

The Cross & The Flame is published monthly for our congregation and friends. We welcome you with open hearts, open minds and open doors.

VIROQUA UNITED METHODIST CHURCH PASTOR

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OFFICE HOURS

9:00 a.m. - 12:00 a.m. Monday – Thursday
(Church door opens at 9:00 a.m.)
Office Closed on Fridays

September Service Assistants

Ushers

September 1—Paul & Sonja Bjerkos
September 8— Greg & Mary Cheever
September 15—Alice Sloane & Joanne Hornby
September 22—Aaron & Angie Hanson
September 29—Youth

Greeters

September 1—Annabel McGarry
September 8—David Peterson
September 15—Janet Welch
September 22—Jerry Schroeder
September 29—Youth

Liturgist Holly Fanta



Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can, in all the places you can, at all the times you can, to all the people you can, as long as ever you can.

John Wesley



THE CROSS & THE FLAME



**Viroqua
United Methodist
Church**

P.O. Box 127, Viroqua, WI 54665

September, 2019

“Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they?”

And why do you worry about clothes? See how the flowers of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. So do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.”

Matthew 6:26, 28, 31, and 33

One distinctive feature of the gospels is its representation of Jesus as a peripatetic philosopher. While walking to Jerusalem in the footsteps of their teacher, the disciples were instructed on a variety of topics. Jesus intended to teach His disciples about the commitment and risk involved in being His followers. He taught them the truths about the Kingdom of Heaven, about trusting that God will provide and care for us all, and about living in harmony with creation.

If God takes care of the birds, and if He takes care of the lilies, how much more will humans take care of each other when we seek to live in harmony with His creation. Brothers and sisters, we already have the Kingdom. Let’s live according to Him.

However, knowing that we are immersed in a world to which we do not belong and considering the community to which the gospels were directed may have been waiting for the return of Jesus Christ for five or six decades, we understand that these teachings are also words of encouragement to follow.

Trusting in his parousia (return), despite the seemingly endless wait, is a hope that can help us cope with cruelty.

The words of Jesus offer affirmation and security to the Christian community in our day. Jesus tells us not to be anxious for clothing and food but “Seek, rather, the Kingdom of God, and all these things (clothing and food) will be given to you.” These words are a promise of divine providence that supports and sustains His people.

Obviously, the promise that God will give “all these things” does not eliminate the reality of fear and insecurity in the future; but, the words of Jesus respond to the church’s fear about the security of its future. Jesus challenges the community of the faithful to believe in his promise and to trust.

Given the promise of Jesus and the security of divine providence, the church has no excuse for not responding to the Lord’s call to follow the example of Christ and extend the hand of help and solidarity to the poor and needy. On the contrary, in its ministry of service, deliverance, and sacrifice, the church serves the Lord and receives confirmation that its heart is in the right place. This confidence keeps it alert, discerning the presence of the Lord, and waiting for his coming.

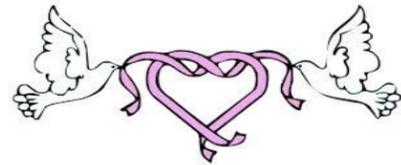
In conclusion, if we can fully trust that God takes care of us and calls us to live in harmony with his creation, investing our hearts in what brings life, then the hope of a better tomorrow in Christ becomes bearable. Yes, we trust that God has the last word in history; and, we believe that in the meantime we are called and called to live according to the Kingdom of God and not according to the empire of Caesar.



Viroqua United Methodist Church’s Mission Statement

The Viroqua United Methodist Church exists for the purpose of carrying out Christ’s Great Commission by enabling all who come to personally know the joy of God’s love and forgiveness and to lovingly share this joy in the fellowship of the church and in reaching people throughout the world.

Happy Anniversary



- Layne & Janette Hanson September 6
- Aaron & Angie Hanson September 8
- Tom & Sheryl Steele September 12
- Bruce & Marcy York September 17
- John & Vickie Doan September 22

Where was Noah when the lights went out?
In d'ark.

What is Adam and Eve's least favorite word?
Insinuate.

What was the first tennis match mentioned in the Bible?
When Joseph served in Pharaoh's court.

Where was Solomon's temple located?
On the side of his head.



A little boy opened the big and old family Bible with fascination, and looked at the old pages as he turned them. Suddenly, something fell out of the Bible. It was an old leaf from a tree that had been pressed between the pages.

'Momma, look what I found,' the boy called out.

'What have you got there, dear?' his mother asked.

In astonishment the boy answered: 'I think it's Adam's suit!'

September Birthdays

God's Blessings on You!

- David Peterson September 1
- Gregg Roberts September 6
- Jerry Schroeder September 7
- Mallory Hanson September 9
- Landon Hall September 10
- Luke Garrett September 11
- Kristen Parrott September 12
- Lisa Ulberg September 12
- Patty Fetting September 14
- Pete Gilman September 15
- Barb Huschka September 15
- Jim Porter September 18
- Ryan Bjerkos September 20
- Luther Hendrickson September 21
- Dawn Stalsberg September 21
- Larry Primmer September 24
- Nathan Primmer September 24
- Layne Hanson September 25
- J.R. Maly September 27
- Aaron Hanson September 30



God's love for me is great!
It reaches to the heavens.
[Psalm 58:10](#)

TRUSTEES MEETING

August 13, 2019

Present: Aaron Hanson, Gregory Cheever, Pete Gilman, Barb Casper, Dale gudgeon, Sandy Skarda, Pastor Erika

An Opening prayer was given by Pastor Erika.

Business;

Replaced washing machine at parsonage \$629>95—Paid by split agreement: LaFarge charge 50%, Westby UMC 34.5% of remaining 50%, Viroqua UMC 65>5% of remaining 50%. The LaFarge charge is renting their parsonage.

Eave spouts on church and parsonage garage were repaired. The bill needs to be divided into separate bills for correct billing.

Monika Sutherland wants Thursday nights for her orchestra practice. Approved. A new contract needed with same rate.

Fire extinguishers discussed. A Location list is available.

A smoke alarm for the parsonage kitchen was approved and will be installed.

Gregory introduced David's concerns about pets in the parsonage. Clean up and repairs of damage should be the responsibility of the Pastor. Limitations should be required. This will be tabled for a while. The conference has a policy in place.

A parsonage work day will be August 24 at 9:00 am. Other UMCs will be notified. Work list: paint back stairway, remove carpet, stain porch. Kathy will put on website. Lunch will be provided.

Pastor asked about name tags for congregation. This will be turned over to Worship Committee.

The air conditioner wiring needs to be checked.

Meeting adjourned. Next meeting: September 10 at 5 pm.

FINANCE COMMITTEE

August 20, 2019

Present: Pastor Erika, Jolene Gudgeon, Kathy Hanson, Gregg Roberts, David Peterson, Aaron Hanson, Cavan Fang, Layne Hanson, Gregory Cheever

Joys & Concerns

Joy for the new cement work. Kathy likes the secretary job.

Financial Secretary Report & Treasurer Report

Motion made, seconded, and approved to accept the reports as given.

New Business

- Annual Conference voted in June to divide apportionments into 3 categories. Church can decide how to allocate their apportionments. We decided to keep our apportionment giving the same.
- We decided to open a checking account at WCCU. This will make it easier for Westby to transfer funds to us.
- Funding for the cement work was discussed. We decided to have the Financial Secretary distribute funds as necessary.
- 2020 Budget work sheets will be ready September 1. They will be due by October 1

Old Business

- Electronic Giving—The Financial Secretary & the Treasurer will form a sub-committee to come up with a plan to present to the Finance Committee

ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL

August 20, 2019

Present: Pastor Erika, Jolene Gudgeon, Kathy Hanson, Gregg Roberts, David Peterson, Aaron Hanson, Cavan Fang, Layne Hanson, Gregory Cheever, Kristen Parrott, Janet Welch

Kathy opened the meeting with a devotional from the Upper Room.

Pastor Erika

- Pastor has designed business cards. We will order 1,000 of them. We also discussed the need for a card we can all use to tell folks about our church. Kathy will work on designing one.
- Pastor Erika will be using this email —pastor-vw@driftlessministry.org
- We will pursue posting a copy of the sermons to the website.

Treacher Methodist Girls' School in Malaysia—Della Olson, an aunt of Kathy, was a principal in this school for many years in the early and middle part of the twentieth century. She was a missionary sent from this church. Maxine Olson, Kathy's sister, will be attending their 120th anniversary in September. She and Kathy composed a letter of greeting from this church for Maxine to take with her. It was read to the group.

Committee Reports

UMW—their September meeting will be September 5. See minutes.

Care & Nurture—see minutes

Trustees—see minutes

Missions—they will be meeting in September

Worship Committee—the Hymn Selection committee met. Worship Committee will meet on Sept. 19

History Committee—they will look at getting the Wills & Memorials information up to date

SPRC—they will meet tomorrow night, August 22

Meeting adjourned at 8:15. Next meeting 7:00 pm on September 17

CARE & NURTURE COMMITTEE MEETING

August 12, 2019 @ 10:30 am

It was our first meeting with Pastor Erika. We got to tell about what our committee is doing, and it was great talking with her.

We went over the Homebound list and explained all the places where people live.

The Fortney meal for August was done by the Missions Committee. Thank you.

Our committee will be helping the SPRC Committee with the August 25th luncheon to welcome Pastor Erika.

Thank you to Sandy Skarda for sending out the birthday and other cards.

At our meetings we will be going over the Prayer List to keep it updated.

Our next meeting will be Monday, October 14 at 10:30.

All are welcome to attend our meetings to help and give us new ideas. God bless you all.

BIBLE TRIVIA

How many books are in the New Testament?

Twenty seven

Who were the first 2 Apostles to follow Jesus?

Peter & Andrew

PRAYER

Prayer Request Cards can now be found in the pews. Please use these cards when you wish to have someone added to the Prayer List. The list is printed in the bulletin and we pray for these folks each week. In general, folks will remain on the Prayer List for one month. If you would like the person to remain on the list longer, indicate such on the Prayer Request Card, or fill out a new one at the end of the month. This policy will enable us to keep the Prayer List current.



We also have telephone **Prayer Chains** functioning in this church. If someone you know is in special need of prayer, you may call Janet Welch at 637-7531, and she will activate the prayer chains right away. Prayer chains are often used in emergency situations and offer a community of support. Anyone who would like to be a pray-er should let Janet know, and she can add you to one of the groups.

From time to time, at various seasons of the year, we have conducted **Prayer Vigils**. These give folks a focus and encourage extra prayer for a certain event, group of people, or time of change.

In addition to these prayer opportunities, a new **Prayer Group** will be organized to pray for our church and its people. It will begin on Wednesday, September 18, and meet weekly. All are invited. You may come either at 7:30 am or 5:30 pm. Meet in the chapel and plan approximately a half hour.

CARDS

Sandy Skarda, a member of the Care & Nurture Committee, sends cards to folks with birthdays or anniversaries. She also is willing to send cards for other occasions, such as an illness, hospitalization, or loss of a loved one. It is up to all of us to let her know about these events.

Her contact information is:

Phone: 624-5643

Email: siskarda@mwt.net

Sandy is very willing to send cards, but needs to have the notices.

Thanks, Sandy!

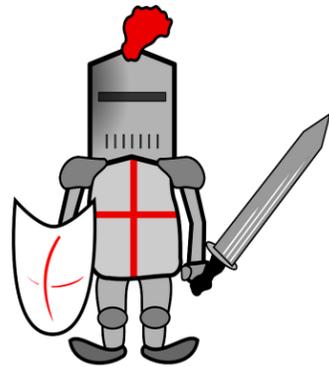


LADIES GET AWAY

The Ladies Get Away at the Hanson Lake House (Winter, WI) has been delayed this year. We currently have a plan to go on Wednesday, October 2. We will stay two nights and come home on Saturday, October 5. There is still room if anyone would like to join us. Accommodations are modern and all meals are provided. The cost is \$60, with the money going to the church. It is a great time of fellowship, relaxation, pontoon boat rides, games, movies and devotions, If you are interested, let Kathy Hanson know.



CALLING ALL KIDS!



Wednesday Night Church School begins on September 18 at 3:30. Invite your friends and join us for an evening of fellowship, learning, special projects, games, crafts.

The evening ends with a supper for the whole family!

Invite your friends— let's have a big group this year!

THE ARMOR OF GOD—We'll be learning about God's armor & what it means for

THE PERU CONNECTION

Terrah (Overbo) and Arthur Mendoza will be arriving in Viroqua with their two children in time for the Vernon County Fair! Yes, Taylor has a new baby sister!

We always love it when the Mendozas come to Church School to share what they are doing with kids in Peru.

This will happen on Wednesday, September 25. We invite the entire congregation to join us in the Fellowship Hall to hear Terrah and Arthur and to share a meal with us.



FLOOD GATES by Sue Nilson Kibbey

HOLY MOMENTUM FOR A FEARLESS CHURCH

This book was recommended by our District Superintendent, Scott Carlson, at the Charge Conference last fall. A group of folks have been reading and meeting rather off and on to discuss the book. Admittedly, we have gotten somewhat distracted with summer and the changes we have experienced, but we have made a goal to finish the book by October 5, and start to talk about possible impacts for our church. All are invited to join the group that meets at 9:00 am on the first Saturday of each month. There is an extra copy of the book in the church library if you would like one.

BIBLE PROMISES: WHAT'S TRUE ABOUT GOD?

September On-line Bible Study

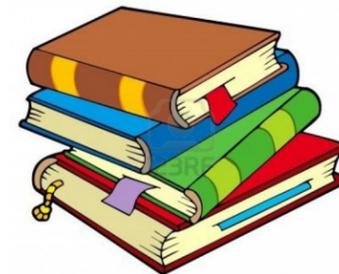


What does the Bible say about God? About His Word? About me? Set out on a journey to live your faith by digging into the promises that God has made to us through His Word. This 21-day study provides Scripture and Biblical truth to shine light on some of God's Bible promises. Join us on the Bible App starting September 8th as we explore God's promises and learn more about our loving God. Use the link below or click the graphic on our website to join us for this study.

To join this study, click on this link: <https://bible.comp/17336598/21ffde3fe2f797529dbb0f12c11518be>

HOW ABOUT A GOOD BOOK?

The UMW has been purchasing books for their reading program. These books are available for all of us to read. Following are reviews of a few of them. Take a look, visit our church library, and see if you might like to check out one of these books or something else!



The Pilgrim Messiah by Dr. Richard C. Cheatham

A Novel Drawn from the Gospel of Mark

We know that Jesus was fully divine and fully human, but so often we think only about the divine qualities. The readers of this novel will experience The Man of Galilee in all his rich humanity. They will see the tender parting with his family when he leaves for the Jordan River. They will hear his thoughts as he struggles with Satan in the wilderness. They will meet his followers, Simon Peter, James, John, Mary Magdalene, Thomas and Judas – yes – even Judas as understandable, likeable people. The readers of this novel will never again think of Jesus as less than fully human.

Adventure of Ascent by Luci Shaw

This is a non-fiction book in which Luci Shaw has given us a lifetime of exquisite reflections on nature, love, death, suffering, loss, faith, doubt, creativity, curiosity, lifelong learning—all of it drawn from the breadth of her own experience, harvested in penetrating and lyrical insights. Still active in her eighties, Luci now turns her attention to the season of edging toward the borders. As she traverses new territory, she records her experiences lovingly, honestly, sorrowfully, joyfully—here's what it's like, and here's what to be ready for. These field notes will inform your own journey, no matter what your age.

UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

Our September meeting will be on the 5th because the 12th is Fair week. The program will be on World Thank Offering. Barb Casper will be the hostess.

Some of us will be attending the District Annual Meeting at Platteville on Sept. 21. Early registration is due Sept. 7th. I will have registration forms if you'd like to go.

The Lydia Circle members have been reading for the Reading Program. Those reports are due Sept. 1.

Shirley Gilman served for coffee after the church service at the Bethel Home on Sunday, August 18. Thank you, Shirley.

Dates to remember:

Sept. 1 Reading Programs due

Sept. 5 1:30 UMW meeting

Sept. 21 S.W. District Annual Gathering at Platteville UMC

Oct 18-19 WI Annual Gathering at Black River Falls UMC

Nov. 9 Day of Enrichment at Columbus UMC



United
Methodist
Women

He wakens me morning by morning, wakens my ear to listen like one being taught.

Isaiah 50:4