



## St. Mark's United Methodist Church

April 2024

We live to embrace and serve all with the courage of Jesus Christ to heal and reconcile ourselves and the world.

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### Loom Project Update

**Thanks to everyone** who has helped with our mat weaving project. We still need donations of plastic grocery bags and volunteers to cut and weave on Monday mornings from 10:30 to 11:30. We have volunteers to help you get started. Barb, Shirley and Kay

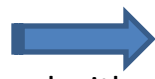


We have begun to make our St. Mark's dreams come true. The dream of purchasing a loom to make sleeping mats was shared on one of the stars during our stewardship journey last Fall. We have been able to make this dream a reality. The new loom can be found in the Youth Room and the weaving of our first mat has begun. More information will be shared as to how you can get involved with this ministry. Let's celebrate this as a glory sighting as God works through us to share his love.

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### United Methodist Men Events

- ❖ The St. Mark's UM Men are having a meeting on April 6th at 7:30 AM and inviting all who might be interested, to attend. Sgt. Kevin Bailey, with the Iowa City Police Department, will be presenting a program about Scams and Frauds. To make sure that we have enough food, we would ask that you let either Dennis Preslicka or Bob Kesselring know that you will be attending.
- ❖ Since the 5th Sunday of the month is Easter, our pancake Sunday has been moved to April 7th.



## Focus Forward



As we move forward with our Spiritual Leadership (SLI), we want to keep you informed with our progress. We have started with building relationships, with one another and strengthening our bond with God. As you would build a house you have to start with a foundation, and we are the foundation! In fact, all we continue to grow our relationships with God & others, we want to incorporate L3 into all our lives. You will not be disappointed!

In our journey we are Loving, Learning, Leading (L3) in all that we do. We worship, pray, reflect, learn and love. We are the students and are absorbing all that God is giving us and learning how to incorporate into our daily lives and live like Jesus. This process is eye opening & is just what our thirsty souls need. One of our homework assignments has been to read the book “The Anatomy of Peace” by The Arbinger Institute. It is amazing and really has given us a lot to talk and think about. If you have a chance, you should read it!

Where have you seen God? **Glory Sightings** are all around us if you take the time to look and listen, he is always there with you. Our challenge to you is that you share yours with us and we will do the same. It is a powerful experience and makes my heart warm. God is all around us, look and find his Glory – what do you see? I see him in Cardinals – my mother loved Cardinals and had many bird feeders. So, when I see that beautiful bird, it brings back great memories and fills my heart with love. He gives me strength, peace and comfort. We can’t wait to hear what yours are!

Peace from your Focus Forward leadership team.

Angie, David, Neil, Lou, Brenda, Cindy, Alberta & Diane

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### **March 2024 Church Council Meeting**

The Church Council met Tuesday, March 19, 2024. The following is a summary of the meeting.

#### **Loving:**

We opened our meeting with a prayer, and sharing of joys, concerns, and Glory Sightings. In addition, Pastor Alberta updated the Council with information from the Iowa City Circuit. District Superintendent Brian Oliver will be hosting a Circuit Rally on April 20 from 9 am to 12 pm. This rally will be held in Wilton, and Pastor Alberta would love to have others from our congregation join her!

**Learning:**

Diane Berwald and Brenda Mayer shared an update on the most recent Focused Forward meeting. Together, the group is working on building a foundation, and strengthening bonds with God. They have been focusing on Glory Sightings in their lives, and encourage everyone in our congregation to do the same.

**Leading:**

The various committees reported the following discussions to the Council:

**Trustees:**

Working on cleanup and improvements/repairs around the church, including placement of the visitor parking signs, spring cleanup in the church/parsonage yards, filling potholes, sprucing up the landscaping and adding gutter guards. Stay tuned for information on how you can help out!

**Finance:**

Working with Chicken BBQ chairs (Cory Berwald and Randy Krutzfield) to finalize plans. Announcements about the event will begin in April.

**Worship:**

Reminder of Holy Week service schedule and encouraged attendance at these various services throughout the week. April 7 will be Holy Hilarity Sunday, followed by Pancakes. Communion is scheduled for April 14.

**Outreach:**

Discussed possible dates for the Garage Sale – most likely in June.

Reviewed possibility of having a presence at local festivals. We would need volunteers to help with this to make it feasible.

The CRC is working on getting re-established

**Missions:**

Encouraging the growth of the 52 Club by adding more members and making sure the congregation knows more about the Club and what they help with.

Added a new member to the committee (Deb Jansen)

**Pastor's Report:**

Pastor Alberta will be taking off a few days after Easter – Monday, Tuesday, and part of Wednesday.

**SPPRC:**

Staff evaluations will be coming up.

Home gatherings to be held in April (Brenda Mayer and Donna Higgins) – committee will discuss if these visits will be continuing in future months.

Discussed office coverage for Shandy and Pastor Alberta if their vacations overlap

For more detailed notes from the committees, please reach out to Rob Rindels at [robrindels@gmail.com](mailto:robrindels@gmail.com) and he will email you committee meeting minutes. We are not able to share the SPPRC minutes due to possible confidential staff information.

**Upcoming SPPRC Meeting** - April 9th at 7 PM in the Wesley Room.

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### **APRIL NEWSLETTER ITEMS** from Brenda Mayer

#### **Easter Baskets:**

We assembled and distributed 77 Easter Baskets this year:

26 – DVIP

18 – Shelter House

15 – Catholic Worker House

18 – United Action for Youth

Thank you to everyone who helped and donated to this mission. We provided books/bookmarks, chocolate bunnies, toothbrushes, washcloths and a fun item for each basket. THANK YOU!!

#### **Christmas Stockings:** Goal for 2024: 566 stockings (it is doable!)

We will be working on Stockings again on the 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Saturdays in April.

WE NEED HELP!!! There is something for everyone, really....We especially need some people to cut the stockings and people to sew the stockings. There is always decorating of the stockings to be done. And we need labels for every stocking.

Also: Please keep in mind whenever you are shopping and see a sale: we need lots of stuffed toys (one for every stocking!) and books – books – books! We need board books(for ages under 3), books for 3-5 year olds (preschool or Level 1 books), books for ages 6-8, ages 9-12 and ages 13+. We currently have NO board books and we are going to need almost 300 to give each child 2 books.

We also need toothbrushes for all ages (Dollar Tree is a good source for these!

They even have infant brushes which would be wonderful to include!) We need 148 infant toothbrushes! Winter Hats for ALL AGES!! Gloves and mittens!

These are our most important items. We would also like to include a small toy/nail polish/age appropriate gift otherwise but we really want to concentrate on: Books, toothbrushes, hats, gloves/mittens, and slipper socks. Please prayerfully consider how you might donate or participate in this project. THANK YOU!

**SAVE THE DATE!!** The Garage Sale is returning! Start sorting and saving your stuff! Remember, we have tables (\$5 ea) and spaces (\$10) available for you to have a place in one large garage sale! We will be setting up on Friday, June 7<sup>th</sup> starting at 4:00pm. The garage sale will be Saturday, June 8<sup>th</sup>, 8am – 1pm with cleanup until 3pm. Please join us!

**FROM THE CRC\* \*Consultation of Religious Communities**

There is a LOT happening in the Iowa City/Johnson County area. You can be a part of helping your neighbors by: April 2nd 6:30 – 8:30 p.m. Refugee Simulation St Mark's Lutheran Church, 8300 C Ave, Marion, IA

This Refugee Simulation takes participants through carefully researched and immersive learning scenarios to understand some of the experiences refugees face when forced to flee their homes. REGISTRATION REQUIRED

April 4th 10:30 am to 6pm A Community Reading of Martin Luther King's "Beyond Vietnam: A Time to Break Silence"

This is a 57th Anniversary of MLK's most controversial speech on April 4, 1967. One year assassinated in Memphis. This presentation will be repeated 8 times; please feel free to come and go as you wish. FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC.

**Table Talk and Potluck** April 21 st 12:00n – 1:30 pm @ Gloria Dei Lutheran Church  
123 Market St Iowa City

Speaker: Dr Chris Jones Iowa's water quality. Dr. Jones is the author of "The Swine Republic". The event is free with a potluck lunch. No registration is required.

**Annual Fundraiser for Agape Café** May 4th 7:30-11:30 a.m. 31st Annual Fundraiser for Agape Café in Iowa City

Old Brick Church, 26 E Market St

In 2023 alone we served 4,500 meals, nearly 600 more meals compared to 2022. January and February of 2024 have already seen a 55% increase in meals compared to this time last year. We offer guests an additional entree/meal to-go each week. Guests are also invited to take groceries, fresh fruit, baked goods and more at our "take as much as you need" table. Goal: \$37,000

**Loving Kindness Loving Justice Community Art  
Exhibition Featuring Faith UCC Artist-in-Residence Kai**

May 16 th 6:30-8:30 p.m

Kiser and a poetry reading from Carol Tyx. 1609 Deforest Ave. Iowa City

May 19 th 7:30 p.m. **Act Justly** is planning a showing of “Humanize My Hoodie”, a documentary with discussion to educate and promote justice in our area.

**Summer 2024 VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!** Catholic Worker House we invite you to help serve immigrant children this summer. School-aged refugee children living at our two houses of hospitality need mentors, tutors, drivers and role models to keep their day occupied with extracurricular activities.

To sign-up or inquire further, please call Emily at 515-729-6482.

Together, we can plug you into existing activities or work with you to plan something new for time that is currently unstructured. **ANYTIME VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!** Houses into Homes Our mission is to provide the basic comforts of home to those who are experiencing furniture poverty, but we do much more than that. Houses into Homes is a place where you can donate your beds, furniture, and other items, knowing that they will help neighbors right here in our community at the same time as keeping those items out of the landfill. Houses into Homes is a place where you can donate your time in a way that fits your interests, skills, and schedule. Just a few of the jobs available: -Drive the box truck to do furniture pick-ups and deliveries

-Unload the truck after pick-ups and bring in drop-off donations

-Repair, refurbish, repurpose, reupholster, and remake furniture items

-Clean upholstered items, mattresses, and rugs

-Organize and make sets of household items like sheets and dishes

-Test lamps and microwaves, and repair as needed

**From the UMC BOARD OF CHURCH & SOCIETY**

Peace with Justice Action Alert: Tell Congress to Call for a Ceasefire in Israel and Palestine. As the violence continues in Israel and Palestine, call on your Members of Congress to support ceasefire, de-escalation, and restraint by all involved. We pray for the innocent civilians, many of them children, who have been caught in the crossfire. As we pray, we must also remain steadfast in our witness for peace.

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## April Special Offerings

April 7th – None listed

April 14th – Native American Awareness

April 21st – Iowa City Compassion

April 28<sup>th</sup> – Free Lunch



April Birthdays!

**1st** – Nancy Thayer, Robert Bassett    **7th** – Lee McKnight  
**9th** – Lowell Fenner    **10th** – Traci Huffman    **11th** – Ann Fenner, Barb Fisher-Krueger  
**12th** – Larry Fountain, Jan Stewart    **25th** – Connor McDowell

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## More Events on the Calendar:

**April 1<sup>st</sup>** – April Fool's Day

**April 7<sup>th</sup>** – Holy Hilarity Sunday

**April 14<sup>th</sup>** – Communion Sunday



Remember when you see our posts on Facebook, please **LIKE** and **SHARE** to get them to more people!

**Thank you for all of the support you show for St. Mark' UMC!**

St. Mark's United Methodist Church  
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Worship Sunday morning 9:30am