

Valley Views

A monthly publication of Valley United Methodist Church
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OFFICE HOURS: Monday-Thursday 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Friday 9:00 a.m. to noon

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Online Youtube Streaming Worship Service: Sunday 9:00 a.m.; search for ValleyUMC



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Valley Views Editor

Sheila Madsen

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Dear Valley friends,

As I write this, there's a cacophony of papers and books on my desk, hurriedly consulted and left where they lay. A gaggle of glitter and gold dust stare at me from the table, along with the pitcher in which I practiced the glowing water I'd pour out on Christmas Eve. My clergy robe is crumpled in a chair, and the rope cincture slithers on the floor among several stoles, where they landed after worship that night.

In the sanctuary, the big water jar and a punch bowl wonder when they'll be emptied, washed, and stowed. Two of the candles on the Advent wreath are mute, their flames drowned during Christmas Eve worship in a build-up of melted wax that hardened around their wicks.

A manger sits in the entryway; I catch the faint strains of a lullaby when I pass it. Half of our warmly prepared luminaries are still outdoors, glowing however faintly (like they did from the start (!)). Candles in hurricane cups sit in their basket, awaiting their fate.

At home, the fridge and counter are untidy with leftovers and gifts of goodies. The stack of cards finally tipped and fell, into a disorder that reminds me of my own un-sent greetings and thank you's. Chores are ask-

ing to be done. Naps whine to be taken.

Such is the worthy mayhem of *AFTER*. With all the lists and care that lead up to a beautiful Christmas, I revel in this *after*. Yes, things need attention, but nothing feels urgent. The debris of good and faithful celebration sings a happy chorus, indeed.

In the distance, I can hear the drumbeat of the new year approaching. It has an undeniable energy about it. A kind of joy and purpose, but it's still indistinct. Hazy. It has a definite shimmer to it, but I can't quite make out the particulars.

It's the glorious gleam of *BEFORE*. A lot I can't see yet, amidst pandemic turbulence and winter interruptions, along with new leaders and fresh seasons. Waiting for the light to illuminate next steps on various, purposeful journeys.

What a sweet spot. Reverberating with a great *after* and a tantalizing *before*. With plenty of time. Reserves of energy and possibility. The promise, and certainty, that *God is with us*, as we prepare to turn the page to a bright new 2021, ourselves, and together.

With joy,
Pastor Lee

JANUARY LECTONARY

January 3

Isaiah 60:1-6
Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14
Ephesians 3:1-12
Matthew 2:1-12

January 10

Genesis 1:1-5
Psalm 29
Acts 19:1-7
Mark 1:4-11

January 17

1 Samuel 3:1-10
Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18
1 Corinthians 6:12-20
John 1:43-51

January 24

Jonah 3:1-5, 10
Psalm 62:5-12
1 Corinthians 7:29-31
Mark 1:14-20

January 31

Deuteronomy 18:15-20
Psalm 111
1 Corinthians 8:1-13
Mark 1:21-28

**Next VV Deadline:
January 19, 2021**

MISSION AND OUTREACH

DMARC FOOD PANTRY

You may still make donations for Food Pantry items-just leave at the lower level doors during office hours or make a monetary donation by noting "Food Pantry" on your check.

December donations

\$1220

VALLEY UMC NEW MEMBER

We welcome Valley UMC's newest member, John Hooker. John joined the church during the December 13 Worship Service.

John has faithfully jumped in with both feet to live out his membership covenant to serve God and his church. He is one of our Sunday morning Tech Crew members and will be serving on the Administrative Leadership Team.

John and his fiancé, Stacie Stearns, will be married at Valley UMC in the fall of 2021.



Welcome, John!



Since Covid-19 restrictions began in March, approximately 100 "to go" meals are handed out at Trinity UMC each weekday. Many of these meals are purchased from local restaurants for about \$5 each.

Valley UMC sent a \$500 donation to cover the November meal.

Thank you for your ongoing generosity!

CFUM SUPPER CLUB FOR 2021

We will continue our \$500 financial contribution every other month beginning February with the expectation to go back to in-person volunteering and serving when able. Please note: When we return to in-person meals, we will be serving on the 3rd Friday.



Dear Valley UMC,

We would like to thank you for all of the cards, prayers and memorial gifts sent to us during Verl's illness and passing.

Our church family provided strength and comfort in this difficult time and we are grateful for your support.

Sincerely,

Andra Sims and family

PERSONAL CARE ITEM DRIVE

Now that donations are being accepted again at WDM Human Services, you can feel free to drop off items at the church if you wish. The needs have continued and will be great in the coming months. The focus for this month is **shaving cream and bar soap**.

Or if you are able to donate any personal care items, they are much needed and much appreciated at anytime.

Thanks for your support!

Please note: The Valley UMC Mission team has decided to drop its affiliation with Churches Outreach Group at this time. This decision was made in conjunction with discussions regarding the future of the COG Committee and the current pandemic. Valley UMC will continue its generous participation with personal care items and other support of West Des Moines Human Services as they have in the past.



- ◆ Marian DeBoef
- ◆ Rose Donati
- ◆ The family and friends of Cindy Chamberlin
- ◆ Women at the Well Ministry
- ◆ Pastor Lee and the mission and ministry at Valley UMC
- ◆ All of those on the front lines of this health crisis.
- ◆ Those suffering illness, loss, isolation, and hardship during the pandemic
- ◆ Our nation's leaders for a new beginning in 2021

2020 ADVENT MISSIONS

Heifer International-\$605

Women at the Well-\$1085

Unspecified Advent-\$2915

Thank you for your generous support of our 2020 Advent offerings.

HOLIDAY GIFT CARDS FOR WEST DES MOINES HUMAN SERVICES

\$440 and 2-\$25 grocery gift cards



Support AmazonSmile is a simple way for you to support Valley UMC every time you shop, at no cost to you. The next time you shop the website, go to smile.amazon.com and you'll be asked to select a charity of your choice. AmazonSmile will donate 0.5 % of your eligible purchases to the charitable organization of your choice. Valley UMC is one of the one million organizations on the selection list.

Contact the church office if you have questions.

2021 CHURCHWIDE SPECIAL SUNDAYS UNITE THE WORK OF THE CHURCH

United Methodists are connectional. We put into practice that if we want to give money beyond our local church and local community needs, the first place to look is our connectional system.

Connectional giving – all of us giving together – is fuel for ministry. It enables us to share the concerns of many people. When you give towards one of the six Special Sundays, you enable vital ministries that change the world, one life at a time.

HUMAN RELATIONS DAY JANUARY 17, 2021

Supporting neighborhood ministries. Your gifts are part of building beloved community through faith-based volunteer programs, community developers and programs that work with at-risk teens.

UMCOR SUNDAY MARCH 14, 2021

Responding globally to persons in need. Your gifts ensure that UMCOR can respond quickly and in compassion to disaster and devastation. You support the daily business allowing UMCOR to keep the promise that 100% of any gift will go toward that project

NATIVE AMERICAN MINISTRIES SUNDAY APRIL 18, 2021

Recognizing and supporting Native Americans. Your gifts allow us to collaborate with existing native ministries, create programs and support seminary scholarships for United Methodist Native Americans

PEACE WITH JUSTICE SUNDAY MAY 30, 2021

Finding peaceful resolutions together. Your gifts support the development of social justice ministries in every Annual Conference with half of the collections remaining within each conference.

WORLD COMMUNION SUNDAY OCTOBER 3, 2021

Providing global education and vocational impact. Your gifts equip racial and ethnic students through scholarships for national and international graduate students who will transform communities around the world.

UNITED METHODIST STUDENT DAY NOVEMBER 28, 2021

Investing in our students. Your gifts underwrite scholarships for United Methodist undergraduate and graduate students allowing them to achieve education goals with a financial freedom.

WEST DES MOINES UMC MINISTRY “EVERYBODY EATS”

The Valley UMC Missions Team approved \$400 to be taken from the Undesignated Missions fund for the 240 luminaries that were used by our church on Christmas Eve. This donation will support West Des Moines UMC's initiative addressing hunger: *Everybody Eats*. Their program partners with West Des Moines Schools to Fill the Gap for children and their families when the school is not in session. So, for this purpose, they provide food packs for weekends, during school breaks, and over the summer. When school went online, they began providing packs for students that wouldn't be getting school lunches for weeks at a time. They work with various sources like Hy-Vee, Rotella Bakery, and Frito-Lay to obtain supplies at a reduced price, and they assemble the volunteers to help put these packs together and make sure food gets delivered timely.

They also have a Little Free Pantry at their church that gets stocked every day, and they support Meals from the Heartland as part of their Everybody Eats commitment.

SO MANY THANKS



Thanks so much for the love gift you all gave to me and my family. We are blessed and overwhelmed by your generosity.

When Michael Hommer handed me this gift, he said it represented hugs and handshakes from everyone in this congregation. What a lovely thought. Having come into this role during a pandemic, that is something I've missed more than I can say. Consider yourself hugged or "handshake-d" back, as a deposit on the day (God willing, *this year!*) when we can share those gestures for real.

I am so grateful to be serving in your midst. I look forward to the ways God will work through us all in the year ahead, and beyond.

Blessings,
Pastor Lee

AN ADDRESS BY OUR BISHOP Monday, January 4, 7-8:00 pm

Our bishop, Bishop Laurie Haller, invites all clergy and laypersons in the Iowa Conference to an *Epiphany Address: Watching Over One Another in Love*. The address will be Livestreamed on Monday evening, January 4, 2021, from 7:00 to 8:00 p.m. at this link: <https://vimeo.com/491131592>

The address is based upon the Gospel Lesson for the Epiphany of Jesus Christ, Matthew 2:1-12. She intends to offer both a word of hope for the New Year and will share with you several initiatives designed to address areas of our life together as a church. Included in these initiatives will be reports on the formation of Circuit Ministry, church finances, a process for reimagining the Conference Connectional Ministries Council, UM Camping and Retreat Ministries, and ways of caring for our clergy.

Following her address, there will be a time for questions and answers using the email address: vision2032@iaumc.org. We are also invited to virtual conversations on the ministry of local church and conference finances. These will be held at 9:00 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. on two Saturdays, Jan. 23 and 30. These conversations are for all local church pastors and lay members of local churches. We hope you'll join as you're able. All of these events will be recorded for later viewing; watch our weekly e-mails for links.

ADMINISTRATIVE LEADERSHIP TEAM

Thank you to our Administrative Leadership Team members going off after serving faithfully for the past 3 years (or more): Dave Stensrud, Michael Hayes, Michael Hommer and Phyllis Pearson. Beginning in January 2021, we welcome our new members: Emory Cleveland, Fran Watson, Starr Himes, Larry Hutzell, John Hooker, Bob Schulte and Harold Templeman.

PRAYER SHAWLS FOR HEALTHCARE WORKERS

Lynda Hommer and Pastor Lee are inviting us to a challenge: *Let's send prayer shawls to every one of the frontline healthcare workers with whom we're connected.* This would include people in our congregation along with your family members, friends, neighbors, relatives, hangers-on, and ex-es. When you think about the burden of this pandemic on the medical personnel who are caring for people, who are the faces—specific people—who come to mind? They're the ones we want to bless with a prayer shawl, along with a message of love and care from this congregation.

We aren't sure whether this will mean ten prayer shawls or 100. But we trust that we'll be able to meet any and all these needs, and we'd ask you to assist in two ways: (1) By sending the church office the names, addresses, and relationship of any and all healthcare workers that you'd like to receive this care. And (2) By joining in the work of creating prayer shawls! If you are willing but need instructions, please contact Lynda Hommer at 515/681-4935 or lynda.hommer@gmail.com. Maybe you don't do handwork but you'd like to provide supplies or help pay for postage? Check with Lynda about that, too, or send a check marked "COVID Prayer Shawls."



It is projected that the strain of this pandemic on our healthcare system will negatively impact the mental and physical health, resiliency and retention of our medical workforce for years to come. This offering of prayer shawls is one small way we can let these individuals know they are held with prayer and support, even if they live far away.

VALLEY UMC FOUNDATION MINUTE VALLEY UMC BOARD MEMBER RECOGNITION

As the year 2021 opens, it is a time of new beginnings having just celebrated the birth of Jesus and anticipate better days ahead on a number of fronts. The Valley UMC Foundation is also starting the new year with new beginnings.

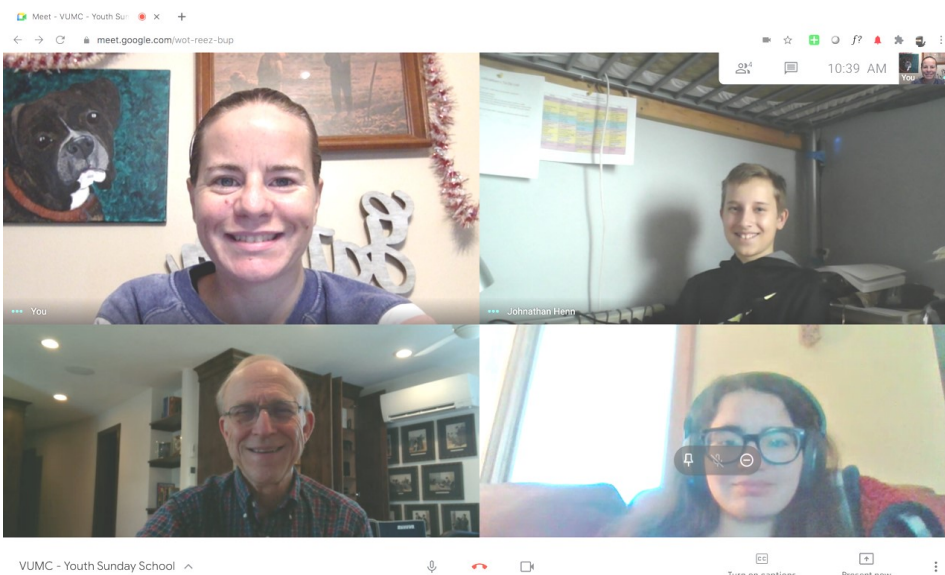
Some of our beginning Board members aren't totally new to the Foundation. Mike Hommer and Phyllis Pearson have been serving as representatives from the Leadership Team. Now that they are no longer on the Leadership Team, we celebrate their willingness to continue on the Foundation Board as two of the at-large members. Phyllis has volunteered to serve as treasurer for the coming year pending the outcome of what we are sure will be a hard-fought election campaign (against nobody) at the February quarterly Board meeting. For a truly new beginning, Jim Lewis has also agreed to serve as an at large member on the Board this coming year. For those few among us who haven't met Jim and his wife, Rusty: they came to us a couple of years ago from Washington state where Jim's career in the ministry was multifaceted. He brings financial experience as well as additional spiritual guidance to our Board.

At this writing, we await the announcement of who will be the other new representatives from the Leadership Team.

Questions about the Foundation may be directed to any Valley UMC Foundation Board member. They are Doyle Sanders, Ginny Midkiff, Rose Donati, Jim Lewis, Mike Hommer, and Phyllis Pearson.

YOUTH SUNDAY SCHOOL

Youth Sunday school has continued to meet one hour weekly through Google Meet at 10:30 a.m. on Sunday mornings. Jaci Vega and Doyle Sanders have enjoyed meeting with the kids about a variety of current topics utilizing Cokesbury's LinC (living in Christ) program. If you have a youth that would like to join the discussion, please reach out to Jaci at vegadynasty@gmail.com. We would love to have you!



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**Valley United
Methodist Church**

VALLEY UMC WEBSITE

Join our worship services, read the Valley Views, calendars, bulletins and much more by visiting our website:

www.valleyumc.org

Livestream Sunday morning
worship at 9:00 a.m. on
Youtube: ValleyUMC

REACHING UP, REACHING OUT, REACHING IN

*At Valley UMC we're **REACHING UP** to experience a bold, passionate, life-changing relationship with Jesus Christ, **REACHING OUT** to witness through nurture and service, and **REACHING IN** to challenge ourselves toward discipleship and spiritual growth.*