

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

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



Westby United  
Methodist Church  
February 2025

IN THIS ISSUE

## Holy Club - Methodist

by Pastor Paul Lee

To understand about Methodist, and before we talk about Doctrine, Spirit, and Discipline, we should know where the name "Methodist" came from.

Wesley's spiritual life was influenced by his mother, Susanna Wesley. Susanna's education was very strict. Susanna disciplined her children to keep the routines. Susanna checked what the children had learned and remembered before mealtime. Susanna disciplined the children not only in studying but also in various areas, such as eating and behavior. This discipline of Susanna affected Wesley to form his spiritual lifestyle.

After Wesley became a fellow at Oxford, he went back to his hometown to help his father's ministry. While Wesley was in his hometown, his brother, Charles Wesley, entered Oxford. At this time, Charles founded a small gathering with his two friends for spiritual discipline and studies about God and faith. After Wesley came back to Oxford from his hometown, Charles and his two friends invited Wesley to be the leader of this gathering. They named this gathering "Holy Club," and this was the start of Methodist.

Wesley's strict spiritual discipline affected this Holy Club. It was not the club just sharing their story, checking in on each other's lives. They hardily trained their spiritual lifestyle like sports players in this present day. Just as athletes make detailed plans and execute how much weight to lift today and how much to lift tomorrow, what to eat today, and what training to do tomorrow for their body and performance during the game, Wesley and Holy Club members make their own plans, and prepared a specific list and rules for spirituality and tried to stick to them. They had some list to do. Pray every morning, read the Bible and spiritual readings, receive Communion every week, fast every Wednesday and Friday, visit prisoners, etc.

We could know that Wesley named this gathering as Holy Club, so why do we call us "Methodist"? Holy Club had a very strict schedule for their spirituality. However, they seriously devoted their lives to keeping those rules and schedules that they set up. So, people around the Holy Club members started to mock Holy Club members as "Methodist." The word "Methodist" came from a group of doctors when Emperor Nero ruled the Roman Empire. Those doctors believed that all illnesses could be cured if a person lived a well-scheduled and ordered life and ate

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healthy foods. Those doctors were called, “Methodist” at that time. Wesley liked the name “Methodist.” He believed the Holy Club could be called Methodist because they followed the schedules and rules for God well.

If the Holy Club just pursued what to do, they would be the legalist. However, Wesley had an obvious purpose and direction in doing all the disciplines. The purpose was to be a Perfect Christian, and the way to be a Perfect Christian was “Doctrine, Spirit, and Discipline.” This was why Wesley was afraid of losing “Doctrine, Spirit, and Discipline.” If the Methodists lose those three things, we lose our fundamental purpose and the way of our spiritual life. So, in the next few months, I hope to talk more about what a Perfect Christian is and about our Doctrine.

Pastor Paul

### Pastor Paul’s Schedule:

Westby UMC Office Hours:

- Thursdays (9:00-12:00)
- Anytime by appointment

### Contact Information:

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 Cell Phone: 262-393-8416  
 Email: pastor@virouqawestbyumc.org

### February Birthdays

Feb. 12 – Jill Bjornstad  
 Feb. 16 – Sooho Lee  
 Feb. 22 – Tim Gaskell  
 Feb. 26 – Ardith Hoff



### Thursday Morning Prayer Group

Prayer is a gift from God and a powerful tool that He gave to us. He wants us to use it, individually and as a group. Please continue to exercise your prayer muscles by joining us at 9:00 AM on Thursday, February 6<sup>th</sup> for our monthly prayer group time.

Thank you for your continued prayers for our church ministries, church members and our community.

### Mission of the Month – UMCOR

With so many wildfires happening in California, we thought it would be a good time to have UMCOR as our mission of the month. UMCOR is supporting the efforts of conference disaster response ministries across the region in California. UMCOR has awarded two solidarity grants to the California-Pacific Annual Conference to undergird their immediate relief efforts. This includes evacuee support like food and essential supplies as well as support for volunteer efforts and other relief activities. Trained volunteers are preparing to assist where it is safe to do so. If you would like to donate to UMCOR this month, here are some ways you can give:

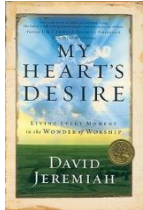
- Donate online at <https://advance.umcmmission.org/p-620-umcor-us-disaster-response-and-recovery.aspx>
- By check made out to Global Ministries/UMCOR with “Advance #901670-Calfires” written on the memo line and mailed to Global Ministries/UMCOR, GPO, P.O. Box 9068, New York, NY, 10087-9068

Donate through our church by putting money or a check in an envelope and write UMCOR on the envelop. For checks, please make the check out to Westby UMC and indicate “UMCOR” in the memo line.



## Thursday Morning Bible Study Group

Please join us on Thursday, February 27<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 AM for our monthly Bible Study group. We are studying the book of Luke and Acts. During the January study, the group watched part 1 of the Overview of Luke on the Bible Project website (<https://bibleproject.com/>) (<https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/luke/>). To prepare for this month's study, please read all of the book of Luke and Acts. Pastor Paul provided a handout about inductive Bible study at the January meeting. Please see him to get a copy of this handout to use in preparation for this month's study.

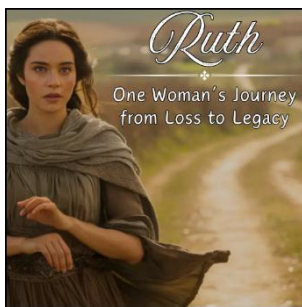
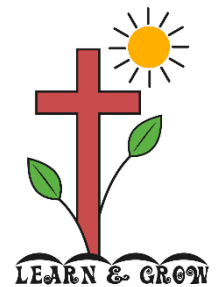


## Growing in Faith Study Group

We will continue with our discussion about the book, *My Heart's Desire* by David Jeremiah. This month we will meet on Wednesday, February 5<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 PM to discuss chapter 7 and meet again on Wednesday, February 19<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 PM to discuss chapter 8. Anyone is welcome to come and join the discussion even if you don't have the book.

## Sunday School News

- The Sunday school crew has been learning about David the Shepherd and will continue with David the Warrior and David the King. We have a special focus on the 23rd Psalm.
- We will continue the tradition of making Valentines for Norseland Nursing Home residents on February 2nd. Adults are welcome for this event. It's a meaningful way to share God's love with others. (We will keep February 9th as a make-up date for the Valentines, if needed).
- There are a couple of options for a winter fun day in February – depending on snow and temperatures. We will talk as a group about what works best for family schedules.
  - Option 1 : Snow Days at Living Waters in Westby will be on Sunday February 9th at 1:00 this year for skating, skiing and tubing IF there is snow. The cost is \$7 including lunch. Jane can provide transportation – parents and friends are welcome.
  - Option 2 : Whitetail Ridge at Fort McCoy for tubing on Saturday, February 15th with the Viroqua church. The cost is \$25 per person. Parents would need to provide transportation. Jane is not available for this date, but families can still attend. Please let Jane know if you need more information.



## February Online Study – Ruth: One Woman's Journey from Loss to Legacy

Do you ever wonder if the little things in life matter? Do you sometimes wonder why some things happen or don't happen in your life? Do you ever ponder whether what you are doing in your life and with your life matters? In the book of Ruth, Ruth and other people in this book of the Bible had some of these same feelings, but through God's providence, these people experienced more positive things in their lives. This book shows us that no person or event is insignificant in God's plan.

Please join us this month as we embark on a journey for 26 days with Ruth. Here is the link to this month's reading plan, which will begin on February 1st.

- Love God Greatly: Ruth - <https://bible.com/p/71825388/fd33c2b7054adadb46ba6bec81f563f1>

*This online study and more can be accessed through the Bible App on your mobile device or the [bible.com](https://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.*

## Goal & Activity Planning – Feb. 2nd

Each year, we gather together to review what goals and activities we want our church to do or strive for during the upcoming year. This year, we're going to do the planning on Sunday, February 2<sup>nd</sup> after worship, during our fellowship time.



Please be praying about what God wants our church to do to serve our congregation, serve the Westby community and serve God. Please bring your ideas to this planning meeting on February 2<sup>nd</sup>. We welcome your ideas.



## Faith UMC Soup Lunch & Auction – Feb. 8th

On Saturday, February 8<sup>th</sup>, there will be a Soup Lunch and Auction at Faith UMC. Meals will be served from 11:00 AM-12:45 PM. The Auction will begin at 1:00 PM. The cost of the Soup Lunch will be a freewill offering. The menu includes: three kinds of soup, crackers, bread, cheese and sausage tray, desserts and a beverage.

## Joint Lenten Devotional Booklets – Devotions Due Feb. 16<sup>th</sup>

This year for the Lent season, we will be doing another Joint Lenten Devotional Booklet with Viroqua UMC. During this Lenten season, Pastor Paul is encouraging each of us to spend more time reading the Bible each day. We'll read the four gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. A handout will be provided to let you know what chapters to read each day, so that by Easter, we will have read all four gospels.



If you would like to help and write a devotional for the Lenten Devotional Booklet, we would like you to pick a verse or verses, which you find most meaningful to write about, from the assigned daily reading. We would also like you to include a prayer which relates to the verses you chose for your devotional. This process will be a little different, but meaningful since you are able to choose the scripture to write about.

There will be a sign-up sheet in the narthex for writing devotions and the devotions are due on Sunday, Feb. 16<sup>th</sup>. Our church is responsible for providing 12 devotions. Please email your devotions to [westby.wi.umc@gmail.com](mailto:westby.wi.umc@gmail.com) or to Linda. If possible, please try to limit the number of words to 150, which includes the devotional and prayer, but does not include the scriptures. Thank you for helping to make this booklet possible.

## Westby United Methodist Church – Board Meeting † - January 8, 2025

**Present:** Pastor Paul, Jean Shore, Julie Fargen, Tim Gaskell, Jane Gaskell and Linda Weilnau

**Opening:** Pastor Paul opened with prayer.

**Approval of Minutes:** The minutes of the November board meeting were emailed to the board and published in the December newsletter, so they could be reviewed prior to the meeting. Jean Shore and Julie Fargen motioned to approve the minutes. Motion passed.

**Treasurer's Report:** Verna Drake provided a draft of the financial reports for December. They were incomplete due to waiting for end of the year totals for some items from Viroqua UMC. These reports were emailed to the board members prior to the meeting. Jean Shore and Jane Gaskell motioned to approve the treasurer's report. Motion passed.

**Old Business:**

- ✝ West Entrance Modification – We have one estimate and want one more estimate before spring. It was mentioned to try and get one from Janzen's.
- ✝ AED – VMH Grant -Jane Gaskell submitted a grant to VMH for an AED. We received the grant, and the AED unit has been ordered. We were able to use the grant funds to pay for the AED and a cabinet for it. Jane will send a Thank You card to VMH.
- ✝ Old Christmas Tree – Jane Gaskell placed a post on Facebook Marketplace that the tree could be picked up for free. She received several replies, and the tree was picked up on Jan. 3.
- ✝ Meal Site Contract – renewal for 2025 – Tim Gaskell delivered the letter in November, but we haven't received any replies. Tim will contact them again.

**New Business:**

- ✝ Celebration of Life on January 18 – This will be for Tom Sharratt. There may be about 150 people, so we will need to add chairs to the sanctuary. We can place chairs in the narthex area if needed. We'll set up 11 tables with 10 chairs per table in the fellowship hall for the reception. Borgens will be catering the meal for the reception. We will need to provide people to serve the meal. We will set up the additional chairs Sunday after church.
- ✝ Schedule Goal Planning – We will do this during fellowship on Sunday, Feb. 2.
- ✝ Viroqua UMC Chili Cookoff – Will this be held? – Pastor Paul reported that Viroqua UMC will not be having the Chili Cookoff this year.
- ✝ Lenten Devotional – Ash Wednesday is March 5. We will do the joint Lenten Devotional Booklet with Viroqua UMC again. Pastor Paul plans on creating a Bible reading plan for during Lent.

**Business from Board Committees:**

- ✝ **Trustees** – No report.
- ✝ **SPRC** – No report.
- ✝ **Worship** – Looking ahead: Lent, Palm Sunday, Good Friday, Easter – We discussed how we have alternated some services with Viroqua UMC, such as for the Maundy Thursday service. This discussion was to help Pastor Paul know what has been done in the past.
- ✝ **Education** – Will maybe attending the Snow Days on Feb. 9 at Living Waters Bible Camp, depending on the snow conditions.
- ✝ **Lay Leadership** – No report
- ✝ **Missions** – No report.

**Pastor's Report:** Pastor Paul asked to have someone go with him when he visits Ann Shaw this month.

- Last Sunday, Pastor Paul dropped the microphone and isn't sure if it still works or not. We may need to purchase a new one, possibly a wireless one.
- The turnout for watching the Packer game at church on Jan. 5 went okay. Those who came enjoyed watching it on the larger viewing area in the sanctuary.

Jean Shore motioned to adjourn. Meeting was adjourned.

Minutes submitted by Linda Weilnau

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**But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.**  
~ Romans 5:8

## Financial Corner – by Verna Drake

Welcome to 2025, but let's take a glimpse back into 2024. As your treasurer for the past 15 years, I'm consistently blessed to be part of a church family that ensures I, as the treasurer, am able to pay all our bills.

Our 2024 apportionments of \$4,188.00 were paid in full. Apportionment funds are used by our conference for many things of which a few are funds for retired pastors, moving expenses for Pastor Erika and Pastor Paul, funds for 5 campus ministries, & funding for 2 Christian camps. For an in-depth listing of how our apportionments are used, there is a poster on the Narthex bulletin board.

Our 2024 financial reports are not complete as of this publication. We are waiting for the Viroqua treasurer to supply us with shared pastoral costs for November and December. However, in my estimation you can look at the financials in this newsletter and see that we should end 2024 with some surplus. Once the 2024 financials are closed, I'll inform you with an accurate report.

In 2024, we were not successful in hiring a concrete contractor to complete the handicapped ramp for the west entrance. We do have one bid which is double the original bid when we did the automatic door. We are still seeking a second bid. It's a small project, so many contractors tell us they will try and see if they can work us in, but that hasn't happened. Our one bid is for \$4900. We currently have \$2500 slotted for this project.

Other projects that need attention which will impact our finances are:

- Painting of the Narthex as it hasn't been painted since originally constructed
- Repair to landscape edging that is missing or no longer in place
- Redo our weed barrier in the rock beds on the west side.

Thank you for being a giving church family. Maintaining our building, our property and covering our expenses with your tithes is only doable because we all give of our time, talent and treasure.



FOR GOD  
SO LOVED THE WORLD  
THAT HE GAVE HIS  
ONLY  
BEGOTTEN  
SON, SO  
THAT WHOEVER  
BELIEVES IN HIM  
SHALL NOT PERISH  
BUT HAVE ETERNAL LIFE.



| JOHN 3:16

## February 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
<b>2</b> ☩ <b>9:00 AM</b> – Worship Service (Communion) <b>10:00 AM</b> – Fellowship & Sunday School – Goal Planning Session	<b>3</b> <b>11:30 AM</b> – Senior Meal Site	<b>4</b> <b>11:30 AM</b> – Senior Meal Site <b>12:30 PM</b> – Strength Training Class	<b>5</b> <b>11:30 AM</b> – Senior Meal Site  <b>6:00 PM</b> – Growing In Faith Study Group	<b>6</b> <b>9:00 AM</b> - Prayer Group <b>11:30 AM</b> – Senior Meal Site <b>12:30 PM</b> –Strength Training Class	<b>7</b> Pastor Paul’s Sabbath Day	<b>8</b> <b>11:00 – 12:45</b> – Faith UMC Soup Lunch
<b>9</b> ☩ <b>9:00 AM</b> – Worship Service <b>10:00 AM</b> – Fellowship & Sunday School	<b>10</b> <b>11:30 AM</b> – Senior Meal Site	<b>11</b> <b>11:30 AM</b> – Senior Meal Site <b>12:30 PM</b> – Strength Training Class	<b>12</b> <b>11:30 AM</b> – Senior Meal Site <b>5:45 PM</b> – Church Board Meeting	<b>13</b> <b>11:30 AM</b> – Senior Meal Site <b>12:30 PM</b> –Strength Training Class	<b>14</b> Pastor Paul’s Sabbath Day	<b>15</b>
<b>16</b> ☩ <b>9:00 AM</b> – Worship Service <b>10:00 AM</b> – Fellowship & Sunday School	<b>17</b> <b>11:30 AM</b> – Senior Meal Site	<b>18</b> <b>11:30 AM</b> – Senior Meal Site <b>12:30 PM</b> – Strength Training Class	<b>19</b> <b>11:30 AM</b> – Senior Meal Site <b>6:00 PM</b> – Growing In Faith Study Group	<b>20</b> <b>11:30 AM</b> – Senior Meal Site <b>12:30 PM</b> –Strength Training Class	<b>21</b> Pastor Paul’s Sabbath Day	<b>22</b>
<b>23</b> ☩ <b>9:00 AM</b> – Worship Service <b>10:00 AM</b> – Fellowship & Sunday School	<b>24</b> <b>11:30 AM</b> – Senior Meal Site	<b>25</b> <b>11:30 AM</b> – Senior Meal Site <b>12:30 PM</b> – Strength Training Class	<b>26</b> <b>11:30 AM</b> – Senior Meal Site	<b>27</b> <b>9:00 AM</b> – Bible Study Group <b>11:30 AM</b> – Senior Meal Site <b>12:30 PM</b> –Strength Training Class	<b>28</b> Pastor Paul’s Sabbath Day	

**\*\* Remember to join us at 3:20 PM each day for being unified in prayer to pray for our church and how we can reach and serve others, while serving God ...**

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

God is able to do much more than we ask or think, through His power working in us.  
~ Ephesians 3:20 (NLV)

