



Eagle Grove United Methodist Church

Love God, Love Others, Change the World

“Making Disciples of Jesus Christ for the Transformation of the World”

421 West Broadway Street ~ P.O. Box 101 ~ Eagle Grove, IA 50533

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February 2022



One of the learnings we've had in this COVID time is how important it is to stay in touch with others – and our phones have become the primary means of that. We've discovered we can “see” grandchildren that live far away, call and order groceries, prescriptions, or lunch. Voice to voice connections are great!

Like many of you, I do not pick up phone calls that don't show a real name on my phone. Many friends don't answer ANY phone calls. From the caller's end, that may be frustrating, but we can use voice mail and leave a message. I personally call back as soon as I can.

If you need help getting voice mail set up, or cleaning out your mailbox, ask! Yes, grandchildren or neighbors might be able to help. I'm not phone techy, but I've taken cell phones to the phone store, and someone there can clean the up so fast! It's not my job description, but if I can't leave you a message... Well, I'll help, or get someone who will.



Congregational Care is working to get a call/text tree up and running for cancellations or other significant announcements. If you have not been contacted, let ME know...712-212-5333. I will pass your info along and GET YOU CONNECTED. Leave a message if I don't pick up!



We do want to stay connected, and we also know keeping due diligence is important. Tele-marketers have always been annoying! Scammers are more prevalent than ever. Old scams have resurfaced; new fraud schemes keep appearing. It seems they've honed their game, using not just the phone and emails, but text messages. They've gotten more skillful, and often sound so real

Lately, pastors of many denominations have been “used” in these schemes. Supposedly, we have someone who needs immediate help/money.

Yes, that's a not-so-infrequent request pastors get. No, we don't just hand out money!

In Eagle Grove, requests for assistance are routed through EGAMA. I would never email or text and ask you to go and purchase gift cards, or to give money to someone who will come to your door – NEVER! If an emergency is genuine, you will know from me about it, face-to-face. Gift cards are NEVER an acceptable way for a person in need to pay their utility bills

This “business” has been around for a long time. It comes and goes, taking advantage of our desire to help others. Some general reminders:

---If you want to make a contribution to a project, take your time. Check them out. Genuine encourage your questions. Other people around you will know about them too.

---You initiate the call, or call back (much later).

---Talk to someone else about it before you give.

The telephone has been around for almost 150 years... think about how it's evolved. It IS a primary means of communication; we need to be proactive and wise and cautious and use it to help us and others.

– Pastor Alaïre

Are We There Yet by Bishop Laurie Haller

When I was growing up, our family would take summer road trips to different parts of the country. Stuffed into our “woody” station wagon, I and my three siblings would vie for a seat next to a window. Unfortunately, my younger brother and sister would often have to sit in the middle because my older brother and I had seniority. Most commonly heard in our station wagon were these laments, “He touched me!” “Tell her to stop singing,” “I’m hungry,” and “Are we there yet?”

I still hear these words, “Are we there yet?” as I interact virtually with a variety of people on a daily basis. Like you, I’m tired of the Pandemic, and I can’t seem to get used to the new normal, whatever that is. I spend hours every day sitting in front of my computer, either writing or participating in an endless stream of Zoom and Microsoft Teams meetings that threaten to turn me into a zombie.

It’s not always easy to be motivated in this liminal time. We recognize our own anxiety, are not able to fully focus on our work, and the littlest things can set us off. At the same time, we are all wondering about the future of The United Methodist Church and are asking the same questions, “What’s happening? Will General Conference be postponed again? When is COVID going to end? Why aren’t we there yet?”

I have noticed over the past two years of COVID-19 that many of us have struggled with our own mental health. That includes me as well. We have had to isolate from others, work from home, wear masks, worship over Zoom, and refrain from being physically near others. I am especially concerned about the toll that COVID-19 has taken on our children and youth. I am deeply grateful for our teachers: for the ways in which they have had to pivot in order to teach virtually, and also for being aware of the emotional and relational needs of their students.

COVID has changed us and our world forever. Never could I have imagined that we would enter a third year of fighting COVID infections. As the highly contagious Omicron variant continues to sweep through our country, we recognize that over 800,000 American lives and millions of other lives around the globe have been lost.

Clergy and laity alike have had to reinvent themselves in ministry. Let me give a “shout out” to our pastors! Just as teachers have had to completely change their normal protocols, pastors have also had to learn how to provide pastoral care, worship, and teaching remotely. Forty years ago, none of that would have been possible. So, how do we cope in such a time as this? How do we live fully, serve faithfully, and innovate creatively when it’s a struggle at times to simply get out of bed?

At the same time as vaccines are quickly created to fight COVID variants, we are also experiencing the resilience of the human spirit around every turn. Merriam-Webster defines resilience as “the ability to become strong, healthy, or successful again after something bad happens.” Another definition of resilience is “the ability of something to return to its original shape after it has been pulled, stretched, pressed, or bent.” Frank M. Snowden, ... Professor Emeritus of History and History of Medicine at Yale,...(has) studied pandemics for forty years, Snowden is convinced that Covid-19 was not a random event. He said, “People talk about the return to normality, and I don’t think that is going to happen.” Last spring, as Snowden was inundated with people wanting to know more about COVID-19 pandemics, Snowden himself was diagnosed with Covid-19...

No, we’re not almost there. There will be many more infections, and there will very likely be more variants. We cannot totally control COVID, but what we can do is become more resilient... (Bishop Laurie include a list of other things we can do – like eating right and getting rest, and also being kind, showing grace, and reaching out to others and making a difference. –AW)

Are we there yet? No, but we’re getting there. The first step is caring for ourselves. By God’s grace and by walking beside each other (masked, of course!), we can become resilient and create a new normal for our world.

Dial-a-Devotion

Tuesdays

February 1—Kurt Knudsen

February 8—Sharon Seibert

February 15—Maggie Wright

February 22—Melody Amonson

The weekly Sunday sermon is now available by phone— just call

515-212-2802. The newest

one will be up by about 7am on Sundays (before actual worship!), and remain all week. The phone number for access will always be the same.



THANKS to everyone who was part of all the work that made the Turkey Dinner a success. About 400 meals were served. That's a lot of food! Kudos to Alec for giving hours of work and worry! If you have comments to share in the evaluations, please write them down, and get them to the office.

Prayers for:

-Marilyn Helmick's family. Passed away unexpectedly January 14. Celebration of her life was January 18.

-Deb Falwell, Don Deuel, Ron Bliss and others who have had serious health issues, and are now home, recovering and recuperating.

-The many, many people who are ill with Covid, regardless of symptoms. We know the vaccine and booster makes a difference in severity, and masking helps. Take care, everyone!



You're never too old to send Valentines.

Valentines Day coming up Monday February 14th.

Conference Notes

Bishop Laurie and the Cabinet work to be "Leading Now and Into the Future". They have set up gatherings in each district, an "Iowa Leading the Way" Tour. We are now part of the Camp Clear Lake District (the conference has reorganized from 8 to 5 districts) that will meet **in person, Sat, Feb 5, 1pm @ Faith UMC in Humboldt**. A Zoom session is scheduled for Feb 28, 6pm. These conference-wide conversations are for laity and clergy of the conference and will speak to Vision 2032, the Cabinet Statement of November 2021, and reiterate there is a home in the Iowa Conference of The United Methodist Church for all. Pastor Alaire plans to attend; laity are encouraged to as well. You can find the statements and vision at iaumc.org, or we can get you hard copies.

Yes, changes and uncertainty are all around. But our mission and ministry continue. EGUMC makes a huge difference, thanks to each of you. Ingathering 2022 will be the first Saturday in November. Updated info is ready – there are very few changes from last year to the Personal Dignity and School kits. That list will be on the table in the narthex. Be a part of this giving to others.

Pastor: Alaire Willits

Office Secretary: Amy Hunt

Financial Secretary: Denise Helmick

Treasurer: Tracy Crail

Organist: Ann Shriver

Custodian: Amy Hunt

Ministers: ALL MEMBERS