processed down the aisle as it continued to do until the 1970's when most formalities in dress were abandoned.

Some of the familiar choir directors (and organists) were Professor Horace Alden Miller, Lloyd Oakland, Mary Hesla, John Klaus, Wayne Burcham, and Joel Foreman. Barbara Moore served for many years as Music Director, retiring in 2006.

.....Kay Graber

Church Historian

Black Lives Matter

ERIC CARNER JOHN CRAWFORD III MICHAEL BROWN EZELL FORD DANTE PARKER MICHELLE CUSSEAU
LAQUAN MCDONALD TANISHA ANDERSON AKAI GURLEY TAMIR RICE RUMAIN BRISBON JERAME REID
GEORGE MANN MATTHEW AJIBADE FRANK SMART NATASHA MCKENNA TONY ROBINSON ANTHONY HILL
MYA HALL PHILLIP WHITE ERIC HARRIS WALTER SCOTT WILLIAM CHAPMAN II DOMINIC HUTCHINSON
ALEXIA CHRISTIAN BRANDON GLENN VICTOR MANUEL LAROSA JONATHAN SANDERS FREDDIE BLUE
JOSEPH MANN SALVADO ELLSWOOD SANDRA BLAND ALBERT JOSEPH DAVIS KEITH HARRISON MCLEOD
DARRIUS STEWERT BILLY RAY DAVIS SAMUEL DUBOSE MICHAEL SABBIE BRIAN KEITH DAY FELIX KUMI
CHRISTIAN TAYLOR TROY ROBINSON ASSHAMS PHAROAH MANLEY JUNIOR PROSPER LAMONTEZ JONES
PATTERSON BROWN ANTHONY ASHFORD ALONZO SMITH TYREE CRAWFORD INDIA KAGER BETTIE JONES
DYZHAWN PERKINS CHRISTOPHER DAVIS MARCO LOUD PETER GAINES KEVIN HICKS MARY TRUXILLO
MIGUEL ESPINAL MICHAL NOEL KEVIN MATTHEWS QUINTONIO LEGRIER JANET WILSON RANDY NELSON
TORREY ROBINSON DARIUS ROBINSON ALTON STERLING CHRISTOPHER WHITFIELD PAMELA TURNER
LA'VANTE BIGGS MICHAEL LEE MARSHALL JAMAR CLARK RICHARD PERKINS BENNI LEE TIGNOR
KEITH CHILDRESS JR ANTRONIE SCOTT WENDELL CELESTINE DAVID JOSEPH CALIN ROQUEMORE
ERIC REASON GEORGE FLOYD **#SAYTHEIRNAME** BREONNA TAYLOR PAUL O'NEAL

[A Serve of Lament, Repentance, Communion and Commitment](#)

[was done on June 24.](#)

https://youtu.be/8y0SDae5_z4

Other resources are listed at :

<https://www.umcmv.com/anti-racism-resources/>

...AWAKEN to the truth that racism is evil and hurts us all;

...CONFRONT racism through truth-telling and action to right the wrong; & ...TRANSFORM the hearts, minds, and behaviors of people and institutions.

July Birthdays



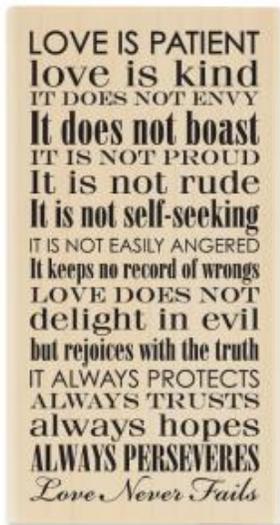
Dorothy Rilett	07/01
Jacob Stewart	
Jim Wallace	07/02
Addison Ault	07/03
Graham Bradbury	
Nicole Claussen	
Matt Stewart	
Jody Stewart	07/05
Richard Jacob	07/06
Matt Traynor	
Andrea Hallier	07/08
Cathy Stoner	07/09
Florence Reinken	07/11
Amy Anderson	07/12
Chad Conrad	07/14
Marilyn Schnittjer	07/15
Danielle Smith	
Mackenzie Voigt	07/16
Lohgan Anderson	07/19
Cot Graber	
LaVonne Meyer	07/21
Randy Cooper	07/22
Marj Whitley	
Kay Graber	07/23
Preston Johnson	07/24
Jay Currie	07/29
Wrenlie Bixler	07/31
Jeff Walters	



Giving Opportunities

- UMCOR COVID-19 Response Fund
<https://advance.umcmision.org/p-2025-umcor-covid-19-response-fund.aspx>
- SE Linn Community Center
 - <https://selinn.org/>
- Mission of Hope Cedar Rapids
 - <http://www.missionofhopecr.org/>

Happy July Anniversaries!!



Melissa & Kerry Kahl	07/01
Jason & Brittany Booth	07/02
Alison Dix & Mel Steen	
Mackenzie & Ben Kraus	
Tim & Diane Legore	07/14
Tyler & Taya Roos	
Dan & Cathy Stoner	
Abe Tubbs & Nicole Claussen	07/20
Brian & Teresa Bothell	07/24
Scott & Jessica Johanningmeier	07/26
Marty St. Clair & Cindy Strong	
Kyle & Jena Jaspers	07/28

Prayers for Healing:

- For all who are currently infected with the COVID-19 virus
- For Jeff Walters as he recovers from back surgery, prayers for patience as he gives his body time to heal
- For Bonnie Hunwarden (Jeff Walter's mom) who suffered a stroke and is in acute rehab. Prayers for Bonnie as she recovers, and also for her husband, Don (Jeff's Stepfather), who is in cardiac rehab following a heart attack
- For Rob Stoll who continues to experience health issues
- For Doris Lockridge (Jackie Wallace's mother) who is 90 and has dementia, and has lost her stability when walking. It is difficult for Jackie and Doris to be separated at this time. Prayers for Doris' health and for comfort during this time when no visitors are allowed
- Continued prayers for Emily (Stoner) Bell as she continues to make steady progress in her recovery
- For all our friends and family members who are fighting the battle against cancer

Prayers for Comfort and Strength:

- Tammy and Randy Cooper requests prayers for their son Brett Cooper, who works as a police officer in Iowa City, prayers for his safety and peace with the heightened angst towards police officers
- For anyone who is working in the healthcare field or another "frontline" occupation during this pandemic and unprecedented time. Prayers for their safety, strength and comfort
- For the family of Normagene Robertson (Jim Baty's grandmother) who passed away on June 12th
- For anyone who is feeling lonely or isolated due to recent changes in how we live day to day. Prayers that they will reach out to others, that God will comfort them, and we will all make extra efforts to serve as the hands and feet of Jesus
- For those worrying and anxious about health issues
- For all who are struggling: emotionally and spiritually
- For individuals and families who are under financial stress
- 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 even if we are not in worship services together
- For all not mentioned by name who are mourning the loss of a family member or friend

Prayers for Transition:

- Prayers for "reopening" of our State. Patience and understanding in regard to each other's perspectives
- For Pastor Lee Schott, former pastor at Women at the Well, as she transitions to a new appointment
- For college seniors, as their transition after college may be different than expected
- For Pastor Terra Amundson (and her husband, Jay) as she begins her ministry at UMCMV and for Pastor Joy Mitchell (and Weston) as she looks ahead to a new appointment in Walcott, Iowa
- For the leaders of our church here at UMCMV to know how to lead us and what to do in these unusual times
- For the United Methodist Church: including the global church, the Iowa Conference and our Mount Vernon congregation

Prayers for Sustenance:

- Prayers for Maxine Havill and John Havill as they reside in a Care Facility during this time of social distancing. Their days are spent almost exclusively in their rooms. Let's try to brighten their day with some mail, here is the address: Mechanicsville Specialty Care, 104 E 4th Street, Mechanicsville, Iowa 52306
- For the children in Sibiu, Romania being served at The Super Kids Day Center and the staff who are ministering to them. Specifically, prayers for Pastor Cristi and Ligia
- UMCMV Stephen Ministers and Care Ministers
- Mission of Hope
- Women at the Well United Methodist Church

Prayers for our Nation and our World:

- For justice and peace for people of color in our country. May the Holy Spirit move throughout our churches and individuals to help us be part of the solution to the current unrest and racism. Lord hear our prayers, and guide this country and your world to act justly, love mercy and walk humbly with you
- For all people and countries of this world who have been and continue to be effected physically by the COVID-19 virus
- For all people across the globe who are concerned about financial implications of pandemic, both personally and beyond
- For national and state leaders to deal with the COVID-19 virus effectively
- Pray for love among all people
- Prayers for peace for people everywhere - peace worldwide

Prayers of Thanksgiving and Joy:

- Pastor Terra and her husband, Jay, have moved into the parsonage. We are so happy to welcome them to our church family and Mount Vernon community
- It was a welcomed opportunity to see each other while at the farewell parade for Joy. Keep connecting and reaching out to each other, we are so thankful for relationships
- Spencer, the young man who has been on our prayer list, has improved enough to be more mobile than expected at this point and to be discharged home, and receive further rehab services. Thank you for lifting him up in prayer
- Thankfulness for the healthcare workers, groceries employees, childcare providers and all others who are on the frontlines helping our communities to function and providing care to those who need it
- Thankfulness for online methods of staying connected during this time of social distancing
- Gratefulness for the love and kindness shown to one another in times of crisis
- Thanksgiving for our small and wonderful communities of Mount Vernon and Lisbon
- Gratitude for our many blessings



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
Director of Youth	
Praise Team Director– Interim–	Clint Stanerson
Christian Education Director....	
Sunday School Coordinator	Brittany Booth
Congregational Care Coordinator	Julie Baty
Office Manager/Newsletter	Alison Dix
Admin. Asst./ Membership.....	
Nursery Care.	Melissa Oxley
Director, Adult Handbell Choir . .	Kristi Keast
Organist	Karen Stoll
Chancel Choir Director	Joleen Woods
Custodian	Night Shift
Maintenance & Repair Director . .	Trustees
Wedding Coordinator.....	Barb Shepley
Financial Secretaries	Richard Jacob, & Jackie Morrical
Treasurers	Mike Kragenbrink Alison Dix



Welcome Pastor Terra Amundson!



**Rev. Terra
 Amundson**



**Husband
 Jay Amundson**