



The

Circuit Rider

January 2023

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My Friends,

As a new year begins and takes shape before us and in us, I thought I would share some John Wesley with you. A reminder that we are diverse in thinking and in attitude. It does not mean we are enemies in some vast tribal world of hate. Let me begin with Wesley's words on salvation:

By salvation I mean, not barely, according to the vulgar notion, deliverance from hell or going to heaven, but a present deliverance from sin; a restoration of the soul to its primitive health, its original purity; a recovery of the divine nature; the renewal of our souls after the image of God... True religion is the loving God with all our heart, and our neighbour as ourselves; and in that love abstaining from all evil and doing all possible good to all (persons). ~John Wesley

As John Wesley was often fond of doing, He referred to scripture. In Deuteronomy 6:4-9 we read part, "Hear O Israel: The Lord is our God, the Lord alone." You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might. Keep these words that I am commanding you today in your heart. Recite them to your children and talk about them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you rise. Bind them as a sign on your Lord, fix them as an emblem on your forehead, and write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

As we move forward into 2023 let us do so with intentional purpose. That is to be renewed and restored by God for the Hope, Joy, Peace and Love ushered by the birth of Jesus. Despite the desire by some to divide and to throw daggers of hate we must resist! We must rise in compassion and care. Rise in patience and hope. Rise in Grace and Mercy. We are God's children, and we are yet learning what that means.

To be children of God means in part that we have been born into God's family. We become God's children through faith in Jesus Christ, which is our spiritual rebirth. Reborn, not with a physical birth from human passion or plan, but a birth that comes from God" (John 1:12-13). You are very, very special my friends. There are also others who are special as well. You may not see this right away; it can take time. However, take your time and be patient with yourself and with others.

Let me finish with one more quote from John Wesley. A very important one in looking at the current culture around us.

We must act as each is fully persuaded in his (or her) own mind. Hold you fast that which you believe is most acceptable to God, and I will do the same. I believe the episcopal form of Church government to be scriptural and apostolical. If you think the Presbyterian or Independent is better, think so still and act accordingly. I believe infants ought to be baptized, and that this may be done either by dipping or sprinkling. If you are otherwise persuaded, be so still, and follow your own persuasion. It appears to me that forms of prayer are of excellent use, particularly in the great congregation. If you judge extemporary prayer to be of more use, act suitable to your own judgment...If thou love God and all (humanity), I ask no more. "Give me thine hand."

Often, we have more in common with each other than we may have thought!

Shalom

Ken

HAPPY
New Year

A Note from SPRC

From the Staff Parish Relations Committee (SPRC)

December 2022



A few things to discuss with the congregation:

1: **Pastor Ken retiring**. As previously announced, Pastor Ken is retiring. Church Council and SPRC have been working together to create and forward to District Superintendent Doug Cue a description of who we are in the Solon United Methodist Church and what we are looking for in a new Pastor. Superintendent Cue will review our request and with the help of many others in the Iowa Conference use this information to find a replacement for Pastor Ken that best matches our needs and desires as a church. This search process is ongoing now and we expect to hear additional information in late winter/early spring 2023 regarding the results.

2. **Pastor Ken will be taking a six week leave of absence** beginning on January 1st for a professional sabbatical and opportunity for spiritual renewal. In the interim, SPRC is arranging coverage for the following items:

Providing a Pastor or credentialed lay leader to provide worship services for six Sundays beginning 1/1/2023

Having an on call pastor available for spiritual needs as well as administration of funeral rites etc...

Continuation of the current confirmation class

As a reminder, Pastor Ken will be retiring from the SUMC in June 2023.

2. **Joe Massa**, Director of Christian Education, has left SUMC. We wish Joe the best of luck and we greatly appreciated his insight into how to address the needs of our Christian Education program at SUMC.

***On behalf of the SPRC, we wish you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.
We are very excited to see what God has in store for us in 2023.***

"But those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength; they will fly up on wings like eagles; they will run and not be tired; they will walk and not be weary."

Isaiah 40:31

This year may have been hard, but the Lord is here to reignite our lust for life in 2023. Go into this new year with the power of God behind you, and you'll come out even stronger at the end.

MUSIC MINISTRY

The beginning of the new year is here! This is always that moment where everyone makes resolutions and grand promises of what they are going to do for the new year. Some pick up a new hobby, some promise to lose weight, or start a new exercise regimen. We have a rarely used treadmill in our basement as evidence of that from last year! I always feel it is a time to take a deep breath and feel like anything is possible. The only limits are what we impose on ourselves.

So, have you ever thought of singing? Or making music? If you already do either of these, or want to start, why not give the choir or bells a try? Both groups love to have new people join us and we promise that we will accommodate all levels of knowledge or experience. This is your opportunity to stretch yourself a bit and go for it! You can talk to me or any persons involved in either group. Chancel Choir rehearses on Wednesday evenings at 6:15 p.m. and Bells set up at 7:20 with rehearsal starting at 7:30.

On Sunday, January 8th, we will be having a new experience! The Festival of Lesson and Carols will be an opportunity for us to sing holiday carols joined with Biblical readings. Based on the format of the traditional service, Lessons and Carols, held each Christmas Eve in the Chapel of King's College in Cambridge, England, it incorporates carol within scriptural lessons. It is a special service that starts in the Garden of Eden, then continues through to the prophet Isaiah foretelling the birth of Christ, and then the peace that Christ will bring to the world. The angel then appears to Mary, then the birth of Jesus, the shepherds' journey, next the wise men following the star, and finally St. John's unfolding of the mystery of Christ's birth. In between each of these is a relevant carol or hymn, or sometimes a medley of two. Everyone has always enjoyed this and I know SUMC will too!

Bells and Chancel Choir will join together on Sunday, January 15 for a combined piece, "Can You Hear the Christmas Bells?". You won't want to miss it!

Happy New Year to everyone!
Angie



WORSHIP SCHEDULE

January 1-Communion

****9:00AM Worship Only****

Scripture: Ephesians 3:1-12

The Next Step

By Pastor Rebecca Carver

January 8

Lessons & Carols

Led by Angie Grecian-Bransky

January 15

Scripture: TBD

Lay Leader Lynn Brown

January 22

Scripture: TBD

Lay Leader Lynn Brown

January 29

Scripture: TBD

Lay Leader Lynn Brown

WORSHIP ATTENDANCE

	8:00 AM	9:30 AM	TOTAL
DECEMBER 4	54	46	100
DECEMBER 11	45	46	91
DECEMBER 18	45	30	75
DECEMBER 24	4PM 122	5:30PM 84	206



CHRISTMAS TREE WALK 2022

The Annual Solon Tree Walk was held in our Family Life Center on Saturday December 3rd from 10AM –3PM. There was a Makers Market, Bake Sale, Craft Sale, Tree Display, Luncheon, Silent Auction, and Mr. & Mrs. 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! Totals have come in and it looks like the general fund benefitted by \$3,629.84 due to everyone's hard work!

Below are some wonderful images from the Tree Walk, enjoy!



LIGHT THE NIGHT

On Wednesday December 14th we held our annual 'Light the Night' event! Following our Family Meal we went into the Sanctuary to sing Christmas Carols. Angie played requests -both Christmas Hymns and Christmas songs. It really was a fun time together!



Then off to the Fellowship Hall to decorate sugar cookies we went! Connie Railsback provided homemade sugar cookies and we enjoyed some fellowship while we decorated and drank hot cocoa. If you missed this event this year, you'll want to keep an eye out next year! All who attended raved about how much fun it was. Thanks to all who helped put this event together!

For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them."

Matthew 18:20

SAVE THE DATE -CONFIRMATION!



CONFIRMATION IS IN FULL SWING! CONFIRMANDS ARE MEETING REGULARLY PREPARING FOR THEIR BIG DAY. THE CONFIRMATION CEREMONY WILL BE HELD ON SUNDAY MARCH 26TH AT THE 9:30 AM WORSHIP. PLEASE MARK YOUR CALENDAR SO YOU CAN JOIN IN ON WELCOMING AND CELEBRATING OUR 2023 CONFIRMANDS!

WELCOME CHURCH TRAC AND CONNECT APP!

Staff have been working hard the past month or so to transition from our old church software, Power Church, to our **new software and easy to use APP Church Trac!**

So far we are loving the new software, it is very easy to use, has an APP for the congregation to download and includes website service. They also have great customer service, reports are easy to pull and we can communicate to you all through text and email via the software! Check out the history of Church Trac below!

Our History

From the beginning, ChurchTrac has been all about helping Christian churches, ministries, and leaders. In 2002, ChurchTrac founder Byron Tedder was serving on staff at a local church. But his church had a problem...there were more people coming than they could keep up with! Back then (just like today) church software was either expensive, difficult to use, or both.

So, Byron got to work, creating a simple database for keeping track of members and guests. He continued working on his project and it wasn't long before ChurchTrac was born. Fast forward over 20 years later, Byron (and his Team) are still creating and innovating and serving the local church. Today, ChurchTrac is helping over ten thousand churches keep track of their members and guests...and so much more.

While staff are loving the new program, that doesn't mean that we don't expect hiccups, we are all still learning! Please be patient as we navigate this changeover.

Some really great news is that you can have Church Trac right at your fingertips yourselves! You can check out our website, create a login and have access to your personal information and even your giving information and donate all from your phone. This will allow us to keep more accurate church records and allow you all to have easy access at any time!

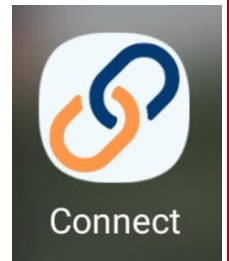
To begin, go to our new website at: <https://soloniaumc.churchtrac.com/>

You can either view on the website or click on the QR code button on the right of our web address and download the Connect App for super fast, at your fingertips service!

You'll be able to browse and click on some of the 'cards' as they are called and see worship from the previous week regardless of if you log in or not but the next step would be to create a login.

You can click the 'sign in' button in the top right hand corner and then choose 'create an account' and use your email address to proceed. Once you are all approved and logged in you should be able to see what information the church has on file for you AND you'll be able to update or fill in any missing information yourself!

If you would like a visual here is a short video on how to download the Church Trac App! [CLICK HERE](#)



If you have any questions or any snags shoot us an email at soloniaumc@gmail.com and we'll help you out! This will be a learning process together, but it will certainly help us maintain better records, have better communication and keep us all update on what is going on as fast as possible!

CHURCH & SOCIETY

Greetings SUMC Family

As the holiday season comes to a close, it can be a time of excitement and happiness and reflection on our many blessings. However, for many people it can feel stressful and challenging and disappointing and lonely.

During this holiday season and the beginning of 2023, it is important to keep your mental health a priority. There are a variety of simple self-care strategies to help you cope and we are sharing some resources of information and tips from Mental Health First Aid (MHFA).

Though loneliness is common, how and why people experience it varies widely. Some people may live a happy and healthy life with minimal social interaction, while others may have contact with family and friends and still feel alone. Many factors, like isolation due to the pandemic, the loss of a loved one, and even the weather can increase feelings of loneliness. Those who live alone, the elderly, and those grieving tend to experience loneliness more than others. Check this link for tips to cope in a healthy way:

<https://www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org/2021/12/loneliness-how-to-cope-during-the-holiday-season/>

Regardless of whether you are living with a mental health challenge or know someone who is, you can take steps to prepare for the holidays and prioritize your mental health in the coming weeks. Check this link for five tips to ease the struggle:

<https://www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org/external/2020/12/mental-health-during-the-holidays-five-tips-to-ease-the-struggle/>

As 2022 comes to an end, you may be reflecting on the year that has passed and planning for the year to come. This past year was challenging for many, but we now have the opportunity to refocus and have a fresh start. A new year can provide us with hope and, more importantly, a desire to change. In the coming weeks, you may want to reflect on positive changes you would like to see in yourself and use that information to establish meaningful resolutions for a healthy and happy new year. Check out this link for tips:

<https://www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org/2021/12/prepare-for-a-healthy-new-year-with-tips-from-mental-health-first-aid/>

The National Council for Mental Wellbeing has many excellent resources and shares daily information and tips on their [blog](#) and social media channels – follow this organization on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#)!

In Christian Love,

*Church & Society and the
Solon Mental Health Collaborative*

Sending love to...



**People grieving
a loss
this holiday
season**



**People
separated from
loved ones
this holiday
season**



**People who are
caretakers
to someone
who's ill**



**People battling
physical or
mental illness
this holiday
season**



**People working
on the front lines
this holiday
season**



**People struggling
to afford
the holidays this
year**

Missions Report

thank you



Thank you all for your support for Missions here at SUMC. We are happy to report that we, as a congregation, raised \$985.00 for Project Holiday and \$245.00 in Toys for Toys for Tots!

Thanks for sharing your gifts to help others!



MISSIONS

across the street & around the world

WOMEN IN FAITH (UMW)

The UMW Christmas Potluck was well attended, with several guests and even two men present. As usual, there was a wonderful variety of food and no one went home with an empty stomach! The group was serenaded by John Krob on the guitar, with Christmas Music and a sing-along. Phyllis Cabbage's "Right/Left" games were next, accompanied by lots of fun and laughter. Phyllis also orchestrated a wonderful Christmas Skit featuring animals of that time, and as usual each character lent her own special humor to the skit.

The UMW officers will stay the same as the previous year, and thanks to them for their hard work to keep the group up and running. UMW members were also commended for the multiple ways in which they contributed to the Christmas Walk - being part of Crafts, the Bake Sale, the Basket Silent Auction, and making cookie dough for the "Cookies by Jay". The UMW will not meet in January, with the next meeting the first Wednesday in February.

WOMEN
IN
FAITH



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.

TRUSTEE RECAP

Trustees continue to stay busy, take a look at what's been happening below!

- New Fire Alarm system was installed in the Family Life Center
- The sanctuary window exterior trim was completed by Steve Fisher
- Batteries were replaced in the smoke and carbon monoxide detectors by Al Hulse
- Fall tune-ups of the church facilities HVAC units was completed
- Narthex women's bathroom repair completed by Al Hulse



Big thank-you's go out to Al Hulse for oversight of the new fire alarm system install, Jill Weetman and Lindy Hulse for coordination of the pickleball play, Barb Kalm for oversight of the new FH stove, Wayne Anderson and Ruben Galvan for ongoing cleaning of the FLC gym floor and all the trustee committee members for their excellent support of the needs of the church facilities!

Blessings,

Paul Miller- Trustees Chairperson

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, Church and Society Ministry Team

****Please see the next page for descriptions of these opportunities****

If interested, please call church office at 624-2288 or email soloniaumc@gmail.com



Below is the current list of staff and committee members for 2023. If you would like more information on different open positions please contact Pastor Ken or the church office!

2023 LEADERSHIP SOLON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

STAFF		Missions Ministry Team		
		<u>12/31/2023</u>	<u>12/31/2024</u>	<u>12/31/2025</u>
Lead Minister	Ken Ferguson	Denise Gregor	Angie Grecian-Bransky	OPEN
Music Director	Angie Grecian-Bransky	Dan Boggs	OPEN	OPEN
Christian Education Director	OPEN	<u>BOARD OF TRUSTEES</u>		
Office Administrator	Lindy Hopp	<u>12/31/2023</u>	<u>12/31/2024</u>	<u>12/31/2025</u>
Youth Group Coordinator	OPEN	Al Hulse	Mike Turner	Kris Kucera
Director of Hand Bells	Mary Kucera	Paul Miller	OPEN	OPEN
Treasurer	Ivan Hasselbusch	Jill Weetman	OPEN	OPEN
Custodian	Ruben Galvan	Nancy Worrell		
Security	Lisa Hilton	Dolfi Kame		
Nursery Supervisor	Lindy Hopp	<u>STAFF-PARISH RELATIONS COMMITTEE</u>		
		<u>12/31/2023</u>	<u>12/31/2024</u>	<u>12/31/2025</u>
		OPEN	OPEN	OPEN
		Dave Weetman	OPEN	OPEN
		OPEN		
		<u>CHURCH AND SOCIETY MINISTRY TEAM</u>		
		Keela Herr	Jim Leighton	Alan Harrington
		Jean Leighton	Pastor Ken	
		<u>FINANCE COMMITTEE</u>		
		<u>12/31/2023</u>	<u>12/31/2024</u>	<u>12/31/2025</u>
		Sue Wilkinson	Dave Weetman	Cathy Boggs
		OPEN	OPEN	Justin Schmidt
		Treasurer Ivan Hasselbusch		
		<u>COMMITTEE ON LAY LEADERSHIP (Formerly NOMINATIONS)</u>		
		<u>12/31/2023</u>	<u>12/31/2024</u>	<u>12/31/2025</u>
		OPEN	OPEN	OPEN
		<u>PERMANENT ENDOWMENT FUND COMMITTEE</u>		
		<u>12/31/2023</u>	<u>12/31/2024</u>	<u>12/31/2025</u>
		Richard Novak	Ivan Hasselbusch	Keela Herr
		Paul Saupe	OPEN	Kris Kucera
		<i>Finance Committee Representative: Ivan Hasselbusch</i>		
		<u>CHRISTIAN EDUCATION COMMITTEE</u>		
		Jill Weetman	Allison Roe	
		Pastor Ken	Jen Hawks	Amanda Vollbrecht
		<u>WELCOMING MINISTRY</u>		<u>MEALS MINISTRY</u>
		Norma Novak		OPEN
		<u>Care Committee:</u>		
		Ron Puettman	Melody Morris,	
		Connie Koeppen	Pastor Ken	
		<u>Sanctuary Team:</u>		
		Jean Leighton	Tawnia Kakacek	Joyce Cook
		Julia Woessner		

PRAYERS AND CELEBRATIONS

In Our Prayers

Moscow, Idaho

Sydney Schwindt who is dealing with an ankle injury as she prepare for The Nutcracker dance performance.

Loren and Junior Noska as Junior prepares to move off base.

The Family of Michael S., who recently passed away.

Fred and Alice Mally and Jen Hawks and Family as Fred has been moved to Hospice care.

Those who are navigating this holiday season alone.

Military families who are separated during the holiday season.

The Family of Buck Keith who passed away .

Dena who is dealing with rotator cuff and shoulder issues.

All who are battle sickness –colds and flus this holiday season.

Rachel who is struggling with bi-polar disorder.

Alvin who is recovering from a truck accident.

Andrea who is recovering from appendix surgery.

Mark McAndrews who is battling ALS.

The family of Jim Carter, following his death.

Connie, who is battling cancer.

Those dealing with delayed Christmas celebrations due to illness.

Wilbur Erhart who was treated in the E.R.

Brent, who is recovering from surgery.

Ukraine.

Bruce, who is recovering from stage 4 cancer.

Rejoices & Thanksgiving

Congratulations to Marian Andersen’s husband who is retiring!

Thanks to all who donated goods, and time to help make the Christmas Tree

Walk a success!

Thanksgivings for our Bell Choir and their wonderful talents!

Thank you to our volunteers, we see you, and appreciate all that you do.

The angels of the holiday season, those who give and donate this time of year to spread joy and happiness.

Jack who celebrated his 2nd birthday!

Christmas Celebrations, what joyous times!

Thank you to the Richards Family and all who help with Family Meals!

Thanksgivings that Yvonne is back from dealing with Covid.

I lift up my soul. ~Psalm 25:1



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.

Birthday Announcements

Do you have a birthday in this month but do not see your birthday listed? Contact the church at soloniaumc@gmail.com.

January Birthdays

Recker, Peyton	01/01
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
Ferguson, Chrisa	01/11
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
Phillips, Clayton	01/17
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
Gruber, Grace	01/31



*Making disciples of Jesus Christ
for the transformation*

Rev. Ken Ferguson, Lead Minister (sabbatical 1/1-2/18)
Angie Grecian-Bransky, Music Director
Open, Christian Education Director
Lindy Hopp, Office Administrator
Open, Youth Group Ministries
Mary Kucera, Director of Hand Bells
Ivan Hasselbusch, Treasurer
Ruben Galvan, Custodian
Lisa Hilton, Security



SUNDAY SCHEDULE
8:00 AM & 9:30 AM—Worship
9:30AM—Sunday School

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