



The Visitor

Vicksburg United Methodist Church

Volume 18, Issue 3

March 2011

The Glory of Spring

A pastor looked out his study window and was smitten by the glory of spring bursting forth all around him. He recalled a story about a Jewish doctor freed from a Nazi concentration camp.



The doctor began walking along a country road and was captivated by the green meadows, the wildflowers, the singing birds. He felt touched by the master artist's work in nature. Indeed, the doctor was so moved that he knelt by the road in prayer. He decided that God was giving him a whole new life. He was becoming a healthy human being again, instead of a victim of horror and hate.

The pastor, remembering that story, praised God as he saw the earth blooming once again with indescribable beauty.

-The Newsletter Newsletter, March 2011



Inside this issue:

Pastor's Article	2
Missions	2
Prayer	3
Care Corner	4
Kid's Hope	5
Heart & Hands	5
UMW	6
Finance	6
Announcements	7
Mail	9
B-day/Anniv.	9

Church Staff

Pastor

Dr. Bufford Coe

Administrative Assistant

Kirsten Russell

Choir/Praise Band Director

Tamra Stamm

Custodians

Paul French & Mike Chapman

Director of Caring Min.

Laurie Nic

Financial Assistant/ Webmaster

Trish VanTichelt

Heart & Hands Teacher/ Director

Amber Morris

Kids Hope USA Director

Barb Bladt

Youth Director

Hank Stamm

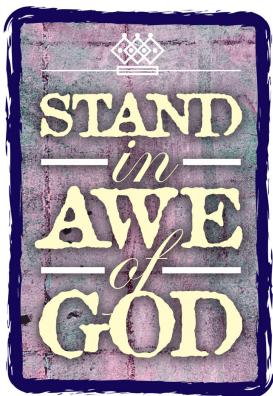
Newsletter Editor

Trish VanTichelt

A Great Fit

A caller to Christian radio station KLOVE spoke of the amazing way God restored her struggling marriage. On the weekend that she and her husband separated, they each attended different services on different days at their large, multi-campus church.

For an object lesson, the pastor had purchased three 1,500-piece puzzles and given one piece to each worshiper that weekend. The woman took hers home and placed it on her dresser.



Ecclesiastes 5:7b, NIV

That Sunday, the husband stopped by the house to do yard work. When the woman walked by her dresser, she noticed that another puzzle piece was attached to hers—and it fit. It was the piece her husband had received at church.

The woman said that was a loud sign from God that she and her husband “fit” together and would be okay. Life and marriage aren't always perfect, but she framed the puzzle pieces “as a constant reminder to our covenant to each other” and to God's promises.

-The Newsletter Newsletter, March 2011

Pastor's Article

Each year, every United Methodist pastor is required to submit lengthy statistical and financial reports to the annual conference. While completing these reports can be time-consuming and tedious, they do provide an interesting snapshot of the life of that congregation over the previous year. Inevitably, some of the figures are encouraging and some are discouraging. Let me highlight for you some of the more encouraging figures from this year's report.

- Last year we received ten new members on profession of faith compared to seven the year before.
- The number of young adults (ages 19-30) involved in Sunday School and other small group ministries increased from sixteen to twenty-one.
- The number of people served by community ministries of an educational nature such as Kids Hope, scouts, and preschool increased from 183 to 207 and the number of people served through community ministries for outreach, justice, and mercy such as Angel Food, Angel Tree, and Generous Hands increased from 900 to 1040!
- The debt on our new building decreased from \$1,021,000 to \$1,001,000.
- Giving to the General Operating Fund increased from \$293,000 to \$300,000 (in round figures) and General Operating Fund income from all sources (including rent, interest, fundraisers, and tuition) increased from \$329,000 to \$336,000.
- Giving to the Building Fund increased from \$95,710 to \$100,182.
- Last but certainly not least, we paid 100% of our Ministry Shares compared with only 75% in 2009!

While numbers do not tell the whole story, these numbers give us some indication of the vitality of a local congregation. I look forward to being able to report even more positive numbers to you at this time next year!

Love in Christ,



Dr. Bufford Coe

Mission Moment

Dear Pastor,

Greetings in the mighty name of Jesus Christ! This is a letter of appreciation for your leadership and participation in the covenant of Ministry Shares. Mere words are not enough to thank you, especially because we are in tough economic times and the world needs us more than ever before. It is through your leadership that we are able to carry out our mission around the world.

I specifically want to thank our 100% giving congregations to Ministry Shares. You are an example of living by God's economy. According to the final report from the treasurer's office, 39 congregations gave 100% with 4 giving over 100%, 4 gave between 75% and 99.99%, and 15 gave 50% to 74.99%. The most improved were Bloomingdale and Paw Paw UMCs, both at 100% for 2010. Congratulations! In addition to Ministry Shares, our district was the second largest contributor to special giving in our conference. We gave over \$333,000 to ministries such as camping, missionaries and UMCOR! I am constantly reminded that according to the 2008 *Book of Discipline*, para 340.2e, pastors are to provide leadership in full payment of apportionments. I recognize that sometimes it is easier said than done. I pray that each of you continue to educate your congregations about the commitment they have as a United Methodist Church, as well as teach about our great connection.

In the upcoming years, we will be utilizing our connection more than ever before, especially through our General Agencies and Commissions. These agencies and commissions are staffed with our best and brightest and have an overview of the best practices being applied in our connection across the world. They are a resource for all of us.

Once again, thanks for your leadership and participation in the covenant of Ministry Shares. It enables God's will to be done around the world and undergirds our connection as United Methodists. If I can be of any help in providing leadership and education about Ministry Shares, do not hesitate to let me know.

Peace and blessings, Rev. Neil Davis

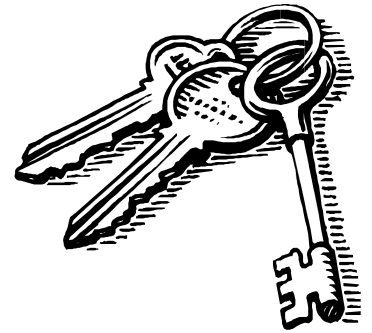
Prayer

Faith is not a destination, it is a journey.

Finding Your Keys

"There is very little power in the key that fits my car," Pastor Jack Hayford said. "The car engine has power, but it does not come to life without my key being put into the ignition. In other words, I don't have the power to go outside and get myself going 60 miles per hour, but I have access to a resource that can get me moving at that speed.

"Jesus said, 'I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven' (Matthew 16:19). Keys mean the *authority*, the *privilege*, and the *access*. Some things will not be turned on unless *you* turn them on. Some things will not be turned loose unless *you* turn them loose. Some things will not be set free unless *you* set them free. The key doesn't make the power of the engine, it *releases* the power of the engine."



Having legal possession of the keys to a car was evidence that we have the *right* to that car. In the same way, because Jesus gives us the keys of His kingdom, we have the right to come before God in prayer. "As many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God" (John 1:12). As His children we have the right to come before our heavenly Father in prayer.

Having the keys to the car also means that we have the *responsibility* for it. In that same way, we are responsible for our side of the partnership with God in prayer. If we don't use the key of prayer, then it is likely that nothing will happen. In other words, there won't be anything released or unlocked.

Our problem is we sometimes forget where we put the keys to our car. The same is true in our prayer life. We misplace the key that unlocks God's power. We come upon a situation, or a situation comes upon us, and we forget to use the key of prayer to move powerfully in and through it. Whenever I lose the keys to my car, I ask God to show me where they are and help me to find them. He always does. Whenever we lose sight of our prayer key, we can ask Him to help us find it again. He will do that too.

Start The Engine...

A key is no good to us if we never use it to unlock anything. If the car key doesn't connect with the ignition, the power of the engine will not be ignited. God's power is always available to us, but if we don't use the key of prayer, we can't appropriate this power for our lives.

~Stormie Omartian

Membership Class & Inquiries

All adults and high school students who are interested in joining Vicksburg United Methodist Church or members who are interested in learning more about the United Methodist Church or our local congregation are invited to attend four orientation sessions that will be held at 10:00 a.m. beginning Sunday, March 27. These classes will prepare persons to become members of our church family and the global United Methodist Church, but persons may choose at the end of the classes whether or not they wish to join. Our new members will be welcomed into the congregation during the worship services on Easter Sunday, April 24. For more information, contact Pastor Buff or Laurie Nic.

Caring Corner

WOW!

Did we ever have a great year of WOW!?! Thanks so much to all of the willing volunteers who cooked, served, purchased, cleaned up, taught, and in general showed Jesus love to our community this year! A special thank you goes to the teachers of the classes who spent many hours preparing and teaching our little ones up through our adults. God Bless you all!! WOW is done for the school year but we plan to resume in September of 2011!

Please take a moment to thank these wonderful folks!

"Yay, God" Man: Dr. Ken Franklin

WOW night secretary: Cheryl Lee

Adult classes: Pastor Buff Coe, Nancy Fulton, Tricia VanTichelt, Denice Pauli, Linda Cleveland, Vera Walker, Tamra Stamm, Laurie Nic and "The Geek Squad"

Gym Leaders: Brea Conant & Julia Cantu

Preschool: Kristen Hossink, Kara Nic & Christine Mohr

K-2nd: Heather Fenwick, Jennifer Thompson & Maddie Hossink

3rd – 5th: Darcy Osborn & Logan Pauli

Middle School: Hank Stamm, Mike and Jody Tuinier, Don & Char Dailey

Kitchen Crew: Linda and Symon Olenczuk, Marie Ketvirtis, Dona Nichols & Sandy Hanson

Servers: Ron and Carol Scheff, Lori Tichvon, and Shelly McCauley

Clean up Crew: David Nic, JoDee Nelson

MEMBER CARE NEWS:

Homebound? In a Care Facility? Do you know of someone from our congregation who is now homebound or living in a care facility that we should add to our lists? We send cards or visit and deliver flowers to these folks near Christmas and Easter. Our caring ministries director also visits them at other times during the year. Please call the office to update our information. Thanks!



Kids Hope

Dear Church Family,

I recently had the enormous pleasure of meeting with every single student in our program. I was helping them get t-shirts ready for tie-dying, which they will wear at our upcoming Camp Party. The teachers at Tobey were so patient as I asked to "borrow" most students from their classrooms.

Securing rubber bands to fabric is much harder than you would think! Each child put a lot of thought into what designs they could make and I know they will be thrilled with the unique results. Most of the time we were doing this in the school halls, sometimes at a stray desk, often on the floor, always surrounded by other students who were very interested in what we were doing. Unintentionally it turned into a wonderful opportunity to have our Kids Hope kids be the center of attention in a fun and positive way. Proudly they announced to fellow classmates and staff that they were doing this for **their** party. Coming through in every conversation I had was how much they valued the relationship with their mentors and how special they felt because that individual came to see them every week. After the holidays one student/mentor match was unable to meet for a couple of weeks. When I saw the classroom teacher in the hall I asked her if the child was happy to be seeing his mentor again. "Happy", she said, "happy doesn't even begin to describe him. He was beside himself with joy!" All because someone from our church goes to see him for one hour a week. We actually have a need for two mentors to help some children who were signed up for the program, but who have not been matched with anyone yet. One hour of your time in "exchange" for a child's joy is an incredible deal.

Please make it possible for our ministry to reach out and include these two first graders!

Faithfully, Barb

KIDS HOPE STORY

"Can I stay with you all day?" asked Lynn of her Kids Hope mentor, Miss Mary. Miss Mary smiled and replied, "No honey, you need to go back to class with Mrs. C. "She'll be fine without me," responded Lynn, "she has lots of other kids!"

One child. One hour. One church. One school.

Heart & Hands—NOW ENROLLING!

Heart and Hands Christian Preschool is accepting enrollment for the 2011-2012 school year! **ENROLL BY APRIL 1ST TO RECEIVE A DISCOUNTED REGISTRATION FEE OF \$40.00!** Tuition rates are not expected to increase for next year. Scholarships are available. Enrollment is open to the community! Tell everyone you know! Visits are welcome to see our facilities and experience a little bit of what class is like. Contact Amber Morris for more information (269)649-2343 ext 106.

4 Year Olds M/W/F (9-12pm)

Co-op 9 Payments of \$105.00

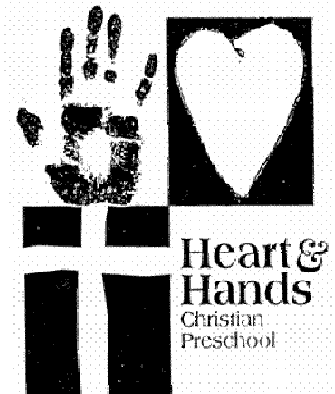
Non Co-op 9 Payments of \$135.00

3 Year Olds T/TH (9-11:30am)

Co-op 9 Payments of \$65.00

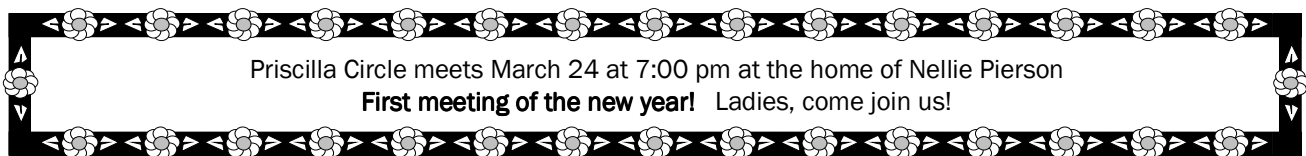
Non Co-op 9 Payments of \$90.00

Registration Fee: A non-refundable fee of \$60.00 is due at the time of enrollment.



March United Methodist Women

March 3	12:30pm	UMW General Mtg—pledge service Aileen Greanya & Penny Sult with Melva Kohler and Jean Philport's report on Sudan
March 4		Church Women United—World Day of Prayer
March 10	9am	Merry Martha Circle
March 10		UMW Spring Fling at Marcellus UMC (District)
March 13		Susanna Wesley Bake Sale
March 17	9:30am	Susanna Wesley Circle—Hostess: Melva Kohler & LaVon Rolfe
March 24	9:30am	Executive Team Mtg
March 24	7pm	Priscilla Circle at home of Nellie Pierson



We hope you will take a few minutes to glance through your UMW Program Book for 2011. Check out our programs and activities for the year. **Last year Vicksburg UMW sent in over \$9,600.00 toward the mission outreach of our church.** We give to local, district, conference and national mission. Including South County Community Services, UM Community House in Grand Rapids, Kalamazoo Gospel Mission, WMU Wesley Foundation, Church Women United, and toward the Mission Trip of our own VUM youth each year.

Our circles sponsor Mother/Daughter and Father/Son events, and adopted many people for Christmas, as well as sponsoring the Christmas Child shoeboxes and many other activities. We hold our two HUGE Rummage Sales each year. We also have an Email Circle and a very active online Reading Program Circle and a "hands on" mission circle. UMW is a vital part of our congregation. We have mission education programs and activities through out the year. We are responsible for our church's Lenten Breakfast in the Spring as well as serving our church family and others with Funeral Lunches. In December we sponsor a Christmas Program for the congregation. These are some but not all of our activities.



Please note, on the back inside cover of the program booklet is a membership/pledge card for your convenience. If you are not already a part of UMW we invite you to become involved. Your card and donation can be sent to the UMW Treasurer at the church address or dropped in the offering plate. Our Treasurer is Penny Sult. Our Membership Chairperson is LaVon Rolfe, she will be happy to answer your questions about UMW.

A Note From Finance!

*Every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessings of the Lord you God which He has given you.
Deuteronomy 16:17*

Praise the Lord all bills are current! Why not sign up for electronic giving? It is a great way to give your tithe without having to worry about the weather or vacations. Look for information on this in the blue folders in the pew or contact Trish VanTichelt. Remember in order to pay our ministry shares we need some fund raisers. If you have an idea please contact the staff and start planning it NOW. Take a look at the tiles on the wall. You can be a part of this legacy for only a \$50 donation. It is a great way to remember a person, date, event or to share your Love of God. Don't forget about the church's recycling program. You can check out the church's web site or contact Trish VanTichelt for more information on what we can recycle for cash. Please continue to pray for the Church and her finances as we go forward into Spring. We want to continue to be an example of Christ for our Community.
God Bless: The Finance Committee.

Coming up for Lent

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. Reservations are not needed; everyone is welcome. The locations of the Lenten breakfasts are as follows:

- March 15 Vicksburg United Methodist Church, 217 South Main Street
- March 22 Vicksburg Assembly of God, 403 South Kalamazoo Street
- March 29 Chapman Memorial Church of the Nazarene, 7520 East U Ave
- April 5 St. Martin Catholic Church, 5855 East W Avenue
- April 12 Lord of Life Lutheran Church, 9420 Portage Road
- April 19 Lakeland Reformed Church, 10442 Sprinkle Road



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.



Ash Wednesday

Ash Wednesday

An Ash Wednesday service will be held in our sanctuary on Wednesday, March 9 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.

Announcements

There will be NO Sunday School April 3rd. There WILL BE Sunday School on April 10th and the kids WILL be singing in the Traditional Service.

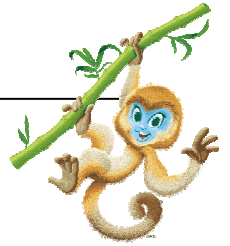
Daylight Saving Time begins Sunday, March 13. Remember to set your clocks ahead one hour before going to bed Saturday night.

NEEDED; A long rectangular table for the History/Archive Room at the church. Anywhere from 8 -10 foot long (extensions are okay to reach this length). Prefer something of a antique/vintage era. We plan to use this table for multiple purposes: Examples: historical work, as a meeting room table and a classroom table, etc.

Call Nancy Fulton 649-1649

Announcements Continued

Party Time Sing & Play, Wild Bible Adventures, Bamboo Blast Games, Chadder's Movie Mania, Crazy Crafts, Treetop Treats, & Rowdy Wrap-Up awaits one and all as Vicksburg UMC prepares for our VBS program this summer "PandaMania"!



From music to snacks and everything in between, each part of PandaMania VBS is intentionally designed to focus on the things that matter—connecting kids to God—and eliminating the things that don't. It's about preparing each child's heart to receive the gospel message in an unforgettable way. It's about enabling kids to share God's love with others. It's about why you do VBS.

PandaMania VBS is intentionally designed to connect kids to God, create change in their hearts, and give them opportunities to share God's love with others.

Making Jesus real to kids.

If you would like to help with one of the most exciting weeks of the year at VUMC ~ August 8 - 12, 9:00 - 12:00 ~ talk to Lisa Coe.



Donations Needed...
Gift bags and tissue paper are needed for the welcome goody bags that our Newcomer Care Committee gives to visitors. If you can help out, supplies can be left at the Welcome Center.

Looking for some structured time in your afternoon??

Looking for something different in this weather?

Want a little exercise with friends from the church?

We are attempting to get together in the Family Life Center on Tuesdays for "Chair Volleyball" and Thursdays for "Pickle Ball" at 2pm.

ABSOLUTELY NO EXPERIENCE REQUIRED!!!! We have people to teach you the fundamentals! NO competition, just plain laughter and fun!

Bring a friend and enjoy the rest of winter. For more information, call Vera Walker.

Introducing Tips for Tiles...
We are taking a collection of loose change (or more!) for tiles in our NEW mosaic wall leading into the Family Life Center. We would like to honor the many great members of VUMC who have passed away in the past 10-15 years that had a vital part in the building addition, but there is no one left to buy a tile for them.
Look for special marked envelopes in the pews to help out. Contact Vera Walker or Trish VanTichelt if you would like more information.



Mail Bag

I would like to express my deepest appreciation to all who had a part in helping me celebrate my 80th birthday. God has given me the gift of life and each of you have helped to make each year a gift to be part of this church family. Thank you!!

Betty Thomas

Dear UMC,

A thank you for praying for me during my medical crisis. They have meant so much to me. I've met and run into people from your church that have told me they are praying. I'm so glad I live in a community United in Christ! It doesn't matter where we worship, just that we all worship the One, True God!

I am doing well. Just some numbness left. Psalm 30:2, "O Lord, I cried to you for help and you restored my health."

Together in Christ, Christine Butcher

March Birthdays

- 3/2 Harrison Barton
- 3/3 Charlotte Rice, Florence Hayward
- 3/4 Jeff Geiger, Kari McClish
- 3/7 Norm Hackett, Mike Tuinier, Meg Goecker
- 3/9 Willis Green
- 3/11 Alan Smola
- 3/12 Charles Girolami
- 3/13 Nelly Avis, Barbara Addis, Mary Rusk
- 3/18 Alexandra Morris
- 3/19 Jo Pope



Young at Heart

- 3/23 Suzette Coffey, Carol Berkey, Marc Tilbury, Mark Johnson
- 3/24 Brad Beams
- 3/25 Chris Morris
- 3/26 Susan Halladay, Joseph Oswalt
- 3/27 Dee Dee Hoy, Adam Lampe
- 3/28 Amy Slancik
- 3/29 Barbara Hughey, Connor Polsinelli, Robert Gruber
- 3/30 Michael Asher
- 3/31 Vernon Noel

March Anniversaries



- 3/3 Shelly & Kent McCauley
- 3/6 Mary Ann & Jeff Kudary
- 3/22 Elizabeth & Jack Page
- 3/31 Jody & Mike Tuinier



Vicksburg United Methodist Church

Return Service Requested

217 S Main St
Vicksburg MI 49097
Phone: 269-649-2343
Fax: 269-649-2538
E-mail: reception@vicksburgumc.org

PRSR STD
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
VICKSBURG MI
PERMIT NO 41

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 18, Issue 3

March 2011

Cartoon Corner



Bible Quiz

Just before the Last Supper (John 13), Jesus took off his outer robe, poured water into a basin and began washing his disciples' feet. One disciple, however, protested having the Lord wash his feet. Jesus told the reluctant man that unless he allowed Jesus to wash his feet, he really had no share in Christ's leadership. The disciple then relented. He said Jesus could wash not only his feet but his hands and head, as well.

Choose the name of this disciple from the list below:

- A. Peter
- B. John
- C. Andrew
- D. Judas



Answer: A (See John 13:1-9)