



The CIRCUIT RIDER

FEBRUARY 2025

A Monthly Publication of Solon United Methodist Church

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This year, Easter is late—not until April 20—so Lent doesn't start until March. As I looked at the scripture readings in the lectionary, which is the three-year-cycle of proposed scripture readings for churches, I saw that several of them in February were by or about prophets. So we will have a theme of prophets in February.

We'll learn about some of the prophets, and ask "What really is a prophet anyway?" Sometimes prophets predict that something specific will happen, but more often they speak more general words of warning when the leaders and people are focused more on power and status than on justice and compassion for the poor and outcast. Prophets also speak words of hope when the people are suffering a great deal—such as when they had been conquered by another nation and taken into exile in a foreign land, like Babylon or Assyria.

In the Hebrew Scriptures, or the Old Testament, there are major prophets and minor prophets (as the confirmation class is learning). Basically, the major prophets are the ones with longer books: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel. (The book of Lamentations was also written by Jeremiah, so is also included in the major prophets.) The twelve minor prophets all have shorter books with just a few chapters: Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah (so short it is not even divided into chapters, just verses!), Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi. Jonah is probably the most familiar of the minor prophets, since that is where we find the story of Jonah and the whale.

But prophets aren't limited to the Hebrew Scriptures. We'll also hear about Simeon and Anna, prophets in the New Testament who recognized Jesus' importance when he was just an infant. Jesus also refers to himself as a prophet.

And there are also present-day prophets. February is Black History month, and a group of us are watching the PBS *The Black Church* documentary together, so we will learn about some African American prophets and leaders. One of those prophets is Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., who used his Christian faith and leadership and his prophetic voice to have a huge impact on American society. He offered a dream for a better and more just future for people of all races, and he was willing to challenge the political and religious leaders of his day when they supported laws and policies that were unjust, especially to people of color. We'll also sing a few spirituals in worship during February. So there is a faithful role for prophets today, wherever there is injustice, and wherever hope is needed.

We'll shift to a gardening theme for Lent. We'll reflect on everything from the Garden of Eden, to the Garden of Gethsemane, to the Garden where Mary met Jesus on that first Easter morning. Read more about the Lenten series elsewhere in this newsletter.

Pastor Peggy

Dear friends, since
God so loved us, we
also ought to love one
another.

1 JOHN 4:11

Worship Schedule

February 2 - Communion

Scripture: Jeremiah 7:1-7;

Luke 2:22-40

Sermon: *Prophets: A Voice from God*

February 9

Scripture: Isaiah 6:1-8

Sermon: *Prophets: Responding to God's Voice*

February 16

Scripture: Jeremiah 17:5-10;

Luke 6:17-26

Sermon: *Prophets: Seeing the Blessing*

February 23

Scripture: TBA

Sermon: TBA



February is Black History month. In honor of this, we will be singing many American Negro Spirituals during our Sunday morning services. While the term "African American Spirituals" has been used

widely, I found information from Dr. Everett McCorvey who is the founder of the American Spiritual Ensemble and a researcher on this topic. He writes, "The term 'American Negro Spirituals' speaks to the history, the suffering, the hope and the resolve of a people who were able to sing through their suffering and tell and re-tell their heroic stories of triumph and survival through these songs. It is a story and a history that hopefully will never be forgotten. And while the songs were born out of this very dark period in our American History, these songs are now sung, celebrated, and revered all around the world."

Sometimes songs were meant to be sung during church services. At other times they were sung in fields to pass time. Some songs were sorrowful songs to describe the slaves' struggles. Examples of this are "Sometimes I Feel Like a Motherless Child" or "Nobody Knows the Trouble I've Seen". Others are joyful and known as jubilees like "Rock-a My Soul in the Bosom of Abraham".

Spirituals could also be code songs of protest against slavery. One example of this is "Steal Away" that the Chancel Choir will be singing on Sunday, February 9th. Language of the Underground Railroad was often embedded into spirituals and held a secret language to assist slaves to freedom. Talking of Canaan was about getting to the North. Moses was Harriet Tubman. Having a "ticket" was code for escape.

I hope you enjoy this opportunity to celebrate and appreciate the rich history left for us.

February 2 – Chancel Choir sings "This Is My Song"

February 9 – Chancel Choir sings "Steal Away"

February 23 – Celebration Bells perform "Peace Like a River" and "Great Day!"

Angie Grecian-Bransky

We love because he first loved us.

1 John 4:19

JANUARY WORSHIP ATTENDANCE

	9:00 AM
January 5	88
January 12	64
January 19	64
January 26	61



CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Greetings,

As we settle back into our usual routines I hope you had a wonderful Christmas season. Both of our Sunday school classes finished their advent series by comparing three stories “The Grinch Who Stole Christmas, The birth of Jesus, and Joseph and his multi-colored coat. We focused on the different feelings that people had in common in all three stories. We also focused on how God helps people with their feelings and how God used people in each of the stories to spread His love.

Our pre-k through 4th grade will continue to study about Joseph and his amazing journey. They will continue to learn how God used Joseph’s talent of interpreting dreams to save thousands of people and how he forgave his brothers. The 5th- 8th graders will be returning to their Be Bold series as they continue their faith journeys. They will also spend time on how to use the Bible in their lives.

Hailey Wilson, our nursery staff, joined our team January 5th. She is looking forward to helping our young families attend workshop service by watching our little ones as they learn about Jesus. Please let the young families know about our nursery.

We would love to get our Treasure Seekers, our after school program for our grade schoolers, going again for this semester. We need at least 5 students signed up for this group to provide this service. So far we only have 3 students signed up. Please spread the word about this fun activity for our k-5th graders.

Our confirmation/middle school youth group have been learning about the history of Methodism and our church. On January 15th our students met with their mentors. They went on a scavenger hunt with their mentors as they learned about the church’s history. Al Hulse presented a short program about the history of our church bell. The students were able to ask questions about the church.

We continue to need Sunday School teachers and assistants. Please be prayerful about how we can fill this great need for our students.

As we start our new year, may we think about how we continue to grow in our faith as we teach our young students to grow in their faith.

Dee Swartzdruber

SUMC Youth during the Children’s Message with Guest Preacher Phil Kakacek



High School Youth Group

The high school youth group will be starting a study of the book of Revelation, as they requested last fall. Their questions and observations are very impressive! It's so much fun to see them grow in their knowledge and faith!

With Dee's leadership, we're planning for this summer's mission trip. Two fundraisers are in process and coming up - Super Bowl Subs and a repeat of our Dave's Coffee Cakes sales. We'll greatly appreciate your support to help us raise funds for the mission trip!

LeeAnn Gilroy & Sue Wilkinson

MISSION TRIP FUNDRAISERS

Super Bowl Subs –ORDERS DUE JAN. 31st

We are selling Super Bowl Subs to help raise money for the Annual Youth Mission Trip this summer. ORDERS ARE DUE JANUARY 31st and can be found by scanning the QR code on the right OR by grabbing a paper order form from the bulletin board in the narthex. Let the SUMC Youth feed you so you can relax and watch the game on Sunday February 9th!

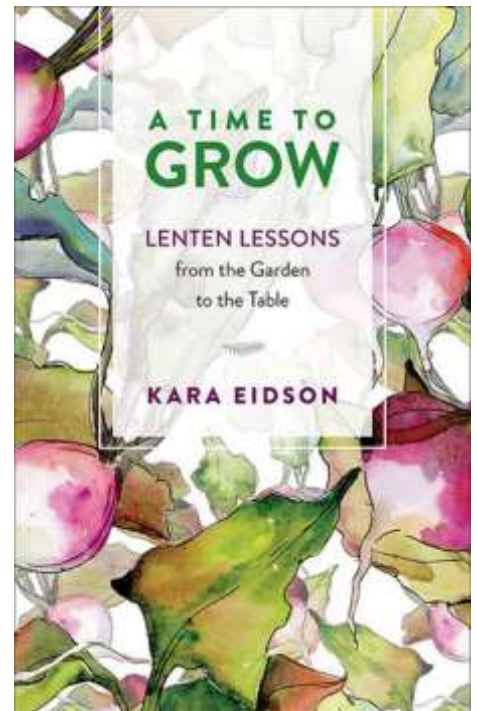
Youth will be making the sandwiches fresh for you to pick up in Fellowship Hall on Sunday the 9th following worship! Your support is appreciated!



Lenten Study

Lent begins on March 5 with Ash Wednesday, and concludes on April 20, Easter Sunday. During that time, we will be using the themes of gardening, eating, the meals Jesus shared with others, and taking time for growing our faith. There will be an option to read on your own, or join a study group for the book *A Time to Grow: Lenten Lessons from the Garden to the Table*, by Kara Eidson. [Click here](#) or sign up on a Sunday, or with the church office, to order a copy of the book, and indicate whether you want to read it on your own, or be part of a study group. The cost of the book is \$13, but pay what you can.

“From Eden to Gethsemane to the garden in which Jesus was buried and raised, our story of faith wanders through much fertile soil. But in our current world of fast food and to-go meals, we often do not make time to explore where our food comes from and how we break bread together. Journeying through the season of Lent with this in mind, *A Time to Grow* encourages readers to slow down, move through the painstaking process of growth, and end together with great feasting and celebration of the resurrection. Themes of soil, water, light, time, fasting, feasting, and more guide the way from Ash Wednesday to Easter Sunday. Readers will explore the intricacies of how faith is required to produce food and how that faith can lead us all to feast at the table on Easter morning.”



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 1st!

SUMC SECURITY

In response to church employee safety concerns, and to a recent theft of food from the church kitchen, the Trustees have installed security cameras in multiple areas around the church.

The trustees are also in the process of considering other church security methods. The congregation will be updated on their progress with this.

Any questions or concerns, please contact trustee chairman

Kris Kucera, 319-936-1148.



SUMC ANNUAL SOUP SUPPER

Once again, Solon United Methodist Church will be hosting their yearly soup supper on March 1, 2025.

We will be serving three soups this year. Our famous chicken noodle soup, chili, and new to our menu is bean and ham. Don't forget our table of desserts, including cookies, bars, and wonderful homemade pies. Who could resist?

Our music will be provided by Solon Shima Country Sounds, with Leo Shima and his accordion. Always a good time to listen to polka music and do some toe tapping.

We will be serving from 5:00 – 7:00 pm.

Meal tickets will be \$10.00 for adults and \$5.00 for children 12 and under.

We are also donating 10% of our proceeds towards Lake MacBride State Park.

Improvements are through Johnson County Foundation-Lake MacBride.

We are also accepting cash donations and Ron Puettman will take care of this benefit.

Consider giving to help keep our park beautiful.



Wednesday Night Family Meals

Join us for Family Meal! These meals are provided at no cost with free will donation. Take out is available, and ALL are welcome. See the schedule below, and check the worship clipboard to sign up to donate or volunteer!



February 5th	March 5th	April 2nd
12th	12th	9th
19th	26th	16th
26th		23rd
		30th

UWF Workday!

Join us for a United Women in Faith Workday!

Where: Wesley Room

When: Tuesday, February 11, 8:30-11:30

What: Project: Heart Pillows for Hospital Patients

Everyone Welcome!



United Women in Faith did not meet in January, but are ready to get going for 2025! The next meeting will be February 5th in FH at 1:30.

Jeanne will be providing the program, while

Barb and Ruth will be the hostesses. We'll also be preparing for the upcoming work day on February 11th.

All women are invited to our meetings!

Interested in joining?

Contact Verlee Lauderbaugh, gverleeretired@hotmail.com or

Shirley Anderson, swanderson@southslope.net

Men's Group

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

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



Prayers and Joys

In Our Prayers

Those traveling for the holidays.
 All those in our world who are in need and in harms way.
 Jeanne Erhart asked for prayers for Tristan Metzler, who is in the hospital.
 Mary Kucera's mom who is recovering from a compression fracture.
 Neil Webster asked for prayers for Dennis Cordle who is in the hospital, probably from a stroke.
 All those who are sick.
 Alice and the family of Fred Mally, who died this past week.
 Bill and the family of Ann Leefer, who died this past week.
 All the places in the world where people are struggling and afraid.
 Peace in the world in all the places there is violence and war.
 Safety in the cold and storms, especially for those who don't have a home.
 Betsy Saupe, having joint replacement in her right hand.
 Ivan Hasselbusch who has started chemotherapy.
 Those impacted by the California wildfires, especially those who have lost homes, businesses, whole communities, loved ones, and those who are fighting the fires
 All the places in the world where people are struggling and afraid.
 Peace in the world in all the places there is violence and war.
 Safety in the cold and storms, especially for those who don't have a home.
 Scott Nicol, recovering at home from heart surgery.
 LeAnn Gilroy's niece Angela and husband Austin just had a baby, Azariah, however, Azariah has health issues.
 Pat Huber has had some improvement, but could use continued prayers.
 Sue Wilkinson asks for prayers for her friend Janan and mother, as Janan's mother goes into hospice care.
 Verlee and Arnie Lauderbaugh ask for prayers as they travel to Orange Beach, Alabama.

The cease-fire and peace talks between Israel and Hamas.
 Leaders in our congregation.
 Our District Superintendent, Rev. Brian Oliver.
 Our Bishop Kennetha Bigam-Tsai.
 Ministry of the other UM churches in our Iowa City area circuit.

Rejoices & Thanksgivings

The freshness and newness of the New Year.
 Emma and Tanner Vollbrecht's Grandpa is out of the hospital.
 Alice Crossley celebrated her 96th birthday on January 6, 2025.
 Jason Moses turned 1 on January 8th.
 Mary Kucera shared joy at the birth of a grandson, Theodore James.
 Pastor Peggy shared joy that they did not find any heart issues with her Dad's chest pain, and that she and her parents were able to visit her brother and family in Mexico over the holidays.
 For Julia Andrews playing the piano on January 12th for us!
 A friend of Jennifer Allen, Julie and her husband, who have been trying to have a child, will be adopting very soon. Prayers that all goes smoothly for child, family, and adoption process.

The baptism of Rush Rodriguez, and his mom Nicole Rodriguez joining our church on January 26th.



February Birthdays

Werning, Holly	02/01
Haury, Denise	02/02
Jedlicka, Terri	02/03
Mostrom, Kale	02/04
Feldkamp, Katelyn	02/06
Keith, Connie	02/13
Allen, Maxon	02/20
Railsback, Connie	02/22
Moses, Amelia	02/28

Blessings to you on your birthday

This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.
 Psalm 118:24



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



SUNDAY SCHEDULE

9:00 AM—Worship
9:00 AM —Sunday School
10:20 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
Todd Bransky, Bell Choir Director
Lindy Hopp, Office Administrator
Mary Kucera, Director of Hand Bells
Ivan Hasselbusch, Treasurer
Lisa Hilton, Security
Hailey Wilson, Nursery

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