



# The Visitor

Vicksburg United Methodist Church

Volume 19, Issue 2

February 2012

## St. Valentine's Sacrifice

Every February 14, we celebrate the loved ones in our lives with cards, flowers and chocolate. But Valentine's Day has another meaning that's been lost.



First declared a holiday by King Henry VIII of England in 1537, it commemorates the beheading of St. Valentine on February 14, 270 A.D. His crime? Performing wedding ceremonies after Roman Emperor Claudius II had outlawed marriage.

Valentine was martyred for faithfully doing the work God had given him. Although it's good to celebrate love and marriage, let's also remember the courage of a man who gave his life following his convictions.

*-The Newsletter Newsletter, February 2012*

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## "O Love That Will Not Let Me Go"

O Love that will not let me go,  
I rest my weary soul in thee;  
I give thee back the life I owe,  
That in thine ocean depths its flow  
May richer, fuller be.

George Matheson (1842-1906) wrote the words to this much-loved hymn while feeling intensely lonely and afraid.

Years back, his fiancé had broken their engagement upon learning he was going blind. Despite that challenge, Matheson had followed God's call to a fruitful pastoral ministry — with his sister's assistance. Now his sister was getting married, and Matheson worried about who would take care of him and if anyone would ever want to marry him.

Amid such despair, Matheson later shared, God gave him all four verses of this hymn in five minutes. It's a poignant reminder that God's love sustains us even when human love falls short.

*-The Newsletter Newsletter, February 2012*



### Church Staff

**Pastor**

Dr. Bufford Coe

**Administrative Assistant**

Kirsten Russell

**Choir/Praise Band Director**

Tamra Stamm

**Custodian**

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**Financial Assistant/  
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**Heart & Hands Teacher/  
Director**

Amber Morris

**Kids Hope USA Director**

Barb Bladt

**Youth Director**

Hank Stamm

**Newsletter Editor**

Trish VanTichelt

## From the Pastor's Pen

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I felt embarrassed at a recent meeting of the Church Council when somebody asked me what one of the line items in our Ministry Shares budget supported and I didn't know! It prompted me to look up the conference budget so I had more specific information about the various ministries and programs supported by our Ministry Shares.

The West Michigan Conference expects us to support seven funds with our Ministry Shares. Let me briefly list these seven funds and summarize how the money is used.

**Connectional Ministry** pays for the expenses of our six district superintendents plus various other costs such as the Equitable Compensation Fund (which supplements the salaries of pastors serving churches that cannot meet the minimum salary set by the conference), Retiree Health Care, and the Moving Expense Fund (which covers the moving expense of pastors changing appointments).

**Administrative Funds** is our share of the administrative cost of the denomination as a whole, the North Central Jurisdiction, and the bishop's office, as well as administrative officers and committee of the annual conference such as the conference secretary, the conference chancellor (who serves as legal advisor to the bishop and the annual conference), and the conference treasurer.

**World Service and Conference Benevolences** includes basic support for the ministries of the denomination (as opposed to the administrative costs), as well as the ministries of our annual conference such as the Board of Christian Camping, the Board of Global Ministries, and the Board of Higher Education and Campus Ministry.


**New Church Development** is used to establish new congregations and nurture them to sustainability.

**Ministerial Education Fund** provides financial support to our thirteen United Methodist theological seminaries, provides loans and scholarships to seminary students from our conference, and provides money for continuing education for clergy now serving in our conference.

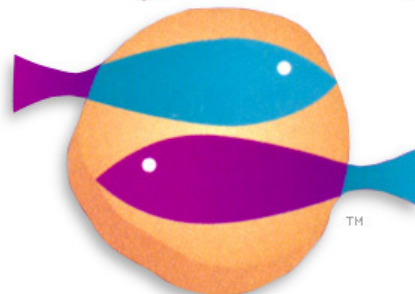
**Black College Fund** provides support to eleven historically African-American colleges and universities related to The United Methodist Church.

**Africa University Fund** supports the United Methodist university founded in Zimbabwe in 1992.

For more information about our Ministry Shares, click on the Treasurer's Office link on the conference website, [www.westmichiganconference.org](http://www.westmichiganconference.org).

Love in Christ,  
  
Dr. Bufford Coe

Sharing God's Gifts



## Make Sure You Please God with Your Prayer Type

*Christians like microwave-type praying.  
Our God desires marinating-type praying.  
-Peter Lord-*

Sometimes I feel a burden on my heart about a particular person or situation and pray a passionate quick prayer, then I feel a relief and am able to go about my daily business knowing that things will work out.

The above kind of prayers take a lot of energy, but you don't have to use a great deal of concentration or discipline to pray for only a few minutes at a time.

The marinating-type of praying calls for a much more disciplined prayer life. You might feel God leading you to pray for a critical family or church situation that might take some time to be resolved. I prayed for a situation in my church for several years before I started to actually see the victory. I know God was working on the situation all the time, but I certainly could not see it. Over and over again I would watch Satan win huge battles with little effort at all. I felt as if he was rubbing his victories in my face and saying, "Your prayers will never make a difference in this situation, so you might as well quit praying."

I know I would have given up if I had not had a direct word from God telling me that I was not to leave the church, but to pray and fast for the situation there. When you get a "word" like that, it is up to you to then decide if your desires to leave are so great that you want to voluntarily live in rebellion against God.

In the end, I decided that being in rebellion against God would be the worst decision I could ever make under any circumstances. I figured I might end up "in the belly of a big fish" like Jonah did until I came to my senses and started to walk in obedience.

No matter what type of prayer the situation calls for, if you spend time with God just fellowshiping with Him and getting to know His character, you will know how He wants you to pray.

I came to realize that it is an awesome thing when God can look at your life and know that He can trust you to be consistent in prayer for something huge that might take awhile.

Real and powerful prayer does take a lot of effort and energy, but you can feel yourself moving closer to God each day. How awesome it is to be able to walk in His power to pray and minister to others each day that might desperately need a touch from Him.

Cathy Deaton

**CONSTANT  
PRAYER  
TO GOD**



## Refocus for Lent

Give up complaining — focus on gratitude.  
Give up harsh judgments — think kind thoughts.  
Give up worry — trust God to provide.  
Give up discouragement — be full of hope.  
Give up bitterness — turn to forgiveness.  
Give up hatred — return good for evil.  
Give up anger — be more patient.

Give up pettiness — become mature.  
Give up jealousy — pray for trust.  
Give up gossiping — control your tongue.  
Give up sin — turn to virtue.  
Give up giving up — persevere.

~Author unknown



## Ash Wednesday

An Ash Wednesday service of ashes and communion will be held in our sanctuary on Wednesday, February 22 at 7:00 p.m. Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of Lent, the forty days (not counting Sundays) of preparation for Easter. Whatever you plan to do as your observance of Lent this year, worship is an important part of our spiritual growth. I invite you to join us for our Ash Wednesday service as we begin this season of repentance and reflection together.



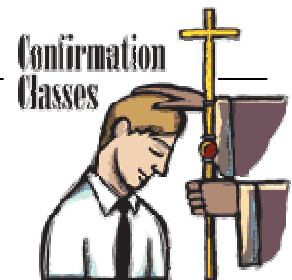
## Lenten Breakfasts



Every year, we join with the other churches in the Vicksburg Ministry Alliance to hold a series of breakfasts every Tuesday morning during Lent. The breakfasts begin at 6:45 and end at 7:25. A \$2 donation is suggested. Each week, a lay person from the host church will bring a devotional message. **The first of the 2012 Lenten Breakfast will be held at our church on Tuesday, February 28.** Reservations are not needed; everyone is welcome. The churches that make up the Vicksburg Ministry Alliance include Chapman Memorial Church of the Nazarene, Lakeland Reformed Church, Lord of Life Lutheran Church, Saint Martin Catholic Church, Vicksburg Assembly of God, and Vicksburg United Methodist Church.

## 2012 Confirmation

Any Middle School students who wish to be confirmed in the spring of 2012 should contact Pastor Buff as soon as possible. Confirmation is the process through which middle school students make their personal profession of faith and are received as professing members of the church, whether they were baptized as young children or not. Each of the students will be matched with an adult mentor who will guide their student through their confirmation preparation. The students will be confirmed on the morning of Sunday, May 20.



For students who wish to prepare for confirmation during the 2012-2013 school year, we are planning two overnight retreats at Wesley Woods Camp as well as trips to Detroit and Chicago as part of our confirmation program. Those students will be confirmed in the spring of 2013. For more information, contact Pastor Buff.



A new KHUSA mentor has been meeting with a boy who has been struggling this year. After Christmas break the mentor asked Caleb, "Did you get what you wanted for Christmas?" Caleb answered, "Yes, you came back."

Mason sang this song to his mentor Brian, "Sticks and stone may break my bones, but you make me VERY HAPPY!"

## PARTIES

We will NOT be having a winter party this year. Instead mentors and students will be doing a Valentine activity during their regular meeting time at school. Also, we will have a time in March where each student gets to share special treats with his/her class. More information to follow.

**We WILL be having an end of the year party!  
Wednesday May 23, 3:30 - 6:00, FLC**



# HELIX

## IMPORTANT DATES FEBRUARY & MARCH

**FEBRUARY 20. Parent Mtg 6:30p-7:30p**—Discussion of upcoming series concerning the changes that go on in our students lives in middle school & how they can learn to embrace these physical, emotional, & spiritual changes.

**FEBRUARY 27. Mission Trip Parent Mtg 6:30p-8p**—Emergency Contact/permission forms & important information!

**MARCH 16. Final Mission Trip Payment Due-\$50**

**MARCH 17, Mission Trip Training Session #1-2p-5p**

As followers of Jesus, we find comfort knowing that we don't have to navigate this life on our own! We are not alone; God lives in us and walks beside us. God has given us the Bible to know him on a deeper level, to give us guidance in our daily lives, and to show us his unconditional love. The Bible is our love letter from God—it offers the truths we need to live a life according to his plan. It's an open invitation to meet with God daily and learn about his plans and purposes for us.

This 3-week series will give student a chance to explore the Bible. This may be the 1st in-depth visit for some teenagers, while others may be quite familiar with the Bible already.

**WEEK 1:** Learn About the Bible (2 Timothy 3:16-17)

**WEEK 2:** Navigate Through the Bible (Proverbs 2:1-6)

**WEEK 3:** Memorize Verses from the Bible (Psalm 119:9-16)

### SERIES OBJECTIVES:

**WHAT:** The Bible is a foundation of our faith as Christians, and its pages are filled with truths, teachings, and ideas that help us pursue God's plans and purposes for our lives.

**WHY:** When we learn how to read the Bible, navigate its pages, and memorize its words, we're allowing God's Word to shape how we live our lives and how we impact the people around us.

**HOW:** Students will have the opportunity to dig deep into the Bible by learning facts and information about the Bible, strategies for reading and applying its truths, and methods for memorizing verses.

# RAW

## IMPORTANT DATES FEBRUARY & MARCH

**MARCH 9<sup>TH</sup>**—Final Mission Trip Payment Due- \$115.

**MARCH 10<sup>TH</sup>**—YouthWorks Summer Mission Trip Training Session #1-2-5

**MARCH 18<sup>TH</sup>-21<sup>ST</sup>**—Live In Retreat-3 nights where our students will spend their nights here at VUMC instead of home to grow as a church family, and in their faith.

The 4 Gospels—Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John—provide eyewitness accounts of Jesus' life. Through these accounts we see Jesus living life with purpose. He did more than just travel from one town to the next or speak to the crowds. Every part of Jesus' life was lived with a purpose: his teaching, travels, miracles, and prayers. By studying specific stories we will get a clearer picture of how Jesus lived purposefully and learn how to apply those lessons to our lives. Jesus showed us how to **REACH** out to others with his love when he talked to the woman at the well in John 4 (**WEEK 1**). In John 17 (**WEEK 2**), we read how Jesus prayed that Christians would **CONNECT** and be united together. In Matthew 14 (**WEEK 3**) we see how Jesus was able to **GROW** by spending time with the Father—a habit that was crucial to Jesus' ministry. Jesus in Matthew 20 (**WEEK 4**) demonstrated reasons to **DISCOVER** how to serve others, rather than being served. And in Luke 22 (**WEEK 5**), Jesus chose to **HONOR** God by going to the cross because it was going to glorify the Father.

### SERIES OBJECTIVES:

**WHAT:** God calls every Christian to live a life of purpose and meaning.

**WHY:** Jesus' life serves as a model for how we can reach, connect, grow, discover, and honor.

**HOW:** Students will be encouraged to develop a stronger sense of each purpose in their lives.

## Sunday School News

All is well in the Sunday school department. John Cleveland's class on the Ray VanderLaan films seems to be a big hit. When he and Darcy switched classrooms, Darcy and I decided that that should be a permanent switch as the smaller classroom serves her needs this year.

We are half way through the Sunday school year already. **Yikes!** The elementary classes are enjoying the connections between classroom and sermons – not always the same text, but seeing the connections. The bi-annual fish races have taken place in the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> grade class. We raced goldfish this year ~ the theme of the morning was Jesus calling the fishers to be fishers of men instead of fish.

The kids are excited to be singing on Camp Sunday and have begun work on those songs already. The kids will be encouraged to wear camp attire as is hoped the rest of the congregation will also. **Break out those favorite camp shirts!** We continue to receive a great response from parents and the congregation on including the kids once a month with singing during the traditional service.



## Heart & Hands Preschool



Help spread the word! Heart & Hands is now enrolling.

We have an exciting 2012-2013 school year planned with 3 class options:

- 4 yr old a.m. class meets Monday, Wednesday, & Friday 9-noon
- 3 yr old a.m. class meets Tuesday, & Thursday 9-11:30
- AND our new option this year is a p.m. combo class. 3's & 4's will meet on Tuesday & Thursday afternoons, 12:30-3:00 and the 4's only will meet for a 3rd day on Friday's, 12:30-3:00

Check out our new brochure for more information at the welcome center and pass it on to your family, friends and neighbors!!!

**IF YOU REGISTER BY APRIL 1ST YOUR REGISTRATION FEE IS ONLY \$40 (Instead of \$60)!!**

## Everything is Possible with God

Just a heads up that Vacation Bible School 2012 is a short 6 months away! August 6<sup>th</sup> through the 10<sup>th</sup> are this year's dates. We will be flying high in the SKY as we walk through the last events of the life of Jesus. And we will see that **pigs can fly!**



## WOOT is HERE!

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After months of planning and preparation, our winter WOOT sessions are here!

WOOT stands for “We’re Open on Thursday” and is the successor to the popular WOW Nights our church offered for several years. Every Thursday between now and February 9 we gather for a hot meal at 6:00 and then go to classes based on our age and interests. Classes and gym time are available for children from preschool through middle school. High school students and adults may choose from a variety of options including Meet Matthew, Mark, and Luke (an overview of the first three gospels), Green Cleaning, Online Safety, What Are Those I Things? Cookie Decorating, and Identity Theft.

The evening ends at 7:30. If the Vicksburg schools are closed or evening events at school are cancelled because of the weather, WOOT will not meet that night. We have reserved February 16 as a make-up date in case any of our sessions are cancelled. Everyone is welcome at WOOT! Come and join the fun!



## February UMW

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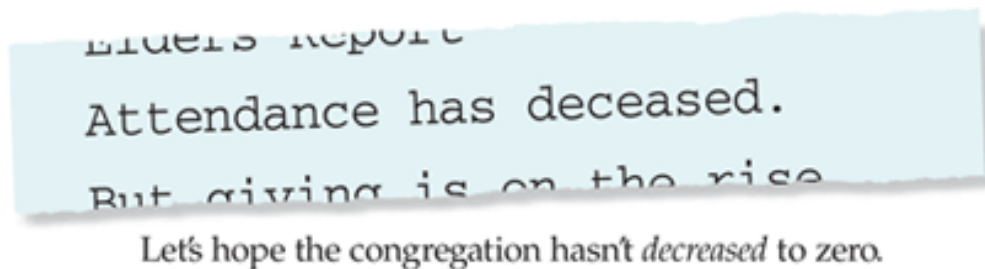
Feb. 3	Church Women United
Feb. 12	Susanna Wesley Bake Sale
Feb. 16, 9:30am	Susanna Wesley Circle (Hostesses Bev Fenwick & Lori Lash)
Feb 16, 11am	Executive Team Meeting



## Ooops!

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From a newsletter in Grand Rapids, Michigan:



## Coffee Hour is Back!

It seems to be just what we need on chilly Sunday mornings....

However your help is needed in supplying snacks, coffee, sugar and creamer packets, stir sticks and small 8 oz cups. **Not Styrofoam.**

There is a new sign up sheet on the table. Feel free to bring some goodies and leave them on the table on Sunday morning. Supplies should be left in the old kitchen.

*Thanks for your help with this friendly, fun, visiting time for our church family.*

Just a small reminder from our kitchen fairies too:

Please wipe out any sink you use when you are finished and leave the kitchen better than when you found it, ready for the next group, and ready for the state inspector. Thank you.



## Coffee Fellowship

## Greeter Schedule

We succeeded in filling up the schedule for welcome center and door greeters for the next 5 months! Here is a small reminder to those who signed up. Your help is very much appreciated!

### 8:50 Service

Welcome Center:

February—Marie Ketvertis & Donna Nichols

Greeters through April include:

Chuck Walker, Cathy & Jeff Johnson, Betty & Joe Gruber, Sally & Larry Kohler



### 11:10 Service

1st Sunday of month:

Greeters-Mark & Pam Harrison

Welcome Center-Grace Rayman

2nd Sunday of month:

Greeter-Vicki Worthington

Welcome Center-Jennifer Thompson

3rd Sunday of month:

Greeter-Phyllis Barrett

Welcome Center-Marshall Linebaugh

4th Sunday of month:

Greeters-Tom Aitken

Welcome Center-Beth Aitken

### Substitute List:

Rich Myers, Aileen Greanya (on 2nd Sundays that choir does not sing), Kathy Moore, Sara & Justin Carrier, Sherry Shane, Vera Walker, Chris Bush

## February Birthdays



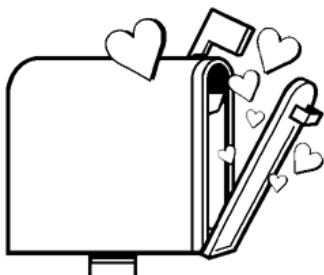
- |      |   |      |   |
|------|---|------|---|
| 2/1  | Marianna Hiemstra                               | 2/15 | Andrew Forsythe   |
| 2/2  | Charles Myers                                   | 2/17 | Cande Vermeulen, Jolene Cron, Katie Hillenbrand, Audrey Linebaugh |
| 2/4  | Billy Manuszak                                  | 2/18 | Jill Barton   |
| 2/5  | Steven Dibble                                   | 2/19 | Anna Sponseller   |
| 2/6  | Rex Bragg                                       | 2/20 | Laverne Swinehart, Kristopher Dibble                              |
| 2/7  | Laurie Nic, Avery Slancik                       | 2/21 | Maxine Fuller, Betty Gruber                                       |
| 2/8  | Tom Hardy                                       | 2/25 | Daniel Willoughby   |
| 2/9  | Noreen Heikes                                   | 2/26 | Diana Girolami, Andrew Falconer, Taylor Linebaugh                 |
| 2/11 | Amber Shirah, Todd Dibble                       | 2/27 | Judi McNett, Virginia Maslanik, Sara Carrier                      |
| 2/14 | Michael Snyder, Alexandria Oswald, Lauren Burke | 2/28 | Edward Haberle, Christopher Young, Brian Eberstein                |
|      |   | 2/29 | Larry Barton  |

## February Anniversaries

- |      |                                |                  |
|------|--------------------------------|------------------|
| 2/14 | <b>Joan &amp; James Smola</b>  | <b>25 Years!</b> |
| 2/17 | <b>Vera &amp; Chuck Walker</b> | <b>50 Years!</b> |
| 2/18 | Sally & Larry Kohler           |                  |
| 2/22 | Barbara & Billy Adams          |                  |
| 2/29 | Majorie & Al Thomas            |                  |



## Mail Bag



To My Church Family,

During a time like this we realize how much our family and friends really mean to us... Your expression of sympathy will always be remembered. Thank you so much for the plant in memory of Jake.

Church Friend, Maud



## Vicksburg United Methodist Church

**\*Return Service Requested\***

217 S Main St  
Vicksburg MI 49097

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### Sunday Worship:

8:50am Contemporary Service  
10:00am Sunday School for all ages  
11:10am Traditional Service

**Alive in Christ, and it Shows!**

**WE'RE ON THE WEB!**

**WWW.VICKSBURGUMC.ORG**

# The Visitor

Volume 19, Issue 2

February 2012

## Cartoon Corner



Thanks to Dad Hengeveld (See Genesis 6-8) 02-05-

I'M SORRY SIR, BUT YOU'LL HAVE TO PAY  
\$25 FOR THE SECOND BAG OR I CANNOT LET  
YOU BOARD ... ARK POLICY

## Bible Quiz

During Jesus' time in the wilderness after his baptism, Satan tempted him to do three things. Which of the following was not one of the temptations?

- A. To change water into wine so wedding guests would know he was God's Son
- B. To throw himself down from the top of the temple, expecting angels to save him
- C. To turn stones into bread to satisfy his hunger
- D. To worship Satan in order to gain all the world's kingdoms



Answer: A (See Matthew 4:1-11 and Luke 4:1-13.)