



The CIRCUIT RIDER

JANUARY 2024

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A Monthly Publication of Solon United Methodist Church

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I am excited to have celebrated our first Advent and Christmas together! There have been many things to learn, many challenges, and many joys. I am blessed to be serving in your midst, and to be getting to know all of you! The children performed their simple Christmas pageant both at the Retirement Village, and before our Wednesday Christmas dinner. I listened to several of our musicians sing with the joint Christmas cantata with other United Methodist churches in the circuit, and I enjoyed the candlelight services on Christmas Eve.

I am grateful for the many wonderful volunteers and staff we have, including now Dee Swartzendruber who is shifting from volunteer to staff as she begins as our Christian Education Director. She has shown initiative, creativity, commitment and enthusiasm as she has worked with our afterschool program and Sunday school as a volunteer. I hope you will join me in welcoming Dee to her new role!

After the waiting and preparing of Advent, and then the celebrations and gatherings of Christmas, we may come into the new year weary, or maybe let down a bit, or maybe breathing a sigh of relief. I invite us to take some time for joy, play, rest, and creativity. I have chosen to use the general outline of a worship series from Marcia McFee, who supports many churches with worship planning ideas.

This worship series is Drawn In: Living the Creative Life with God. We often spend too much time being "driven" rather than "drawn in." We focus on what we "should" do rather than what we feel excited and compelled to do in our lives, in this world. During this series, we will connect with our inherent creativity and nurture this foundational aspect of being human, giving us renewed energy for passionate work, delightful play, and creative problem solving to make this world a better place for all.

We'll start with a celebration of Epiphany, when we remember the story of the wise men, who studied the stars and the scriptures, and dreamed of meeting this newborn messiah and king, Jesus. Then we'll step back and see if there are ways we want to hover—to pause and step back to see the big picture, and remind ourselves where our joy and our values lie. Then we'll imagine what we might be willing to risk to follow a dream or to explore something new. Then we'll reflect on listening to the Holy Spirit in the midst of creative projects and joint tasks. The series will continue through the first two weeks of February, up until Lent.

Sometime in January, we also hope to welcome several new members to our church!

Many blessings for a new year of growing in faith and reaching out in mission!

Pastor Peggy

**HAPPY
NEW
YEAR**

Music Ministry

Worship SCHEDULE

Happy New Year!

I hope everyone had a wonderful buildup to Christmas. For musicians, it is a time of joy, frantic rehearsals, stress, and love. Extra rehearsals and extra music. A little extra of everything.

I had the joy of accompanying the Treasure Seekers sing at the Solon Care Center as well as on a Wednesday evening before dinner. Bell Choir played beautiful pieces at a Sunday service. Chancel Choir sang at two Sunday services and then sang at both Christmas Eve services.

Five members of the Chancel Choir (including myself), participated in a circuit-wide concert at First United Methodist Church in Iowa City. We had 5 rehearsals and then a concert on a Friday night. The music was a collection of Christmas pieces arranged by John Rutter set into a Lessons and Carols. It was nice to see some members of SUMC at our concert! What a treat!

As you can imagine, all of these activities took a lot of work, extra rehearsals, and a lot of planning. However, the joy of the season makes it all worth it. It is a time when we all come together to create beautiful music together. And that is what brings love. The love we have for each other and for what we do.

I look forward to bringing the joy and love from Christmas-time into the new year. January will also give us moments for beautiful music. We will have music by the Chancel Choir on the first and third Sundays, the bells will be ringing on the second Sunday, and Cathy Boggs will be singing a wonderful solo on the fourth Sunday.

Wishing you a wonderful start to 2024 with many moments of love and joy!

Angie



January Worship Series

**Drawn In: Living the Creative
Life with God**

January 7-Epiphany & Communion

Scripture: Matthew 2:1-12

Drawn in to Dream

January 14

Scripture: Luke 4:1-13

Drawn in to Hover

January 21

Scripture: Mark 1:14-20

Drawn in to Risk

January 28

Scripture: Acts 16:6-15

Drawn in to Listen

We spend too much time being “driven” rather than “drawn in.” We focus on what we “should” do rather than what we feel excited and compelled to do in our lives, in this world. During this series, we will connect with our inherent creativity and nurture this foundational aspect of being .

WORSHIP ATTENDANCE

	9:00 AM	5:30PM	TOTAL
DECEMBER 3	83		
DECEMBER 10	100		
DECEMBER 17	73		
DECEMBER 24	40		
DECEMBER 24	115	102	217

Blessed are those who dwell in your house; they are ever praising you.
-Psalms 84:4

Come

WORSHIP
WITH US

SUNDAYS
9 AM

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

The Staff Parish Relations Committee is excited to announce that Dee Swartzendruber, long term member of Solon UMC, has just been hired as our new part-time Christian Education Director. She has been putting in many volunteer hours already helping to lead our Treasure Seekers program, and as a Sunday school teacher. We are excited to have her join our staff.

Greetings from the Swartzendruber household. My name is Dee Swartzendruber. I am excited to be the new Christian Education Director. My husband Roger and I have called the Solon area our home for over 30 years. We have been members of this church for over 25 years. We have two grown sons, Alex, and Eric. We also have a four-year-old granddaughter, Bessie. At this church I have been involved in Sunday school, fundraising, children's activities, and last year I joined the choir. I am currently working with our afterschool program, the Treasure Seekers. I am looking forward to bringing new energy to our education program. With the new year upon us I look forward to working with all the volunteers that make all our education programs possible.

May all of you have a blessed new year!

Dee Swartzendruber

deeswartz@soloniaumc.org



ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL

Adult Sunday School meets each Sunday morning following worship at 10:15 AM in the Wesley Classroom in the lower level of our Family Life Center. All are welcome to join in!



For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, so that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope.

Romans 15:4

Trustee Update

I wish to send out a big thank-you and ongoing appreciation to the Trustees Committee, church leadership and supportive members of our committee's purpose to maintain and provide capital improvements to the church facilities!

The trustees committee members provide many talents, expertise and forward thinking with their ideas. All the members serve because they believe in this church and care for providing the best service to it's members for today and for the future. The following is a list of completed projects over the past five years:

- renovation of the Christian education rooms, ceilings, hallways and new tables/chairs
- renovation of the nursery and event room in the FH basement
- renovation of the offices of the church admin, Christian ed leader and sec/treasurer
- renovation of the front entry ramp and narthex
- renovation of the sanctuary stage/lighting and addition of the audio/video platform
- installed new camera and sound system in the sanctuary
- installed high speed internet, new office PC's and phone system
- repair of the FLC foundation drainage issue
- replaced the garden shed and its landscaping
- installed new FH and sanctuary windows
- renovation of the kitchen island
- purchased new kitchen stove, new refrigerator for FH
- installed new fire alarm system in the FLC
- installed big screen TV in the FH
- replaced the exterior double doors in the FLC gym
- replaced 5 HVAC units in the church
- replaced the parsonage deck and water heater
- installed heat cables on the church entry roof and gutters for snow and ice
- removed five dead trees from church and parsonage property
- replaced church and FH roof after the derecho
- repaired the sanctuary quilter's window
- installed radon system in the parsonage
- install of pickleball courts in the FLC gym



Thank you 😊

Special thanks goes to those that volunteered to help with the Christian education renovation and removal of the cabinets and desks from the old high school and carrying into the FH basement, teardown activity needed for the start of the renovation projects and the sanctuary stage & A/V platform renovation work along with the camera and sound system oversight. Same for the removal of the dead trees and providing the equipment. Same for the offices renovation and design work.

Special thanks also goes out to all who volunteer their expertise and labor for planting and maintaining church, parsonage and garden plants/flowers and landscaping. Same to all added volunteer help for needed FLC gym floor and church/FH cleaning. Also for those that volunteer their expertise to operate the sanctuary A/V sound equipment.

Finally to Al Hulse for his continued expertise and repair work when needed for lighting, electrical needs, bathrooms, FH chairs, church doors/locks, getting keys made, plumbing church fire extinguishers, church fire alarms and parsonage upkeep needs.

I apologize for any projects I may have missed and again a heartfelt thanks and blessings for all supporting this church! I am leaving the trustees committee after six years of serving and am confident the existing members will continue to do a great job!

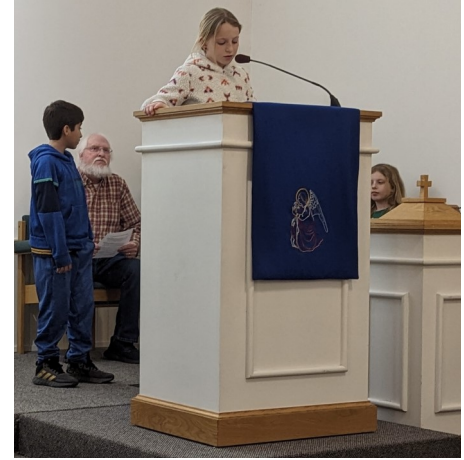
Peace be with you,

Paul Miller- Chairperson of the Trustees

CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

Our after school program, Treasure Seekers, kicked off our Wednesday night Christmas activities with their Christmas Pageant! The children did a wonderful job leading and performing while showcasing some of the things they have learned here at SUMC. It was a wonderful pageant!

Children, thank you for sharing your gifts!



Wednesday Night Activities including TREASURE SEEKERS, FAMILY MEAL and YOUTH GROUP will all resume on Wednesday January 3rd!

WEDNESDAY NIGHT CHRISTMAS DINNER

With donations from both the Wesley Class and United Women in Faith we were able to provide the Christmas Community Dinner on December 20 free of any charge to the community. What a great outreach and sharing of the good news of Jesus birth!



CHRISTMAS KALEIDOSCOPE 2023

The Annual Solon Tree Walk, renamed this year to the Christmas Kaleidoscope, was held on Saturday December 2nd in our Family Life Center. There was a Makers Market, Bake Sale, Craft Sale, Tree Display, Luncheon, Silent Auction, and Mr. Claus even made an appearance. It was a wonderful day with lots of visitors and lots of smiles. Thank you to ALL who played a part in making this event a success. Whether you donated cookie dough, crafts, made a gift basket for the auction, helped with chickin' pickin', ran the cash register, manned the sale tables or helped set up or tear down—we appreciate every one of you and the time you put in to help! Save the date for our 2024 event on Saturday December 7th!

Photo Credit to the Solon Economist –thank you to the Economist for their coverage of the event!



COINS IN THE OFFERING



Coins in the Offering mission account supported one family in need in North Liberty.

We worked with The Center for Worker Justice of Eastern Iowa (CWJ). CWJ 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.

The family consisted of father, mother, two daughters and a son. They provided their Christmas list and we delivered gifts all wrapped and tagged. The father did not request any gifts. This family left their home in New York to get medical care for the youngest daughter (sitting) at the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics.

Thank you to Mary Richards and Jordan Railsback for helping with this delivery.



TOYS FOR TOTS



On December 11, **thanks to you, 30 toys valued at approximately \$540** were delivered to the Marine Corps Reserves Toys for Tots. These toys will be distributed to children whose parents cannot afford to buy them Christmas gifts.

Thanks for sharing your gifts to help others!

ST. LUKES NEWBORN HAT DONATION

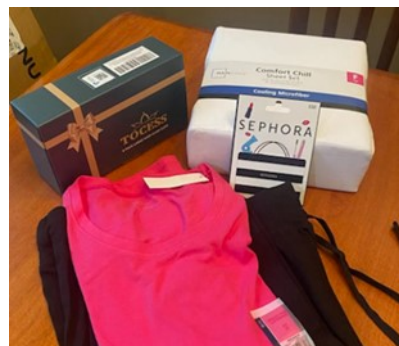
United Women in Faith created and delivered 15 newborn crocheted hats to St. Luke's Birthing Center on November 30. Thanks goes to Verlee Lauderbaugh!



ADOPT-A-FAMILY AT CHRISTMAS TIME!

United Women in Faith supported three families in need!

One family from right here in Solon. We worked with the Solon School System to help this family.



Two other families were helped out through Olivet Neighborhood Mission's Christmas Program where gifts are purchased for children ages 15 and under in a single family. We selected the size of family to sponsor, and we were given information about each child's age, gender, and clothing size, as well as gift ideas from their parents. We wrapped and labeled the gifts, then drop them off at the family's homes.

Special thank-you to Neil Webster for taking the pictures and driving Ruth Spieker, Nadine Sojka and Connie Koeppen around!



DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PROJECT

Donations of jewelry were made to the Domestic Violence Holiday Store Project: An annual holiday store to give survivors a chance to shop for free holiday gifts for their children and for children to shop for their parents.

Thanks to Jan Stock for her generosity.



RED SCARF PROJECT

Seamstress, crocheters and knitters in our church created 11 scarves for delivery to Foster Care to Success (FC2S). They will be sent as part of their Valentine's Day care packages to college and training program students who have experienced foster care.

Thanks to all those who to the time and loving care to create these scarves.

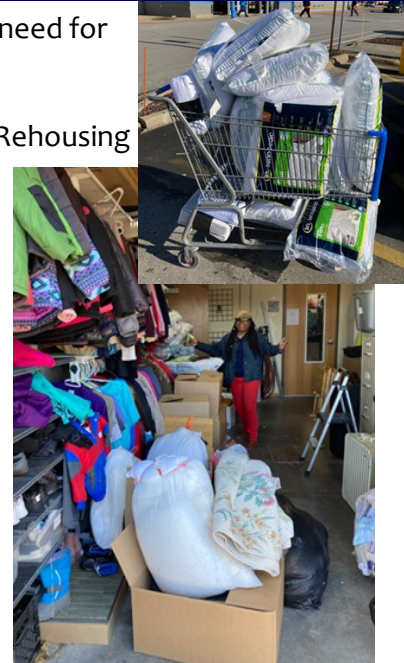


SHELTER HOUSE IOWA CITY

The Shelter House of Iowa City posted on their Facebook page that they had an urgent need for bedding supplies.

"It has been a record breaking two months of move-ins for this time of year. Our Rapid Rehousing work continues in earnest as we help folks move from shelter into their own apartments. During these cold months, we bring so many community members out of the cold: in Emergency Shelter, in Emergency Shelter Overflow, in Winter Emergency Shelter, and in the Emergency Shelter lobby during the days. This means that we are in extra need of pillows, blankets, and twin-sized sheets for our Winter Shelter program, and we are in urgent need for beds and mattresses for Rapid Rehousing."

Wesley Class sponsored the purchase of new items of bedding and others have donated slightly used bedding items. This resulted in THREE car loads of items delivered over the past two weeks. So much so that they are stopping deliveries until they can sort and organize what they currently have in their limited storage space!



BRIDGEHAVEN

United Women in Faith delivered layette sets to Bridgehaven for their new baby gifts. These sets contain a receiving blanket, bib, burp pad, hat and booties. Coleen Pumphrey and her friend continue to make these sets for our delivery to this worthwhile organization.

A little background on this organization:

- Since 1983, Bridgehaven Pregnancy Support Center has offered compassion, hope, and help in the circumstances before, during, and after pregnancy in the Cedar Rapids area. They serve both women and men and our services are always free and confidential.
- Bridgehaven's Mission is to empower choices for life through Christ-centered education and support.
- Core values are Christ-centered, spiritually and scripturally-grounded, client-focused, and life-honoring.
- Bridgehaven believes in the sanctity of human lives.



WOMEN IN FAITH AND UNITED METHODIST MEN

UWF delivered 33 treat bags to the Willis Dady Homeless Shelter for men on December 22!



WOMEN IN FAITH (UMW)

The UWF Christmas Potluck was well attended! Phyllis offered the adult Advent program and the UWF officers were hostesses.

The UWF will not meet in January, with the next meeting the first Wednesday in February at 1:30 PM in Fellowship Hall.



UNITED METHODIST MEN



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

If you would like to attend, call Mike Turner at (319)624-2061.

FIND YOUR SPOT!

Our church is in need of reinvigoration and restoration. In accomplishing this goal, we need you! One way to help is to take the opportunity to be involved. We have so many opportunities. Many do not take much time but spiritually lifts you and the church. Be the energy you want to attract!

Find your opportunities in: Board of Trustees, Staff Parish Relations, Finance, Missions, Nominations, Christian Education Committee, Sanctuary Team, Care Committee...

If interested, please contact Pastor Peggy or email the church office at soloniaumc@gmail.com



Below is the current list of staff and committee members for 2024. If you would like more information on different open positions please contact Pastor Peggy or the church office!

2024 LEADERSHIP SOLON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

STAFF		BOARD OF TRUSTEES		
Lead Minister	Peggy Garrigues	<u>12/31/2024</u>	<u>12/31/2025</u>	<u>12/31/2026</u>
Music Director	Angie Grecian-Bransky	Mike Turner	Kris Kucera	Al Hulse
Christian Education Director	Dee Swartzendruber	Dolfi Kalm	Jill Weetman	OPEN
Office Administrator	Lindy Hopp	STAFF-PARISH RELATIONS COMMITTEE		
Director of Hand Bells	Mary Kucera	<u>12/31/2024</u>	<u>12/31/2025</u>	<u>12/31/2026</u>
Treasurer	Ivan Hasselbusch	OPEN	OPEN	OPEN
Custodian	Ruben Galvan	OPEN	OPEN	OPEN
Security	Lisa Hilton	FINANCE COMMITTEE		
Nursery Supervisor	Lindy Hopp	<u>12/31/2024</u>	<u>12/31/2025</u>	<u>12/31/2026</u>
		Dave Weetman	Cathy Boggs	OPEN
		OPEN	Justin Schmidt	OPEN
		Treasurer Ivan Hasselbusch		
CHURCH COUNCIL		COMMITTEE ON LAY LEADERSHIP (Formerly NOMINATIONS)		
Chairperson, Church Council	Nancy Worrell	<u>12/31/2024</u>	<u>12/31/2025</u>	<u>12/31/2026</u>
Lay Leader	Phil Kakacek	OPEN	OPEN	OPEN
Lay Member(s), Annual Conference	Phil Kakacek	PERMANENT ENDOWMENT FUND COMMITTEE		
Council Secretary	Keela Herr	<u>12/31/2024</u>	<u>12/31/2025</u>	<u>12/31/2026</u>
		OPEN	OPEN	OPEN
Administrative Committee Chairpersons		Chairperson, Trustees OPEN		
		Chairperson, Staff-Parish Relations Dave Weetman		
		Chairperson, Finance OPEN		
		Chairperson, Nominations OPEN		
		Chairperson, Perm Endowment Kris Kucera		
Program Committee Chairpersons		Chairperson, Perm Endowment Kris Kucera		
		<i>Finance Committee Representative: Ivan Hasselbusch</i>		
Worship Planning Team	Tawnia Kakacek	CHRISTIAN EDUCATION COMMITTEE		
Missions	OPEN	Dee Swartzendruber	Jill Weetman	Allison Roe
Education	Dee Swartzendruber	Jen Hawks	Amanda Vollbrecht	
Membership Secretary	Alan Harrington	WELCOMING MINISTRY		MEALS MINISTRY
President, United Methodist Men	Mike Turner	Norma Novak		OPEN
Pres. Women In Faith	Shirley Anderson & Barb Kalm	Care Committee:		
		Ron Puettman	Melody Morris,	
		Connie Koeppe		
NOMINATIONS		Sanctuary Team:		
<u>12/31/2024</u>	<u>12/31/2025</u>	<u>12/31/2026</u>	<u>12/31/2024</u>	<u>12/31/2025</u>
OPEN	OPEN	OPEN	<u>12/31/2026</u>	OPEN
MISSIONS MINISTRY TEAM		<u>12/31/2024</u>	<u>12/31/2025</u>	<u>12/31/2026</u>
<u>12/31/2024</u>	<u>12/31/2025</u>	<u>12/31/2026</u>	OPEN	Joyce Cook
Angie Grecian-Bransky	OPEN	OPEN	OPEN	Julia Woessner
Joel Johnson	OPEN	OPEN	OPEN	Tawnia Kakacek

**Some changes may not be fully noted.*

PRAYERS AND CELEBRATIONS

In Our Prayers

Celie – Sue Wilkinson’s son-in-law’s mother, who was recently diagnosed with breast cancer.

The Stodola family, after Scott Nicol’s nephew Mark Stodola died recently.

Erin Whitfield, Lisa and Don Evans daughter, who is serving in the Navy in the Middle East, Erin’s husband Tyler, also in the Navy.

Safety for all of those travelling during the holidays.

Julia Woessner lifts up prayers for all the college students going into the time of final exams.

Hostages who have been released and their families. And all those who are still hostages.

Peace somehow to become more possible in the Middle East.

General prayers for our world.

Maureen, a friend of Deb Ruff, having back surgery.

Dee and Alyssa, also friends of Deb who has breast cancer.

Greg, brother-in-law of Sue Wilkinson, recovering from a shoulder replacement.

Darcy’s uncle Johnny Burns is going into a nursing care, her Aunt will be alone.

Liz Petrie—who recently had a kidney transplant.

Mary Gruber has kidney stones.

Kay Geguzis—one daughter-in-law having colon surgery related to cancer, another daughter-in-law having sinus surgery.

People with dementia, and those facing health issues as they grow older.

Darcy Miller had a shoulder replacement on , which went well. She is recuperating at her daughter’s house.

Kay Geguzis’ daughter-in-law, Kim, as she awaits results after surgery..

Dena Reynolds asks for prayers for Kirk’s mom, who needs comfort and hope.

For all of those impacted by the tornadoes in Tennessee. Marian’s sister lives a block away from where one hit.

For all those still suffering in Gaza and Israel.

Peace somehow to become more possible in the Middle East.

Families of those killed, and all impacted by shooting in Nevada.

Continued prayers for the Tritle’s daughter-in-law Jessica and her family, as Jessica faces her terminal illness.

Ruth Ann Richards is in the hospital for bleeding issues.

Jeanne and Wilbur Erhart’s son Wyatt had a mild heart attack.

Scott Nicol asked for additional prayers for Charles and Sue Whetstine—Scott has cancer, and broke his arm this past week, Sue is having serious back pain, fortunately their children live nearby.

Larry Meister’s daughter Julie as she recovers from a medical procedure.

Continued Prayers of comfort for Denise Brotherton and her family, after the death of her husband Mike Brotherton.

Continued prayers for strength for Sue Wilkinson’s niece, Matea, whose husband has just been called into active service away from the family, and they have a young child, Zair. She also shared a joy that Zair just had a successful ear surgery that has greatly improved his speech.

Bob Gilroy requested prayers for all who are in military service, especially those serving far from home during the holidays.

Peace somehow to become more possible in the Middle East, in the Ukraine, and around the world.

Dee Swartzendruber lifted up prayers for our church, and for her work with the education programs as she begins work as a staff member.

Rejoices & Thanksgiving

Pastor Peggy’s mom recovering well after surgery

Pastor Peggy gives thanks for Phil Kakacek and Jill Mack preaching for her the two Sundays she was gone.

Successful Christmas Kaleidoscope, with many people attending, and many dedicated volunteers!

For the music that Todd Bransky and Angie Grecian-Bransky offer to our congregation, along with all of the musicians at our church.

Dee Swartzendruber lifts up joy for the energy of the young people here.

Kay Geguzis is grateful that both of her daughters-in-law came through their surgeries well.



Hofsommer, Randy	01/03
Kerkove, Janelle	01/04
Ryan, Jackson	01/05
Crossley, Alice	01/06
Cusick, Ben	01/06
Grecian, Judy	01/06
Landuyt, Emma	01/06
Lauderbaugh, Arnie	01/08
Morris, Melody	01/10
Bark, Fred	01/12
Deike, John	01/13
McFarland, John	01/14
Richards, Kate	01/15
Ryan, Tia	01/15
Smith, Jodi	01/15
Locke, Alex	01/16
Herdliiska, Payton	01/18
Hofsommer, Greg	01/20
Owen, Jaden	01/20
Richards, Tess	01/21
Feldkamp, lola	01/24
Proffitt, Rachel	01/25
Turner, Kim	01/27
Miller, Debbie	01/30



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 in the pew and place it in the offering plate during worship. If you would like to add your prayer request to our church-wide prayer chain, please call the church office at (319) 624-2288, or email us with your request.

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

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

**Welcome
Connect
ignite
Love**



Sunday Schedule
9:00 AM—Worship
9:00 AM —Sunday School
10:15 AM —Adult Sunday School

Church Phone: (319) 624-2288
Address: 122 North West St., Solon, IA 52333
Website: <https://soloniaumc.churchtrac.com/>
Facebook: Solon United Methodist Church—Iowa
Instagram: soloniaumc