

# THE CROSS & THE FLAME



**NOVEMBER 2024**

## Thanksgiving

Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

"When trees are caramelized, and the wind is crisp like an apple, we know fall has come to us." I read this quote from an article that introduces the Caramel Apple. Since fall is my favorite season, I thought this quote expressed fall really well. I expected to see a beautiful fall season in Chicago, but I could not because the strong wind blew out all tree leaves before they were colored well.

My family spent a great summer season here, and we met such a beautiful fall season. All the colored trees are so lovely. Cool-weather leads my family for a walk. I used to enjoy the beautiful fall season in South Korea. However, I heard that South Korea's fall season has shortened due to global warming, and I have not seen such a beautiful fall season since I left South Korea in Hawaii and Chicago. So, the fall of this year is so special for me. It made me give a lot of thanks to God.

If we only focus on the leaves that need to be cleaned and the chilly weather, we will not be able to see God's beautiful nature and will only be caught up in depressing feelings. "Give thanks in all circumstances" opens our eyes, minds, and hearts to see how God works in our lives in all circumstances. God gave us a lot of gifts that we can feel the grace of God in many places of our lives. I hope we can find the little gifts God has hidden in our lives and give God many thanks in this month of November.

Amen.

Pastor Paul



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Pastor's Letter.....	page 1
Birthdays/Anniversaries .....	page 2
Looking Back at October .....	pages 3-4
Looking Forward at November .....	Pages 5-7
Committee Reports.....	pages 8-11
November Calendar .....	Insert

## NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Wynne Roberts	November 6
Kelli Schulz	November 7
Lorraine Gerdl	November 12
Mary Deters	November 18
Janice Fortney	November 19
Finn Brenneman	November 26
Jessica Janzen	November 28
Pat Matz	November 30

*God's Blessings on You!*



## NOVEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

Pete & Shirley Gilman      November 12



## 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.

## *Long Range Objective* *Viroqua UMC*

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

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



**Please remember to show kindness and love to all your neighbors this election season.**

## Baked Potato Sale

The Hospitality Committee was responsible making the Baked Potato Sale happen. It was a great success! We sold 100 potatoes and made a profit of \$914. Many thanks to all who helped!

The potatoes were donated by Cyndy Hubbard (Hub's Fries), and the sour cream packets were donated by Kwik Trip. Thanks for those donations.



It all started by washing the potatoes!

## Apple Crisp With Pastor Lee



The Apple Crisp meetings have been enjoyed by everyone who has attended. A make-up date has been scheduled for Wednesday, November 6th at 1:30 pm. There is also one scheduled for Wednesday, October 30th at 6:30 pm. If you missed your scheduled time, you are invited to attend either of these.

## Loving Our Neighbors

One of the ways Viroqua UMC shows God's love in our community is through our Good Samaritan Fund. This fund allows our church—at the pastor's discretion—to offer short-term emergency help to people in need, while respecting their privacy and dignity. For example, we were recently able to provide a couple of nights of shelter at nearby motels for an unhoused individual who was waiting on other assistance to come through.

VUMC's Good Samaritan Fund is chiefly funded by member donations. You can contact the church office or use our online giving platform if you want to participate in this ministry of our church that makes a difference in people's lives.

## Viroqua UMC September /October 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.

September 22	\$1,635.75
September 29	\$539.05
October 6	\$4,510.05
October 13	\$917.05

## Thank You

Thank you to Marlo Volden for the dehumidifier that he donated to the church. He brought the dehumidifier for use during the summer months and has since decided to donate it. This is something we have needed so his donation is greatly appreciated.

Thanks, Marlo!

Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Ephesians 5: 20

**Beware of any Christian movement that acts as though the world is full of enemies to be destroyed rather than full of neighbors to be loved.**

**Beware of any Christian movement that demands the government be an instrument of God's wrath but never a source of God's mercy, generosity, or compassion.**

## *How Can We Afford ICD?*

Our church was encouraged last winter by the conference to participate in the Institute of Congregational Development, a 10 month program designed to help churches and pastors take their ministry to the next level. Pastor Erika applied for and obtained a grant to attend the Institute. It paid for half of the tuition and entitled 2 persons to attend. A lay person from either Viroqua or Westby has been attending each month with the pastor. By the time Westby paid their share of the fee, our church paid approximately \$500. For that amount of money, we have attended meetings each month mostly around the state, but one in St. Louis and one in Kansas City. All hotels and the transportation to the distant sessions have been included. Our participation in the Institute continued with the change of pastors.

We feel that we are receiving a terrific value and that this is one of the benefits we receive back from the conference. The presenters have been excellent. We are learning a lot and we look forward to taking steps to create a vision and goals that will indeed take us to the next level and help to revitalize our church.

## *Radio Broadcast*

Several people have recently made generous donations to support the radio broadcast. Thank you!

These donations have funded about 30—35% of the radio cost for a year.

This response indicates that the broadcast is valued.

The Radio Broadcast will continue as usual, but its funding has been removed from the operating budget for next year. Some money will be taken from our memorials fund.

This does not mean that we don't need your ongoing support for this ministry.

Please continue to sponsor radio broadcasts in honor or memory of loved ones.

## *Nursery Helpers*

Sunwoo has been in the nursery with the children every week since coming to Viroqua. We'd like to start organizing volunteers to join her. Two volunteers in the nursery would mean that we can encourage more children to come, and eventually lead to freeing Sunwoo up to attend worship.

If enough people take a turn helping in the nursery, it won't be a burden to any one person. We can use folks of all ages from teenagers to grandparents—both female and male.

Please consider this ministry and look for a sign up sheet in the Narthex if God prompts you to help with this.

## *All Saints*

Those of our congregation who have gone home to be with the Lord this year:  
Their memories will be honored during the worship service on Sunday, November 3rd, All Saints Sunday.



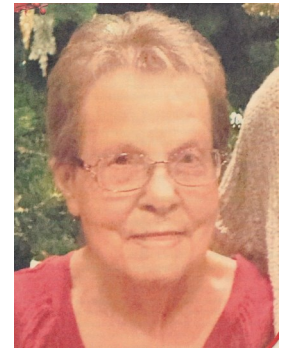
**Veryl Gerdl**



**Ruth Gilbertson**



**Jean Knutson**



**Patricia Olson**

Other loved ones may be memorialized by placing a Luminary Bag.  
Let the office know by Thursday, October 31st at noon if you'd like to remember someone in this way.

<i>November Sunday Servants</i>					
	<b>Liturgist</b>	<b>Ushers</b>	<b>Greeter</b>	<b>Screen Operator</b>	<b>Communion Stewards</b>
<b>November 3</b>	Tom Lohr	Joanne Hornby Jerry Brenneman	Barb Casper		Phyllis Kalnins Cavan Fang
<b>November 10</b>		Janet Welch Janette Hanson	Alice Sloane		
<b>November 17</b>		Mary & Chuck Mulvaney Kemp	Barb Casper		
<b>November 24</b>		Cavan Fang Marlo Volden	Ardith Olson		



## *A Green Bay Packer Potluck*

**November 17th      12:00 pm      Packers vs Bears**

Bring Packer game type food for the potluck.

The game will be on the TV in the Fellowship Hall. Stay as long as you want.

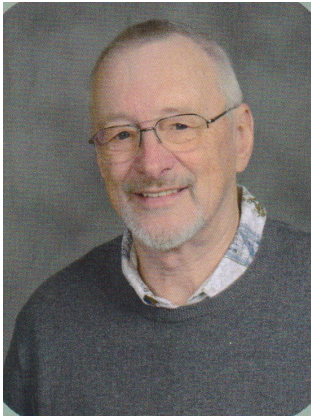




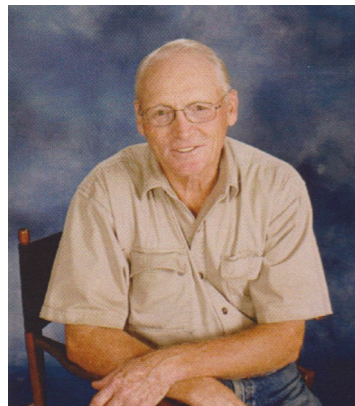
With love and gratitude we thank members of our current church family for their military service.

**Veterans will be honored during Worship on November 10th.**

**Join the Veterans for cake following the service.**



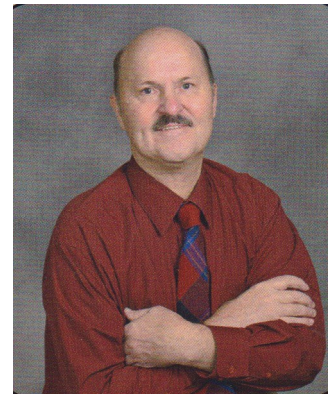
Gregory Cheever  
Marine Corps



David Peterson  
Army



Gerald Schroeder  
Air Force



Marlo Volden  
Army

Christopher Schultz, Army  
Daniel Stalsberg, Army  
Charles Turben, Army



(If we have omitted any names, please let us know)

## The Next Book



The Book Group's next book is *The Seed Keeper* by Diane Wilson.

Rosalie Iron Wing has grown up in the woods with her father, Ray, a former science teacher who tells her stories of plants, of the stars, of the origins of the Dakota people. Until, one morning, Ray doesn't return from checking his traps. Told she has no family, Rosalie is sent to live with a foster family in nearby Mankato - where the reserved, bookish teenager meets rebellious Gaby Makespeace, in a friendship that transcends the damaged legacies they've inherited.

On a winter's day many years later, Rosalie returns to her childhood home. A widow and mother, she has spent the previous two decades on her White husband's farm, finding solace in her garden even as the farm is threatened first by drought and then by a predatory chemical company. Now, grieving, Rosalie begins to confront the past, on a search for family, identity, and a community where she can finally belong. In the process, she learns what it means to be descended from women with souls of iron-women who have protected their families, their traditions, and a precious cache of seeds through generations of hardship and loss, through war and the insidious trauma of boarding schools.

Weaving together the voices of four women, *The Seed Keeper* is a beautifully told story of reawakening, of remembering our original relationship to the seeds and, through them, to our ancestors.

The discussion of *The Seed Keeper* will be held on Monday, December 2nd at 7 pm.

## Advent Devotional Booklet

Advent and Lenten Devotional Booklets have become a tradition for us. Pastor Paul has put together some scriptures and we're asked to pick one and write a 125-150 word devotional based on the scripture. Our writings are put together in a booklet to use as a devotional during the Advent season. We have found this to be a meaningful endeavor, both for those of us who write devotionals and for those who read them.

The Devotional Sign-up Sheet with scripture references can be found in the narthex. Please sign up to write one of these devotionals. They are due by November 17th.

Thank you in advance!!



**The Community Handbell Concert will be held in our sanctuary on  
Sunday, November 24th at 2:00 pm.**

**This is always a wonderful afternoon of great music!**

## Growing in Gratitude

### November Online Bible Studies

With Thanksgiving just a few weeks away, its not surprising when we all start to think about all we are grateful for. Gratitude, and the act of thanksgiving, naturally offers us a way of embracing all that makes our lives what they are. However, it should be more than just a momentary good feeling. We are called to live a life filled with thanksgiving!

To become better at the practice of thanksgiving, we are going to focus on gratitude during the month of November through our online Bible studies! We invite you to join us on a 28-day journey through a series of four studies as we learn more about gratitude and aim to live a life full of thanksgiving!

To join these studies, simply use the links below! We look forward to growing in gratitude with you!

Acts of Gratitude for Ordinary Days – Starts Nov. 1<sup>st</sup>

<https://bible.com/p/69525491/704b248b31472567d2bb11cbab059336>

The Power of Gratitude – Starts Nov. 7<sup>th</sup> <https://bible.com/p/69525538/99415be70781c73fb970cdec5fbc7dd8>

Real Hope: Gratitude – Starts Nov. 14<sup>th</sup> <https://bible.com/p/69525557/096fa8569e86e4a3f62fcdc560f3b0fd>

Transform Your Life Through Gratitude and Prayer – Starts Nov. 21<sup>st</sup> <https://bible.com/p/69525565/1732eb9f39e6bcef7e2b5f42206a94b4>

These online studies and more can be accessed through the Bible App or [bible.com](https://www.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](https://www.bible.com).



## Westby UMC Christmas Cookie Walk – Saturday, Dec. 7<sup>th</sup>



Start your Christmas baking the easy way, without having to find recipes or dirty any dishes. Come to the Westby UMC Annual Christmas Cookie Walk on Saturday, Dec. 7, 2024, from 9:00-12:00. There will be a wide variety of Christmas cookies, homemade candies, and other baked goods available. The cookie walk is like having a salad bar, where you get to choose your own salad toppings, but with cookies in place of the salad items. The cost is \$7 per pound, with some items priced separately. Coffee and hot chocolate will be available. Proceeds from this fundraiser will go towards Westby UMC's outreach and other needs. Remember to come early for the best selection of cookies.

## *Administrative Council*

October 16th, 2024



Members Present: Gregg Roberts, Dan Brown, Gregory Cheever, Phyllis Kalnins, Kathy Hanson, Layne Hanson, Cavan Fang, Kristin Parrott, Barb Casper, Pastor Paul.

The Administrative Council Meeting and Finance meeting blended together as we worked to get ready for Charge Conference. We spent extra time finalizing the budget.

The Charge Conference, held jointly with Westby, will be held in Viroqua on November 13th. It will start with a potluck meal at 6 pm. Amanda Stein, District Superintendent, will conduct the meeting.

The group decided to pursue holding a visioning/goal setting retreat this coming January. We will work at setting a date soon.

**Trustees** would like for us to prioritize replacing the deteriorating windows downstairs. The council gave the go ahead to get bids and then present the project to the congregation for support. A second priority is to tuck point the loose bricks on the outside of the building.

### Committee Reports

**Missions Committee** will be meeting on Sunday.

**Hospitality Committee** will be doing thank yous to community emergency workers during November. Congregation members will be invited to help write thank yous for this community outreach. See complete minutes elsewhere in this newsletter.

**Worship Committee:** All Saints Day will be on November 3rd. See complete minutes elsewhere in this newsletter.

**SPRC** meets October 28th at 6 pm.

**Education Committee:** See complete minutes elsewhere in this newsletter.

The meeting ended with the Lord's Prayer.

Next Meeting: October 16th @ 8:00 pm.

## *Missions Update*

Thank you to everyone who participated in the garden produce sale this fall, bringing in produce and/or buying what others grew. We raised \$42 for our church's missionary, Temba, who works at an agricultural mission in Zambia, Africa.

Through a number of fundraisers, our church tries to raise \$1000 for Temba each year. We are at about \$700 now, so we have \$300 to go before the end of the year. Please consider making a contribution to this worthy cause.

The annual Thanksgiving food drive begins on Sunday, November 3, and runs through Sunday, November 24. Help fill the grocery cart with food and other basic necessities to support our local food pantry.

United Methodist Student Day this year will be Sunday, November 24. Celebrate the day by wearing your school gear to church — sweatshirts, t-shirts, hats, whatever you have from your favorite school. The purpose of Student Day is to support United Methodist students as they prepare for life by adding knowledge to their faith. We will also take a special offering that Sunday to help fund scholarships for United Methodist students.

**Won't you give us fresh life and let your people be glad because of you?**

**Psalm 85: 6**



## Finance Committee

October 16, 2024

Members Present: Kathy Hanson, Layne Hanson, Cavan Fang, Phyllis Kalnins, Pastor Lee, Gregory Cheever (Treasurer), Gregg Roberts (Secretary)

Joys & Concerns, Opening Prayer (Pastor Lee)

Meeting notes from previous meeting: 9-16/24 meeting notes correction: Room rent of \$500.

Phyllis motion to accept 9-16-24 meeting notes, Gregory Cheever second. Motion carries.

Treasurer's report (presented by Gregory Cheever):

Projected 2024 deficit of \$25,000 (after \$30,000 transfer in February)

New source of revenue: Space for piano lessons

Motion to accept the Treasurer's report: Kathy Hanson, Cavan Fang Second. Motion carries.

Secretary's Report (presented by Gregg Roberts)

Vanco account funds transferred

Gregory Cheever: Motion to accept the Secretary's report, Layne Hanson seconded. Motion carries.

2025 Budget discussion:

Use Youth account balance instead of budget Youth Ministry.

Use memorials funds on occasion for radio (how do we track memorials)

Radio budget removed from standalone and funded by Wills and memorials.

How to raise funds for capital projects? How to create congregational awareness?

Not replacing the housekeeper for the 2025 budget. Projected \$10,700 deficit in 2025.

Gregg Roberts made a motion to remove Radio from the 2025 Budget and pay it from Wills and memorials, Phyllis seconded motion. Motion carries.

Kathy Hanson made a motion to present the 2025 budget of \$136, 915 to the Charge Conference 11/13, second by Layne Hanson. Motion carries.

Next meeting: November 20, 7:00 PM

Meeting adjourned at 8:55 PM



## Education Committee

October 7th, 2024

### Old Business:

#### **Sunday School**

Our goal is to begin offering regular Sunday School services again, starting in January 2025. Our goal is to serve three different age groups: Pre-School, Elementary, and Teens. We need to find teachers for each age group. We also need to do background checks to be in compliance with our Safe Sanctuaries policy.

#### **Nursery Coverage**

We continue to look for volunteers to provide nursery coverage during Sunday Worship Service. This is another area that we need to make sure we are in compliance with our Safe Sanctuaries policy. We need to have two adults in the nursery each week, or do background checks on the volunteers.

#### **Confirmation**

Target start date for Confirmation is November 2024. Pastor Paul will be reaching out to parents of Confirmation students to establish the schedule.

### New Business:

#### **Christmas Program**

Cavan has written another masterpiece play as an option to use for the Christmas Program. The only downside is that there are no parts for young children. After some discussion it was decided that we will use the play for the Christmas Program and that they young children will be given other "jobs" as part of the Christmas Program. Pastor Paul also decided that the Worship Committee will be in charge of making arrangements for the program.

The next meeting will be held Monday November 4th, 2024 @ 6:00 PM in the Church Lounge

## Worship Committee

October 10, 2024

Those members present were: Pastor Paul, Phyllis Kalnins, Kathy Hanson, Barb Casper

Pastor Paul started the meeting for us with a prayer.



11-3-24 is All Saints Sunday. We will invite family members, of those who have passed this last year, to attend for the special portion of the service honoring their loved one. They will receive a rose and a candle will be lit for them. We will have luminaria bags lit in honor of others who have passed this last year if their names have been called into the office before Friday 11-1-24. (608-637-3551). There will be notices in the bulletins and newsletter.

11-10-24 is the day before Veteran's Day. Pastor Paul will have a moment during the service to talk about how we appreciate our veterans. He will also sponsor a cake to have with coffee after the service.

11-24-24 is Thanksgiving Sunday. We will not have a joint service this year. We will do our Thanksgiving tree differently this year. Leaves will be available for writing out our blessings starting on 11-10-24. If people want to hang it themselves they may do so during a hymn or they can be put into a collection plate and we will hang them later. During the week following 11-4-24, we will set up the Christmas tree without ornaments and hang the Thankful Leaves on it. Hopefully, members and guests will fill out more than one leaf so that we will have a colorful tree with lots of leaves.

12-15-24 is the Sunday we will have a play enacted during the service. Cavan has written it so it is sure to be a real treat.

We will be starting to prepare for the Advent Devotional. Pastor Paul will get the verses chosen and ready to print a sign-up sheet by 10-20-24. By 11-7-24, the sign-up sheet needs to be filled out so that we can start printing and making up the booklet. They will be handed out on 11-24-24.

The idea has come up that we might start using the TV screen for the entire bulletin and only hand out smaller sheets with calendar events and names of those who need our prayers. This will be an experiment so any feedback with reasons to continue or discontinue it would be appreciated.

Pastor Paul is going to look into the microphone issues and get Cavan's input about the problem.

Our next meeting will be held on November 7<sup>th</sup> at 6 PM

## UWF

October 9, 2024

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

President Janet read "Worry, Wrecker of Life" from "Devotions for Later Years".

Barb Casper gave the Treasurer's report. The Pledge to the S.W. District Conference of \$1,000.00 was paid. It was voted to pledge \$500.00 for the year 2025.

Gloria Freilingger paid the Child Fund for October. Lorraine Gerdl has November and Joanne Hornby will do December.

Our circle is responsible for cookies and hostess duties during Meet-You-Time in the months of October & November.

10-6 = Ardith

11-3 = Phyllis

10-13 = Joanne

11-10 = Janet

10-20 = Betty

11-17 = TBD

10-29 = Barb

11-24 = TBD

October 27<sup>th</sup> will be UWF Sunday with our group doing the service.

Joanne Hornby present the program.

Janet Welch provided snacks and Phyllis Kalnins will serve in November.

Our next meeting will be held on November 13<sup>th</sup> at 1:30 in the lounge.



# Trustees Meeting

October 10, 2024

Present: Pastor Paul Lee, Dale Gudgeon, Jack Deters, Pete Gilman, Phyllis Kalnins

The committee reviewed a letter from Church Mutual. The letter explained the changes that will be made to our insurance policies on the church buildings. Our deductible will increase to \$10,000. There will be a limit on roof repair claims. If roof damage is determined to be cosmetic such as from wind or hail, no claims will be paid. Our premium will increase by at least 25%, if not more. We have a 60-day period from the date of the letter received (09/02/2024) to cancel. Their customer service will call us to address any questions we have. We also received a copy of the new insurance policy.

A motion was made by Jack and seconded by Dale to pay a bill we received from Strang Heating for unplugging a drain in the parsonage. The bill was \$237.50.

Pastor Paul made a request to begin work on some areas of the building that need attention. We would like the repairs to be prioritized in the following manner:

- Repair/replace windows starting in the former daycare center (good to have done before winter)

- Weather strip the exterior doors on Terhune, S. Center Ave., and to the parking lot

- Repointing/tuckpointing the bricks around the church exterior

By January Pastor Paul would like to have 3 rooms on the lower level ready for use by children and youth. We could use a "church-wide" clean-up day.

The water heater at the parsonage is much better. Pastor Paul will flush it out a couple more times.

The radiator (thermostat) in the parsonage is still not working. The temperature cannot be regulated. A call has been made to Strang heating. We have been on their waiting list for a long time. Pastor Paul has called them several time and is always told he is on the list.

Our next meeting will be on Nov. 12, 2024 at 6:00 p.m.

# Hospitality Committee

October 8, 2024

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

## LOVE

Avis reported that she has sent 10 birthday, 5 anniversary, 4 get well, and 2 sympathy cards since our last meeting.

Pastor Paul visited the homebound members with communion on Oct. 6th.

## LEARN (Old business)

The Fall Potluck was a success. 45 people were served. We felt like folks enjoyed themselves and lingered to visit. The kids had a good time and Janice added piano music for a bit. We need to do a better job next of planning for help to make the event happen.

The plans for our community outreach to thank emergency workers in November were reviewed. We will put note cards in the bulletins on November 3rd and 10th and ask church attendees to write a note of appreciation to emergency workers. These will be added to a larger thank you poster that goes to the police, fire, & ambulance stations, and the cab company.

We spent time organizing the set up and serving of the baked potatoes at our sale today.

## DECIDE/DO (New Business)

Big Thing: Our committee is not in charge of this event, but members were encourage to give thoughts and ideas for our church-wide fund raiser.

Signage: Kathy expressed the opinion that we need more signage both outside and inside the building. She will ask the Administrative Council to organize a group of people to plan and implement ideas.

Nursery: We are looking for people of all ages to assist in the nursery going forward. The group was encouraged to consider taking a turn at this.

Next meeting: November 12th at 12:00 pm.

*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**

**REV. PAUL LEE**

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Office Staff: Kathy Hanson/Barb Casper

**OFFICE HOURS**

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

Check Us Out On Facebook!

**SUNDAY MORNING SCHEDULE**

**Adult Sunday School Class—9:00 am**

**Worship—10:30 am**

**Nursery Provided**

**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

