

# THE CROSS & THE FLAME



**Viroqua  
United Methodist  
Church  
221 S. Center Ave**

**JUNE 2024**



Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.

And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 4.4-7

First of all, I want to thank God for giving me the opportunity to serve you as a pastor. It has been a privilege to know you and be part of these beautiful congregations. I have seen their fidelity, their dedication, and their love for our heavenly Father and for his Church and they have been an example and inspiration for my life.

It was five years where we walked together through difficult times where we had to learn to support the Church even when we ourselves did not feel strong enough to do so; but that the work you did was key for our congregations to feel God's love and his company during one of the worst times we have experienced in modern history.

As you know, the image of Jesus walking beside us is my favorite; and it is because walking alongside Jesus is walking alongside his church and, when I see you, your faith, your generosity, and your hard work, I also see the face of Jesus reflected in yourselves and I can experience your love through you.

I have nothing left but to thank each one of you for your love, your patience, your friendship and for everything you taught me.

Dear friends, you will always be in my heart and a big part of me will stay with you. I take with me the love you gave me, and you can be sure that you will always be loved by me.

Thank you for everything you have done for me and, I have no doubt, you will do the same for your new pastor and his family.

See you soon and may the love of God endure in your hearts.

Vayan con Dios!

Your forever friend and pastor,

Erika Martinez-Flores.

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## JUNE ANNIVERSARIES

Mary & Chuck Mulvaney Kemp	June 20th
Carolyn & Gerald Schroeder	June 22nd



## JUNE BIRTHDAYS

Rita Olson	June 4
Elizabeth Roberts	June 6th
Mary Mulvaney Kemp	June 7th
Henry Roberts	June 17th
Jolene Gudgeon	June 19th
Kalia Schultz	June 20th
Jackie Maly	June 23rd
Irene Fortney	June 30th

*God's Blessings on You!*



## Long Range Objective Viroqua UMC

**Develop a unique identity by becoming servants of the community and providing Christian opportunities for all people.**

## OUR PRAYER Viroqua UMC

God, the giver of life, generous giver of gifts and abilities, help us discover our talents and have the courage to use them to serve you and our community with unimagined new purposes and deepening love for Jesus Christ. Amen.

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





# BIRTHDAY POTLUCK

Some of the Tables





# Graduates

Congratulations to our 2024 graduates! Colten Dustin graduated from Viroqua High School and Mitchell Hanson graduated from the University of WI Eau Claire. We pray the very best for both of you as you complete this milestone and move on to the next phase of your lives. We will recognize Colten and Mitchell during the worship service on June 2nd.



Mitchell will be a grades 7-12 History Teacher.

## Radio Broadcast

Earlier this spring, we asked radio listeners to call or text during our worship broadcast to let us know they are listening. As we evaluate the costs and benefits of our various ministries, we are interested in knowing whether the radio broadcast is a wise use of our resources.

We knew only a small percentage of listeners would actually call in, so we were surprised to get approximately ten responses--some during the broadcast, and some making verbal contact later in the week to tell us how they rely on the service. Those who listen really do appreciate it!

Based on the feedback we received, we want to continue broadcasting our worship services. It has been a tradition since 1960, and we believe that, with your help, we can continue it.

People can show their support for this ministry by sponsoring or contributing towards a radio broadcast. It costs \$60 per Sunday for the broadcast, but we accept gifts in any amount.

If you sponsor the broadcast, most people use the sponsorship to honor a loved one or celebrate a special occasion. You can sign up in the church office, phone in the info, or mail contributions. Note that you need not be a church member to support the broadcast--we welcome contributions from friends and neighbors in our wider community too!

Thank you to those who took the time to respond with feedback on our worship broadcast. Please feel free to contact the office with any other comments on this ministry.

## Viroqua UMC April/May Giving

Thank you to those who keep up their giving. This is so much appreciated, as we do our best to continue God's work. The amount needed each week to meet our 2023 Budget is \$2,952.

April 7	\$1,986.98
April 14	\$1,384.44
April 21	\$911.44
April 28	\$1,651.44
May 5	\$2,569.72
May 12	\$852.74
May 19	\$1,418.00

## *Pastor Erika Farewell*

**SAVE THE DATE! SUNDAY, JUNE 23RD!**

A potluck dinner and program in honor of Pastor Erika will be held following her last worship service with us on June 23rd.

All are invited to participate as we share memories, reflect, and express our love and appreciation for all Erika has done and meant to us during the five years she has been in Viroqua. We also want to send our love and best wishes with pastor Erika as she and Jorge embark on a new season of their lives.

May God be with us all!

## **Pastor Paul Lee**



Pastor Paul Lee has been appointed by Bishop Hee-Soo Jung and District Superintendent Amanda Stein to serve the Viroqua and Westby United Methodist Churches beginning on July 1st.

May we keep Pastor Lee and his family in our prayers as they make the transition to Viroqua from Evanston, IL where he has been in the seminary. We also pray for our churches as we enter this new beginning, this new season.

We want to do everything we can to make the Lee family feel welcome when they get here. People are encouraged to take meals to the new family during their first week as they are getting settled.

A welcoming potluck will be held after worship on July 14th.

## *June Sunday Servants*

	<b>Liturgist</b>	<b>Ushers</b>	<b>Greeter</b>	<b>Screen Operator</b>	<b>Communion Stewards</b>
<b>June 2</b>	Heidi Garrett	Janet Welch Joanne Hornby	Janette Hanson	Luke Garrett	Phyllis Kalnins Janette Hanson
<b>June 9</b>		Chuck Mulvaney Kemp TBD	Alice Sloane		
<b>June 16</b>		Jerry Brenneman Joanne Hornby	Dale Gudgeon		
<b>June 23</b>		Mary Mulvaney Kemp Marlo Volden	Avis Marino	Hanson Family	
<b>June 30</b>		Janet Welch Cavan Fang	Betty Ross	Finn Brenneman	

## Institute of Congregational Development (ICD)

Pastor Erika and Verna Drake attended this month's session of the ICD on May13-15. This month's session was a field trip to *The Gathering Church* in St. Louis, MO. The lead Pastor is Matt Miofsky and he met with the group to share about this accomplished church's mission and vision.

Erika and Verna related that a big takeaway was how invitational the church was and is to everyone. Keep inviting, inviting, and inviting and then form lasting connections with those who respond. People have questions and they often want to talk with someone about their questions. Start there.

### FOOD PANTRY

Lorna and David Peterson take our food from the shopping cart to the Food Pantry each month. When they turn it in, it's weighed. This month they turned in 11 pounds of food from our food collection cart. Last month it was 16 pounds. Let's keep up the good work!



**Open Doors Forum (a series of occasional community conversations) presents ...**

## It Ain't Easy Being Green

This lively presentation on the topic of plastic pollution will begin with a brief "Plastic 101". Then we'll test our detective skills in an interactive game of investigating everyday products to decide if they are truly sustainable. Viroqua Plastic Free is presenting this program.

**Wednesday, May 29, at 7PM**



**Everyone is welcome.**  
Program will be held in the dining hall  
of the Viroqua United Methodist  
Church

221 S. Center Ave., Viroqua  
(near the Viroqua Post Office)

*enter through the double doors facing  
Center Ave.*



**Open hearts  
Open minds  
Open doors**

Building is handicapped-accessible, with an elevator located at the northwest corner, just off the parking lot

Views presented are not necessarily those of the Viroqua United Methodist Church.  
608-637-3551 [viroquawestbyumc.org/Viroqua](http://viroquawestbyumc.org/Viroqua)

## Lawn Mowing

Thanks to Gregory Cheever and Aaron Hanson for seeing that the lawn has been mowed each week in May. The church's lawn mower needs to be replaced. Aaron has been trying to fix it along with another mower that was offered for donation, but neither of them are going to work.

By the time Marlo mows during the first week of June, there will be a new mower. We need others to sign up for mowing! The sign up sheet is in the Narthex.

## Community Meal

A committee of people met on June 19th to discuss a menu for the Community Meal that we will be serving on Monday, June 24th. It sounds like we'll be doing "build your own sandwich." The committee will meet again this Sunday, May 26th to make more plans.

12-15 people will be needed on the 24th to help prepare the food, serve, and clean up. Monetary donations for the groceries will be most appreciated also. Please consider being a part of this mission to the community.

## Taxi Tickets



The Hospitality Committee would like to be sure that everyone who wants to be in church is able to get here. They have some taxi tickets that they would be happy to make available to those who could use that service. Please let the office know so that we may get the tickets to you.

## Book Group

The Book Group has chosen *The Heaven and Earth Grocery Store* by James Mc Bride for our next read. This best selling book contains themes of race, discrimination, and the power of unity. We welcome everyone to join us. Our next discussion will be on Monday, July 1<sup>st</sup>.



## Lost and Found

We're accumulating quite a collection of items on our lost and found shelf above the coat rack. Check it out! There's even a jacket and a cane.



# Little Free Library

We are thrilled to announce that our beloved Little Free Library, is now officially registered with the Little Free Library national nonprofit organization. As a result, our library is now mapped on the Little Free Library's website, joining a worldwide network of libraries.

There many benefits to being registered including:

**Being Mapped** - By being mapped on the Little Free Library website, our library becomes easily discoverable to book lovers both locally and to visitors. People can use the online map to locate our library, making it a destination for those who are passionate about sharing and reading books.

**Greater Community Engagement** - Joining the Little Free Library network encourages community members to engage with our library. It fosters a sense of shared ownership and pride in maintaining a space where everyone can contribute to and benefit from the joy of reading.

**Access to Resources and Support** - As part of the Little Free Library organization, we gain access to valuable resources, including book lotteries, ideas for community events, and promotional materials. This support helps us keep our library vibrant and engaging for all.

**Contribution to a Global Movement** - By registering with Little Free Library, we contribute to a larger movement that promotes literacy and a love for reading across the globe. Our participation helps in spreading the mission of increasing book access and building community through the power of shared books.

**Encouragement of Literacy and Learning** - Our mapped presence encourages more people to take, share, and return books, thereby fostering a culture of continuous learning and literacy. It provides a valuable resource for children and adults alike to discover new stories and ideas.

**Interactive Features through the Little Free Library App** - We are excited to share that you can download the Little Free Library app from the Google App Store. The app allows users to search for nearby Little Free Libraries, add our library to their favorites list, and sign our virtual guest book. Visitors can indicate if they took or shared a book.

**Access to Book Giveaway Lotteries** - By registering our library, we also gain access to book giveaway lotteries. Publishers collaborate with Little Free Library to provide copies of some of their titles to be given away, potentially helping us stock our library with a variety of books.

We invite everyone in our community to visit our library, take a book, share a book, and be part of this incredible journey of spreading knowledge and joy through reading.

Thank you for your support, and happy reading!



## June Online Study: The Love of God, Our Heavenly Father

Father's Day is in June, so we thought that this would be a good time to learn more about the love God, our heavenly Father has for us. These studies will reveal how God is a good and perfect Father and help us connect to the power of God's love for us so we can be transformed. Please join us in this month's online studies as we discover more about our heavenly Father's love.

Please use these links to join the online studies:

"The Father Loves You" – begins June 1

<https://bible.com/p/66728472/2b0232d80362e92de8390077ba233a59>

"The Empowering Love Of The Father" – begins June 17

<https://bible.com/p/66728493/76da492dc94c2f96a66b94fea641806a>



*These online studies and more can be accessed through the Bible App or [bible.com](http://bible.com) website, which are free resources. In addition to wonderful devotional and 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](http://www.bible.com).*



# Letter from Bishop Hee-Soo Jung

## Following the General Conference

### ***Bishop's Soul Food - General Conference***

The postponed and much anticipated 2020 General Conference in Charlotte, North Carolina has concluded. It was an amazing experience – filled with powerful worship and inspiring missional reports all grounded and surrounded in prayer.

There were many areas in which petitions were submitted and approved. There was intentionality about the constitutional amendment that creates the regionalization of the United States, this being an equal partner with all other "central" conferences (those previously designated that are outside the U.S.). This legislation will need to be ratified by each Annual Conference requiring a 2/3 majority vote of all conferences.

After years of intensive and prayerful debate, the General Conference delegates from all over the world have discerned to remove language that prohibited United Methodist clergy from performing weddings for same-gender couples. There are still some important things about this decision that I want laity and clergy to know.

First, pastors, as chief administrator of the church, and with responsibility to lead the congregations, make the decision about officiating at a wedding. This decision is based on several factors including the couples' preparation for the marriage covenant. The change in the Book of Discipline does not change the pastoral authority in making the decision about officiating at a wedding. There is no mechanism in Conference leadership nor desire on my part as bishop to determine pastoral authority as it pertains to marriage.

Second, churches will continue to determine what weddings are held in their church buildings. Further, the desires of all clergy are to be honored and not judged by others. We know that different people have different opinions on these matters and our churches are in different contexts within the bounds of the Conference and it is my expectation that the diversity of everyone's opinion and everyone's context is to be honored.

Third, is the removal of the prohibitions that prevented a Board of Ordained Ministry from recommending a LGBTQIA+ person for ordination. Qualified LGBTQIA+ persons approved by the Board of Ordained Ministry would now be licensed, commissioned, and ordained. As the bishop, the Cabinet will continue to work with churches and clergy to ensure we have the best match possible when making appointments. We will honor the gifts of pastors and congregation's traditions. We want everyone to have a vital ministry rather than one defined by conflict. Our continued goal is to enhance ministry through theological and missional compatibility. All will be accepted, so that ministry can thrive. Integrity will be a matter for all God's people and every church will be focused to grow into the vital ministry in this changing season. Your Bishop and Cabinet will carry the faithful works of supervision and service to all churches.

The United Methodist Church truly is an international global church. We are sensitive to and honor regional and cultural attitudes toward contentious issues. We celebrate the ways these recent decisions reinforce the primacy of God's love in our lives and the world. I also recognize how they will add complexity to our life together as United Methodists.

I have been diligent in practicing my lived-out faith within our community of believers, which is diverse and inclusive. It has been intentional that our Conference lives into "Beloved Community," which affirms the unity and oneness in God, "for by one Spirit we are all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free, and have been all made to drink into one Spirit." (1 Corinthians 12:13).

Through this lens of oneness in Christ, we are invited to examine and fully embrace the "beloved community," in which we welcome all and include all. It is our time to set aside political labels and societal aspirations and practice our faith in hospitality, grace, and compassion. We are now at a point of avenues for focused ministry with global intention.

As we begin to move into understanding the implications of these decisions, I once again remind us of a quote by one of the founders of Methodism, John Wesley, "Though we cannot think alike, may we not love alike? May we not be of one heart, though we are not of one opinion? Without all doubt, we may. Herein all the children of God may unite, notwithstanding these smaller differences."

May God make it so.

*Bishop Hee-Soo Jung*

# Administrative Council

May 22, 2024



Members Present: Gregory Cheever, Phyllis Kalnins, Kristen Parrott, Cavan Fang, Aaron Hanson, Dan Brown, Heidi Garrett, Barb Casper, Kathy Hanson, Pastor Erika.

The meeting was opened with a prayer by Pastor Erika.

A Farewell Potluck for Pastor Erika will be held on June 23<sup>rd</sup>. The SPRC will head up the planning for the program. That date will be Erika's last Sunday with us. She will be on vacation July 30<sup>th</sup>.

Another Potluck will be held on July 14<sup>th</sup> for Pastor Paul Lee, his first worship service with us. He will come to Viroqua on July 1<sup>st</sup>, but he doesn't start to preach until the 14<sup>th</sup>.

Our church serves the Community Meal on June 24<sup>th</sup>. The menu is being planned – build your own sandwich and more. We will need as many people as possible to help get the food ready and serve on the 24<sup>th</sup>.

Kathy asked the Council to think about the possibility of a 2 committee structure – a business committee and a programming committee. At this point it is believed that combining Finance, Council, Trustees, and possibly SPRC could easily work, but other committees don't have as much overlap. We'll revisit this.

## Committee Reports:

**Trustees:** There is some work to be done in the parsonage during the transition between pastors. We need to buy a new chair for the pastor's office. The air conditioner in the office will need to be checked because it doesn't start. A new lawn mower will be purchased.

**Missions:** Items and money are being collected for the In-Gathering at Annual Conference. The "It Ain't Easy Being Green" program is being advertised in the hopes of a good turnout. The committee will meet on June 2<sup>nd</sup>.

**SPRC Committee:** Phyllis is dealing with the transition from one pastor to another.

**Education:** The Committee won't be meeting again until August when Pastor Lee is here. The Little Library is registered. It shows up on the Little Free Library World map. Thanks to Heidi Garrett for doing this.

**Worship Committee:** See minutes elsewhere in the newsletter.

Motion made to adjourn by Kristen, seconded by Cavan. Motion passed at 9:10.

Next meeting Wednesday, June 19 @ 8:00 pm.

## Church Directory

Are you wondering when those Church Directories are coming? The pictures were taken in late January so it seems a long time ago that we started the project!

It has been a slow process. It took a month or more for us to get everything put together on our end and sent in.

Then the company put the book together, printed a draft, and sent it back to us for proofreading near the end of

April. Corrections were made and it was sent back to the company on May 13th. We even got Pastor Lee's picture in it!—along with Erika's! They said it would take three weeks to get the book printed after they had all the corrections.

We should have it by the middle of June!

Patience is a virtue! We'll enjoy it when we get it!

in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.

Proverbs 3: 6

# Finance Committee

May 22, 2024, 7:00 PM

Attendees: Aaron Hanson, Pastor Erika, Phyllis Kalnins, Cavan Fang, Kristen Parrott, Gregory Cheever, Kathy Hanson, Gregg Roberts, Heidi Garrett

## Joys and Concerns, Opening Prayer (Pastor Erika):

### Secretary's Report: (Gregg Roberts):

Foundation funds balance at approximately \$225,760—lowest it has been in at least five years. Phyllis motion to accept the report as given. Heidi second the motion. Motion carries.

### Treasurer's report (Gregory Cheever):

The Church ran approximately a \$353.11 deficit in April of 2024.

Aaron makes a motion to accept the report as presented. Heidi seconds the motion. Motion carries.

The FC would like to thank those volunteers that helped with the Rummage Sale with a postcard from the FC.

Individual thanks for individual donors to be addressed at the next Stewardship Council meeting..

### Fundraising:

Upcoming fundraisers: Do not currently have a planned fundraiser event.

### Upcoming expenses

Parsonage repairs for new pastor (new dishwasher, remove carpet, stain porches

Lawn mower needed for Church

### Action items:

- Cavan Fang will provide notes for those that helped with the Rummage Sale. FC members will review and sign.
- Phyllis Kalnins will research the Equity grant for pastor salary support through the conference
- Dan will discuss checkbook audit with Sonja Bjerkos
- June 2, after church:, *Special Finance Committee Budget Meeting potluck at 12 PM*

Meeting adjourned at 8:02



# Education Committee

May 6, 2024

Members Present: Heidi Garrett, Avis Marino, Kathy Hanson, Pastor Erika

## Old Business:

2024 Scholarship to Rachel Diehl—Janette handed this out to Rachel at the high school awards ceremony.

Graduate Recognition—will be held on June 2nd. Mitchell Hanson and Colten Dustin will be recognized. Mitchell is graduating from UW-EC and Colten from VHS.

Once a Month Wednesdays—last one for the season. We will look to start them again in October with the new Pastor. Everyone really enjoyed them this past year.

Sundae Sunday— We talked about possibly doing this in conjunction with Graduate Recognition. However, no final decision was made.

## New Business:

VBS—Immanuel Lutheran invited us to participate with them at their VBS held June 24-27 from 4:30-7:30 PM. It is for ages 3-10. We will share the invitation with families who have children in that age range.

Summer Picnic—We will wait to plan this with the new Pastor.

Blessing of the Backpacks—This will be held in August. We will wait to plan this with the new Pastor.

Next meeting— Monday August 5th @ 6:00 PM. We decided not to meet in June & July. We will meet again in August and do a Meet & Greet with the new Pastor.



## *Trustees Meeting*

May 14, 2024

Present: Dale Gudgeon, Jack Deters, Pete Gilman, Aaron Hanson, Phyllis Kalnins

We have new neighbors from Illinois in the house on Terhune that shares a parking lot easement with us. The new owners contacted the church to say that they want to maintain a cordial relationship with us.

There were no bills to pay today. A bill for the annual elevator service was received and sent to Greg for payment.

Law moving will now be done by us. Greg Cheever will mow in May. The Hanson Family offered a mower they have. It is being worked on by Aaron. Aaron and family mowed last Friday with their own mower. Phyllis has offered a battery powered mower to the church; but it may not be powerful enough to mow the entire lawn without charging the battery. This mower may be more suitable for the parsonage. Grady will mow until Pastor Erika moves.

The pastor's office is in need of a new desk chair. Aaron will investigate to find where we will get the best price on a chair.

Tasks that need attention at the parsonage:

Remove carpet upstairs/floors will then need refinishing

Back porch needs repairs

Attic need cleaning and possible vent cover

Dishwasher needs to be repaired-Aaron will run this by finance to see where the money might come from  
Strang's was at the parsonage to fix a leaky sink in the basement. They left the hot water disconnected. Hot water will need to be reconnected.

We will need to set a cleaning date for the parsonage as soon as Pastor Erika knows when she will be moving.

We received an estimate on resurfacing the parking lot. It was \$1586. We usually do this every 2-3 years so we will table this for this year.

The electric outlet next to the sanctuary doors is not working. Aaron will check on this.

We thank Cavan and Kristen for cleaning the sanctuary following the Bell Choir Concert.

We are considering work days both at the parsonage and the church.

Pastor Lee said that he might like to have the old piano in the parsonage. We do not know what condition the piano is in. We will check its condition and bring this issue to the Ad Council.

The basement floor needs buffing. Jim Porter said he would show Aaron how to do that.

Our next meeting will be June 4 at 6 p.m.

## *Memorial Day*



*Memorial Day honors the brave men and women who have sacrificed their lives in service to our country. These courageous individuals have given everything they had to defend our freedoms and way of life.*

*Memorial Day reminds us of the high price of freedom and the debt of gratitude we owe to those who have made the ultimate sacrifice. It is a day to reflect on their sacrifice and to honor their memory with gratitude.*

# Worship Committee

May 2, 2024

Those present were: Cavan Fang, Avis Marino, Kathy Hanson, Pastor Erika and Barb Casper.

Pastor Erika opened with a prayer.

Feedback from the request to have people let us know if they felt that the radio broadcast was being heard was positive. The only responses we got (about 6 or 7) were from those who regularly listened. More feedback would still be appreciated.



We would like the Sunday morning TV screen operators to know how much we appreciate their efforts to enhance our services. They are Grayden Hanson, Finn Brenneman, Gus Roberts, Huxley Brown, Luke Garrett and Phyllis Kalnins.

The organ lamp problem is temporarily being handled with a paper shade. No complaints so far from the congregation. The actual repair of the built-in organ light is being worked on. The problem is not as simple as replacing a bulb. There are strange fuses involved.

We will need pulpit replacement for June 9<sup>th</sup>, June 30<sup>th</sup>, and July 7<sup>th</sup>.

Sermon themes will follow the lectionary through June.

May 12<sup>th</sup> is Mother's Day and Ascension Sunday. The choir will be singing and the congregation will sing a "Mother" themed hymn. The Hospitality Committee will give little plants to the mother's. We thank Kathy for keeping them growing until they can be given out.

May 19<sup>th</sup> is Pentecost Sunday. We should start putting the "bring geraniums and wear red" notice in the bulletins ASAP. The choir will be singing and we will present the "Lord's Prayer" in different languages.

May 26<sup>th</sup> is Trinity Sunday, Peace with Justice Sunday and Memorial Day weekend. The choir will be singing and Kristin will decorate.

July 21<sup>st</sup> will be the Picnic in the Park Service in Westby. It's still early for details.

The possibility of contemporary music before services was mentioned. We will delve into this at the next meeting.

We will meet next time on June 6<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 pm.

Barb Casper, Chairperson

# UNITED WOMEN OF FAITH

May 8, 2024

The United Women of Faith met in the church lounge with the following members present: Janet Welch, Betty Ross, Ann Carlow, Barb Casper, Joanne Hornby, and Phyllis Kalnins.

President Janet read the report of the April meeting.

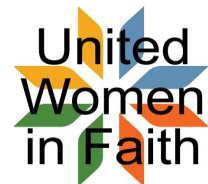
Barb read the treasurer's report. We have \$2,510.51.

As we don't meet during the summer, Janet read the Child Fund donators: May will be Pat Matz, June will be Betty Ross, July will be Joanne Hornby, August will be Phyllis Kalnins and September will be Jolene Gudgeon.

Sunday cookies and coffee for June is the Lydia Circle, July is Hospitality III, August is Hospitality II and September is Hospitality I.

Joanne led the program "Entertaining Angels". Hospitality is not about perfection but about genuine care and connection.

Our next meeting will be held on September 11<sup>th</sup>. Barb will furnish snacks.



# Hospitality Committee

May 16, 2024

Members Present: Avis Marino, Alice Sloane, Barb Casper, Betty Ross, Joanne Hornby, Gregory Cheever, Kathy Hanson, Pastor Erika.

The meeting opened with a prayer by Kathy.

We took Jean Knutson off our homebound list. She passed away on April 25th. Ken Tucker has moved to Vernon Estates.

The Birthday Potluck went well. We were pleased with the turnout. Thanks to those who decorated tables and especially to Mary Cheever as she decorated several tables.

We need to let people know that we have taxi tickets available for those who need a ride to church. We'll put it in the newsletter and make some phone calls.

We discussed developing a plan to take welcome baskets to new people in the neighborhood. Perhaps we will take a basket to all the neighbors this summer in place of the Block Party. We are to think about ideas and bring them to our next meeting. We'll make a definite plan at that time. We do know that we want to do something for Pastor Paul Lee and family when they get here. Pastor Erika suggested that we plan to have people take meals to them while they are getting settled the first week.

Our church is serving the Community Dinner on June 24th. There will be a meeting after church on Sunday, May 19th to start planning.

The Education committee will not be having Sundaes Sunday this spring. They suggest that the Hospitality Committee resume their project of serving ice cream cones outside after church. Graduates will be honored on June 2nd, so that might be a good day, but we need to see if it can coordinate with the Finance Committee plans to meet that day.

We'd like to have a farewell potluck and program for Pastor Erika on May 23rd. We need to coordinate with Westby about it.

It was suggested that we get the disposable communion cups for our homebound people so that they can take communion with us on the radio. We will get that implemented as soon as possible. The data gathering that was done regarding how many people listen on the radio was discussed. Those who listen appreciate the broadcast.

Next meeting June 20 @ 1:00 pm.

## GRATITUDE

A few years ago, a commercial on television began with a black and white clip of Lou Gehrig being honored by Yankee fans on his last day of play. His career was shortened by ALS, which is now called Lou Gehrig's disease, a debilitating muscle disease that eventually stops the heart. What would you have said in the face of this heartbreaking challenge? Amazingly, he begins: Today I consider myself the luckiest man on the face of the earth." How could he say that? Gratitude. Gratitude for all the gifts he had been given, for all the love he had been shown by fans, for all the opportunities he had. He focused on the joys not the losses. That's cultivating thankfulness!

*"Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts,  
since as members of one body you were called to peace.  
And be thankful"  
(Colossians 3:15)*

Being thankful doesn't come easy for some of us, but God says to cultivate thankfulness. How do you cultivate anything? You work at it. You nourish it. You do whatever it takes to make it thrive. Gratitude comes from humility. "A proud man is seldom a grateful man, for he never thinks he gets as much as he deserves" (Henry Ward Beecher). God is good and merciful. The price that Christ paid so that you could be redeemed is immense. His grace is so amazing. You truly are the luckiest person on the face of the earth!

*(taken from the Pierce Congregational Digest, Scranton ND)*



# June 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>2</b> 9am Adult Sunday School 10:30am Worship w/ Communion 11:45am Missions Committee Meeting 11:45am Finance Committee Planning Potluck 4pm Bible Study @ Kathy Hanson's	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b> 10:30am Exercise Group Pastor Erika & Cavan @ ICD	<b>5</b> 8am Prayer Group Pastor Erika & Cavan @ ICD	<b>6</b> 10:30am Exercise Group 6pm Worship Committee	<b>7</b> Pastor Erika @ Annual Conference	<b>8</b> Pastor Erika @ Annual Conference
<b>9</b> Pastor Erika @ Annual Conference 9am Adult Sunday School 10:30am Worship	<b>10</b> 6pm ICD Sharing	<b>11</b> 10:30am Exercise Group 6pm Trustees Meeting	<b>12</b> 8am Prayer Group	<b>13</b> 10:30am Exercise Group	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b> 11am Veyrel Gerdil funeral
<b>16</b> FATHER'S DAY 9am Adult Sunday School 10:30am Worship	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b> 10:30am Exercise Group	<b>19</b> 8am Prayer Group 7pm Finance Committee 8pm Administrative Council	<b>20</b> 10:30am Exercise Group 1pm Hospitality Committee	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>23</b> 9am Adult Sunday School 10:30am Worship 12pm Farewell Potluck	<b>24</b> 5pm Community Meal NEWSLETTER DEADLINE	<b>25</b> 10:30am Exercise Group	<b>26</b> 8am Prayer Group	<b>27</b> 10:30am Exercise Group	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>30</b> 9am Adult Sunday School 10:30am Worship						

*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**

Monday - Thursday 9:00am - 12:00pm

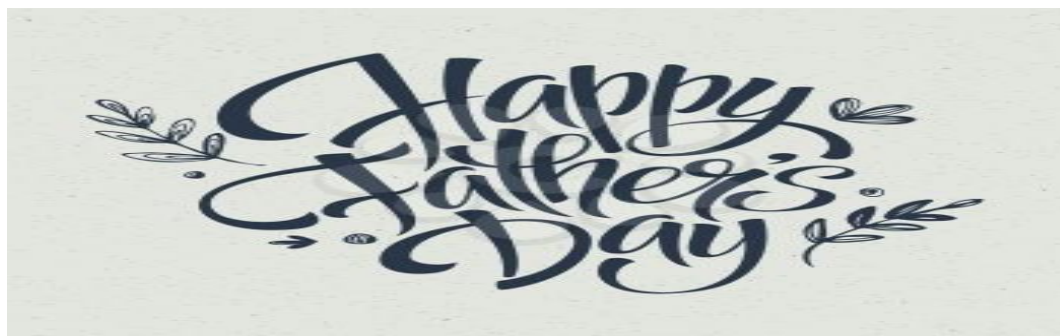
Check Us Out On Facebook!

**SUNDAY MORNING SCHEDULE**

**Worship—10:30 am**

**Adult Sunday School: 9:00 am**

**Broadcast on  
WVRQ 1360 AM/107.3 FM or on  
Facebook Live**



**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.

God does nothing except in response to believing prayer.

John Wesley

