

Lovely Lane *network* United Methodist Church

December 2019

Vision Statement

We are here
to reflect
God's glory
in our
congregation,
in our world,
and in our
hearts.

Forgiven
by Christ,
we forgive.
Accepted
by God,
we accept.

Empowered
by the
Holy Spirit,
we equip,
enable,
and inspire
God's
household
to servant
leadership.



Christ is Coming!

The Advent season begins with these classic words, "Come, thou long-expected Jesus, born to set thy people free."

However, if you are completely honest, what would your answer be to the question, "What are you expecting from Jesus?" Do you really expect Jesus to change your life . . . leading you to places and people you would normally avoid?

Are you longing for the Christ Child to come into your life and circumstances once again . . . or is the Christmas story a very strange event that took place a long time ago and has no meaning today?

I am "old school" enough to believe the Christmas story is a real story that demonstrates and bears witness to the fact that God fully entered into human history and has not gone out of business yet.

Another classic hymn, *O Little Town of Bethlehem*, testifies to this spectacular but mystifying power when it states, "How silently, how silently, the wondrous gift is given; so God imparts to human hearts the blessings of his heaven. No ear may hear his coming, but in this world of sin, where meek souls will receive him, still the dear Christ enters in."

Christ is coming to us. Christ wants to soften our hearts which have become hard. During this Season of Advent, Christ calls to us that he is coming and that he will rescue us from fear, guilt, and loneliness. Make no mistake about it, redemption is drawing near.

As Dietrich Bonhoeffer shares in his book, *A Testament to Freedom*, "Will we let ourselves be pulled into this movement coming down from heaven to earth or will we refuse to have anything to do with it? Either with us or without us, Christmas will come. It is up to each individual to decide what it will be."

May God bless each of you!

MERRY CHRISTMAS FROM THE LOVELY LANE STAFF!!

Scott Meador, Sue Moss, Marti Bowman, Amber Mulnik, Dawn DuPont,
Amy Perry, Julie Meyer, Barb Geissinger, K. Weiler, Dennis Ramsey, Carla Jesse,
Charlie Kucera, Eric Wylie, Marcie Stumpf, Vicki Cangemi, Shelly Turner,
Becky Wood, Rex & Rhonda Heasty, & the Nursery Staff

Calendar of Events — December 2019

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 First Sunday of Advent & Communion 9 am Chancel Choir 6 pm Adult Explo 6 pm H.S. Youth	2 5:15 pm Tai Chi 6 pm Adult Explo 6:30 pm CE mtg. 6:30 pm Boy Scouts	3 6:45 pm WOF	4 9:30 am CCM (offsite) 12 noon WWW 4:30 pm M.S. Youth serve meal 4:45 pm Zamar bells 5:30 pm Family meal 6 pm Kid's Club 7:15 pm AcabeLLa	5	6	7 9 am–1:30 pm ILF 9:30 am UMW Advent Coffee
8 Second Sunday of Advent 9 am Chancel Choir 6 pm Adult Explo 6 pm H.S. Youth	9 11:30 am Happy Endings (lunch offsite) 5:15 pm Tai Chi 6 pm Adult Explo 6:30 pm Boy Scouts	10 6 pm UMW Dinner & Ornament Exchange (@ Vito's) 6:30 pm Mental Health Support Grp. 6:45 pm WOF	11 12 noon WWW 1:30 pm Staff mtg. 4:45 pm Zamar bells 5:30 pm Family meal 6 pm Kid's Club / M.S. Youth / Confirmation 7:15 pm AcabeLLa	12 7:30 am Leadership Team (@ Panera's) 5:30 pm Yoga	13	14 9-11 am Children practice for Sunday's Christmas program
15 Third Sunday of Advent / Children's Christmas Program @ 9:15 9 am Chancel Choir 4 pm Blue Christmas Gathering 6 pm Adult Explo 6 pm H.S. Youth	16 5:15 pm Tai Chi 6 pm Adult Explo 6:30 pm Boy Scouts	17 6:45 pm WOF	18 9-Noon CWM Preschl. Christmas Program 12 noon WWW 1:30 pm Staff brief prayer time 4:45 pm Zamar bells 5:30 pm Family meal 6 pm Kid's Club / M.S. Youth 7:15 pm AcabeLLa	19 9-Noon CWM Preschl. Christmas Program 5:30 pm Yoga (NO Committees, including Ad Council, meeting on this date)	20	21 8 am Men's Breakfast
22 Fourth Sunday of Advent 9 am Chancel Choir 6 pm Adult Explo	23 5:15 pm Tai Chi 6 pm Adult Explo	24 <u>Christmas Eve Services:</u> 5 PM Family-friendly 7 PM Traditional Candlelight 9 PM Holy Communion	25 MERRY CHRISTMAS! (church & office closed)	26 (church & office closed)	27	28
29 First Sunday After Christmas 9:30 am ONE SERVICE ONLY TODAY!	30 5:15 pm Tai Chi	31 HAVE A SAFE & HAPPY NEW YEAR'S EVE!	CCM = Care Center Ministry CWM = Children's Weekday Ministries UMW = United Methodist Women	ILF = International Ladies Fellowship WOF = Women Of Faith WWW = Wednesday Women & The Word		

HAPPY ENDINGS

Our book discussion group will meet at Zepplin's for lunch on Dec. 9th at 11:30 AM. We'll have a short discussion of the book we read for November, *City of Girls*, by Elizabeth Gilbert (since we didn't meet in Nov.). The book we will read for January is *The Library Book* by Susan Orlean.

MEN'S BREAKFAST

Men's Breakfast will be on Saturday, December 21, at 8 AM. Our speaker will be Rod Dooley. Rod is the Executive Director of Talent Management with the Cedar Rapids Community Schools and also Pastor at New City Church.



SUNDAY WORSHIP IN DECEMBER

Dec. 1: 1st Sunday of Advent & Communion—3 services @ 8:00, 9:15 & 10:30 AM / Pastor Scott / Scripture: John 14:15-31 / Sermon: "Peace" *An Altogether Commitment, Part 1*

Dec. 8: 2nd Sunday of Advent—3 services @ 8:00, 9:15 & 10:30 AM / Pastor Scott / Scripture: Jeremiah 29:1, 4-14 / Sermon: "Hope" *An Altogether Commitment, Part 2*

Dec. 15: 3rd Sunday of Advent—3 services @ 8, 9:15* & 10:30 AM / Pastor Scott / Scripture: Luke 1:34-38 / Sermon: "Love" *An Altogether Commitment, Part 3 (*Children's Christmas Program)*

Dec. 22: 4th Sunday of Advent—3 services @ 8:00, 9:15 & 10:30 AM / Pastor Scott / Scripture: Psalm 30:1-5 / Sermon: "Joy" *An Altogether Commitment, Part 4*

Dec. 29: 1st Sunday After Christmas—One service @ 9:30 AM!!!

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES

Tuesday, Dec. 24th

5 PM Family-friendly

7 PM Traditional Candlelight

9 PM Holy Communion

Childcare is available at 5 & 7 PM.

Blue Christmas Grief Gathering

On Sunday, Dec. 15, at 4 pm, we will host a *Blue Christmas Gathering*. We recognize that not all people will be able to celebrate happily this Christmas, and so we're offering you the opportunity to gather and name the grief. Even in sorrow, Christ's coming at Christmas brings light to the dark places in our lives.

Join us for a time of remembrance in Fireside, with snacks following. All those grieving from loss—of a job, a loved one, mobility, health—are invited to come. For more info., contact Pastor Scott @ church.

2019 Advent Offering Recipients

Family Promise of Linn County: Teaming with the faith community, Family Promise provides a warm and welcoming place for families in need to call home while they get back on their feet and into stable housing. Host Congregations provide overnight lodging, meals, and hospitality. Volunteers provide a variety of services, including cooking and serving meals, playing with children, helping with homework, and staying overnight at the host churches.

Willis Dady Homeless Shelter: The shelter has been serving single men and families for over 30 years. Their mission is to provide shelter and prevention services to the homeless and near homeless. Their goal is to empower clients to break the cycle of homelessness and become self-sufficient. Through a successful capital campaign, they were able to dedicate an enlarged facility this past August and now are able to serve more people in need.

Pierce Backpack Ministry: One of the most important programs we have supported and continue to support is Operation Backpack. In East Central Iowa, 1 in 7 children are at risk for hunger or food insecurity. The Backpack Ministry addresses this concern by providing needy students with nutritious easy to prepare food when other food resources may not be available, specifically on weekends and during school vacations.

Women At The Well: WATW is a United Methodist congregation located within the walls of the Iowa Correctional Institution for Women, in Mitchellville, Iowa. It offers ministries designed to encourage the spiritual growth of its members, assist them when they transition back into the world outside the walls, and to better understand the hurts and hopes of those who reside within the Iowa Correctional Institute for Women. Lovely Lane has committed to becoming a Partner Organization supporting this ministry.

An Advent mailing has gone out that includes a card with giving options and a return envelope.

Building Renovations Update

We are in the midst of an exciting time at Lovely Lane as we move forward with building renovations in 2020 and 2021 that will better equip us to share God's love, bring hope to others, and make disciples of Jesus Christ. The opportunities for building improvements at Lovely Lane are many:

- *Proactive and Preventative Building Maintenance (siding, windows, heating/cooling systems)
- *Accessibility and Welcoming to All (ADA compliance, covered worship entrance)
- *Safety and Security (fire protection, comprehensive security systems)
- *Sanctuary and Gathering Space Improvements
- *Improved Efficiency and People Flow (install elevator, main office entrance, worship entrance)

In October 2018, church members were invited to make a pledge to support the building renovation project. On behalf of the Core Building Team, thank you to those who have made the initial progress of the building renovation project possible with your pledge and fulfillment. Your commitment to the future ministry of the church is appreciated.

There's still time to learn more about the building project and make a pledge to make this project happen. Take a moment to visit blessing.org to review the plan, see renderings and read the latest Blog posts. The website also provides details on how to make a pledge and arrange for your giving -- weekly, monthly or annually -- online through your bank or the Lovely Lane website; check or cash. Important: please put Capital Campaign in the memo line.

During this season of giving, please prayerfully consider how you can further our progress. Your kind and generous spirit is appreciated!

Wishing you a season filled with love and light!

Blessings,
Amber Mulnik, Project Manager,
Building Renovations

Blessed 
to be a **Blessing**
— Reflecting God's Light —

LET'S HELP OUR NEIGHBORS!!

Lovely Lane is continuing to support different local pantries. One of these is the Cougar Corner Pantry at Kennedy High School. Kennedy has partnered with HACAP to support Kennedy families in need of food and toiletries. You can help by donating nonperishable food items and toiletries to be placed in the tubs labeled "Kennedy" in the church narthex.

Suggested donations include:

- Granola Bars
- Ramen Noodles
- Tuna
- Canned Chicken
- Cereal (sugary/flavored preferred)
- Canned Soups
- Hygiene Products (shampoo, conditioner, toothbrushes & paste, men's and women's deodorant)
- \$10 Walmart Gift Cards (please place these in the labeled envelope in the church office)

Remembering with love:

Donald Caspers.....2018
Paul Nylin.....2017
Bev Munnik.....2016

Presence: Worship Attendance

<u>11/3</u>	<u>11/10</u>	<u>11/17</u>	<u>11/24</u>
263	253	279	246

October Financial Totals

Cash inflow—mo. of Oct.	\$ 33,654
Cash inflow—YTD	\$441,955
Budget need/month	\$ 49,732
Cash outflow—mo. of Oct..	\$ 33,923
Cash outflow—YTD	\$428,236
Unpaid apportionments	\$ 30,208

UNITED METHODIST WOMEN (UMW)

HUGE THANK YOU FROM UMW

Thanks to all the bakers and buyers who participated in this fall's bake sale! We had a wonderful selection of treats just in time for our Thanksgiving visitors!!

UMW DECEMBER HAPPENINGS



ADVENT COFFEE

Saturday, Dec. 7, 9:30 - 11:30 AM
Fellowship Hall

We know that Christmas is a busy time, but let us take time to reflect upon the true meaning of this season. Begin this year's joyous Christmas season with us. Advent should be a time to celebrate the love that God gives to us. We cordially invite you to An Advent Coffee on Saturday, December 7th, in our Fellowship Hall from 9:30-11:30 AM. Please join with us for some refreshments, reflections, and warm fellowship as we begin to celebrate the season, and enjoying the beautiful sounds of an acappella Women's Quartet.

If you need babysitting, notify the church office or Cheryl Murphy (377-6205).

UMW BIBLE STUDY

The Bible Study group will not meet in December. We will resume meeting on Tuesday, January 7th, from 9:30-11:15 AM in Fireside. We invite you to join us for fellowship and study. If you have any questions, call Cheryl Murphy (377-6205). (We are currently studying Paul's Letter to the Romans.) **We have decided to not only LUG OUR MUGS, BUT TO FILL THEM AT HOME, SO REMEMBER TO COME PREPARED WITH YOUR FAVORITE BEVERAGE IN HAND! Have a Blessed Advent and Christmas!**

UMW'S ANNUAL DINNER & ORNAMENT EXCHANGE

This always fun event is on **Tuesday, Dec. 10th, at Vito's on 42nd St. NE.** All women are invited! We'll meet there at **6 PM.** Please sign up on the STUB at church or call Nancy Miller at 393-6340 to reserve a spot.

FRIENDLY FELLOWSHIP

We will not meet in December but will meet again on Friday, January 17th, at noon. The January program will be presented by Lisa Nelson, Jayne Woodson's daughter. She will give a report on her interesting adventures when walking from Rome to Assisi, Italy, this summer. The hostess will be Jayne Woodson.

Sunday School & Weekday Studies For All Ages

GOD IS GOOD! Learn from the Bible Stories—Find out at Children's Sunday School!

9:15 AM Sunday School—Classes for the following are available:

***Elementary** children PreK to 5th grade are using a multi-age format as we gather for music in Room 100. Spark House **Activate Faith** lessons for Science, Stories & Games, Art and Cooking are rotated each week. Stories used are rooted firmly in the Bible.

***Middle School** youth meet in the Youth Room (106) and use *Submerge* from *Deep Blue* – a Bible centered approach for preteens to be Creative, Connect with God, and Dive Deep!

***Confirmation Class** will meet on Wednesday, Dec. 11th, @ 6 PM.

***High School** age youth may be Sunday School volunteer helpers!

- **Adult Class** / Faith Issues meets in the Library
- **Adult Class** / Faith Journeys meets in Room 205

10:45 AM Sunday School: Classes for children (PreK – 5th grade) are located in the Fellowship Hall using Spark House's **Activate Faith rotations**. Children are dismissed from the Sanctuary after the "Time for Young Disciples" and may be picked up after the service in the Fellowship Hall.

The children's classes will present their Christmas program, "Star of Wonder", in 9:15 AM worship on Dec. 15th. There will be a practice on Sat., Dec. 14th, from 9:00 to 11 AM.

Adult Explo Classes - Sunday & Monday evenings

ADULT EXPLO continues to meet with Pastor Scott on Sunday and Monday nights at 6 PM in the Library. The group is now focusing on the book, *Almost Christian: A Wesleyan Advent Experience*, by Magrey R. Devega (and others). Everyone is welcome!

Wednesday Night Kid's Club & more

I am Fearfully & Wonderfully made! The schedule for Lovely Lane UMC's Weds. Night Kid's Club is:

5:30 PM Family meal served

6:00 PM Kids go to their classrooms. **Middle Schoolers** will gather with Amy Perry in the Youth Room.

(**Confirmation Class** will gather with Pastor Scott on Wednesday, Dec. 11, at 6 PM.)

6:05—6:20 PM 2nd, 3rd, 4th & 5th grade go to music

6:55—7:15 PM Preschool, Kindergarten and 1st grade go to music

7:15 PM Kids head home

Come and learn how we are fearfully and wonderfully made. For more information, please contact Julie Meyer at juliem@lovelylane.org or 393-6674.

Wednesday Women & the Word (WWW)

WWW Bible Study meets at 12 noon on Wednesdays in the Library. We are using the Advent study "Light of the World" by Amy-Jill Levine. We will not meet on Weds., Dec 25, or on Jan 1st.

A **FREE ADVENT DEVOTIONAL** may be picked up in the narthex (one per family, please!). They're entitled *Arise & Shine—Devotions for Advent* by Tim Wesemann.

BRING IN YOUR CHRISTMAS POINSETTIA for the altar any time during Advent to honor or remember a loved one. Be sure to write your name and the name of the person(s) to be commemorated on the poinsettia sign-up sheet in the narthex.

Concerns & Celebrations

PRAYER CONCERNS:

- *Sympathy to Judy McDowell & family on BD's death (brother-in-law)
- *Sympathy to Bob & Bert Tribuno on the death of his sister
- *Sympathy to Dave & Linda Jones on the passing of granddtr., Lindsay
- *Sympathy to Barb Geissinger on the passing of her mother-in-law
- *Sympathy to Lu Serbousek on the passing of family friend, 15-yr.-old Alexis, due to brain cancer
- *Sympathy to Ron & Margaret Nelson on the death of friend, Susie
- *Sympathy to Marcie Baugh's military friends whose son-in-law passed
- *Sympathy to Sue Moss's friend & family on loss of their daughter
- *Sympathy to Jim & Barb Vancura following a family loss
- *Sympathy to Sharon Kouba's neighbor on the death of her son
- *Berta Mullin recovering from knee surgery, back at care facility
- *Dave Keefe recovering from knee surgery
- *Kent Jackson's sister, Cindy, needing 2 types of surgery
- *Dave & Maryann Ellis's Aunt Betty, following a heart attack
- *Dave Keefe's stepdad, Jerry Walker, has terminal cancer
- *Marci Wittles' sister, Lela White, with cancer in hip, bones & ribs
- *Waylon Stepp's mother, Lee
- *Nancy Schultz's son-in-law Tom recovering from surgery
- *Julie Meyer's mother recovering from a surgical procedure
- *Darla Carter's sister, Jackie
- *Carmen Johnson's father, Mel, after multiple falls
- *Rachel Wylie's school friend with cancer
- *Jacey Wall's friend's mother
- *Lifting up UMC pastor, Anna Blaidel
- *Family & friends with mental health issues

JOYS:

- *Steve & Donna Mooney & UMCOR work in Louisiana
- *Keith & Julie Schmickley travelled to Peru for family wedding
- *All Saints Sunday service & remembering loved ones who've passed
- *Excellent response from Stewardship Sunday
- *Thanks to Carolyn Barnes for a great job as Children's Weekday Ministries' director, & retirement congrats!
- *CWM has hired Dawn DuPont as their new director (was Trinity Lane Preschool's site director)
- *Phil & Shirley Martin's trip to Antarctica
- *Mike & Becky Wood returned home from Mississippi
- *ReGina Culbertson is employed and working
- *Amy Perry following her call to ministry
- *Wedding congratulations to Ed Bents & Chuck Sitter
- *Celebrating our veterans in the church & community
- *Large class of new members & celebrating Chris Tanner's baptism
- *Madelyn O'Brien & Jared Stumpf going to All State for music
- *Success of Operation Christmas Child per ReGina Culbertson
- *Vicki Cangemi & daughters overseeing small free food pantry
- *Trinity Lane Preschool making a difference with local families
- *Bishop Laurie Haller speaking on the district
- *UMC delegates' statement apologizing for harm to the LGBTQ community

Ministry Teams @ Work

HOSPITALITY

- *Beverages & help set up for potluck on 11/24 (decorating church for Advent & Christmas)
- *Make punch for Mrs. Barnes' retirement reception on 12/8

HEALTH & WHOLENESS

- *Helping with Blue Christmas Gathering on 12/15
- *Survey of congregation in January to determine activities in 2020
- *New leadership for 2020 will be Lisa Taylor & Sue Moss

MISSIONS/COMMUNITY OUT-REACH

- *T-shirt sales campaign in full swing
- *Getting tags lined up to hang on Angel Tree
- *Advent Offering Recipient speakers & dates are set

THANK YOU NOTES

Thank you for the very generous donation you have given to HACAP's Backpack Program for Pierce Elem. School. We're very fortunate to have you as a partner in our efforts to provide food to hungry people.

Thank you so much for contributing 51 lbs. of food to the Linn Community Food Bank during the third quarter of 2019. We could not operate our food bank without the generous support of donors like your congregation.

Thank you so much for the beautiful quilt for one of our families staying at New Directions Shelter!

Thank you so much for all the prayers, cards, and support for Dave Keefe and family during his health issues, knee replacement surgery & recuperation. He is improving but is delaying the 2nd knee surgery. It means so much to us that we are part of such a caring congregation!



December Monthly Newsletter, Vol. 57, No. 12
2424 42nd Street NE
Cedar Rapids, IA 52402

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Sunday Worship Schedule

Worship services @
8:00, 9:15 & 10:30 AM

EMBODYING ...
DISCERNING ...
DISCOVERING ...
THE WILL OF *
GOD

Find out more about us:

Website: www.lovelylane.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/lovelylaneumc

Phone: 319-393-6674

Lovely Lane Staff

Lead Pastor.....Dr. Scott Meador
Sr. Office Manager.....Sue Moss
Office Manager.....Marti Bowman
Building Project Manager.....Amber Mulnik
Director Children's Weekday Min.....Dawn DuPont
Director of Youth Ministries.....Amy Perry
Kid's Club Director.....Julie Meyer
Christian Educator..... Barb Geissinger
Choir Director.....K. Weiler
Organist.....Dennis Ramsey
Children's Choirs.....Carla Jesse
Director of Handbells.....Charlie Kucera
Nursery.....Shelbie Wood, Tara Neveu,
Paige Gerjets, & Claire Van Erde-Wyk
Wedding Coordinator.....Becky Wood
Custodians.....Rex, Rhonda & Jessica Heasty
Audio/Visual Coordinator.....Eric Wylie
Treasurer.....Marcie Stumpf
Finance Secretary.....Vicki Cangemi
Webmaster.....Shelly Turner

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Cedar Rapids, Iowa
Permit No. 196