



The

Circuit Rider

February 2023

A Publication of Solon United Methodist Church

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In our history of the faith in the Wesleyan tradition the idea of grace and the life we have in grace is presented in a three-fold manner. We refer to it as, prevenient grace, justifying grace and sanctifying grace.

Prevenient grace is the grace of God in our life before we are fully conscious of God or that God is even real or cares for us. We can look back once we are born again to see with a new spirit that God was always there. The face that we did not know it was God does not take away the truth that God has always been with us. Now we have new eyes to see the new life in God. It is often amazing to see our past in a new way. We have now been awakened to a fresh new day! It precedes our being aware, therefore it is prevenient!

As followers of Christ Jesus we also see and recognize this grace given, is given in Christ. His life and sacrifice is why we have new life. We cannot earn God's love. We cannot buy the Love of God. God's love for us is given in the fullness of time in Christ Jesus who in the word of God in flesh or ash we put it. The incarnate presence of God. We see in Christ Jesus the truth of God's reality and life in all eternity. We are therefore justified by and in Christ!

In addition to justification we also see God in our life by the sanctification of God's life in us and in the world. We grow and learn everyday and in this process we begin to understand the complexity of life and God with us. We are not left alone. We have never been alone. We have God with us, but also with the community of believers to help us. It is a journey full of adventure and hope and joy and peace in the presence of God's gracious love for life. A conversion of insight to the world, the universe and to eternity.

We discover on this grand adventure that God is real and so is the truth of God. We discover as well, that not all things are as they should be. There is pain and suffering and we know what pain and suffering is not right! We feel the need and we see the need for change. Change in the world, but first and foremost change in ourselves. A process of conversion.

In this part of the adventure we can and we indeed need the community of believers we call the Church. With all our faults it remains the hope and joy of God. We are God's people, now and we are being converted ever day with new insight and hope in Christ Jesus.

Shalom
Ken



MUSIC MINISTRY— LOVE IN FEBRUARY

The stores are full of Valentine’s Day cards and the aisles abound with candy. As a child I remember decorating a shoe box and cutting a slot in the top to take to school for a card exchange. Years later, I helped my own children create their boxes as well as shop for the perfect box or bag of cards. The funny part is that it really wasn’t about the cards. It was more about whatever candy was attached to it!

While it isn’t really a Valentine’s Day song, I was reminded of a classic early praise song about love. When I looked it up, I found a neat story I want to share:

I Love You Lord by Laurie Klein

This is a classic song from the late seventies that almost every church has in its repertoire. When Laurie wrote it, she was a new mother and wife struggling to get by. Her family was living in a mobile home as her husband attended school and she felt pretty isolated—a feeling compounded by not even having the money to make long-distance phone calls to friends or family. Depleted and empty one morning during her quiet time, she grabbed her guitar and said to the Lord, “Would you give me a song you would like to hear?” And “I Love You Lord” basically wrote itself.



*I love You Lord
And I lift my voice
To worship You
O my soul rejoice
Take joy my King
In what You hear
May it be a sweet sweet sound
In Your ear*

In February, the Chancel Choir will sing the first and third Sundays of the month and Bells will be ringing on the second Sunday! The second Sunday will also be a hymn sing so please get some favorites in mind that you would like to request!

Chancel Choir rehearses on Wednesday evenings at 6:15 pm and Bell Choir rehearses following at 7:20 pm. Come and join us!

JANUARY WORSHIP ATTENDANCE

	8:00 AM	9:30 AM	Total
January 1	<i>one service only</i>		37
January 8	31	30	61
January 15	22	43	65
January 22	16	25	41

WORSHIP SCHEDULE

February 5th -Communion

Scripture: Matthew 5:13-16

Sermon: *Saltiness*

By Retired UMC Pastor
Rebecca Carver

February 12th

Scripture: TBD

Lynn Brown

February 19th

Scripture: TBD

-Pastor Ken

February

Scripture: TBD

-Pastor Ken

Sunday
WORSHIP

I am with you

Always

Matthew 28:20

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Sunday School is back in session after taking a break for Christmas and New Years and we would love to have any kids PK-5th grade attend during the 9:30AM service. Kids will sit with their families in church until the Children's sermon is over and then will make their way down stairs. We've averaged between 5-7 kids during the Fall and will continue in a one-room format until our numbers increase. We are focused on teaching stories from the bible with an emphasis on Jesus' life and his teachings leading up to Easter.



If you have an interest in teaching or have questions, please feel free to email Jennifer Hawks at jenhawks@southslope.net.



FINANCE

At the first of the year, SUMC started using ChurchTrac, an integrated software system designed to handle all of a church's needs for computerized support.



churchtrac

One feature of ChurchTrac is each member can establish an online account with SUMC through our website. This will enable members to see what's going on in the church, edit their membership information, and view their giving history.

ChurchTrac also allows a member to set up giving to the church. And, of course, this is where Finance comes into the picture!! The giving can be via credit/debit card, ACH transfer or text giving. It can then be set up as either a one-time gift or as an automatic periodic gift to the church.

While the process to set up the giving is straightforward, it does involve jumping through a couple hoops. The company that processes the online giving for SUMC wants to be sure the account information provided is accurate and, therefore, provides the hoop that needs to be cleared.

The website for SUMC is www.soloniaumc.churchtrac.com. Once you are at the site, there is a sign-in box at the upper right corner. Clicking on that box brings you to a screen where you can create your account. Once this is established, you are good to go for whatever you may want to do.

Ivan Hasselbusch, church treasurer, has developed a procedure that lays out the steps to be taken to create on-line giving. If you would like a copy to guide you, send an email to ihasselbusch@soloniaumc.org and Ivan will respond with a copy. He will, of course, also attempt to answer any questions you may have about the process.

PERMANENT ENDOWMENT

There has been a lot of questions regarding church projects that have been done over the past couple of years and how the endowment has funded the projects. First, the principal monies in the endowments fund are to never be touched, only the earnings may be used for church capital expenditures or any expense that is deemed appropriate. Prior to 2021 we had a number of good market years that led to a substantial amount of earnings. Those earnings are earmarked for use on church expenditures as the trustees and church council see fit.

Improvements to the facilities such as new windows, an updated Sunday school experience, a new front porch and ramp to the church and water mitigation around the Family Life center, and the enhanced audio/visual technology just to name a few. All these projects were funded by earnings from the endowment. In addition, the church council decided to use some funds to try and establish a better Christian education experience, that was to be funded by the earnings from the endowments as well, but COVID put a pause on that.

The danger ahead is now that we have had two years of no earnings along with the high inflation rate which means there will most likely be no new earnings to be used for the next few years. We have previous years earnings in reserve, but those funds will be tightly watched until we are once again on solid footing.

On a final note, pledges and donations are also down, and the church can no longer pay its annual budget from donations alone. The earnings from the endowment have been also used for things like snow removal, office equipment, computers and other general fund items. This has been going on for the past two or three years but as donations and pledges continue to decline, the use of the endowment earnings will continue to rise.

Although some of this seems to be doom and gloom, please remember that it was the foresight of a few members that led to the development of the endowments fund, and the members that contributed and still contribute to that endowment that allowed us to weather the COVID storm and provide the best facilities possible. With the careful management of the endowment, and the guidance of the endowments committee, trustees and church council it will be there to serve way into the future.

PERMANENT ENDOWMENT SCHOLARSHIP



Applications are now being accepted. Forms are available on the church bulletin board, on the website or click [HERE!](#) Please fill out the application and turn into the church office.

DEADLINE is APRIL 15th!

TRUSTEE UPDATE

The Trustees Committee wishes to thank the SUMC staff and patrons for their ongoing support of the decisions and work this team did in 2022 and will do in this new year of 2023!

The Family Life Gym usage continues to grow with scheduled weekly days and times by groups such as the Johnson



County Pickleball Association, youth archery, volleyball, basketball teams & baseball teams and SUMC youth groups. Hourly usage fees have been established for use of the gym facility.

A new thermostat was installed for the FLC gym heating and cooling that can now be operated manually and via WIFI from the church administrator's office PC. Big thanks to Lindy Hopp and Kris Kucera for install and set-up of the operation of the thermostat from the office.

Ed Haury has completed his terms on the trustees, we want to say "thanks" to Ed Haury for his work and participation on this committee over the years. The trustees want to welcome Ruben Galvan to the committee as it's newest member for 2023!



Additional thanks go out to the following:

- Ruben Galvan and Wayne Anderson for upkeep of the FLC gym floor and facility
- Al Hulse for repair of the FH women's bathroom stall door
- Jill Weetman and Lindy Hopp for oversight of the pickleball group

Blessings to all,
Paul Miller- Trustees Chairperson

Alone we can do so little;
together we can do so much.

UWF (previously UMW) Workday!

On January 17 nine women met in the Wesley room to create comfort pillows for cancer patients. 85 pillows were created for future distribution to Hall-Perrine Cancer Center (Mercy CR), Helen G. Nassif Community Cancer Center (St. Luke's), Gilda's Club (Davenport) and Mercy Hospital Iowa City.

All are welcome to participate by your presence, participation and prayers at our next workday. Workday scheduling will be announced in church, stay tuned.



United
Women
in Faith

The United Women of Faith (UWF), formerly UMW, will meet February 1 at 1:30 in the Fellowship Hall. ALL ARE WELCOME! The lesson is TBA, and Hostesses are Connie Koeppen and Ruth Spieker. Bingo has resumed at the Solon Care Ctr, and Barb and Coleen are responsible for cookies on 2/16.

Interested in joining? Contact Shirley Anderson, swanderson@southslope.net or

UWF 2022 Mission Recap

This chart summarizes completed mission projects by UWF in 2022. Red font are new mission opportunities for 2022.

Completed UWF Mission Projects 2022

Value \$6,609.12

(2021=\$4,759.16) increase of \$1,849.96 (approx. 39%)

Congratulations United Women In Faith! We are proud of all the work you have done in continuing to support missions and in pushing yourselves to reach out to new missions!



Organization	Description	Providers
St. Luke's Birthing Center	Crib Sheets, Swaddle Blankets, Crocheted Hats	Verlee
Bridgehaven	Baby Sets	Coleen
Catherine McAuley Center	Food & Hygiene Products	UWF, Congregation
Central Furniture Rescue	Household Products	Church Kitchen
Gilda's Club, Dav-enport	Heart Pillows	Workdays
Goodwill	Kitchen Supplies	Church Kitchen
Hall-Perrine Cancer Center (Mercy CR):	Heart Pillows 100 units 2022 43 units 2021	Workdays
Helen G. Nassif Community Cancer Center (St Luke's):	Heart Pillows 100 units 2022 43 units 2021	Workdays
Mercy Hospital IC	Heart Pillows	Workdays
Midwest Mission	Student School Bag Products	UWF, Congregation
Midwest Mission	Household Production to support FL	UWF, Congregation
Mission of Hope	Hygiene Products	UWF, Congregation
Mobility World-wide Personal Energy Transportation	Empty jugs and cans	UWF, Congregation
Olivet Neighborhood Mission	Hygiene Products, Household Cleaning Products, Christmas Adopt A Family Project	UWF, Congregation
Red Scarf Project	Red Winter Scarves	UWF, Cathy Boggs
Solon School System	School Supplies	UWF, Congregation
Iowa City Shelter House	Hygiene Products, clothing, blankets	UWF, Congregation

UNITED METHODIST MEN

Join us every Saturday morning at 6:00 am at the Family Life Center and on the first Saturday of the month they have breakfast in the Fellowship Hall.

Interested? - call Mike Turner at (319) 624-2061.



SUMC SOUP SUPPER IS BACK!

ANNUAL SOLON
UNITED METHODIST Church
SOUP SUPPER

Friday, February 17th
Live Entertainment
by Leo Shima



Adults - \$9, Children - \$5
(12 & under)

Meal served from 5:00-7:00 PM

Menu

Chicken Noodle Soup, Chili, or Oyster Stew
Hot Dogs, Dessert, and Beverages

Solon United Methodist Church, 122 N West Street, Solon, Iowa 52333

(319) 624-2288

WAYS TO VOLUNTEER AT SUMC

There are always a few different ways you can share your gifts and volunteer at SUMC. Check out the links below on quick and easy ways to sign up to help!

Weekly Worship Sign Up: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20f084da4a722a6ff2-summer#/>

Here you can sign up to Greet/Usher, have the kids do acolyte, run the visuals for worship or bring fellowship for after church. Even signing up once every 6-8 weeks would be a huge help!

Sunday School Teacher Sign Up: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20f084da4a722a6ff2-sunday#/>

Here you can sign up to teach Sunday School! We are currently running the one room school house model. Curriculum is set up and Jen Hawks is your contact if you have any questions! Jen Hawks, jenhawks@southslope.net.

SUMC Soup Supper Volunteer Sign Up: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20f084da4a722a6ff2-sumc#/>

Our Annual Soup Supper is BACK on February 17th. Sign up to wait tables, serve desserts or drinks or wash dishes. You can volunteer for an hour at a time and make a huge difference!

SUMC Soup Supper Dessert Donation Sign Up:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/index.cfm?go=w.manageSignUp#/40460194/share/>

Sign up to donate desserts such as cheesecakes, pies or bars for the Annual Soup Supper on February 17th!

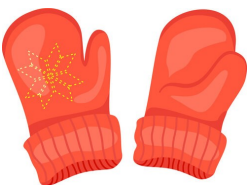


Olivet Donations Needed

UWF has a donation box in the Narthex collecting individually wrapped valentine's chocolates for cookie plates that will be distributed to those in need in the Olivet Neighborhood Mission. You may donate chocolates through February 10th!



They are also trying to help the mission refill their winter clothing bins. If you have new or used hats, mittens, gloves or scarves, please donate drop them off to the bin in the narthex also. Your support is a huge help to those in need, so clean out those closets or grab some extras on your next shopping trip. As with the chocolates, donations will be accepted through February 10th.



WHAT IS LENT? (FEBRUARY 22—APRIL 6TH 2023)

WHAT IS LENT?

Lent is a season of the Christian Year where Christians focus on simple living, prayer, and fasting in order to grow closer to God.

WHEN IS LENT?

It's the forty days before Easter. Lent excludes Sundays because every Sunday is like a little Easter. Basically, it's about one-tenth of a year (like a tithing of time). Mardi Gras is the day before Lent, which begins with Ash Wednesday.

SO THE REAL BEGINNING OF LENT IS ASH WEDNESDAY?

Yes. Ash Wednesday, the day after Mardi Gras, usually begins with a service where we recognize our mortality, repent of our sins, and return to our loving God. We recognize life as a precious gift from God, and return our lives towards Jesus Christ. We may make resolutions and commit to change our lives over the next forty days so that we might be more like Christ. In an Ash Wednesday service, usually a minister or priest marks the sign of the cross on a person's forehead with ashes.

WHERE DO THE ASHES COME FROM?

On what we now call Palm Sunday, Jesus rode a donkey into Jerusalem while people waved palms and cheered him on. Less than a week later, Jesus was killed. The palms that were waved in joy became ashes of sorrow. We get ashes for Ash Wednesday by saving the palms from Palm Sunday, burning them, and mixing them with a little water (like tears) or oil. It's symbolic.

WHY "DO" LENT? HOW DO I START?

Are you searching for something more? Tired of running in circles, but not really living life with direction, purpose or passion? It's pretty easy to get caught up in the drama of classes, relationships, family, and work. Our lives are filled with distractions that take us away from living a life with Christ. We try to fill the emptiness inside us with mindless TV, meaningless chatter, stimulants, alcohol, too many activities or other irrelevant stuff. We run away from life and from God.

Lent is a great time to "repent" -- to return to God and re-focus our lives to be more in line with Jesus. It's a 40 day trial run in changing your lifestyle and letting God change your heart. You might try one of these practices for Lent:

FASTING: Some people have been known to go without food for days. But that's not the only way to fast. You can fast by cutting out some of the things in your life that distract you from God. Some Christians use the whole 40 days to fast from candy, tv, soft drinks, cigarettes or meat as a way to purify their bodies and lives. You might skip one meal a day and use that time to pray instead. Or you can give up some activity like worry or reality tv to spend time outside enjoying God's creation. What do you need to let go of or "fast" from in order to focus on God? What clutters your calendar and life? How can you simplify your life in terms of what you eat, wear or do?

SERVICE: Some Christians take something on for Christ. You can collect food for the needy, volunteer once a week to tutor children, or work for reform and justice in your community. You can commit to help a different stranger, co-worker or friend every day of Lent. Serving others is one way we serve God.

PRAYER: Christians also use Lent as a time of intentional prayer. You can pray while you walk, create music or art as a prayer to God, or savor a time of quiet listening. All can be ways of becoming more in tune with God.



Christians from many different traditions celebrate Lent. How will you use the time to grow closer to God?

PRAYERS AND CELEBRATIONS

In Our Prayers

Al Hulse following the passing of his brother.
Kate Richards recovering from a wrestling injury.
Connie Railsback's friend Sarah & her cancer returning.
Our custodian Ruben, recovering from an automobile accident.
Folks in California receiving too much rain.
Scott & Lynn Silberstein & families – remembering their loss of loved ones
1 year ago.
Those dealing with issues that we can not see.
All dealing with health issues, prayers of strength and healing.
Sara, who was recently diagnosed with terminal cancer at 18.
Sue and Joe Wilkinson's daughter and son-in-law.

Joys & Celebrations

Birthdays of Arnie Lauderbaugh, Scott Silberstein, & John McFarland.
For the beautiful picture postcard icy frost that we saw coming in on Sunday,
1/8.
Family, Friends and our Church community.

February Birthdays

Werning, Holly	02/01
Haury, Denise	02/02
Hawks, Landon	02/03
Jedlicka, Terri	02/03
Mostrom, Kale	02/04
Feldkamp, Katelyn	02/06
Recker, Kera	02/09
Donovan, Dulce	02/12
Keith, Connie	02/13
Allen, Maxon	02/20
Railsback, Connie	02/22
Donovan, Dante	02/28

Pray. Wait. Trust.

Matthew 21:22

Prayer Requests

The SUMC family wants to support and encourage you throughout your time of need. If you have a prayer request, please fill out the Prayer Request card located in the pew and place it in the offering plate during worship. You can check a box on the card to keep your prayers private (they are given to Pastor Ken on Monday morning) or if they are not marked we add them to next week's bulletin so the congregation can pray for you! if you would like to have your prayer request sent to our church-wide prayer chain, please call the church office at (319) 624-2288, or email us at soloniaumc@gmail.com with your request!



Birthday Announcements

Do you have a birthday in this month but don't see your birthday listed?
Contact the Church at :
soloniaumc@gmail.com
or 624-2288.

Be sure to give your month, day, and year. We need your birth year to be able to enter in the software.

*Making disciples of Jesus Christ
for the transformation
of our world*

Rev. Ken Ferguson, Lead Minister (sabbatical 1/1-2/17/23)
Angie Grecian-Bransky, Music Director
Lindy Hopp, Office Administrator
Mary Kucera, Director of Hand Bells
Ivan Hasselbusch, Treasurer
Ruben Galvan, Custodian
Lisa Hilton, Security



SUNDAY SCHEDULE
8:00, 9:30 AM—Worship
9:30 AM —Sunday School

Church Phone: (319) 624-2288
Address: 122 North West St., Solon, IA 52333
Church Website: www.soloniaumc.org
Church Facebook: Solon United Methodist Church—Iowa