



Circuit Rider

May 2023

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A Monthly Publication of Solon United Methodist Church

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My Friends,

Tradition speaks of April showers and how they will bring May flowers. Of course, in the midst of this is the passionate search for the magic of the morel. In either case they are a part of our Lord's loving garden come the season of spring. A visible and palpable treat for our senses which awakens in so many ways. For me personally, I have enjoyed the coming of the morel to the blue-bell flower of the forest. Such beauty rolling through the meadows to the ridge of the forest.

As I was remembering this in my heart, I came across a sister of the faith from years ago. She was a Carmelite Nun from the 19th century. Known by some as 'The Little Flower' she is also known as 'Saint Therese of Lisieux.' Within the classic book Story of a Soul, she wrote:

"I understand that every flower created by Him is beautiful, that the brilliance of the rose and the whiteness of the lily do not lessen the perfume of the violet...if only the lowly flowers wished to be roses, nature would lose its springtime beauty, and the fields would no longer be enameled with lovely hues. And so it is with the world of souls. Our Lord's living garden. He has been pleased to create great saints who may be compared to the lily and the rose, but He has also created lesser ones, who must be content to be daisies or simple violets flowering at His feet."

So today, tomorrow, this week, and in all places in all of time embrace the beauty of the variety nature gives. Not only the variety we see in the meadows and forests, but in our cities, towns, villages and neighborhoods. The God of creation has placed us in the midst of an awesome and remarkable place. His living garden bursting with wonder and color and beauty.

Take that next step my brothers and sisters. Look over there. A field of bluebell flowers, and over there is a bed of roses! And again, I see the beauty of the dandelions in my yard. Yes, the dandelion is beautiful no matter what some might say. Open your heart and eyes and souls. Our Lord has indeed given us a beautiful garden.

Shalom
Ken



LET US NOT LOVE
IN WORD OR TALK,
BUT IN DEED
AND IN TRUTH.

1 JOHN 3:18

Music Ministry

In April, Pastor Ken's sermon talked about believing even though we cannot see. That's what the disciples did when they heard of the resurrection. It is what we are called to do as well. Pastor Ken told a funny story of a boy complaining that all he hears about is "Jesus and germs, Jesus and germs" - yet he can't see either of them! To go along with that message, here is a funny children's song written by Dan Lee-Archer and David Wakerley.

I Cannot See Him with My Eyeballs

Verse 1:

We trust things every day, in every single way
 Whether sitting in a chair or in a taxi
 We hope the chair won't break and the taxi driver stays awake
 And that pimple cream will get rid of my acne

Pre-Chorus:

'Cause if I can trust in all these things
 Then here's something profound
 I put my faith much more in God
 Who has never let me down

Chorus:

I've got faith in the God of the Bible
 I'm trusting what He says is reliable
 There's confidence deep below
 A conviction even though
 I cannot see Him with my eyeballs

Verse 2:

I don't find it hard to trust, that when I board a bus
 It will take me to my desired destination
 It won't take me to my Aunt's, or to the south of France
 I really don't have time for a vacation
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I loved the "eyeballs" wording. I have known many children who say that rather than their "eyes" and it always makes me laugh. I hope you enjoyed it too!

Music this month:

- May 7th - Chancel Choir sings a favorite, "King of Kings"
- May 14th - Chancel Choir sings our traditional piece for Mother's Day, "Song of Ruth"
- May 21st - Bells play

Angie Grecian-Bransky



Worship Schedule

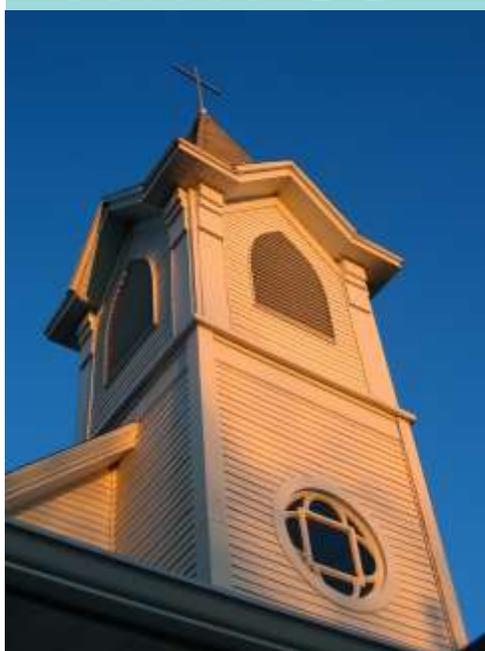
May 7 - Communion
 Scripture: Hebrews 12:1-12
 Take A Step
 By Ryan Christenson

May 14 - **Mother's Day**
 Scripture: John 14:15-21
 The Advocate
 by Ken Ferguson

May 21—Graduation Sunday
 Scripture: John 17:1-11
 Our Loving God
 by Pastor Ken

May 28
 Scripture: John 7:37-39
 The Living Water
 by Pastor Ken

worship
 WITH US



APRIL WORSHIP ATTENDANCE

		8:00 AM	9:30 AM	Total
Palm Sunday	April 2	55	35	90
Maundy Thursday	April 6	-	-	40
Easter Sunday	April 9	45	127	172
	April 16	43	42	85
	April 23	30	31	61



Easter Breakfast -He is Risen Indeed!



Wow. What a wonderful Easter breakfast we had! Thanks to all who donated, setup, prepared, served, and cleaned to make this such a wonderful morning! It was wonderful to have so many youth involved in the bustling kitchen!

For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in the midst of them.

~Matthew 18:20



Easter Breakfast -He is Risen Indeed!



"The great gift of Easter is hope."

-Basil Hume



SUMC will be holding the 2nd Annual Bake Sale during the City-Wide garage sales on Saturday, June 3rd from 7am – 1pm.

This year we'll be under the entry canopy of the library. We will be offering free coffee/lemonade with any purchase!

We would appreciate donations of baked goods for this event, see the clipboard to sign up!

Stop out while you are shopping and enjoy a treat to show your support!



April

- Sent 13 Starbucks gift cards to college students studying for finals.
- Collected monetary donations and items for Personal Dignity Kits for Turkey/Syrian people devastated by earthquakes.

May

- We will collect donations for the Youth Mission trip occurring in June. Stay tuned for more information in the bulletin on Sundays/via email!



SUMC Garden

The SUMC Vegetable garden has been a huge producer in years past! All of the produce we grow is then donated to the Solon Food Pantry or to Solon Senior Citizens.

If you would like to help with the garden or have items to donate, please contact Karen at the phone number or email below. We are always looking for more volunteers to help out.!

In late June thru September, we will need help picking the produce to give to the Food Pantry. Help is always welcome anytime whether you want to help one time or weekly.

If anyone is interested in helping with the vegetable garden or has questions, please contact Karen McGill at kmcgill787@gmail.com or 319-329-4578.



April Showers at SUMC!



Every April we try to 'shower' the church with a little love in donations for items that we use here daily. This year you all showed up in great bounds, thank you! So much more was donated than what is shown in this picture. From stamps, multiple packs of toilet paper and canisters of coffee to plates and cups for fellowship.

Every donation, no matter how small, makes a difference. THANK YOU for supporting SUMC and making it rain this April!



A BIG
thank
you



Thank you to the **Richards Family** for your selfless service in organizing, shopping for, cooking and serving Wednesday Night Meals.

You are a wonderful example for all and we appreciate you!

We want to also thank the many other volunteers that jumped in each week to make Family Meal a success. Teamwork makes the dream work!



Graduation Sunday

SUMC will hold our Annual Graduation Sunday, including our Senior Slide Show, on Sunday May 21st at the 9:30 AM Worship Service.

Please plan to come and encourage our graduating seniors as they celebrate their accomplishments and look toward the next chapter in their lives.



The Trustees are foregoing the traditional Spring Clean Up Day and instead challenging church goers to help spruce up the church grounds on their own! We have already had a number of Trustees and members step up to take care of some projects but there are few left and they are noted below. Any of these tasks may be completed on your schedule, at your own pace. If you have questions you may contact the church or Trustee Chair, Paul Miller. Thank you for supporting SUMC!

- Plant flowers on west side of the FH
- Rake up/pick up branches on the FLC open lot west of the church facility
- Dust the pews of the sanctuary



Paul Miller, SUMC Trustee Chair
319-430-2859



Nothing can change God's love for you.

YOUTH *Mission* TRIP

Calling all people who want to SERVE others and be the hands, feet, and heart of Christ can come together for Transform Week June 26th - 30th.

During this week, those interested will meet at the SUMC in the morning, go to Cedar Rapids, and be a part of the mission's work through prearranged connections with people to work on various housing and construction projects. Volunteer for a day or the whole week. You will be a vital part of the transformation!

Here is a [register now under SOLON SERVANTS](#). We will plan to meet at SUMC in the mornings. Lunch will be provided. Then return in the afternoon.

Contact Carol Ann Richards for more information. 319-541-1424.



First quarter giving statements have been e-mailed. If you did not receive one, please notify the church office. With ChurchTrac, each member now has the ability to view their giving statement at any time. To do this, access SUMC's website at <https://soloniaumc.churchtrac.com/> click on the 'Sign In' at the upper right and click on 'Create an account' on the next page. Once your account is established, you will be able to, amongst other things, view the current status of your year to date giving.

Some comments were received in the recently completed Congregational Assessment Tool survey about the lack of financial information available to church members. The following is a summarized report on the 2023 budget performance of the General Fund, the primary fund of the church that pays all of the expense of our programs and facilities.

General Fund Financial Performance:

	<u>January – March</u>	
	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget</u>
Giving	49,582	48,565
Other	<u>2,209</u>	<u>855</u>
Total Income	51,791	49,420
Expense	<u>58,801</u>	<u>65,259</u>
Net Result	(7,010)	(15,839)

This Finance Performance Table will be updated and posted in all future Circuit Riders to help ensure that the congregation is made fully aware of the church's financial state.

United Women in Faith—April Work Day

On Tuesday, April 11 members of the United Women in Faith met to create heart pillows. These pillows create comfort for those suffering from that disease. 185 pillows were created. We were able to distribute 50 pillows to Mercy Hospital Iowa City and 100 pillow to Hall-Perrine Cancer Center (Mercy Cedar Rapids).

We will be having another work day soon to create an additional 50 so that we can deliver 100 to Gilda's Club Quad Cities at Genesis Family Medical Center. Perhaps you will be able to join in the fun and fellowship? All are welcome!

Future date and time will be communicated in the church bulletin. Any questions or concerns please contact Connie Railsback, 319-430-9057.



Thanks to those who were able to participate: Verlee Lauderbaugh, Shirley Anderson, Ruth Spieker, Connie Koeppen, Jeanne Erhart, Yvonne Strang, Jan Stock, Nadine Sojka and Connie Railsback (not pictured).



United
Women
in Faith

We believe
love in action
can change
the world.

The UMW will be meeting Wednesday, May 3 at 1:30 pm in the Fellowship Hall. Verlee Lauderbaugh will have the lesson, "Why a laugh a day keeps the doctor away." Hostesses are Yvonne Strang and Tawnia Kakacek. Mission Chair, Connie Railsback will be reporting on current mission projects, and the summer work day schedule.

Looking ahead, the June 7 brunch will be held at Barb Kalm's home in Lisbon. Non-members are invited, and can contact a UMW member for car pooling arrangements. A good time of food and fellowship always awaits. The July meeting involves the group's annual road trip, with more to come as to time and date. There is no meeting in August.



UNITED METHODIST MEN

We continue to meet at Fellowship Hall Saturday mornings at 6:00 AM. Join us!

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

HOUSES INTO HOMES

Together we make it home

On Wednesday, April 5, at the United Women in Faith monthly meeting, a guest speaker was on the agenda. That guest speaker was from Houses into Homes in Coralville. Lucy Barker shared with us how the organization sets up homes for those in need.

Houses into Homes provides gently-used beds, furniture, and household items for families and individuals in Johnson County who are exiting homelessness, domestic violence, and other crisis situations.

Houses into Homes mission is to help people feel the comfort of home and to do so in a way that honors their experience and engages them with unconditional positive regard. Houses into Homes is the only organization of its kind in Johnson County. We also proudly offer volunteers, recipients, donors, and staff a unique opportunity to meet and impact those with whom they share our community.

We were introduced to Fletcher, the Bed Bug Catcher. YES! They really have a dog that will sniff out mold and bed bugs. Way to go Fletcher!



The ladies attending the meeting brought items to share with Houses into Homes. As always, they were very generous. United Women in Faith presented a check to Houses to Homes for \$50.

Together We CAN Make a Difference!



Register today for **NAMI Walks Your Way Johnson & Linn Counties 2023**, which promises to be our most meaningful event ever. **Registration is simple and free!**

The last couple of years have been challenging for all of us, but if there has been a silver lining, it is that everyone is talking about mental health.

Our employers, schools, politicians, neighbors, actors, athletes, family and friends are talking about their experiences with mental health conditions and the importance of seeking help. **We are coming Together for Mental Health!**

In that vein, **we are planning to have an in-person event this year**. We want to come together with our NAMI Johnson and Linn communities and **celebrate** the progress we've made toward our mission of improving the lives of people affected by mental health conditions.

Event:	NAMI WALK
Event Date:	Saturday, May 6, 2023
Location:	Terry Trueblood Recreation Center 579 McCollister Blvd, Iowa City, IA
Event Time	Start time: 10:00am

For more information, go to <https://www.namiwalks.org/team/56988>

The link will take you to a page that contains details of the walk as well as links to register ("Join our Team") and to donate to this event ("Support Us").

If you have any questions, contact Keela Herr at keela.herr@gmail.com or 319-389-5173.

Thank you for your support.

Mental Health for All — and Always
#Together4MH

1 in 5 U.S. adults experience mental illness each year
1 in 20 U.S. adults experience serious mental illness each year
1 in 6 U.S. youth aged 6-17 experience a mental health disorder each year
50% of all lifetime mental illness begins by age 14, and 75% by age 24
Suicide is the 2nd leading cause of death among people aged 10-34

Prayers and Celebrations

In Our Prayers

Healing to Gary Mechtensimer who was able to return home and is recovering.

All who are affected by cancer.

Charles Whetstine, who is undergoing chemotherapy.

Rocco and Janelle following the loss of their daughter.

Melody Morris, who recently had shoulder surgery and is recovering.

Sarah and her family as she battles cancer.

Len, a co-worker of Tawnia K.'s who is recovering from surgery.

Lance Evans who is preparing for boards for Medical School, and a wedding.

Rejoices & Thanksgiving

Barb and Dofli Kalm who celebrated their 61st Anniversary!

Congratulations to all the Confirmands we received at SUMC.

The beauty of the Quilter's Window!

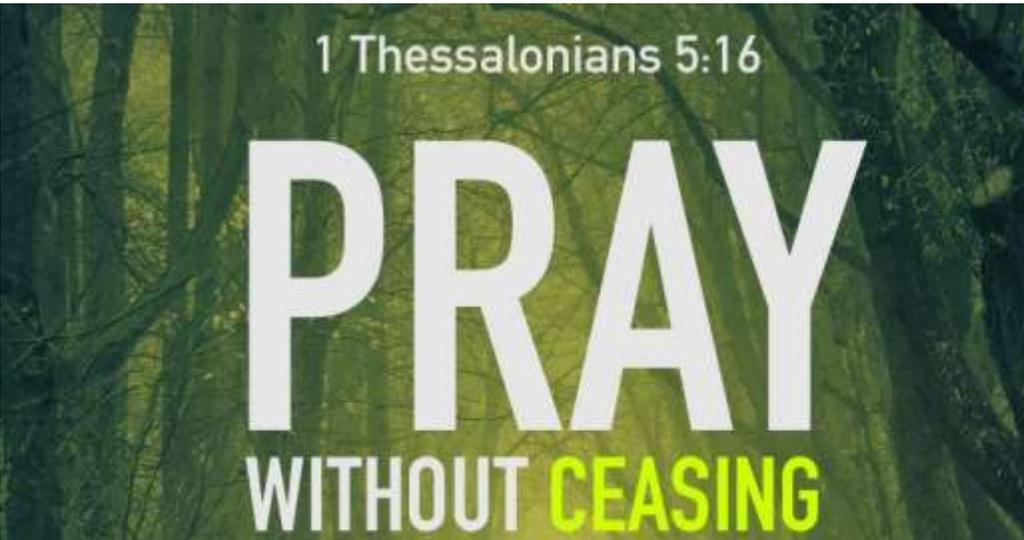
All who helped make the Easter breakfast such a wonderful event this year!

The Richards Family and ALL of the Wednesday Night volunteers who prepared, served, donated and cleaned up Family Meals this year, we are grateful for you!



May Birthdays

Hallie Mottinger	05/01
Winnie Hofsommer	05/02
Melissa Tiedemann	05/03
Grace Allen	05/04
Greg Kunkel	05/04
Laurie Stebral	05/04
Braden Haugland	05/06
Jace Janssen	05/11
Johanna Doscher	05/13
Adam Gerdin	05/16
Roger Swartzendruber	05/17
Paul Saupe	05/19
Jeannie Jedlicka	05/20
James McATee	05/21
Adam Smith	05/21
Ethan Swan	05/22
Janet Stock	05/25
Elena Swan	05/25
Dan Boggs	05/30
Luke Deike	05/30
Wayne Anderson	05/31



Prayer Requests

The SUMC family wants to support and encourage you throughout your time of need. If you have a prayer request, please call the church office at (319) 624-2288, or email at soloniaumc@gmail.com us 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. Be sure to give your month, day, and year. We need your birth year to be able to enter in the software.



*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

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Website: www.soloniaumc.org
Facebook: Solon United Methodist Church—Iowa
Instagram: soloniaumc