

Our calling is to reach all people with the life-changing power of God's Love and Grace available to all through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

The Westby United Methodist Church welcomes **everyone** with open arms and open hearts as indicated in Romans 15:7 (NIV):
Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God.



Westby United Methodist Church
 April 2022

IN THIS ISSUE

The Peace of Shalom

by Pastor Erika Martinez-Flores

<p>I only ask of God That I am not indifferent to the pain, That the dry death won't find me Empty and alone, without having done the sufficient.</p>	<p>I only ask of God That I am not indifferent to deceit, If a traitor can do more than a bunch of people, Then let not those people forget him easily.</p>
<p>I only ask of God That I won't be indifferent to the injustice That they won't slap my other cheek, After a claw (or talon) has scratched this destiny (luck) of mine.</p>	<p>I only ask of God That I am not indifferent to the future, Hopeless is he who has to go away To live a different culture.</p>
<p>I only ask of God That I am not indifferent to the war, It's a big monster and it walks hardly on All the poor innocence of people.</p>	<p>I only ask of God That I am not indifferent to the battle, It's a big monster and it walks hardly on All the poor innocence of people.</p>
	<p>Leon Gieco</p>

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This is one of the most powerful songs ever written and sung in times of war. The author lived through the dictatorship that existed during the 70's in Argentina. As a response to what his people faced, he wrote this song that has been interpreted all over the planet (especially in Latin America) not only as a hymn of hope but also as an anthem of denunciation.

Peace (shalom) is at the heart of the message of the Old and New Testaments. Peace (shalom in the Bible) is not just a normal greeting used as an expression of courtesy. Peace (shalom) is a promise that comes from God and is a desire for blessings among men. Indeed, Jesus Christ himself is our peace. Christians, blessed by God in Jesus Christ, should be a blessing to each other and a blessing to all nations.

Peace among humankind supposes a constant effort to establish justice in the world. As the Scripture affirms, authentic peace is "the work of justice". Justice must be understood as the recognition of the dignity of every person which includes their fundamental human rights, their personal freedom, and a life absent of discrimination due to faith, race, culture or sex. Justice must be understood as the right of every human creature to life, to land,

to food, to water, to an education that makes them fully aware of their rights which will empower their self-determination. Above all, this personal good presupposes the common good and social justice with peace.

Peace is the gift of forgiveness, redemption, and new creation. Like love, joy, mercy and kindness, peace is also the fruit of the Holy Spirit. The kingdom of God is justice, peace, and joy in the Spirit.

This hope must animate our prayer ever more profoundly. It is necessary to continually implore God for peace so that God will grant it to us and preserve it. But the weapon of prayer also strengthens our commitment to change situations of injustice and to work together with a view that builds a more just world.

Faced with the terrible evil of the lack of peace, faced with the endless chain of mourning caused by war, we only have one alternative: to bear witness to the Peace of God. "Blessed are those who work for peace, for they will be called children of God" (Matthew 5: 9). Therefore, the Church is called to be a sign, instrument and witness of peace, peace with God and among men.

May God be with all of you,
Pastor Erika Martinez-Flores



Pastor Erika's Schedule:

Thursday at Westby UMC – 10:00 AM - 1:00 PM

- 3rd Thursday of the month (11:30 AM - 1:00 PM)

Sunday morning before worship – 8:30 AM – 8:50 AM

Please feel free to call or email Pastor Erika if you'd like to talk to her during the week

Contact Information:

Cell Phone: 919-478-3584

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Parsonage Phone: 608-637-7614

Email: pastor-vw@driftlessministry.org

April Birthdays

April 17 – Roger Zogg



Mission of the Month – Church Beautification

Spring is the time we celebrate the resurrection, and new beginnings. It is a time of renewal, a time when we like to see everything fresh and clean and more beautiful than ever. This year, that will include our own beautiful house of worship.



You may have noticed that the cracks and holes in the church, kitchen and fellowship hall walls and ceilings have already been repaired. The next step is to paint. Our April mission of the month will hopefully provide enough money to buy the paint and finish the job. In the bulletin (and on the back table in the church narthex) you will find brightly colored

envelopes with paint-can shapes on them for you to use to bring your contributions toward the beautification of the church. Our hope is that members and friends will donate enough money to not only buy the paint and get the painting done, but to do some other beautification projects. The more money we raise, and the more time and effort we put in, the more beautiful we can make the house of God. Please make checks payable to the church with the words "Paint" or "Church Beautification" on the memo line. Thank you in advance for your participation in these projects.



Sunday School News

The Sunday school crew enjoyed a sunny winter afternoon snow tubing on the hills of Whitetail Ridge on February 26. There were 9 kids and 8 adults from the Westby church, and we were joined by others from the Viroqua church. The lanes were very fast, and more than one hat flew off on the way down! A fun way to spend a winter day.

In the weeks leading up to Easter, we will be learning about the life of Jesus and the important events of Holy Week.

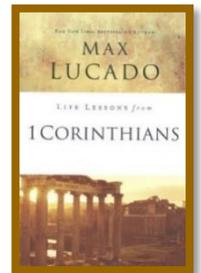
SAVE the DATE:

- Sunday, April 10 ~ Palm Sunday @ 9:00 | The Sunday School Crew will present the music and message during the Worship Service. Fellowship time with coffee and snacks after church. Sunday school will follow.
- Sunday, April 17 ~ Easter Sunday | There will be no Sunday school. Worship Service @ 9:00.
- Sunday, April 24 ~ Confirmation Sunday | Adey Oliver will be confirmed during the Worship Service. Please come and be a part of Adey's special day. Sunday school will follow.
- Sunday, May 1 ~ Last day of Sunday school | End of the "school year" party

Growing in Faith Study Group

As we continue our discussion of 1 Corinthians, this month, we will meet on Wednesday, April 13th at 6:00 PM to discuss Lesson 8 (Spiritual Gifts - 1 Corinthians 12:1-11) and on Wednesday, April 27th at 6:00 PM to discuss Lesson 10 (True Love - 1 Corinthians 13:1-13).

Please come and join us for a time of fellowship and thought-provoking discussion, even if you don't have the book.



April Online Studies – Preparing to Celebrate at Easter & Red-Letter Day

After we finish with the online Lenten Devotional study on April 10, please join us as we prepare to celebrate Easter and reflect on the sacrifice that Jesus made so we can have the gift of salvation. Our first study, Celebrate Christ at Easter will encourage us to focus our thoughts and enhance our experiences leading up to Easter Sunday. The 2nd study for April, Red-Letter Day, will continue by examining Jesus' final words on the cross and His victorious triumph over death.

- Celebrate Christ at Easter will be being on April 11th. Here is the link to join this 7-day online study: <https://bible.com/p/50210781/181bbeb260770ddb1ee6a8c9e527b353>
- Red-Letter Day will begin on April 18th. Here is the link to join this 12-day online study: <https://bible.com/p/50210812/6a6f089b8f4c380b81d43a69a2bc23e9>

This online study can be accessed through the Bible App or [bible.com](https://www.bible.com) website, which are free resources. In addition to wonderful devotional/reading plans, they provide a verse of the day, and you will be able to read the Bible in a wide variety of versions. The Bible App is available in your app store on your mobile device, or accessible online at www.bible.com.

Confirmation Sunday – April 24

On Sunday, April 24th, Adey Oliver will be confirmed during worship. Please and join us as we encourage Adey as she makes this declaration of her faith and becomes a professing member of our church.





Thursday Morning Bible Study

Come and join us on Thursday, April 21st for our monthly morning Bible study group. We will continue with studying the book of Psalm, lead by Pastor Erika. We'll start at 11:30 AM, so come for a time of learning, good discussion and fellowship.

Thursday Morning Prayer Group

Please join our monthly Prayer Group on Thursday, April 7th at 10:00 AM for a time of fellowship with our Lord through prayer. Everyone who attends can offer up prayer requests, then the group prays for these requests. Praying starts with whoever feels like beginning then anyone can add their prayers. Pastor Erika does the ending prayer. The time commitment can vary from 15-60 minutes. We will place a prayer request box in the narthex so anyone can drop their prayer requests in the box and this group will pray for them. Prayer is powerful, so it's important that we prayer together to combine our prayer strengths.



Palm Sunday – Special Events

On Palm Sunday, April 10th, there will be some special events. The first special event will be that the Sunday school students will perform and give a message during the worship service. The second event will be that there will be a special fellowship time afterwards with a wide variety of treats to eat while we're visiting with each other. Please come and join us as we worship our Lord, enjoy a special performance and spend time in fellowship.

Maundy Thursday Joint Service

On Maundy Thursday, April 14th, we will have a joint service with Viroqua UMC. The service will be held at Viroqua UMC and will begin at 6:00 PM. Communion will be offered during this special time of worship.

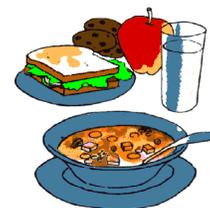


Easter Sunday

Easter is Sunday, April 17th. Please come and join us as we celebrate the resurrection of our Lord and our gift of salvation that Jesus gave to us through his sacrifice. Worship will begin at 9:00 AM.

Westby Senior Meal Site

The Westby Senior Meal Site is open again and is hosted at our church. Meals are available on Monday-Thursday and are served at 11:30 AM. Please call 608-637-5201 by 9:00 AM on the day you would like to come and have a meal at this serving site. Jane Gaskell is now the server for the meal site at our church.



Church Lawn Mowing Job

We need someone to mow the church lawn this year. This person needs to provide their own mower and gas. The pay is \$25 per time the lawn is mowed. If you are interested or know of anyone who may be interested in this job, please have them contact the church at 608-634-3206 or westby-umc@driftlessministry.org for more details.

Westby United Methodist Church - Board Meeting † March 16, 2022

Present: Verna Drake, Ardith Hoff, Jean Shore, Jane Gaskell, Tim Gaskell, Tom Sharratt and Linda Weilnau

Opening: Tim Gaskell opened with prayer.

Approval of Minutes: The minutes of the February board meeting were emailed to the board and published in the March newsletter, so they could be reviewed prior to the meeting. Verna Drake and Ardith Hoff motioned to approve the minutes. Motion passed.

Treasurer's Report: Verna Drake provided the financial reports, which included the report for the month of February, Year-to-Date report, special accounts, and the credit card statement. These reports were emailed to the board prior to the meeting. Verna Drake submitted the Ezra Stats reports, filed the annual cemetery state report and filed the bi-annual property tax exempt form. Jane Gaskell reported that the Sunday School account covered the cost of snow tubing for the Sunday School students who attended this event the end of February. Jean Shore and Jane Gaskell motioned to approve the treasurers report. Motion passed.

Old Business:

- † Review COVID Policy – It was decided to continue with the policy of it being optional to wear masks and still practice social distancing when sitting in the sanctuary. We will continue to have the tables spaced out more in the fellowship hall to allow for more distancing.

New Business:

- † Painting and Fixing Interior Walls – Tom Sharratt presented the bill from Grant Johnson for fixing the cracks in the walls and ceiling in the fellowship hall and kitchen. The total was \$1,275. Tom also obtained bids for painting the fellowship hall and sanctuary from 3 different people. The bids didn't include the Sunday school rooms, Pastor's office, library or small conference room. The bids were from Jim Green, Al Felton and Sheryl Davidson. The bids ranged from \$2,900 to \$6,200. It was decided that we need to determine if we are going to do the painting ourselves or do fund raising to cover the expense of this project. We will ask if the bids can be valid through the end of June 2022 to give us time to consider our options.
- † Events/Activities for Palm Sunday, Holy Week and Easter – There will be a joint Maundy Thursday service with Viroqua UMC at Viroqua. Jane Gaskell is going to check if there are any plans for a Westby Community Good Friday service this year.
- † Mowing and Sidewalk Snow Removal – Chad Oliver isn't able to do sidewalk snow removal or lawn mowing for us anymore due to health issues. We will need to find someone to do this. Linda Weilnau will post a notice for this job opening on Facebook and the website.
- † Set Apart Virtual Conference (April 1 – May 31) – We are going to see if there is a group rate, other than individual registration fees for this event so we could show it at church and then invite women from the other area Methodist churches and the churches in Westby. If we can do a group rate, the potential date for this would be Saturday, April 30th. Linda Weilnau will inquire about a possible group rate. If we can't get a group rate, we will not be doing this event.
- † DMC Disabilities Grant – Due March 31, 2022 – We need to include the Accessibility Audit when we submit this grant. Linda Weilnau started to fill out this grant and discovered that it required detailed information about the project (project completion date, cost of labor, cost of materials, standards and

codes being used). We currently don't have any of this information and it is going to take some time to gather these details. We need to get an estimate of the cost of the mechanism for opening the door and getting it installed. We may also need to purchase a new door, in addition to adjusting the entrance platform so it slopes up to the door. It was decided to continue to gather this information and then apply for the grant in January 2023.

- ✝ Senior Meal Site – They are going to open the Westby Senior Meal Site on March 28th. Jane Gaskell is going to be the server for this site.
- ✝ Use of Fellowship Hall – Verna Drake asked to use the fellowship hall on April 16th for a birthday party. This was approved.
- ✝ Cemetery Mowing – The cost of mowing the cemetery for this coming summer will be \$575. It will be mowed every other week. There was also tree trimming done around the stones and near the road so you don't hit your head on the low hanging branches.

Business from Board Committees:

- ✝ **Trustees** – This was covered under New Business.
- ✝ **SPRC** – Verna Drake attended the recommended SPRC training session.
- ✝ **Worship** – We want to have special snacks for Palm Sunday during fellowship. Jane Gaskell wants to have the Praise Group sing on Easter Sunday.
- ✝ **Education** – On Palm Sunday, the Sunday School students will present a message and sing songs during worship. Currently the students are learning about the miracles of Jesus. They will be making ornaments relating to the lessons leading up to Easter. The ornaments will be put on the tree in the back of the sanctuary. Pastor Erika was wondering if we might have an egg hunt. Jane Gaskell mentioned having the stations of the cross or painting a rock with the 3 crosses on it for Easter. Confirmation is April 24th. Adey Oliver will be confirmed. The last day of Sunday school will be May 1.
- ✝ **Lay Leadership** – No report.
- ✝ **Missions** – It was suggested to have building repairs or church beautification as the April mission of the month. Another suggestion was to have a fund raiser where people would “purchase” an item, possibly a paper cut-out of a paint can or a piece of the church and have this money go towards the building funds.

Pastor's Report: Pastor Erika was not available due to Lenten Service at Viroqua UMC.

Jean Shore motioned to adjourn. Meeting was adjourned.

Minutes submitted by Linda Weilnau

LITTLE HEROES FROM THE BIBLE

Young in their age, but not in their willingness to be used by God. Sometimes we think that God only uses great leaders and those who are mature in faith, but God can use anyone who has a humble and obedient heart. This is the case of these boys and girls. Despite their young age, they were great heroes in biblical history for God's will to be done. Throughout this year we will be meeting some of these great little heroes.

This is just an aid to encourage you, dear parents, to take time out and sit down with your children and share exciting family Bible stories. Do not forget at the beginning and at the end of each time, to pray to put yourself and your family in God's hands through prayer.

ESTHER, THE BRAVE QUEEN

ESTHER 4:1-16

Many years ago, the people of Israel were forced to leave their country to go and serve a country called Persia. The king of this country called Ahasuerus, on the advice of his minister Haman, wants to kill all the Jews in his kingdom.

Esther was a Jewish girl who had been taken captive. After her parents died, she was adopted by her cousin, Mordecai, who raised her as if she were her own daughter. King Xerxes needed a new queen and Esther was selected from among many young women.

Haman was a high-ranking official and he did not like the Jews. He did not particularly like Mordecai. So Haman decided to destroy all his people, who were also Esther's people. The king did not know that Esther was Jewish. What was Esther going to do? She did not want her people to be destroyed. She was afraid that if she asked the king to stop Haman's plan, she would die and if she didn't ask the king, her people would be destroyed.

Esther prayed. Her servants of hers prayed. Mordecai prayed. The Jewish people prayed. So, Esther decided to appear before the king. She was very brave and loved her people very much from her and from God. She saved her people from her from Haman's evil plan. Although the word God is not recorded in the book of Esther, His work from him, His guidance from him, His protection from him is there for us to hear. When we listen to God, we can do great things.

ESTHER, THE BRAVE QUEEN

Scripture: Esther 4

Age: we only know she was young.

Address: Persia

Parents: Her mother's name was Abihail

Funny facts:

- Her Hebrew name was Hadassah
- Jews celebrates a party to remember what she did. The party's name it's Purim.

Interesting facts:

- She asked her people and servants to pray for her.
- Thanks to her the People of Israel were saved from death.



April 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 Pastor Erika's Sabbath Day	2
3 ☩9:00 AM – Worship Service (Communion) 10:00 AM – Fellowship & Sunday School	4 11:30 AM – Senior Meal Site	5 11:30 AM – Senior Meal Site	6 11:30 AM – Senior Meal Site	7 10:00 AM - Prayer Group 11:30 AM – Senior Meal Site	8 Pastor Erika's Sabbath Day	9
10 <i>Palm Sunday</i> ☩9:00 AM –Worship Service 10:00 AM – Fellowship & Sunday School	11 11:30 AM – Senior Meal Site	12 11:30 AM – Senior Meal Site	13 11:30 AM – Senior Meal Site 6:00 PM – Study Group	14 11:30 AM – Senior Meal Site	15 Pastor Erika's Sabbath Day	16
17 <i>Easter Sunday</i> ☩9:00 AM – Worship Service 10:00 AM – Fellowship	18 11:30 AM – Senior Meal Site	19 11:30 AM – Senior Meal Site	20 11:30 AM – Senior Meal Site 6:00 PM – Church Board Meeting	21 11:30 AM - Morning Bible Study Group 11:30 AM – Senior Meal Site	22 Pastor Erika's Sabbath Day	23
24 ☩9:00 AM – Worship Service 10:00 AM – Fellowship & Sunday School	25 11:30 AM – Senior Meal Site	26 11:30 AM – Senior Meal Site	27 11:30 AM – Senior Meal Site 6:00 PM – Study Group	28 11:30 AM – Senior Meal Site	29 Pastor Erika's Sabbath Day	30

Remember to join us at 3:20 PM each day for being unified in prayer to pray for our church ...

“God, Give us the courage to dream big dreams. Please open our minds and hearts so we can have new breakthroughs to Your new possibilities. Amen.”

God is able to do much more than we ask, or think, through His power working in us.

~ Ephesians 3:20 (NLV)

