



# THE VISITOR

## Fish Fry Fun (Brad Saufferer)

The walleye will be frying July 16<sup>th</sup> at the Half Pint Brewery. This will be the second annual fish fry to benefit the accessibility project at the Blooming Grove Church. Brad Spinler's brain trust, or as I refer to them, the dream team, will be doing the frying again this year. French fries, coleslaw, cookies, and root beer floats will round out the menu. As always, a free will offering will be collected for each meal.



We are looking for volunteers to help with food prep, serving, set up, and whatever else pops up. Talk to me at church or give me a call at (507) 363-6579. It's a lot fun and a chance to talk smart and tell lies with good friends while supporting a worthwhile project. I excel at both talking smart and telling lies. See you there.

## The Stretch

*How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world.*

--Anne Frank

Welcome! "The Stretch" will be a space where opportunities to learn, grapple, and discover how we show up as love in the world through justice related topics. You can expect articles, book suggestions, informed discussion spaces, and a plethora of ways to experience what it means to be Christ in the world. We will start *The Stretch* experiment with a suggestion for a summer read! *This Tender Land* is a William Kent Krueger novel about "four orphans on a life-changing odyssey during the Great Depression". Read and enjoy, then plan to gather in September as we dig a little deeper into the history of boarding schools in our country.

Part 2 to this experiment is an invitation to a safe space to learn and ask questions about LGBTQ+ inclusion. This is a topic that has been in the forefront of our denomination, communities, and families. I will be using a variety of reference books to facilitate

from including, *The Savvy Ally* by Jeannie Gainsburg. If you so desire, please read the book, but it is not necessary. The only requirement is to bring yourself completely open to being stretched as we meet at Blooming Grove UMC **on Wednesday, August 23<sup>rd</sup> at 7:00 pm.**

Thank you for walking with me. Please share any ideas or thoughts you would like included in *The Stretch* as this little corner of the Visitor evolves. Much Peace,  
Cindy Saufferer  
Prairie Lakes Parish  
Love Through Justice Coordinator



**Thank you to  
Cindy Saufferer,  
UMC Deaconess, and  
Fred Vanderwerf, our  
Southern Prairie UMC  
District Superintendent**

for leading our parish in the Sunday, June 4<sup>th</sup> conversation about these times of change and transition within the United Methodist denomination – all stemming from the church's longtime and ongoing disagreement over homosexuality and the inclusion of the LGBTQ+ community. Cindy and Fred provided a helpful historical perspective as well as pertinent information that addressed the misinformation and confusion currently swirling about in the United Methodist denomination. In addition, they provided clarifying information regarding the aspirational and inclusive stance taken by our Minnesota United Methodist Conference. Feel free to contact Cindy Saufferer for additional conversation and/or with any questions you may have.

**Thank you to special guests, T.P. and J.P.** who joined us for morning worship and brunch on Sunday, June 11<sup>th</sup> to share stories of their experiences and work while serving in SE Asia. It was fascinating and heart-stirring to hear of all that is happening there, and how we, in our United Methodist inter-connectedness, can continue to support the people and places that their lives touch.

# July 2023

**Blooming Grove**  
Morning Worship...8:15 am

**Janesville**  
Morning Worship.....10:45 am

**Waterville Evangelical**  
Morning Worship...9:30 am

<b>Parament Colors</b> July 2      Green July 9      Green July 16     Green July 23     Green July 30     Green						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
		 North Morris- town July 4th Celebration	11:30 BG Prayer Brunch at Janna's Mar- ket Grill, Fari- bault	9:30 am Parish Bible Study at Cool Wave Coffee Shop, WV		
<b>Blooming Prairie's Old Fashioned Fourth of July</b>					Pastor's Day Off	
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
	6 pm WV Ad Council	4-6 pm Free Diaper Give- away	! "# \$ % & " ' ( ) * + , - . / 0			
<b>Waseca County Fair</b>						
					Pastor's Day Off	
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
<b>Waseca County Fair</b>				9:30 am Parish Bible Study at Cool Wave Coffee		10-Noon Free Diaper Give-away at WV EUMC
<b>Rice County Fair</b>						
<b>Vacation Bible School at WV EUMC—6-8 pm each night</b>					Pastor's Day Off	
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
<b>Rice County Fair</b>	6 pm Bible Conversa- tions/Half Pt.					
30	31	<div style="display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center;">  <div> <p><b>Sunday, July 30th at 10:15 A.M.</b></p> <p>Prairie Lakes Parish Joint Worship Service at WV EUMC with a light lunch to follow.</p> <p>All singers are invited to join us that morning at 9:15 A.M. for a Pop-Up Choir rehearsal.</p> </div> </div>				
10:15 A.M. Joint Worship Service at WV EUMC						



## Celebrations



*“Celebrate God all day, every day. I mean, revel in him! Make it as clear as you can to all you meet that you’re on their side, working with them and not against them. Help them see that the Master is about to arrive. He could show up any minute!”*

*Philippians 4: 4-5 MSG*

July—and the second half of the year of 2023 begins! As one who wonders how time passes so very quickly, I also ponder if I allow those days to pass without taking the time to celebrate this gift of life by celebrating our Almighty God.

There is much to celebrate in our lives. As I read this passage from Philippians, I appreciated the translation I found in *The Message*. Most translations of this text say, “Rejoice in the Lord.” I like Peterson’s iteration that says we should “Celebrate God all day, every day.” Yet too many days I get caught up in the busyness of my “to-do” lists and forget that the hours of each day are not meant to be endured but enjoyed. God gave us the gift of life out of love. When humanity forgot to see God’s good Creation, God had a plan to bring us back to the realization of the gift of life—Jesus.

Friends, as our July 4<sup>th</sup> holiday grows close, let’s revel in God by following the advice given in this text: Revel in God. Let’s do all we can to make it clear to everyone we meet that “we are on their side and willing to work with them.” As we find the joy in living, we can help each other celebrate life. Make it a point to reach out to one person who may be struggling each day in some small way. Show them God’s love by caring.

On July 8<sup>th</sup>, we have an opportunity to celebrate life by supporting brothers and sisters in the LGBTQIA+ Community at Pride in the Park at the Morehouse Park Pavilion in Owatonna. If you are interested in attending, please talk to me.

On July 30<sup>th</sup>, we will have our next joint worship service at Waterville EUMC. If you enjoy singing, celebrate life by joining the parish popup choir! Look for more information in this newsletter about that opportunity.

Please know your pastor celebrates each one of you for the beautiful child of God you are! Jerry and I are blessed by you!

*Pastor Kathy*

## JULY CALENDAR

**Sunday Worship 8:15 a.m.**

5	Wed	11:30 am	Prayer Brunch at Janna's Market Grill, Faribault
6	Thur	9:30 am	Parish Bible Study at Cool Wave Coffee Shop
20	Thur	9:30 am	Parish Bible Study at Cool Wave Coffee Shop
24	Mon	6:00 pm	Bible Conversations at Brewery
30	Sun	9:15 am	Pop-Up Choir rehearsal
	Sun	10:15 am	Parish Combined Worship Service at WV EUMC

### Happy Anniversary

- 13 Phyllis & Norman Giebner  
21 Mike & Allison Janke



## Treasurer's Report

May 26 – June 26, 2023



<b>General Budget Income</b>	<b>\$ 7,900.00</b>
<b>Other Income</b>	
Love Offering	100.00
Cemetery	100.00
Visitor	10.00
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$8,110.00</b>
<b>Expenses</b>	
Pastor's Salary	1,959.32
Telephone	52.46
Pulpit Supply	100.00
Apportionments	3,012.00
Excel Energy	79.39
Love Offering	421.95
Shipping Personal Dignity Kits	120.00
Post Office Box Rental	68.00
Bibles Given	117.78
Lawn Mowing (Janke Farms)	1,100.00
<b>Total Paid Out</b>	<b>\$ 7,030.90</b>
<b>(Net Income:            + \$1,079.10)</b>	

### Building Addition

<b>Income</b>	
Restoration	\$ 3,500.00
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$ 3,500.00</b>
<b>Expenses</b>	
Loan Payment	\$ 3,505.13
<b>Total Paid Out</b>	<b>\$ 3,505.13</b>
<b>(Net Income:           — (\$5.13)</b>	
Restoration Fund Balance	\$77,121.16
Building Addition Loan	\$270,613.93



- |    |                 |    |                   |
|----|-----------------|----|-------------------|
| 1  | Tena Harren     | 14 | Regan Poe         |
| 2  | Bowen Spinler   | 15 | Lenore Poole      |
| 3  | Gerald Morgan   | 16 | Tess Christenson  |
|    | Will Mullenbach | 18 | Greg Poe          |
| 5  | Parker Nelson   | 20 | Holly Nagel       |
| 5  | Lois Hamilton   | 20 | Sharon Nelson     |
| 6  | Samuel Kanne    | 26 | Ben Fyvie         |
| 7  | Dawn Yule       | 27 | Ashley Loken      |
| 7  | Alexys Lustig   | 28 | Stephanie Neuhaus |
| 9  | Alex Martin     | 28 | Ryan Saufferer    |
| 13 | Linda Danks     | 30 | Mikayla Spinler   |
| 14 | Mason Nagel     | 30 | Barb McKewin      |
|    |                 | 31 | Robert Nelson     |
|    |                 | 31 | Joe Prchal        |

### Vacation Bible School July 16-20 6-8 PM Waterville EUMC

### Hero Hotline

In the depths of a colorful underground cave, is the beating heart of the hero community, the Hero Hotline Headquarters where everyone's gifts are valued, and every hero has a role to play. Each day at the Hero Hotline Headquarters, superheroes of all ages and abilities answer the call and join the Professor and veteran hero, Super Meer the Meerkat, to provide expert assistance and solutions to Hero Teams everywhere.

When Heroes in the field call in, the Professor, Super Meer, and our team of heroes will spring into action and explore the ultimate Hero Handbook -the Bible- to discover how all Heroes can follow the examples set by a cast of supporting Bible Heroes in stories from the Old and New Testaments, who work together to bring peace, build each other up, and share the great story of God's love for us where they are and with the whole world.

**Sounds like a fun packed week, right? Please join us! Ages 3-12 welcome!**

Please register by letting Julie know the number and ages of kids that will be coming so we can order supplies for everyone! [jmbalfe@yahoo.com](mailto:jmbalfe@yahoo.com)

## Pastoral Care



*Note from Pastor Kathy King:  
Please call or text me if you would like  
me to visit or if there is a prayer con-  
cern that you prefer to keep private.*

Out of respect for all parties involved, Pastor Kathy does not make pastoral care visits unannounced or without prior invitation from the person involved (or from their friends or family members, on their behalf.)



- Anita – from Waterville EUMC, as she battles an aggressive form of cancer.
- For “Charlie”, Waseca High School’s foreign exchange student, as she journeys back home to Germany. We’ve been blessed to have Charlie as part of our BGUMC congregation this year.
- Nicole Wacek’s cousin Kayla, as she mourns the loss of her best friend, Madeline Kingsbury, the young mother from Winona whose body was found buried in a woods near Mabel, MN. Madeline was a clinical research coordinator at the Mayo Clinic. She had also just entered her first term of graduate school at the U of M in its Public Health Administration master’s degree program. All this as well as being a single mom to a 2-year-old son and a 5-year-old daughter. Please hold Maddie’s family, friends, and all impacted by this tragedy in your hearts.
- Jesse, who, due to the impact of pneumonia and COVID, needs a double lung transplant.
- Brad Saufferer’s sister, Sue, as she recovers from hip surgery.
- Jackie’s friend’s dad, Nick, as he journeys through a long and difficult battle with cancer.
- Carol Karsten’s son, Walter, as he continues work with doctors to address his aggressive form of cancer.
- The family of Justin Krell and Alex Spinler’s AGR (Fraternity) brother who passed away. His wife was Lacey Spinler and Kristin Krell’s Sigma Alpha sister. They have 3 young children and one due in September. Please hold all in this young family in your prayers.
- All in our faith community who privately hold heavy concerns in their hearts and lives. Help us to reflect God’s love and care through our words and deeds that they may know BGUMC as a place of solace, comfort, trust, and support.



**Ruth Carolyn (Hintze) Lemke** passed away after a brief illness on Wednesday, June 21, 2023, at Olmsted Medical Center. She was 86 years old. Ruth was born in Spring Valley, MN, on January 13, 1937, to Ruben and Lenora (Grabau) Hintze. Ruth attended school in Spring Valley, graduating

from Spring Valley High School in 1955, where she had been active in both band and chorus. Ruth worked at First National Bank in downtown Spring Valley after high school. During this time, she took several vacation trips with a group of girls she worked with, most of whom remained lifelong friends.

In 1957, she met and dated Ray Lemke. They were married on June 14, 1959. After taking several years away from banking to raise daughters Carolyn and Ann to school age, she returned to the workforce for a few years at the Standard Oil terminal east of Spring Valley, then returned to banking. She retired from First State Bank in Spring Valley.

Ruth enjoyed attending her daughters’ school activities, even in their collage years, and she acted as room mother and chaperone at various times throughout their elementary years. Ruth also enjoyed crafts and sewing, music, gardening, genealogy, collecting fossils and rocks, and spending time in nature. The whole family enjoyed many camping vacations all over the United States. Ruth was a current member of both the Spring Valley Garden Club and the local quilting club. Ray and Ruth played cards monthly with the same group of friends for 50 years. In their retirement year, Ruth and Ray took short camping trips to various national fossil society shows. Ruth also sang in the church choir most of her adult life.

Ruth is survived by daughters **Carolyn (Brian) Kanne** of Medford, Minnesota, and Ann (Brad) Ihrke of Spring Valley. Also surviving are grandchildren Deanna Kanne of Orlando, Florida, Michael Kanne of Medford, Josh (Brooke) Ihrke of Stewartville, Minnesota, a brother, Roger Hintze, of Shoreview, Minnesota, and a sister-in-law, Anita Nelson of Spring Valley.

Ruth was preceded in death by her husband of nearly 64 years, Ray; parents Ruben and Lenora; brothers- and sisters-in-law Douglas and Anna Richardson, Edwin and Lila Lemke, Wilmer (Bill) and Sylvia Lemke, Alan and Leona Nelson, David and Doris Crabtree, and Ken Nelson; 2 nephews and 2 nieces.



## Highlights from May 2023 Annual Conference of the Minnesota United Methodist Church

### Theme

Drawing on Luke 24:13-35, the theme of this year's gathering was "Encounter. Transform. Respond. The Emmaus Experience." This post-resurrection story where everything has changed and the implications still seem a bit cloudy mirrors the time and space we are living in as a church. We, like the two disciples, are on the road, asking deep questions, and trying to make sense of what it means to be a disciple of Jesus today. And we, too, are finding that we encounter Christ in transforming ways when we do.

### Bishop's Episcopal Address

In the Emmaus Road story, the impossible becomes possible as the world is made right again through encounters with the resurrected Christ who brings healing, reconciliation, and hope. Bishop Lanette Plambeck, in her inaugural Episcopal Address, reminds us that this story for the two disciples on the road is our story too. During this challenging time in The United Methodist Church, she invited those of us in the Minnesota Conference to lean in to one another and declare that there is enough love for all of us, and she reminded each person: You are loved. You are a child of God and a person of worth. There are no exceptions



### Holy Communion

The Bishop led the entire body in celebrating Holy Communion together. Pastor Kathy King, Cindy Saufferer, and Karen Olson served the Communion Elements at one of the stations.

### Milestones in ministry



Those gathered honored and thanked 14 clergy entering retirement, and they celebrated four pastors ordained as elders, two commissioned as provisional members, 13 people authorized to serve as local pastors in the congregations and ministry areas in which they are appointed, and three local licensed pastors, Revs. Paula Gaboury, Dawn Houser, and Kathy King, who completed their five-year course of study (presented with beautiful red scapulars as a sign of this accomplishment.)

### Fresh Expressions with Michael Beck

Rev. Dr. Michael Beck is co-pastor of two Florida churches and a network of "fresh expressions" led by laity that gather in various community venues and public spaces around shared interests and hobbies. He talked about fresh expressions as a new movement of Christian communities where people with no connection to the church are finding life and encountering Christ. Dinner church whereby people gather to share a meal is an easy starting point for a fresh expression, Beck said. Some of the other fresh expressions he's involved with take place in a tattoo parlor, at a restaurant, in a virtual reality space, and at dog park.

### Conference Preacher

This year's conference preacher was Rev. Becky Jo Messenbrink, who serves Eden Prairie UMC. She talked about her desire for an expandable table and reminded those gathered that Jesus' table was for everyone. "Perhaps the church is called to mirror the table which Jesus sets—an expansive table of belonging and community where all are welcome, where all are included and celebrated and treasured, an expansive table at which Jesus can be recognized, and where the kingdom of God is present and talk about God turns into encounters with the living God," she said.

## Love Offering

Conference members, on behalf of their churches gave just over \$40,000 to the 2023 Love Offering. Sixty percent of it will fund a new grant to support churches that have partnerships with mental health services offered in local schools or communities, 30 percent will go to three Minnesota nonprofits engaged in mental health education and advocacy, and 10 percent of the Love Offering each year goes to Volunteers in Mission scholarships, which support first-time mission trip participants.

## Legislation



Hundreds of voting members in attendance at Annual Conference approved all pieces of legislation before them, including resolutions opposing assault-style weapons, addressing the Israeli detention of children, and supporting the creation of a U.S. Regional Conference, and supporting the removal of all discriminatory policies and harmful language related to sexual orientation from the Book of Discipline.

## Disaffiliating Churches

Members ratified the terms of disaffiliation agreements made between the conference Board of Trustees and 14 local churches that have discerned that their path goes a different direction from the Minnesota Annual Conference. After the vote, Bishop Lanette asked Minnesota United Methodists to keep these congregations in their hearts and to pray that even as we part ways, they may continue to live out their faith and serve as a beacon of light and hope for all.

## Jeanne Audrey Powers Ecumenism Award for Healing a Broken World



Minnesota's United Women in Faith (UWF, formerly United Methodist Women) received this year's Jeanne Audrey Pow-

ers Ecumenism Award for Healing a Broken World. Cindy Saufferer (right), president of MN UWF accepted the award for the group. In the past year, UWF members in Minnesota have organized presentations on Native American ministry, participated in Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women marches and Minnesota Healing Stories Sacred Sites Tours, and learned about migrant workers and racial reparations. UWF is a long-time partner of Emma Norton Services, which seeks to provide stable housing for women in transition. In the past year, UWF has also raised up deaconesses and home missionaries who are putting love in action. In their steadfastness to their mission of healing a broken world and through their pivot to open membership to all women of faith, they embody the heart of this award.

## Water Blessing



Prior to Wednesday's Opening Session, the Committee on Native American Ministry (including Pastor Kathy King and Cindy Saufferer) invited all participants to join in a Water

Blessing - naming the ancestral ground on which we stood and blessing the water from which we come.

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED to:  
Box 171, Medford, MN 55049

July 2023

**The Blooming Grove Visitor**

*Since 1936*

**Blooming Grove United Methodist Church**

**Mailing Address: P.O. Box 171**

**Medford, MN 55049-0171**

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(NE corner of Waseca County)

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Check us out on Facebook!

**Pastoral Care and Emergency  
and General Pastoral Questions:**

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**[kking5@hickorytech.net](mailto:kking5@hickorytech.net)**

**507-382-2483**

**Join Us**

**If you are interested in  
becoming a member of  
Blooming Grove UMC,  
see Pastor Kathy.**



Requests for Prayer Chain Email:

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**BLOOMING GROVE  
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH  
SUMMER WALLEYE FISH FRY**



July 16, 4:30—7:00 PM

At The

Half Pint Brewing Company

40099 150th Street

Waseca, MN 56093



**free will offering**  
**[www.bloominggroveumc.org](http://www.bloominggroveumc.org)**