



The Circuit Rider

March 2023

A Publication of Solon United Methodist Church

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Lent is now in full swing and spring is near, yet far. As seen below we are indeed new in Christ, but there are still choices.

George MacDonald writes:

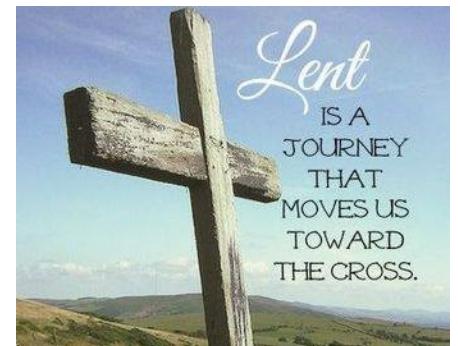
Because we are come out of the divine nature, which chooses to be divine, we much choose to be divine, to be of God, to be one with God, loving and living as he loves and lives, and so be partakes of the divine nature, or we perish. Man cannot originate this life; it must be shown him, and he must choose it. God is the father of Jesus and of us –of every possibility of our being; but while God is the father of his children, Jesus is the father of their sonship. For in him is made the life which is sonship to the Father –the recognition, namely, in fact and life, that the Father has his claim upon his sons and daughters.

We are not and cannot become true sons without our will willing his will, our doing following His making. It was the will of Jesus to be the thing God willed and mean him, that made him the true son of God. He was not the son of God because he could not help it, but because he willed to be in himself the son that he was in the divine idea.

So with us: we must be the sons we are. We are not made to be what we cannot help being; sons and daughters are not after such fashion! We are sons and daughters in God's claim; we must be sons and daughters in our will. And we can be sons and daughters, saved into the original necessity and bliss of our being, only by choosing God for the father he is, and doing his will –yielding ourselves true sons to the absolute Father. Therein lies human bliss –only and essential. The working out of this our salvation must be pain, and the handing of it down to them that are below must ever be in pain; but the eternal form of the will of God in and for us, is intensity of bliss.

Welcome to Lent my friends,

Shalom
Ken



Lent
PRAY. FAST. SERVE.

Music Ministry

We are now into the full swing of Lent. What does that mean for our music in worship? Well, what we do in the United Methodist Church is slightly different than what happens in other Christian religions.

After Christmas, we put away our decorations and the creche is carefully packed until next year. If you are like me, it's a bit of a relief to have a bit of down time after all of the busy activities of the holiday. It is time for a bit of rest. This is what our Lent does for us. It offers us a period of quietness and an opportunity to take some thoughtful time to turn inward.

Many other Christian religions have a practice that the regularly sung Alleluias are removed during Lent and replaced with other responses. It is a way of "burying" them. They are brought back at Easter. They are also directed not to have music that is anything but accompanying the singing. Some churches only allow piano to be played and not the organ nor any other loud instruments.

Ken has spoken in the past about our Sundays being "little Easters". Sundays do not count into the 40 days of Lent so these Sundays are a break from our inward focus. In the Methodist tradition, our music is a reflection of this. While our hymns often reference Lent and its meaning, they are not all in a minor key nor are we required to only play music that is. If you are curious, a very good example is "O Lord, Throughout These Forty Days" found in the UMH #269. It is written in F Major (not minor) and tells us what we can look forward to throughout this season.

May this season be a wonderful time of renewal and looking towards Easter!



Angie Grecian-Bransky

Worship Schedule

March 5 – Communion
Scripture: John 3:1-17
Message: Born Again
By Pastor Ken

March 12—No Sunday School
Scripture: John 4:5-42
Message: So Many Questions
By Pastor Ken

March 19
Scripture: John 9:1-41
Message: Let Us Rise
By Pastor Ken

March 26—Confirmation Sunday
Scripture: John 11:1-45
Message: Moving Forward
By Pastor Ken

February

WORSHIP ATTENDANCE

	8:00 AM	9:30 AM	Total
January 29	18	24	42
February 5	21	38	59
February 12	39	38	77
February 19	30	22	52

Join Us

Looking to deepen your Lenten experience?

Check out some of the examples below on how you can connect on a greater level this season!

Pause: Record your faith journey this Lent. What you see, feel and experience!

Ponder: Share an image or picture that helps you think of Jesus and Hope!

Pray: As you fast from Social Media, write a letter to friends and family.

Practice Go on a virtual pilgrimage! There are lots of options available – the Holy Land, Museums or even a Zoo!



Planning Ahead...

April 2	Palm Sunday	8:00 & 9:30 AM	
April 14	Maundy Thursday Holy Meal	TBD	
April 7	Good Friday		
April 9	Easter	7:00 AM	Sunrise service
		8:00 AM	Easter Breakfast
		9:30 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"...

CAT SURVEY

PLANNING OUR FUTURE TOGETHER!

Our church has entered into a time of discernment during which we are gathering information to guide our decisions for our future. Recently, you have probably heard or read about one aspect of this process: The Church Assessment Tool (CAT). This tool will provide a clearer picture of who we are as a church and what directions might be important for our future. **Your response is very important to us.**

We want everyone involved here at SUMC (**16 and older**) to participate in the survey.

We ask that you take the on-line assessment as soon as possible, but **before Thursday, March 9.**

All answers are strictly anonymous. We have no way of matching any assessment to a particular person, so please feel free to candidly share your perceptions, opinions and experiences. The assessment will take approximately 30 minutes to complete. Please set aside enough time to complete the survey all at one time. Our future together is dependent on your participation and honest answers.

When you are ready, click on this link and begin. <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/SOLONUMC>
The link will also be available at the church website – soloniaumc.org – as well as on our Facebook page.

If you have questions, please contact one of the team members below.

Many thanks,

Dave Weetman 319-530-4987

Bill Musgrave 319-360-0712

Sue Wilkinson 319-321-1344



“God can bring peace to your past, purpose to your present, and hope to your future.”

-John 14:27

THE SUMC STICKLEY BENCH

Have you noticed the bench in the narthex? It has a story...

At some point in the last year, an old bench found its way to a mess of clutter in the back of the Wesley classroom in the Fellowship Hall, and it sat there in pieces for some time. During the Christmas Tree Walk, Barb Kalm grabbed my arm and led me to the Wesley classroom to show me the bench. In her usual cunning manor and convincing smile, she wondered if I could possibly repair the old bench. She was pretty sure it was from the earliest days of the church and hoped it might be restored and on display somewhere in the church.

I am a woodworker and have been all my life, but the last job I want is to repair, and especially refinish, an old piece of furniture. But this was God's work, so how could I say "No". A month or so later I went to the FLC to pick up the bench. Fortunately for me, some UMW women were in the Wesley room sewing and stuffing pillows, and Connie Railsback helped me carry the chair and its broken pieces to my car. I took it home to my workshop and got to work.

First, I made major repairs to a couple of parts on the backrest and refinished them, then reglued the legs and structural pieces on the underside of the bench. But when I turned the bench over to have better access, I noticed a sticker on the underside. Upon examination the first thing I saw was the name "Stickley and Brandt Chair Co, Binghamton, NY." I ran into the house very excitedly, shouting to Betsy, "Holy Cow, it's a Stickley! I'm not qualified to work on a Stickley!" Betsy was not impressed because she had never heard of Stickley. But at this point I had no choice. The pieces were in various stages of repair, so I had to continue, and the finished product is what you see in the narthex.

What about Stickley? There were 5 Stickley brothers, trained in furniture making by their father. Three of them opened the first furniture venture in 1884 called the Stickley Brothers Furniture Co. Charles left almost immediately and formed a company known as Stickley-Brandt Chair Co. in Binghamton NY. This company went out of business in 1919, a victim of WW I and the dying Arts and Crafts Market. Over the years the Stickley brothers formed 9 different companies, and today Stickley furniture can bring at auction thousands of dollars and is in high demand for anyone who dabbles in antique American furniture. There is a wide variation of today's value of a furniture piece depending on which brother built the piece in which factory.

My gut feeling about the bench: I think it was built in in Binghamton NY in approximately 1884, the same time the Solon Methodist was erected, and I feel that this bench was a fixture in the church when it first opened its doors.

My three-part challenge to you: 1. Locate the three major repairs on the bench. They are all visible from the front. 2. Rub your hand across the seat to feel the shape that Charles formed with his mallet and chisel. 3. Sit on the bench (carefully!) so you can report to your peers and siblings that you sat on a Stickley! You could also mention that it is 120-130 years old.

Paul Saupe



Finance Update

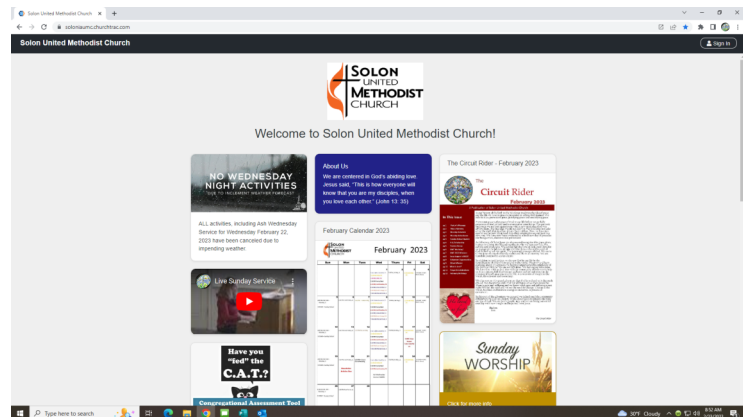
It is a slow process but SUMC members are beginning to establish online accounts at soloniaumc.churchtrac.com. Once you have an account set up, you can edit the details of your church membership and also see, at any time, a report on your giving to the church for the current year.

About 30% of the members who have automated giving have made the necessary switch from Vanco to Stripe, which is associated with our new ChurchTrac giving and accounting program.

All members who have established an online SUMC account can explore signing up for automated giving through Stripe. Just click on the 'Online Giving - click Here' line in the Donate box on the home page of the SUMC website and continue on from there. Our church treasurer, Ivan Hasselbusch, has developed a procedure describing the steps to be taken. If you would like to have a copy, drop an email to Ivan at ihasselbusch@soloniaumc.org and he will provide you with one.



Your All-In-One Church Software.



Planning Ahead: April Showers



You know the saying...while this shower is a little different but can have the same flowery outcome. Let's 'shower' the church with love and gifts this April! It may be a bit early, but Spring is on the way and is such an exciting time of year. See the list of items below and if able donate an item or two.

We'll have a table set up in Fellowship Hall after Spring Break to start collecting items. We appreciate your donations!

Examples of Items to donate:

- Small paper dessert plates
- Prepackaged snacks
- Napkins for fellowship
- Posit It Notes
- 12 pack of Crayons
- Plastic Table Cloths
- Glue Sticks
- Retractable pens

Confirmation

Carol & I have thoroughly enjoyed the experience of leading the confirmation class. Using the "Confirm" book, we've had great discussions on Church history & traditions, and shared some of our life experiences & understanding related to Scripture.

Our hope is that they will continue to foster & nurture a personal relationship with God through Jesus Christ so that their journey is one of assurance, reliance, & trust.

We also encourage them to use their unique gifts, talents, and abilities in shining God's light out into the Community and World.

They've recently helped out with our soup supper & have actively participated in our 2/26 8:00am worship service.

Here are the upcoming dates to be aware of:

3/1 Confirmation Class

3/8 Confirmation Class

3/15 NO CLASS

3/22 Confirmation Class

3/26 CONFIRMATION SUNDAY!!!!



As well, here are some additional service opportunities for them:

4/5. (WED) Help with Easter Egg Hunt

4/9 (SUN). Help with Easter Breakfast

Ongoing – They can sign up on any Sunday to help out in the Church Service or with Sunday School

MISSIONS WEEK: June 26-30 Solon's Christian youth will be helping residents in Cedar Rapids during Transformation Week.

- If possible, please block off these days as it'll be a great time for fellowship and in helping our neighbors in need.

Please reach out if you have any questions:

Blessings,

Phil and Carol

Spring Break Office Hours/Activities



**Solon Spring Break is
March 10th through
March 18th.**

There will be NO Sunday School on Sunday March 12th.

There will be NO Family Meal and no Youth Activities on Wednesday March 15th.

The Church office will only be open on Monday March 13th and Thursday March 16th due to Spring Break week.

We hope that everyone is able to take time to enjoy some downtime with their family and friends during this time!

Mission: Olivet Neighborhood Mission

During the past few week's we have collected candy, made cookies and valentines to be used in the creation of Valentine Plates. On Monday, February 13, 12 women met in fellowship hall to build the plates.

A total of 181 plates were made for distribution!!!



Special THANK YOU
to Mary Hunt,
Connie Koeppen,
and Cathy Boggs
who created the
Valentine's cards!

Those sharing in the opportunity to serve others by creating these plates were: Verlee, Deb, Yvonne, Mary, Connie K, Connie R, Barb, Nadine, Jeannie, Julie, Dee and Jan. Perhaps you will be able to join in the fun next time, we would love to have you!

On Tuesday, February 14, the Valentine Plates were delivered to Olivet Neighborhood Mission by Connie and Verlee. In addition to the plates 10 valentine cards were signed and presented to the volunteers at the mission. Connie had the opportunity to distribute some of the plates directly to their clients. They were SO EXCITED to be remembered on a day celebrating love to everyone.



This completes our outreach to this mission at this time. Thanks to all that contributed to the **FOUR car loads of products** to those less fortunate than us.



Please see this Thank You that we received from Julie Palmer, Director of Olivet Neighborhood Mission:

*Hi Connie,
Please rely to your group of volunteers how much the Valentine's plate of goodies were appreciated!
Olivet's clients so appreciated your loving-kindness! The smiles it brought to people's faces was priceless!
Thank you so much!*

SUMC Annual Soup Supper held Feb. 17th

The February 17 Soup Supper held in the Fellowship Hall was a big success. Leo Shima serenaded local and regional diners as they feasted on Oyster, Chicken Noodle and Chili Soup and homemade desserts, and Norma Novak's Coconut Cream Pie was in high demand. Proceeds from the meal were reported to be in the \$1,000.00 range.



THANK YOU!

*Thank you to ALL who volunteered their time to prepare and work the soup supper.
Thank you to ALL who donated baked goods, provided monetary donations and supply donations. This was the first Soup Supper that SUMC has held since COVID and it was great to have the tradition alive again.*

UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

The UWF will meet March 1 at 1:30 in the Fellowship Hall, and Julie Kessler has the lesson, "Respect is the Key to Success." Hostesses are Connie Railsback and Norma Novak. Bingo is 3/16 at the Solon Care Center at 1:45 with Cookies supplied by Julie K and Denise Gregor.

Interested in joining? Contact Shirley Anderson, swanderson@southslope.net or Barb Kalm, dbjkalm@centurylink.net



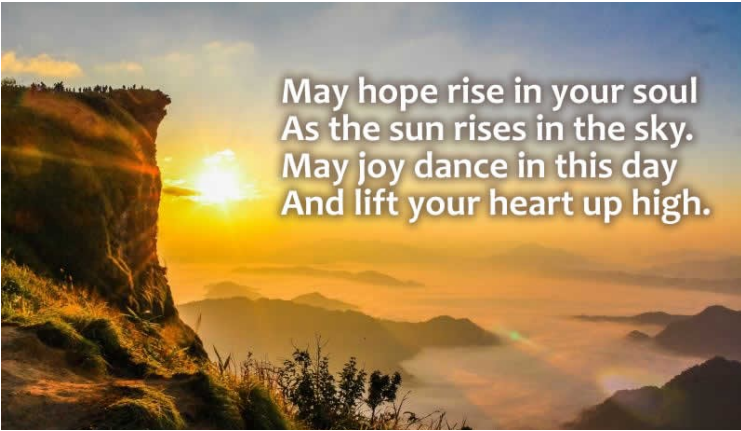
UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

UNITED METHODIST MEN

Join us every Saturday morning at 6:00 am in the Fellowship Hall. We continue to meet every Saturday morning at 6 AM in fellowship hall. Breakfast is prepared the first Saturday of the month and we focus on the Upper Room ministry for our discussions.

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





May hope rise in your soul
As the sun rises in the sky.
May joy dance in this day
And lift your heart up high.



Confirmation Sunday
will be held on
Sunday March 26th
at the
9:30 AM Service.



Since Easter is right around the corner, we are planning a fun Easter event. On April 5th, right after the Wednesday Night Family Meal, we will be having an **EASTER EGG HUNT!**

This event will take place at 6:30 over in the garden area at the FLC. Please bring your friends, and we would love to see you all there!!

Permanent Endowment Scholarship

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

DEADLINE is APRIL 15th!



LAST NIGHT OF WEDNESDAY NIGHT ACTIVITIES: APRIL 26TH

JOIN US FOR A COOKOUT! WEATHER PENDING, WE'LL EAT OUTSIDE, ENJOY GAMES AND MUSIC AND FELLOWSHIP AS WE CLOSE THE 2022 SCHOOL YEAR ACTIVITIES! MARK YOUR CALENDARS!



PRAYERS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

In Our Prayers.

The Elaine Willis family---Elaine recently passed away.
Summer Brand---Her Hodgkin's lymphoma has returned.
Brother-in-law and family in Ukraine---their city was bombed, but they are ok.
Randy---facing surgery.
Our nation.
14-year-old great niece admitted to hospital because cancer treatment caused low blood count
Natalie (and especially for doctors as they continue to search for a diagnosis).
Rev. Dennis Tevis, former Pastor here, suffered a stroke and passed away in February.
Ron Puettmann's Mother, health Concerns.
Mary Kucera, daughter-in-law's Grandmother is in hospice.
Nicols Family, who lost their cat of 19 years.
Julia Woessner's brother-in-law who has had 3 surgeries in one week.
Sarah, 18 year old who has cancer.
Brent who is battling cancer.
Rocco and Janelle's daughter Cindy who was diagnosed with cancer.
President Jimmy Carter who was recently placed in hospice care.

Bruce who has stage 4 cancer.
Ukraine and Russia war.
Kelly and Phillip who are dealing with an enormous amount of stress.
Al Hulse who is battling Pneumonia.
Logan Wolf as he recovers from a snowmobile accident.
Jake as he recovers from an organ transplant.
Clay who has stage 4 cancer.
Gary Mechtensteimer who was recently hospitalized.
Travel mercies for sports teams and their families.
Solon Archery and Solon Basketball teams.

Joys & Celebrations

Congratulations to Keela Herr and Alan Harrington on the birth of their first grandson, Simeon Tayte Harrington, on January 9th!
Fred Mally has graduated hospice care, please continue to pray for his health!
Solon Girls Basketball on their bid to State.
Those who helped with the soup supper on the 17th, we appreciate you all!
Thanks to the Confirmands for helping with worship!
Thanks to Connie Railsback for giving the kitchen and Fellowship Hall floors a deep clean!

March Birthdays

Sherman, Caroline	03/01
Evans, Lisa	03/02
Kakacek, Tawnia	03/04
Ruff, Abigail	03/05
Connelly, Kent	03/06
Johnson, Jude	03/07
Lindemann, Jerry	03/07
Folkerts, Matthew	03/09
Sargent, Emily	03/09
Deike, Brynn	03/11
Erhart, Wilbur	03/13
Feldkamp, Kellie	03/13
Moses, Grant	03/13
Janssen, Jillian	03/17
Noska, Loren	03/17
Wheeler, Tyson	03/17
Strang, Tracy	03/18
Wilkinson, Joe	03/18
Cady, Deb	03/19
Richards, Carol	03/25
Feldkamp, Lary	03/26
Tiedemann, Kate	03/27
Koeppen, Connie	03/28

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.

MARCH CIRCUIT RIDER

Return Service Requested

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

Rev. Ken Ferguson, Lead Minister
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
**No Sunday School March 12th*

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

Instagram: @soloniaumc