

# THE CROSS & THE FLAME



**JULY 2025**

## **“The Scripture Way of Salvation”**

**(Summary of John Wesley’s Sermon)**

John Wesley’s sermon “The Scripture Way of Salvation” explains how people are saved and grow in their faith, using simple ideas from the Bible. He focuses on Ephesians 2:8, which says, “By grace you are saved through faith.” Wesley wants people to understand that salvation is a gift from God, not something we can earn by being good.

First, Wesley says that we are saved by grace. Grace means God’s kindness and love that we don’t deserve. We receive this grace through faith, which means trusting in Jesus Christ. Faith is not just believing with your mind—it means truly depending on Jesus in your heart.

When someone has faith, God forgives their sins. This is called justification. At the same time, God also changes their heart. This is called regeneration or being “born again.” It’s like starting a new life. From that point on, the person begins to live differently, wanting to please God and do what is right.

But salvation does not stop there. Wesley teaches that we are also sanctified, which means we grow to become more like Jesus. This is a lifelong journey of spiritual growth and becoming holy. God gives us the strength to turn away from sin and do good things. Wesley says that good work does not save us, but they are proof that we have real faith. If someone truly believes, they will show love, patience, peace, and other good qualities.

One special idea in Wesley’s teaching is Christian perfection. This doesn’t mean being perfect, like never making a mistake. Instead, it means having a heart full of love—loving God with all your heart and loving others as yourself. Wesley believed that with God’s help, Christians can reach a point where they no longer have bad thoughts or selfish desires controlling them. This is also something we receive by trusting God, not by trying hard on our own.

In simple terms, Wesley says salvation is a journey. It begins when we first believe and are forgiven (justification), continues as we grow to become more like Jesus (sanctification), and can ultimately lead to a life filled with love (Christian perfection). All of this is possible only because of God’s grace and love. We must always trust in God from beginning to end.

Wesley’s message is that God wants to save us, change us, and fill us with God’s love—and all we have to do is believe and keep trusting God.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Birthdays/Anniversaries .....	page 2
Looking Back at June .....	pages 3—5
Looking Forward .....	pages 5—8
Committee Reports.....	pages 8-11
July Calendar .....	page 12

## JULY ANNIVERSARIES

Randal & Deanna Fortney	July 2nd
Nick & Amanda Clements	July 7th
J.R. & Jackie Maly	July 18th
Jim & Kathy Porter	July 31st



## JULY BIRTHDAYS

Dustin Stalsberg	July 3rd
Lana Dustin	July 4th
Mary Cheever	July 10th
Kathy Hanson	July 10th
Brandon Hall	July 14th
Randal Fortney	July 15th
Colton Brown	July 18th
Diane Warren	July 19th
Debbie Strait	July 21st
Kyle Schultz	July 23rd
Mackenzie Stalsberg	July 25th
Carolyn Schroeder	July 31st

*God's Blessings on You!*



## 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





## Sundae Sunday





## Father's Day Breakfast



## Summer Sunday School



## *Viroqua UMC May/June 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 2025 Budget is \$2,635.

May 25	\$1,017.05
June 1	\$2,802.75
June 8	\$2,940.95
June 15	\$1,562.00
June 22	\$1,183.75

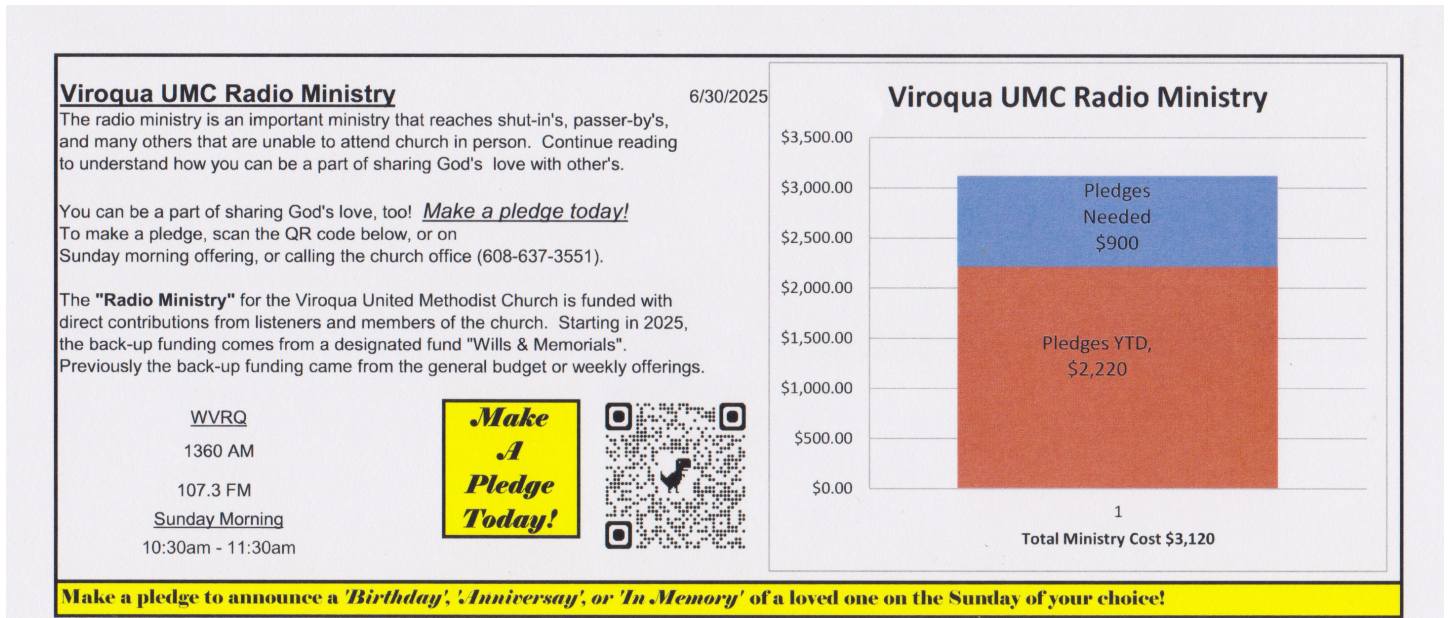


# Radio Fund Pledge Drive

More than 2/3 of the money needed to fund the Radio Ministry has been pledged or given! Since the last newsletter, \$120 of new gifts have been pledged or donated. Thank you so much! This brings us to \$2,220 of the \$3,240 needed to fund the Radio Ministry.

Pledge cards can be found in the pews and pledges may be made at any time.

Thanks for your support!



## Visioning Team

The Visioning Team met by Zoom on Tuesday, June 17th. Members present were Pastor Paul, Gregory Cheever, Kathy Hanson, Layne Hanson.

Pastor Paul emphasized the importance of seeking God's will through prayer in determining what He wants from our church.

We shared thoughts about possible short term goals that can be done yet this year and will present them to Ad Council on Sunday, June 22nd.

The next meeting will be Sunday, June 29th @ 11:45 am.

## Community Dinner

Thanks to everyone who helped in any way for the Community Dinner.

Some folks made monetary donations, and some folks donated cakes or other menu items.

Many worked.

Phyllis Kalnins, Barb Huschka, Barb Casper, Alice Sloane, and Kathy Hanson prepared food at VUMC in the morning.

Pastor Paul and Marlo Volden transported the food to Good Shepherd.

Pastor Paul, Sonja Bjerkos, Lorna Peterson, Joanne Hornby, Maxine Olson, Alice Sloane, Barb Casper, Avis Marino, Peach Hoiland, Cathy Schutz, Betty Ross, Lana Dustin, Janet Welch, Anita Frels, AJ Frels, Kathy Hanson, Cavan Fang, Chuck Mulvaney-Kemp, and Mary Mulvaney Kemp all helped at the event.

What a great group of volunteers!!!



## Teen Group

The Teen Group went bowling at Nordic Lanes in Westby on Wednesday, June 25th.

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

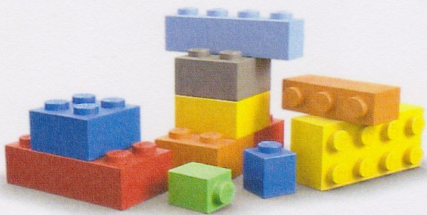
**Build Your Faith**

**SUNDAY, AUGUST 10**

**4:00 – 7:00 PM**

**@ 202 East State Street  
Westby**

**Hosted by Westby & Viroqua United  
Methodist Churches**



**MUSIC | GAMES | FOOD | FUN**

- Everyone in the family is welcome. Kids age 3 – 103 are invited! [Kids younger than age 3 are welcome with a parent or family member to supervise!] There is no cost for the evening.
- Kids will experience great songs, team-building games, Bible adventures, and crafts with the purpose of serving others
- Kids might get a little messy. Be sure to wear play clothes.
- The evening concludes with a meal.
- Please join us as we build our faith with Legos ~ brick by brick..... and bring a friend!

**More kids = More fun!**

**For more information & RSVP:  
Westby: Jane @ 608.606.0317  
Viroqua UMC: 637.3551**

LET US HELP YOU FIX  
YOUR HOUSEHOLD ITEMS!



JOIN US AT OUR UPCOMING  
**REPAIR CLINIC**

**SUNDAY, JULY 20TH, 1-4PM**

**VIROQUA UNITED METHODIST CHURCH  
221 SOUTH CENTER AVE, VIROQUA**

**DONATIONS ACCEPTED BUT NOT REQUIRED**

FOR MORE INFO  
VISIT OUR FACEBOOK PAGE  
FIX-IT FOLKS VIROQUA

TO VOLUNTEER  
CALL KENT  
(920) 602-4896

## Outdoor Worship

Our annual Outdoor Worship and Picnic in the Park is scheduled for July 20<sup>th</sup> at Eckhart Park in Viroqua.. It is a joint service with Westby. We look forward to worshipping with them in the open air.

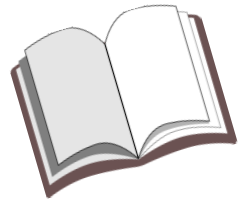
Be sure to bring your lawn chair, a dish to pass, plates and dinnerware. Coffee/cups, napkins, salt & pepper will be supplied. If you are unable to make something to bring, don't let it stop you from attending. We always have plenty of food.

In case of rain, we will meet in the Viroqua church.

## Book Group

The Book Group is currently read ***The Anxious Generation: How The Great Rewiring of Childhood Is Causing An Epidemic Of Mental Illness*** by Jonathan Haidt We will be discussing it on Monday, June 30th.

The discussion date was changed to give more people a chance to read the book. A new book will be chosen at the meeting.



## Lord, Hear Our Cry: 30-Day Prayer Challenge July Online Study



Prayer. It's how we communicate with God. We share our hearts. We pause to listen for wisdom and guidance. However, all too often we can treat it as a measure of last resort rather than a constantly-open dialog to our loving Creator. When your prayer life becomes stale, you can stray for God's path and lose your focus.

In July, we are hoping to motivate you to return to a vibrant prayer life as we challenge you to pray boldly and consistently for 30 days. Together, we will embark on a journey to reignite our prayer lives, opening our hearts so that prayer truly becomes an essential part of our everyday lives. By the end of the month, we will be able to live a quote from John Wesley: "All that a Christian does, even in eating and sleeping, is prayer, when it is done in simplicity, according to the order of God."

We invite you to join us for this prayer challenge, beginning Tuesday, July 1<sup>st</sup>. Use the link below to join the study/challenge and re-ignite your prayer life!

**Lord, Hear Our Cry: 30-Day Prayer Challenge** – Begins July 1<sup>st</sup>:

[https://bible.com/reading-plans/1502/together/74723498/invitation?token=M4ZQXSCc4dg4A2P\\_F2sZ8w&source=share](https://bible.com/reading-plans/1502/together/74723498/invitation?token=M4ZQXSCc4dg4A2P_F2sZ8w&source=share)

*This online study 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). Please note that Bible.com online no longer supports Plans with Friends. You will need to open the Bible App on your mobile device to continue to use this feature.*

**An umbrella cannot stop the rain, but it allows us to stand in the rain.**

**Faith in God may not remove our trials, but it gives us strength to overcome them.**

## *July Sunday Servants*

	Ushers	Greeter		Ushers	Greeter
<b>July 6</b>	Joanne Hornby Jerry Brenneman	Avis Marino	<b>July 20</b>	Marlo Volden	Betty Ross
<b>July 13</b>	Janet Welch Janette Hanson	Miny Hirschfield	<b>July 27</b>	Angie & Aaron Hanson	Alice Sloane

## Education Committee

June 2nd, 2025

Members Present Virtually: Avis, Kathy, Janette, Pastor Paul, Heidi

### Old Business:

1. **Sunday School:** Sunday School will start on June 15th, we have two volunteer lined up. We are looking into preparing a curriculum for the Summer sessions. Pastor Paul will include a Children's Message in the Sunday Worship service and after that, the children can go with the teachers.

We are looking into hiring some young adults from our congregation to serve as assistants for the Sunday School program. We will look further into this and contact SPRC about the possibility.

2. **Confirmation:** The Confirmation ceremony was very nice. We had positive comments about the renewal of Baptismal vows as well as family participation. The flowers & cake were also very appreciated by the confirmands as well as the congregation. The confirmands also greatly appreciated their gifts.

3. **Sundae Sunday & Graduate Recognition:** We celebrated the High School graduation of two of our members last Sunday. We presented each graduate with a gift, and later had ice cream after church to celebrate. Pastor Paul will take Reid Brown's gift to her home as she was not able to make it to church to receive it. We talked about being more deliberate in asking people to let us know whether they received our communications.

3. **Community Meal:** The Community Meal will be held the 4th Monday of June. We would like to encourage the youth to help with this.

4. **Summer Activities:** Summer Activities for the teens will be taken care of through Teen Group. Pastor Paul will plan some Summer Activities for the younger children. More info to come later.

5. **VBS:** Pastor Paul has confirmed with Westby that they will be hosting VBS this year. Westby is planning a date in August at this time. More information will be shared as it becomes available.

6. **Teen Group:** The first Teen Group was held the last Wednesday of May. It was attended by four teens, more teens have committed to attending future meetings. Mitchell Hanson will be helping Pastor Paul with the Teen Group. The first meeting went very well. The next meeting will be the 4th Wednesday of June, meeting time will be determined closer to the date.

### New Business:

1. **Father's Day Breakfast:** On Father's Day the Hospitality Committee will be hosting a Father's Day Breakfast for all Dad's & men of the church. Helpers are needed. Teen participation will be encouraged.

2. **Next Meeting Date & Time:** Monday July 7th @ 6:00 PM



## Finance / Administrative Council Committee

June 22, 2025

### Finance

Members Present: Cavan Fang, Kathy Hanson, Phyllis Kalnins, Gregg Roberts (Secretary), Pastor Paul, Barb Casper, Dan Brown (Chair)

The Financial Secretary's (Mr. Roberts) report was presented. Gregg has requested \$15,000 to be sent from our Foundation Trustee account. Phyllis made a motion to accept the report, Kathy seconded. Motion carried.

The Treasurer's report was reviewed and discussed in the absence of Gregory. Cavan made a motion to accept the report, Barb seconded. Motion carried.

We need to get the Conference form signed and sent in for the 2023 audit. Sonja will do the 2024 audit next.

Room rental of the southwest basement room for office space was discussed. We need to set a price for the room and develop a statement of exactly what is included as far as utilities. That needs to be ready when people inquire about the room.

Phyllis reported that the Trustees have discussed payment for people who do odd handyman type jobs around the building. At this time, we will not start that.

### Council

The Community Dinner is tomorrow night, June 23rd. We could still use a few more volunteers.

**Building Usage by Outside Groups** was discussed. We need to organize ourselves and develop a process and form to let the groups know what is expected of them and who the contact person is.

**Safe Sanctuary Policy:** Phyllis has revised the policy to simplify it and further adapt it to what works for us. She explained what has been changed. Dan made a motion to accept the new policy and Barb seconded the motion. The policy was approved.

Cavan gave a report on Annual Conference.

Pastor Paul reported on what was discussed at the Vision Team meeting. The group is praying about a long term goal as well as short term goals to work on yet this fall. Taking a look at our governing structure is a priority.

Center Street will be redone beginning this August, breaking for winter, and finishing next summer. Our building access will be affected at times.

The meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Next Meeting: Sunday, July 27th after church.



## Hospitality Committee

June 10, 2025

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

Kathy opened the meeting with prayer. The minutes from our May meeting and the homebound list were reviewed. No changes to the Homebound list.

Avis gave a report about the cards she has sent. She can use more cards of all occasions.

### New Business

We spent considerable time finalizing plans for the Father's Day breakfast and the Community Dinner on June 23rd.

Contributions are coming in nicely to help pay for the brats and hot dogs we will be serving. We went over the informational sheet with directions about how to do things from Good Shepherd. We have enough help to provide cakes and prepare the food, but we still need workers during the serving time.

Our summer all church potluck will be held on Sunday August 3rd.

Our next meeting is Tuesday, July 8th.

## Missions Update

Thank you to everyone who participated in creating personal dignity kits for the Ingathering at Annual Conference. Together we donated 13 kits, plus about \$30 for shipping. We dropped off the kits on the first day of conference. They are now at the Midwest Mission Distribution Center in Illinois, and from there will be sent to people in need.

Also at conference we picked up our Rainbow Covenant certificate, which reads as follows: "The Wisconsin United Methodist Annual Conference gratefully recognizes and celebrates Viroqua United Methodist Church for participation in the 2024 Rainbow Covenant with mission giving from local to global levels."

The next meeting of the Missions Committee will be Sunday, July 6, right after the morning worship service.



## Worship Committee

June 5, 2025

Pastor Paul opened the meeting with a prayer.

Everyone liked the confirmation service.

We had a request that the greeters should hand out the red visitor bags. It was decided that we would start putting an announcement in the bulletin for visitors to ask the ushers for the bags, leaving the responsibility to the visitor not the ushers. Or set up an information station in the narthex for the offering, signup sheets and red bags for visitors to pick up on their own. We would need one by both the north and south doors of the sanctuary. No decisions were made as this is still in the thinking process.

Children's Time will be starting up again. Kids will then leave to go to Sunday School. This will add a little more time to the service.

June 8<sup>th</sup> is Pentecost and we have asked for red geraniums to be brought and for everyone to wear red. Tim Gaskell will be preaching. Barb will change the banner and Layne will set up Facebook before the service.

June 15<sup>th</sup> is Father's Day. We hope that the Dads and Lads enjoy the breakfast.

There will be no liturgists from now through the summer unless we have a guest speaker who is not a member of our congregation and is unfamiliar with our service format.

As we change to not passing the plate for offering, we will still be doing both through the summer. When there are special offering envelopes (6 times/year) we will put them in the pew pockets 1-2 weeks before the particular Sunday so that people can take them home to bring back and put in the offering plate before the next service.

July 20<sup>th</sup> is the Park Service at 10:00 AM. Promos have been set up for the newsletters and bulletins. We need at least 2-3 people to come early to clean up the shelter and picnic tables, and to set up the buffet table and set up the keyboard. We will ask Westby to bring their speaker system. Cavan will get the recording of last year's service to the radio station to be played during our regular 10:30 time slot. We will ask Layne to set up the laptop to record this current service for Facebook.

Since the next meeting falls on the night before the 4<sup>th</sup> of July we will change to Monday June 30<sup>th</sup> at 6PM.

Barb Casper, Chair Person



# July 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>29</b>	<b>30</b> 6pm Worship Committee 7pm Book Club	<b>1</b> 10:30am Exercise Group	<b>2</b> 8am Prayer Group	<b>3</b> 10:30am Exercise Group	<b>4</b> HAPPY JULY 4 <sup>th</sup> !	<b>5</b>
<b>6</b> 9am Adult Sunday School 10:30am Worship 10:40am Summer SS	<b>7</b> 6pm Education Committee	<b>8</b> 10:30am Exercise Group 1pm Hospitality Committee 6pm Trustees Meeting	<b>9</b> 8am Prayer Group	<b>10</b> 10:30am Exercise Group	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>13</b> 9am Adult Sunday School 10:30am Worship 10:40am Summer SS 4pm Bible Study @ Kathy Hanson's	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b> 10:30am Exercise Group	<b>16</b> 8am Prayer Group	<b>17</b> 10:30am Exercise Group	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>20</b> 9am Adult Sunday School 10am Outdoor Worship 1pm Repair Clinic 5:30pm Driftless Asian Group	<b>21</b> NEWSLETTER DEADLINE	<b>22</b> 10:30am Exercise Group	<b>23</b> 8am Prayer Group 5pm Youth Group	<b>24</b> 10:30am Exercise Group	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>27</b> 9am Adult Sunday School 10:30am Worship 10:40am Summer SS 11:45am Administrative Council 11:45am Finance Committee	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b> 10:30am Exercise Group	<b>30</b> 8am Prayer Group	<b>31</b> 10:30am Exercise Group		

*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**

### **CHURCH OFFICE**

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Office Staff: Kathy Hanson/Barb Casper

**Check Us Out On Facebook!**

### **OFFICE HOURS**

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

### **SUNDAY MORNING SCHEDULE**

**Adult Sunday School Class—9:00 am**

**Worship—10:30 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.