



Lovely Lane
United Methodist Church

January 2026

Monthly Newsletter

Volume 64, Number 1

Vision Statement

“Lovely Lane is a dynamic faith community that seeks to welcome all people, nurture one another in the faith, and reach out in ministry and service.”

This vision connects with our Discipleship Pathway, Worship + 2. We encourage all persons to be active in worship and participate in two groups in the church: one group is focused on study and the other group is focused on service.

**W
+
2**

World Religions

“So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you”
– Matthew 7:12 (NIV)

Theologian Paul Tillich once defined religion as “ultimate concern.” For Tillich, religion wasn’t necessarily about specific gods or rituals, but those qualities that provide meaning and purpose to a person. Those qualities can range from God to accomplishments to justice. Tillich believed everyone was religious because everyone had something that mattered the most to them. As you might expect, we have many different worldviews out there.

While there are many different ways to view the world, we have five major world religions that have historically provided meaning and purpose to humankind. Those religions include two Eastern Religions and three Western Religions. The eastern religions are Hinduism and Buddhism. The western religions are Judaism, Islam, and Christianity. Each religion has beliefs, rituals, and ethics, yet they all address a different “human problem.” Each religion isn’t necessarily a different path to the top of the mountain. Each religion is distinctive in the ways they provide answers to the big questions in life.

In January, some of our study groups that meet on Wednesdays will focus on world religions. We will examine the book, “God Is Not One,” by Stephen Prothero. Prothero definitely makes the case that each religion is different and not looking to do the same thing. For him, the more we can understand this, the more we can respect and honor the other traditions while we cling to what matters the most to us.

During our study we will look at the characteristics that make each religion distinctive. We will see how Hinduism has a doctrine of Karma and a focus on reincarnation. We will examine the Eightfold Path to Nirvana found in Buddhism. We will take a look at the 613 Laws the Jewish people follow, as well as the Five Pillars of Islam a Muslim needs to obey. Through it all, I hope we will understand our own religion, Christianity, just a bit better. When I was in high school my Spanish teacher told me that my understanding of the English language would increase if I learned a foreign language. The same principle applies here.

I invite you to participate in this study. I also encourage you to consider the other study groups our church offers. Hopefully, we have something for everyone. It remains a joy to learn and grow with each of you! Peace and blessings, Pastor Scott

Calendar of Events (subject to change) - January 2026

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<p>Name Tags - In the past year or so we have started wearing name tags again at Lovely Lane worship services. These give everybody the ability to greet and learn the names of members of the church and guests. In the next couple of newsletters we will share a little history of name tags at Lovely Lane along with more detailed information about the name tags process and answer some often asked questions.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">-Susan Camp, Membership Secretary</p>				1	2	3
						
<p>4 8:30 am Worship In-person 9:30 am Adult SS 10:30 am Worship In-person/livestream 12:00 pm Congolese</p>	<p>5 9:45 am Prayer Shawl (Fireside Room) 6:30 pm Scouting America #766 (Fellowship Hall)</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>7 9:30 am Book Study Via Zoom 5:15 pm Family Meal 6:00 pm Kids Club 6:00 pm Book Study (Library) 6:00 pm Youth Group Bowling at Spare Time 6:00 pm Confirmation 7:15 pm Bells</p>	<p>8 1:00 pm UWF Meeting (Fireside Room)</p>	<p>9</p>	<p>10 9:00 am - 2:00 pm Choir Retreat (Fellowship Hall)</p>
<p>11 8:30am Worship In-person 9:00 am Choir Rehearsal 9:30 am Adult SS 10:30 am Worship In-person/livestream 10:45 Children SS 12:00 pm Congolese 3:00 pm Youth Sledding at Wanatee Park in Marion</p>	<p>12 11:30 am Happy Endings Book Club (Fireside Room) 6:30 pm Scouting America #766 (Fellowship Hall)</p>	<p>13</p>	<p>14 9:30 am Book Study Via Zoom 12:00 pm Women's Book Study (Fireside) 5:15 pm Family Meal 6:00 pm Kids Club Winter Wonderland 6:00 pm Book Study (Library) 6:00 pm Youth Group 6:00 pm Confirmation 7:15 pm Bells</p>	<p>15 4:00 pm Green Square Meals 5:45 pm Trustees (Library) 6:00 pm Health & Wholeness (Fellowship Hall) 6:00 pm Finance 7:00 pm Admin Council (Library)</p>	<p>16</p>	<p>17 8:30 am Men's Breakfast (Fellowship Hall)</p>
<p>18 8:30 am Worship In-person 9:00 am Choir Rehearsal 9:30 am Adult SS 10:30 am Worship In-person/livestream 10:45 Children SS 12:00 pm Congolese</p>	<p>19 9:45 am Prayer Shawl (Fireside Room) 6:30 pm Scouting America #766 (Fellowship Hall)</p> 	<p>20</p>	<p>21 9:30 am Book Study Via Zoom 12:00 pm Women's Book Study (Fireside) 5:15 pm Family Meal 6:00 pm Kids Club 6:00 pm Book Study (Library) 6:00 pm Youth Group 6:00 pm Confirmation 7:15 pm Bells</p>	<p>22 6:30 pm Missions Committee Mtg (Library)</p>	<p>23</p>	<p>24 9:00 - 11:00 am UWF Meditation Event (Fellowship Hall)</p>
<p>25 8:30 am Worship In-person 9:00 am Choir Rehearsal 9:30 am Adult SS 10:30 am Worship In-person/livestream 10:45 Children SS 12:00 pm Congolese 3:00 pm Youth Service Project</p>	<p>26 6:30 pm Scouting America #766 (Fellowship Hall)</p>	<p>27 6:00 pm Children's Council Meeting (Fireside Room)</p>	<p>28</p>	<p>29 12:00 pm Friendly Fellowship Potluck (Fellowship Hall)</p>	<p>30</p>	<p>31</p>



WORSHIP IN JANUARY

- January 4** ***Epiphany of the Lord Sunday***
In-person service at **8:30 am**, in-person & live-stream service at **10:30 am**
Pastor Scott Meador will preach, "Light of the World"
Scripture: Matthew 2:1-12
- January 11** ***Baptism of the Lord Sunday***
In-person service at **8:30 am**, in-person & live-stream service at **10:30 am**
Pastor Alecia Hilmer will preach, "The Day the River Rocked"
Scripture: Matthew 3:3-17
- January 18** ***Second Sunday after the Epiphany***
In-person service at **8:30 am**, in-person & live-stream service at **10:30 am**
Pastor Scott Meador will preach, "Keep On Keeping On"
Scripture: 1 Samuel 3:1-10
- January 25** ***Third Sunday after the Epiphany***
In-person service at **8:30 am**, in-person & live-stream service at **10:30 am**
Pastor Scott Meador will preach, "Leaving Their Nets"
Scripture: Matthew 4:12-23

Words from our New Associate Pastor

It is with immense joy and anticipation that I begin my journey as your new Associate Pastor. I feel truly blessed to serve God alongside you at Lovely Lane UMC. My husband, Todd, and I had already chosen to worship at this church, when Pastor Scott called me to explore the possibility of my serving here. I'm grateful the Bishop and the cabinet appointed me to this vital congregation.

My name is Alecia Hilmer, and I'm married to Todd. Between the two of us, we have five adult children and six grandchildren. Needless to say, we experienced a lively and loud Christmas! I am an avid reader, baker and walker. Todd enjoys woodworking in his spare time. He is a bank manager at BMO in Marion. We both love to garden and travel.

My journey to Lovely Lane has been Spirit driven. I retired from 40 years of ministry in June of 2025. I had planned to fully embrace retirement, and God had other plans! When Pastor Scott called, the Spirit's nudge was undeniable. Your vision of Worship + 2, along with your Discipleship Pathway is transformational. I feel privileged to serve this vibrant congregation.

I look forward to meeting each of you in the coming weeks and months. I will be working part-time and plan to be in the office on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. Thank you for the welcoming spirit which you have already shared with Todd and I over the past six months.

*Peace,
Alecia*

LOVELY LANE YOUTH



Youth Bowling Outing - Join us for an evening of fellowship and fun as we kick off 2026 together with bowling at Spare Time Entertainment. Please join us on **Wednesday, January 7, 6:00 - 8:00 pm** at 4601 1st Ave SE, Cedar Rapids. St. Paul's Family Ministry will cover the cost of bowling and shoes. Any food or beverages will be the responsibility of participants. We hope you'll join us for a great start to the new year!



Youth Sledding Outing – January 11, 3:00-4:30 pm at the Wanatee Park Sledding Hill, 1600 Banner Dr, Marion. Join the Youth Co-Op for an afternoon of sledding! Bring warm winter gear, a sled—or whatever you love sliding down hills on and friends. If there is no snow on the ground, a backup activity will be announced the week of the event.

Youth Service Project and Music Bingo - Please join us for an afternoon of service and fun! We will be putting together food outreach bags for Willis Dady Homeless Services and beginning work on a trivia presentation for an upcoming fundraiser. More details about the fundraiser will be shared soon—we're to get the planning started together! **Sunday, January 25 from 3:00 to 5:00 pm.** Bring your willingness to help others and friends!



Church Service Opportunity

As we move into the New Year, we have an opportunity for a person or a couple to prepare for coffee fellowship one Sunday a month at 7:30 am. Please reach out to Judy McDowell if you can assist in this area. Jmcdow51@aol.com.

Study groups with Pastor Scott meet on Wednesdays. The morning group meets on Zoom at 9:30 am. The evening group meets in the library at 6:00 pm. The next focus will be on World Religions. The book will be "God Is Not One," by Stephen Prothero and will start on **Wednesday, January 7**. Books are available in the church office, \$10.

Women's Book Study – The book for the next study is "The Difficult Words of Jesus." This study will start on **Wednesday, January 14, at noon, in the Fireside Room.** Books are in and available in the church office. The cost of each book is \$10. Please contact **Annie Walker** with any questions, anniew@lovelylane.org.

Men's Breakfast Gatherings

Saturday, January 17

Paul Sale will speak about a recent trip to Argentina. He and Cindy participated in a penguin research adventure with a group called Earthwatch.

Saturday, February 21

Charlie Kucera will speak about the board game that he created called "Captains and Companies."

Saturday, March 21

Kurt Rogahn from NAMI will speak about mental health.

We meet in the Fellowship Hall at 8:30 am.
All are welcome!

The Prayer Shawl Group continues to meet on the 1st and 3rd Mondays of the month at 9:45 am in the Fireside Room.

They stitch prayer shawls for new babies, Lovely Lane graduates, those who are ill and those who are grieving. Blankets and shawls are knitted, crocheted or sewn.

If you would like to stitch and enjoy some good fellowship, please contact Sharon Kouba at (319) 329-7228.



Kennedy Food Pantry List



Apples
Canned fruit
Peanut Butter
Jelly
Ramen Noodles
Fruit roll ups and fruit snacks
Toothpaste
Aluminum baking dishes,
Muffin and cake pans
Cake Mixes
Popcorn
Chips
Cheeze-its, snack crackers
Tuna
Canned Pasta

Donations can be placed in the tubs at the left entrance to the sanctuary. Thank you!

GREEN SQUARE MEALS

Six volunteers are needed each month to help with Green Square Meals! The next date is **Thursday, January 15**, with a **3:55 pm** expected arrival time. Contact Dan Moore by phone at: (715) 432-1983 or by email at: banjobubbadad@yahoo.com if you are able to help serve. Thank you to those who have helped serve these meals!

JOYS

- *Rita Stewart's son, Quintin, and girlfriend, Ashley, in worship (and happy b-day to Quintin)
- *Advent mission offering for NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness)
- *Fair trade sale
- *Appreciation for poinsettias in the sanctuary
- *Christmas Music Extravaganza at St. Paul's UMC
- *Bonhoeffer at Christmas presentation
- *Happy 1st anniversary to David and Debbie Beckner
- *Happy 47th anniversary to Tom and Belinda Muller
- *Happy 49th anniversary to Larry and Susan Wear
- *Reopening of 42nd street in town
- *Celebrating the Roth-Klinck ministries with us
- *New leadership for the Nourished community
- *Joy of Christmas
- *Les and Sherry Minor's grandson Mitch graduating from college
- *Linda and Dave Keefe celebrating their 57th wedding anniversary
- *Morgan Stumpf graduated from UNI with degree in music education
- *Winter Solstice and days getting longer
- *Birthday celebrations in Jan Loftus' family
- *John Samuel André, close friend of Stines family is doing well
- *Children's Christmas pageant
- *Frances Roland assisting with worship
- *Thanks to Barbara Vancura for serving as our SPPRC Chairperson
- *Thanks to Jane Schildroth for serving as our Council Chairperson
- *Appreciation to Tara Neveu for working as our Nursery Coordinator
- *Welcoming Brooke Johnson as our new Nursery Coordinator
- *Welcoming Kim Moore as our new Director of Youth Ministries
- *Happy Birthday to Bill Jahnel (and welcome back to Iowa for a visit)
- *Liz Briggman's daughter visiting over the holidays
- *Welcoming Dr. Alecia Hilmer as our new Associate Pastor

CONCERNS

- *Craig Martinson with heart procedure this week
- *Sympathy to Judy Robertson following the passing of husband, Ken
- *Shirley Mickelson recovering from a fall at West Ridge Care Center
- *Curtis and Maggie Thomas's daughter-in-law, Rachel, with health concerns during pregnancy
- *Marc Wittles with a double mastectomy procedure in January
- *Sister church in Matanzas, Cuba, experiencing mosquito-borne viruses
- *Jenny Schear recovering from a hip replacement procedure
- *Sympathy to Tom and Belinda Muller after the passing of Tom's sister
- *Todd Hilmer's mother, Sharon, following a heart attack
- *Sympathy to Helen Anderson after the passing of her sister-in-law, Chris
- *Nancy Miller recovering from a stroke at Terrace Glen Village
- *Sympathy to Jim and Barb Vancura following the passing of family member, Rod
- *Carl Jesse's cousin, Max, with health complications
- *Kathy Meiborg's sister Kay with health concerns
- *Rose Blank's brother in-law James with cancer diagnosis
- *Marc Wittles thanks everyone for the prayers after the loss of her mother
- *Mary Odegaard recovering from a successful surgery
- *John Roland after the passing of his Uncle David
- *Katie Lewis-Silva's husband Victor on way to Brazil, grandfather not doing well
- *Kaidence Stepp's step-mom fighting cancer
- *Susan Camp's brother diagnosed with cancer
- *Heidi Smith's friend with cancer and upcoming surgery
- *Jorie Dillman's mother with eye surgery
- *Stephanie French after the passing of friend
- *Stephanie French's niece with surgery
- *Jayne Woodson following a brief hospitalization
- *Sympathy to Katherine Plendl after the passing of her father-in-law
- *LuAnn Basemann's sister with surgery coming up



Lovely Lane
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Lovely Lane
Monthly Financial Information

Cash inflow - month of 11/30/25	\$56,166.11
Cash inflow - YTD	\$595,060.85
Budget need/month	\$56,735.00
Cash outflow - month of 11/30/25	\$44,823.21
Cash outflow - YTD	\$547,890.40
Unpaid apportionments	\$0

LOVELY LANE UMC STAFF

Administration & Worship

Lead Pastor	Dr. Scott Meador
Associate Pastor	Dr. Alecia Hilmer
Director of Media & Technology	Eric Wylie
Pianist	Marcie Stumpf
Chancel Choir Director	Nancy Patrick
Handbell Choir Director	Charlie Kucera
Chancel Choir Accompanist	Linda Bayliss
Director of Children's Choirs	Olivia Schneider

Children & Youth

Director of Family Ministries	Annie Walker
Director of Youth Ministries	Kim Moore
Nursery Caregiver Lead	Brooke Johnson
Nursery Caregiver	Hailey Ryan
Nursery Caregiver	Carly Giddings
Director Children's Weekday Ministries (CWM)	Dawn DuPont

Office & Facilities

Office Administrator & Finance Secretary	Tammy Martin
Office Assistant	Sarah Alterbal
Treasurer	Susan Kohl
Membership Secretary	Susan Camp
Facilities Manager	Curtis Thomas
Custodians	Rex & Rhonda Heasty
Website & Social Media	Shelly Turner
Wedding Coordinator	Becky Wood