

THE CROSS & THE FLAME



August 2025

New Birth

We are continuing to learn about the doctrine of early Methodists. We are especially studying the Way of Salvation, which Wesley identified as essential to understanding their doctrine. I have shared that there are two main pillars in the early Methodists' view of salvation: Justification and Sanctification. Before Justification, humans go through the step of Repentance. Then, humans experience Justification, where they are assured by God that they are righteous. At the same time, or immediately after Justification, people experience the "New Birth." This New Birth is the gate and start of Sanctification.

New Birth is a very important part of the Christian life. It means being born again. John Wesley explained about New Birth in his sermon "The New Birth" well. He explains that every person must go through a spiritual change in order to be saved and have a real relationship with God. This is what Jesus meant when He said, "You must be born again" (John 3:7).

Wesley says that when we are born the first time, we are born with a sinful nature because of Adam's sin. This means we are naturally selfish, far from God, and unable to truly love or obey God. Even if someone tries to be a good person, goes to church, or follows the rules, it's not enough. A deep, inner change is needed.

The new birth is a work of God. It's something the Holy Spirit does in a person's heart. It's not something we can do by ourselves. When we are born again, God gives us a new heart. We begin to love God, want to do what is right, and live a holy life. Our thoughts, feelings, and actions start to change. This is the beginning of real Christian life.

Wesley explains that this new birth happens through faith. It's not just about believing facts about God — it's about trusting in Jesus, turning away from sin, and receiving God's grace. When this occurs, we are forgiven and also transformed.

The new birth also leads to a new way of living. A person who is born again will show love, kindness, patience, and other fruits of the Spirit. They will not be perfect, but their life will be different because God is now working in them.

Wesley warns that no one should think they are saved just because they were baptized, go to church, or try to be good. These things are not the same as being born again. Only through the new birth can we become true children of God.

Pastor Paul Lee

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AUGUST ANNIVERSARIES

Gregory & Mary Cheever	August 9th
Jack & Mary Deters	August 10
Josh & Heidi Garrett	August 29th



AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

Daniel Stalsberg	August 4
Sherman Carney	August 7
Angie Hanson	August 7
Janice Primmer	August 8
Charles Turben	August 18
Amanda Clements	August 19
Dan Brown	August 21
Christian Dach	August 23
Almina Hirschfield	August 25
Tom Lohr	August 27

God's Blessings on You!

happy birthday

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.

Another \$900 in pledges will completely fund our Radio Ministry

Viroqua UMC Radio Ministry

The radio ministry is an important ministry that reaches shut-in's, passer-by's, and many others that are unable to attend church in person. Continue reading to understand how you can be a part of sharing God's love with other's.

You can be a part of sharing God's love, too! [Make a pledge today!](#)

To make a pledge, scan the QR code below, or on Sunday morning offering, or calling the church office (608-637-3551).

The "Radio Ministry" for the Viroqua United Methodist Church is funded with direct contributions from listeners and members of the church. Starting in 2025, the back-up funding comes from a designated fund "Wills & Memorials". Previously the back-up funding came from the general budget or weekly offerings.

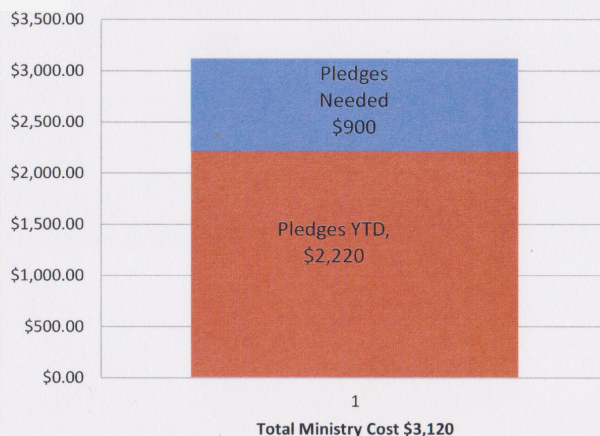
WVRQ
1360 AM
107.3 FM
Sunday Morning
10:30am - 11:30am

**Make
A
Pledge
Today!**



6 July 2025

Viroqua UMC Radio Ministry



Make a pledge to announce a 'Birthday', 'Anniversary', or 'In Memory' of a loved one on the Sunday of your choice!



Teen Group Bowling

Viroqua UMC June/July 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.

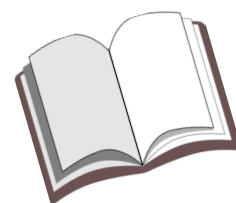
June 29	\$1,363.05
July 6	\$3,846.05
July 13	\$811.05
July 20	\$10,610.75

Book Group

The Book Group's current read is ***Everything You Wanted To Know About Indians But Were Afraid To Ask*** by Anton Treuer.

What have you always wanted to know about Indians? Do you feel like you should already know the answers—or are concerned that your questions may be offensive? For more than a decade, Anton Treuer's clear, candid, and informative book has answered questions for tens of thousands of readers. This revised edition both revisits old questions from a new perspective and expands on topics that have become increasingly relevant over the past decade, including activism and tribal enrollment; truth and reconciliation efforts; gender roles and identities in Indigenous communities; the status of Alaskan Natives and Canadian First Nations; and much more.

The Group will discuss the book on Monday, August 11 at 7:00 pm.



Summer Potluck

The Hospitality Committee will be hosting a Summer Potluck meal on Sunday, August 3rd immediately following the worship service.

Bring a dish to pass and join us in the fellowship Hall for a good meal and fellowship.

If you can't bring a dish to pass, come anyway. There's always plenty of food!



<i>August Sunday Servants</i>		
	Ushers	Greeter
August 3	Joanne Hornby Anita Frels	Avis Marino
August 10	Janet Welch Joanne Hornby	Alice Sloane
August 17	Miny Hirschfield Chuck Mulvaney Kemp	Betty Ross
August 24	Angie & Aaron Hanson	Anita Frels
August 31	Cavan Fang Mitchell Hanson	Avis Marino

God gave you a fingerprint that no one else has, so that you can leave an imprint no one else can.

Unknown

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

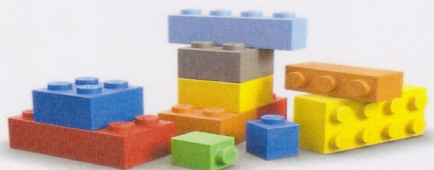
Build Your Faith

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

August Online Studies – Fruitful Faith



During the summer, many people have flower and vegetable gardens which they nurture, water and weed to help the plants produce beautiful flowers to view or delicious vegetables to eat. It takes time and effort to tend to these gardens to help ensure there are flowers or vegetables to harvest. Our faith life is like a garden. We need to cultivate it so we can be fruitful and grow in our relationship with Jesus. How is your faith garden doing?

The online studies for this month will provide guidance for having a fruitful life for and with Jesus. Please join us as we work to become more fruitful.

Fruitful Life – begins on Aug. 3rd

<https://bible.com/reading-plans/32238/together/75127127/invitation?token=3YlyJiEjw1leke4BQMbmGg&source=share>

A Fruitful Life – begins on Aug. 10th

<https://bible.com/reading-plans/34224/together/75127149/invitation?token=zbG0KHclMwJCAI8A2tFY2g&source=share>

Fruitful Faith – begins on Aug. 19th

<https://bible.com/reading-plans/31335/together/75127169/invitation?token=E59ZcmjYAbM-hymvZJBauA&source=share>

Forever Fruitful in Christ – begins on Aug. 24th

<https://bible.com/reading-plans/20906/together/75127188/invitation?token=zw0QJ7lp2yUgBGE7CA3-lg&source=share>

Worship Committee

June 30, 2025

We opened the meeting with a prayer.

We discussed what to do for the Sundays that Pastor Paul will be unavailable.

Plans were made for the hymn sing service on 7-6-25. We are using one from 2009 as an outline and Cavan will be making changes as necessary.

On 7-13-25 we will do a regular service with Layne as a guest speaker.

7-20-25 is going to be the church service at Eckhardt Park. The shelter was reserved in January. We will need a couple of people to come early enough (8:30) to clean the shelter and set up tables and equipment. Barb has a checklist of things to bring/do. Items to bring are: a few styro plates and cups, plastic dinnerware, napkins, salt & pepper, creamer, sugar, a cooler of lemonade, a cooler of water, coffee pot and parts, coffee, Pitchers for carrying water, 2-3 table cloths for the buffet table, paper towels, cleaning spray, broom, 1-2 electrical strips and extension cords, offering plates and signs, bulletins, music stand, keyboard, keyboard stand and stool, and Westby's sound system.

District Superintendent, Amanda Stein, has offered to come to speak, if needed, and Barb Robson is available on the 20th if needed. She is willing to be in a holding pattern until we know for sure how long we might need a fill-in speaker.

Phyllis Kalnins from SPRC discussed chain of command while Pastor is on leave. We won't be able to discuss anything about the church with him while he is away.

Other non-emergency issues will have to wait until Pastor Paul gets back.

Our next meeting will be held on 8-7-25 at 6 PM

Barb Casper, Chairperson

Hospitality Committee

July 8, 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 June meeting and the homebound list were reviewed. No changes to the Homebound list.

Avis gave a report about the cards she has sent. In June, she sent 8 birthday & 3 anniversary cards. In July, she sent 12 birthday, 4 anniversary, and 2 sympathy cards. She can use more cards of all occasions.

Old Business

Father's Day Breakfast:

It seemed to be well received. Approximately 18 people attended and we had almost that many helpers.

Ideas for next year include a half hour later start time to shorten the time before worship. Consider having a separate clean-up crew. Also consider "Dads & Kids" to include daughters.

Community Dinner:

We served about 95 people including carry outs. Many compliments were received about the menu and the food. We had plenty of helpers—perhaps more than needed with all the workers Good Shepherd provided.

With donations of money and food from our people, the total cost to our church was \$13.50.

New Business

Our summer all church potluck will be held on Sunday August 3rd following the worship service.

The Prayer Chain has been updated.

A music group called Adams Voice has contacted our church about doing a concert here in September. We think it is a good idea and will pursue getting more information.

Kathy encouraged the committee to think about possible small groups of interest to members for the fall. Some ideas mentioned were end of life planning, animal shelter group, and after church lunch group.

Our next meeting is Tuesday, August 12th.

Education Committee

July 7th, 2025

Members Present: Kathy, Heidi, Janette, Cavan, Avis

Old Business:

Sunday School: Sunday school has been going well so far. We have had consistent attendance and have had volunteers. The next two weeks will be cancelled unless we can get volunteers, class will resume after the outdoor worship service when we have volunteers again.

Community Meal: The community meal went well. There were plenty of volunteers, and our church received several compliments on the menu. No youth were able to help.

Summer Activities: Summer activities are being handled within the Teen Group as well as with Summer Sunday School and VBS.

VBS: Westby will be hosting this year. On July 15th @ 2:00 PM there will be a planning meeting at the Westby church, we are invited to attend. The theme for this year will be **Legos, "Building Our Faith."**

Teen Group: Teen Group has been meeting the last Wednesday of the month. Last month they went bowling at Nordic Lanes. The next meeting will be Wednesday July 30th.

Father's Day Breakfast: The Father's Day Breakfast went well, several youth were able to help out. The event was well attended and well staffed. Everyone had a nice time.

New Business:

Cavan's Update from Annual Conference: Cavan joined us as our guest to give us an update from the Annual Conference. Many ideas were discussed, and some will be shared with the Visioning Committee.

Next Meeting Date & Time: Next meeting will be held on Monday July 28th @ 6:00 PM

Trustees Meeting

July 8, 2025 at 6:00 p.m.

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

Phyllis gave Aaron a form from the church's insurance company which is designed to help the church evaluate its physical condition presence of standards for operation.

A letter was received notifying us that there will be construction on South Center Street. We may, therefore, not have access to our parking lot for a while.

Fortney will be resealing the parking lot tomorrow. Aaron will put out the church's "No Parking" signs.

Our neighbor on Terhune contributed \$160.00 toward our snow removal bill.

Approval was given for the Vernon County Historical Society to use the church facilities for its volunteer appreciation event. This will be on November 9.

We received a bill from Strang's for a sink in the parsonage.

\$25.00 Materials

\$250.00 Labor

\$10.00 Trip Charge

Phyllis gave Aaron a brochure from Revive Community Development a 501 C3 agency which helps churches develop a plan to maximize the use of their church buildings. This agency is affiliated with the United Methodist Church. Kristen acquired the brochure to share with the trustees. Aaron will discuss the use of this agency with Kristen and the Ad Council.

A company that evaluates and repairs stained-glass windows sent the trustees a letter which offers a free inspection of our church's stained-glass windows. Aaron will discuss this with the Visioning Committee.

It was decided that several items needed further discussion with the Ad Council. Those items were room rental guidelines, room for rent description, and facilities use guidelines.

Next meeting will be on Tuesday, August 12 at 6:00 p.m.

August 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
3 9am Adult Sunday School 10:30am Worship w/ Communion 10:31am Outdoor Sunday School 11:45am Summer Potluck	4	5 10:30am Exercise Group	6 8am Prayer Group	7 10:30am Exercise Group 6pm Worship Committee	8	9
10 9am Adult Sunday School 10:30am Worship 10:31am Outdoor Sunday School 4pm VBS	11 7pm Book Group	12 10:30am Exercise Group 1pm Hospitality Committee 6pm Trustees Meeting	13 8am Prayer Group	14 10:30am Exercise Group	15	16
17 9am Adult Sunday School 10:30am Worship 10:31am Outdoor Sunday School 11:45am Ad Council & Finance 4pm Bible Study @ Kathy Hanson's	18	19 10:30am Exercise Group	20 8am Prayer Group	21 10:30am Exercise Group	22	23
24 9am Adult Sunday School 10:30am Worship 10:31am Outdoor Sunday School	25 NEWSLETTER DEADLINE	26 10:30am Exercise Group	27 8am Prayer Group 5pm Teen Group	28 10:30am Exercise Group	29	30
31 9am Adult Sunday School 10:30am Worship	1 LABOR DAY Office Closed	2 10:30am Exercise Group	3 8am Prayer Group	4 10:30am Exercise Group 6pm Worship Committee	5	6

*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

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OFFICE HOURS

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.