



The CIRCUIT RIDER

APRIL 2024

A Monthly Publication of Solon United Methodist Church

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Happy Easter! Christ is risen!

And spring is now officially here as I write this—even though the weather has been teasing us for quite a while with warmer days, followed by cold. I love seeing the crocuses and daffodils come up as early signs of the new life to come around us!



During Lent we focused on the gospel of Luke, and how Jesus reached out to outsiders, outcasts, and outlaws. He offered new life in many ways to those on the margins—really seeing them, healing them, honoring them in front of others, telling parables where a sinner or a Samaritan was welcomed or was the hero, speaking to women and touching lepers, and saying that he was anointed to “bring good news to the poor . . . proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, [and] to let the oppressed go free.”

Jesus continued that witness and message, even when it brought him into conflict with the political and religious leaders of his day, and even when it led to his death on a cross. But as Easter people, we know death did not have the last word. God raised Jesus from the dead and can also bring new life in many ways and many places where it is hard to find hope today.

As we continue to follow Jesus by living into his purpose of lifting up the lowly and bringing good news to the poor and outsiders, I invite us to dig a little deeper into what we mean by doing outreach. I invite all members and active friends of Solon UMC to a conversation after church on Sunday, April 28. We will have some small group conversations around tables, and some sharing as a large group to see where our hearts lie in terms of reaching out to offer good news. Who are the people hurting today, here in Solon and nearby, that we can offer hope in fresh ways through our actions filled with Jesus' love? See the separate article in this newsletter for more details on the April 28 workshop, and a link to register.

During the season of Easter until Pentecost, I have chosen a worship series theme with some lightness and joy: Dare to Dance Again! Imagine Gene Kelly with an open umbrella, not caring that he gets wet, singing and dancing in the rain! It is a theme that feels personal for me as my foot recovers from surgery, that I hope to be able to dance again. It makes sense as we imagine the disciples' journey from despair at Jesus' death, to the surprise of resurrection. And it makes sense with the joy of Easter to dance with abandon, even in the face of so much challenging news in the world today. Can we witness to the resurrection by living with faith and joy that can take hold even when it rains, and by bringing hope and laughter even in the midst of heaviness?

Pastor Peggy

The Circuit Rider

Worship Schedule

April Sermon Series: Dare to Dance Again

April 7—Communion/Camp Sunday

*Message: With Great Power:
Dancing Together*

Scripture: John 20:19-31 & 1John 1:1-4

April 14

*Message: While in Their Joh: Dancing
with Confidence*

*Scripture: Luke 24:36b-48 &
1 John 3:1-7*

April 21—Baptism of Jason Moses

*Message: By This We Will Know:
The Dance of Love*

*Scripture: John 10:11-18 &
1 John 3:16-24*

April 28

*Message: From You Comes My Praise:
Guide My Steps*

Scripture: Acts 8:26-40 & John 15:1-8



As I write this, I am reminded of the old adage, “March comes in like a lion and goes out like a lamb”. Well, I’m not sure about the lamb part. The wind is blowing so hard that things are hitting the windows and making popping noises. The poor flowering bulbs were surrounded by snow only a few hours ago. Mother Nature only has a few days to get her act together to make the “lamb” portion come true! It’s all part of the process. Hymn #707 is a perfect reminder of this!

1. In the bulb there is a flower; in the seed, an apple tree; In cocoons, a hidden promise: butterflies will soon be free! In the cold and snow of winter there’s a spring that waits to be, Unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.
2. There’s a song in every silence, seeking word and melody; There’s a dawn in every darkness, bringing hope to you and me. From the past will come the future; what it holds, a mystery, Unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.
3. In our end is our beginning; in our time, infinity; In our doubt there is believing; in our life, eternity. In our death, a resurrection; at the last, a victory, Unrevealed until its season, something God alone can see.

Look for wonderful music in the month of April!

Sunday, April 7 - Chancel Choir - “A Jubilant Song”

Sunday, April 14 - Celebration Bells - “Father Welcomes” and “Joyance”

Sunday, April 21 - Chancel Choir - “Siyahamba”

Spring blessings to you all!

Angie



MARCH WORSHIP ATTENDANCE

9:00 AM

March 3	58
March 10	55
March 17	65
March 24	76



Maundy Thursday and Easter Sunday Services

March 28	Maundy Thursday	7:00 PM	
March 31	Easter Sunday	7:00 AM	Sunrise Worship
			Following 7AM Service Easter Breakfast
		9:00 AM	Worship



...” and very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb. They had been saying to one another, “Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance to the tomb?” When they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had already been rolled back” ...

Annual SUMC Easter Egg Hunt FUN!

It was a chilly but sunny day for our annual Easter egg hunt. The youth group had fun hiding the eggs. This year we handed out treat bags with a pencil, bookmark, a flyer about our Easter services and our regular services.

Approximately 40 children attended this year's hunt. The ages ranged from toddler to 5th grade. Everyone had a great time. Thank you to all who donated candy and/or time to make this happen!



Christian Education Update

Happy Spring Everyone!

It is wonderful to see God's new beginnings this spring in pretty flowers blooming. As we look towards spring our youth are starting their new series. Our Treasure Seekers will start their new unit "The Empty Tomb". They will be studying the events of Easter and the resurrection. Our Sunday school class will be focusing on the same thing with their new series. Our youth group will finish with their Lenten studies and continue with their Bible study. They are looking forward to their mission trip this summer and are thinking of local projects that they can help with, including the church's spring cleaning. We still have a wonderful adult Bible Study on Monday evening evenings lead by Jill Mack and our Adult Sunday school class after worship service lead by Phil Kakacek. Please contact them if you wish to join these classes. All are welcomed!



As our youth start their new series may we ponder a new focus on God's love ourselves and how we can spread that love to others around us.

Peace, *Dee*

Workshop on Outreach: to the Outsiders, Outcast, and Outlaws

Sunday, April 28, 10:30 am – 12:00 pm, after Fellowship Time in Fellowship Hall

I have heard people here at SUMC say many times that we need to do outreach. But what do we mean by outreach? Let's dig a little deeper together, by following up on our Lent theme of how Jesus reached out to the outsiders, outcasts, and outlaws.

Where do we see suffering that we can help alleviate? Are there people who need advocates to have their voices heard? Are there people who need community and need to know they are not alone? Where do we see people outside the church that are doing good works that we can lift up and join with? Who are the people in our local community who most move our hearts that we want to reach out to?

At this workshop, we will rotate around several tables with different questions for reflection about outreach. Then we will share some of those responses with the whole group. Be ready to dig deeper into your hopes and dreams for our church. After this workshop we will do some follow-up to hopefully create a goal and focus for some of our work and programming in this next year.



Let's not just talk about Jesus being raised from the dead in the past. Let's find ways to help make new life visible today, right around us!

Trustee Update

Hats off to the volunteers who trimmed, cleaned up debris, (and dug up the invasive devil weed) from the three church flower beds, three parsonage flower beds, the Velma Beck Garden and surrounding area, and then helped apply mulch. It was a lot of hard work, but the results were well worth the backaches and sore knees! Thanks also to Connie Railsback who, among other kitchen cleaning chores, attacked the louvered cupboards in the church kitchen!



Those outside volunteers helping were: Neal Webster, Randy Mack, Julie Hauser, Nancy Worrell, Wayne Anderson, Verlee Lauderbaugh, Dolfi and Barb Kalm, and Tom and Justin Moore. Special thanks to Tom and Justin for all trips back and forth to haul and spread mulch...the results are great! And...the church received a 10% discount on the mulch from Chalupsky's Landscaping in Shueyville, so grateful for that. And, not wanting to miss anyone else who volunteered and helped in some way, thank you as well! Our church family is blessed with so many who come forward, and it is in these times we get to know each other a little better.

Thank you, church family!!

SUMC Trustees

NAMI Walks!

JOIN US to Advocate for Mental Health Awareness by signing up with **Solon Striders: Walking with Purpose** for the National Alliance for Mental Illness (NAMI) Annual Walk. **Every step you take supports mental health education, advocacy, and support programs. Support NAMI's mission to improve the lives of individuals and families affected by mental illness.**

Top 5 Reasons to Join the NAMI Walk

5. Terry Trueblood is Awesome—Come enjoy the beautiful scenery!
4. Get in Your 10,000 Steps (actually less than 2 miles)!
3. Fellowship with other Fun Church and Community Walkers!
2. Free Nourishment and Music!
1. **Make a Difference Advocating for Mental Health with your Feet or Pocketbook!**

If you would like to be part of the team, we'd love for you to join us! Information below.



Mental Health Awareness—NAMI Walks

Date: Saturday, May 4, 2024
Location: Terry Trueblood Recreation Area Iowa City
Check In: 8:30 am
Walk Starts: 10:00 am

Please consider joining our team **Solon Striders: Walking with Purpose** on this walk, and/or donating to the team through the NAMI website. We have set a fundraising goal of **\$2,000** but would love to raise much more, as all donations directly support the mission of NAMI.

For more information, go to <https://www.namiwalks.org/team/64662>

The link will take you to a page that contains details of the walk as well as links to register (“Join our Team”) and to donate to this event (“Support Us”). If you click on Roster, you can select an individual team member to support, as well.

If you have any questions, contact Keela Herr at keela.herr@gmail.com or 319-389-5173.

Thank you for your support.



Camp Sunday—April 7th

On Sunday April 7th S.U.M.C. will be having our very own CAMP SUNDAY! Sunday School kiddos will enjoy camp type activities, snacks and songs and will be given information regarding camps available here in Iowa.



Don't let the kids miss out on the fun, mark your calendars!



PE Scholarship Application Deadline April 1st

Permanent Endowment (PE) Scholarships

Did you know SUMC awards scholarships each year to HS Seniors who are going on to higher education. We encourage all of our HS Seniors to learn more and fill out an application by going to our website:

<https://vwtom.com/solonumc/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2016/03/PE-Scholarship-Application.pdf>

Deadline for submitting applications is April 1st, these can be filled out and emailed to the office, at soloniaumc@gmail.com or mailed to the church at 122 N West St, Solon IA 52333.



Last Family Meal—Wednesday April 24th

ON WEDNESDAY APRIL 24TH AT 5:30 PM WE'LL HOST our Last Family Meal of the school year. It is tradition to hold a cookout on the Last Family **MEAL. WE'LL PLAN ON BURGERS AND HOTDOGS AND** hope for good weather so the kids can chalk in the parking lot and maybe we can even eat outside! Please consider joining in this wonderful event!

IF YOU'D LIKE TO VOLUNTEER IN SETTING UP, SERVING or tear down or would like to donate desserts, please see the clipboard!



United Methodist Bishops Call for Cease Fire in Gaza

On October 7, 2023, an attack by Hamas left 1,200 Israelis dead and hundreds of hostages were taken. Since then, more than 30,000 have been killed by Israel's bombardment of Gaza, the majority of them women and children.

It is estimated that 1.8 million Palestinians have been displaced, their homes and communities destroyed. The United Nations estimates that more than half a million people are living under "catastrophic levels of deprivation and starvation."

The United Methodist Bishops have issued a statement that says in part, "The lack of a true cease-fire after more than five months of this deadly conflict compels us to raise our voices now. We call for an immediate and permanent cease-fire in the Gaza Strip and a commitment from all involved parties, including Israel, Palestinians, surrounding Middle East countries, the U.S., and others to pursue a lasting peace.

We pledge our prayers and commitment to work for a durable peace, an end to the violence and the release of the hostages."

You can read their full statement [HERE](#).



**A Statement from the
Council of Bishops**
The United Methodist Church



United Methodist General Conference to Take Place April 23-May 3 in Charlotte, NC

(Excerpts from an [article in the United Methodist News Service](#).)

Hundreds of United Methodists around the globe are preparing to spend two weeks away from home, work, and family to serve as delegates at General Conference. This conference was originally supposed to take place in 2020, but got postponed because of the COVID pandemic.

General Conference is always a major undertaking with delegates and other church leaders coming from four continents. But planning for the big meeting has been made more complicated by not only COVID's disruptions but also [the exit of about a quarter of U.S. churches](#) under a General Conference-approved provision that expired at the end of last year.

It will be up to the delegates to prayerfully make the decisions that will chart where the denomination goes from here.

Plans call for the coming General Conference to have [862 voting delegates](#) — 55.9% from the U.S., 32% from Africa, 6% from the Philippines, 4.6% from Europe and the remainder from concordat churches that have close ties to The United Methodist Church.

The denomination's annual conferences — regional bodies consisting of multiple congregations — elect the United Methodist voting delegates. The denomination's constitution requires that half are clergy and half lay.

All told, the coming General Conference has 1,099 total valid petitions before it — including 352 new petitions submitted since General Conference's delay in 2020. Those petitions can be found in [the Advance Daily Christian Advocate](#), which contains proposed legislation.

Many of the petitions involve changing The United Methodist Church's language and rules around LGBTQ individuals and clergy, many others deal with how to move the denomination forward after many churches left the denomination, many deal with regionalization—possible ways for churches in different parts of the world to have different rules and organization, and others will deal with ordinary business of the General Conference.

Please keep the General Conference leaders and delegates from around the world in your prayers!

April Showers

We are once again holding our annual April Showers event for SUMC! Please see the list of items that the church could use and consider donating! There is a table in the Fellowship Hall to place donations.

Let's shower the church with these items to help aid in our mission!

Country Time Lemonade (powder)

Plain Copy Paper

Folgers Coffee (Folgers Classic Medium Roast –Decaf and Regular)

Post-It Notes

Plain Legal Size Envelopes

Paper Towels

Stamps

Napkins (regular, not dessert size)



SUMC Garden

The SUMC Vegetable garden has been a huge producer in years past! Our record for food production in one year is currently 1000 pounds! Wow!! All of the produce we grow is then donated to the Solon Food Pantry or to Solon Senior Citizens.

We are preparing for the upcoming planting season!

If you would like to help with the garden or have items to donate, please contact the church at soloniaumc@gmail.com. We are always looking for more volunteers to help out. Help is always welcome. We are looking ahead to the next steps to prepare the garden such as, planting the seeds and plants and adding straw around the plants to reduce the weeding. Then in late June thru September, picking the produce to give to the Food Pantry. Help is always welcome anytime whether you want to help one time or weekly.



United Women in Faith (UWF) Missions Completed in March

Hall-Perrine Cancer Center (Mercy CR) and UIHC Medical Center Downtown

The March UWF Workday was held on Tuesday, March 12. There were 13 who participated in stuffing, sewing and bagging 169 pillows to be distributed to the Hall-Perrine Cancer Center (100) and UIHC Medical Center Downtown (69). UWF Members attending; Verlee Lauderbaugh, Nadine Sojka, Jan Stock, Jan Bishop, Shirley Anderson, Ruth Spieker, Connie Koeppen, Connie Railsback. The UWF members were thrill to have guests Mary and Denny Gruber with their three grandchildren (Grace, Logan and Ruby) join us in this mission work in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Thanks to Connie Koeppen for the delicious cookies! Now don't you wish you had come?

The next workday will be Tuesday, April 9, when we will again work on stuffing and finishing pillows for distribution to UIHC and Gilda's Club in Davenport. We will meet in our usual place, the Wesley Room in Family Life Center from 8:30-11:30 AM, with coffee and treats provided. Come for an hour or three just come with joy in your heart. All are welcome to participate.



Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth.

1 John 3:18

United Women in Faith (UWF) Missions Completed in March

St. Lukes Birthing Center - Verlee Lauderbaugh created and delivered another 33 baby hats for the St. Lukes Birthing Center. A total of 51 hats have already been delivered by Verlee in 2024!!!! Want to help her? If you would like to participate in this mission work contact Verlee directly.



Center for Worker Justice of Eastern Iowa - At our monthly UWF meeting Germaine Fandohan from Center for Worker Justice of Eastern Iowa (CWF) attended to share what this organization does for those less fortunate than us.

The CWF unites low-wage workers across race, ethnicity, and immigration status to promote and defend workers' rights on the job, tenants' rights to safe and

affordable housing, just immigration policies, and more equitable communities.

UWF members donated products for the clients of CWF and made a cash contribution to the organization.

WOMEN IN FAITH

UWF (UMW) will meet on April 3rd at 1:30 pm in FH. Julie K. will have the program Hostesses for the meeting are Jan S. & Julie H. Colleen will be providing cookies for Bingo at the Care Center on April 18th.

Questions? Contact Shirley (319-541-0732) or Barb (319-321-4078).



UNITED METHODIST MEN

We continue to meet at Fellowship Hall Saturday mornings at 6:00 AM. Join us!

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

Prayers and Celebrations

In Our Prayers

Pastor Peggy with her continued foot rehab.
 Jill Mack recuperating from knee surgery.
 Wilbur Erhart recovering from a recent fall.
 John McFarland contending with a throat issue.
 Connie Koeppen healing and rehab from a shoulder injury.
 Deb Ruff asked for prayers for her Mom's husband, Larry, following his wife's death and the uncertainty that lies ahead.
 Traveling mercies, especially for our young people in their comings and goings.
 Dee S. as she remembers her mother by providing altar flowers.
 Renee Lunemann as she recovers from knee surgery—she is in a lot of pain.
 Verlee's niece Ally has finished treatment, and is waiting to be scheduled for major surgery for the cancer.
 Continued prayers for the Tritle's daughter-in-law Jessica. She has run out of treatment options for her cancer, so is living with cancer.
 Nadine Sojka's cousin Ronny, who just had heart surgery.
 Sue Wilkinson's daughter Kelly's mother-in-law Celie has just finished radiation treatment for cancer.
 Dave Harney who has entered hospice care because of his cancer.
 Renee Lunemann as she recovers from knee surgery—she is in a lot of pain.
 Tawnia's friend Rose Alice.
 Verlee's niece Ally has finished treatment, and is scheduled for major surgery for the cancer next week.
 Prayers for Ally's mother Ginny, as she cares for Ally, as Ally's sister gets medical testing, and also as Ginny's mother, Gloria Bulechek is experiencing weakness in her knees..
 Jan Stock asks for travelling mercies for her granddaughter, Maddie, and the Iowa rowing team as they travel to compete.
 Betsy Saupe had successful surgery on her leg, but is still in pain.
 Jeanne and Wilbur Erhart's son, Wyatt who has been hospitalized with heart issues.
 Barb Kalm's sister Karen and husband Carl having health issues.
 Tommy Miller, Darcy's grandson broke a bone in his ankle, is on crutches.
 Family of Dave Harney.
 Family of Dan Smith.
 Duester family, death of Donna Wilkerson.
 LeeAnn Gilroy's sister, who has young children, has cancer, and is restarting chemotherapy.
 Shirley Anderson had successful knee surgery and is recovering at home

Rejoices & Thanksgiving

Sue Wilkinson lifted up her niece Erica and husband Adam as they announced they are expecting!
 Tawnia Kakacek's birthday was Monday, March 4.
 Solon Girls' Basketball team for winning the state title!
 Denny Gruber reported that the soup supper went well last night, and raised around \$700, thanks to many volunteers.
 Mary and Kris Kucera are happy to announce the birth of granddaughter Sophia Louise.
 Norma and Richard Novak share the joy that their grandson, Zeb, won first place in wrestling.
 Carol Ann Richards lifted up a joy for daughter Kate, who is traveling in Guatemala and Belize, and will be home on Wednesday.
 Nadine Sojka's cousin Ron is home doing well after surgery.
 Kate Richards – Essay winner for the Optimists, including a \$500 scholarship.
 Cathy Boggs shared the joy that Ellie, a young girl with liver cancer, that Cathy's granddaughter asked for prayer several months ago, has now had a liver transplant and is doing well.
 Dee shared joy at all the children here this morning waving palms for Palm Sunday.



April Birthdays

Kruse, Keenan	04/01
Telecky, Jim	04/01
Whitfield, Erin	04/04
Vollbrecht, Emma	04/04
Ranard, Ben	04/06
Evans, Lance	04/07
Strang, Yvonne	04/08
Beasley, Airabella	04/12
Lewis, Elizabeth	04/14
Durr, Madison	04/18
Hanus, Lee	04/19
Hess, Terry	04/20
Miller, Austin	04/20
Lauderbaugh, Verlee	04/21
Pearl, Roma	04/22
Railsback, Ed	04/22
McPheron, Cassandra	04/23
Smith, Adam	04/25
Boggs, Cathy	04/26
Kerkove, Madison	04/26
Vollbrecht, Tanner	04/26
Kunkel, Kacie	04/28
Kunkel, Sydney	04/28



APRIL CIRCUIT RIDER

Return Service Requested

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



SUNDAY SCHEDULE

9:00 AM—Worship

9:00 AM —Sunday School

10:15 AM—Adult Sunday School

Rev. Peggy Garrigues, Lead Pastor 319-855-7911
pastorpeggy@soloniaumc.org

Dee Swartzendruber, Christian Education Director

Angie Grecian-Bransky, Music Director

Lindy Hopp, Office Administrator

Mary Kucera, Director of Hand Bells

Ivan Hasselbusch, Treasurer

Ruben Galvan, Custodian

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Website: <https://soloniaumc.churchtrac.com/>

Facebook: Solon United Methodist Church—Iowa

Instagram: soloniaumc