



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
Church Office: (515) 448-4701 Dial-a-Devotion (515)448-3355

Greetings friends,

In the midst of all the rhetoric clamoring for our attention, I have a statement of fact to share with you - Eagle Grove UMC is different than you were a year ago!

Changes? Of course! Covid necessitates some, and while we grumble and complain, I know so many of you conscientiously are doing all we're asked. Thank you, on behalf of all the people you come into contact with. Your actions show them you care.

I'm delighted to be serving as your pastor – and glad you made the change to part-time staffing. The office is only open Tuesday mornings, and Amy and I still work from home a lot. My 20-25 hours a week are quickly “used” in sermon prep, Sundays around worship, office time, and now confirmation and different ways to try to connect with you all.

Worship has changed – we've added Facebook Live to our repertoire, with an ever-changing learning curve. Services have to be shorter (FB shuts us off after 45 minutes!), and singing is still not safe. But isn't it amazing to know that some weeks over 100 people have joined in our virtual community; we regularly have 60-75 viewers. And we have 6 persons who now listen to the sermon by phone. And yes, those who are comfortable gathering together may worship in-person now, as long as rates continue to go lower. We're virtual and live.

Some newsletters are mailed, but more than twice as many folks open it from the webpage! What a savings of paper and postage to send! We're striving to have regular email updates. Not being together really frustrates us, and makes it tough to stay “in the loop”, so more cards and notes are being sent. Please send me prayer requests, to pass on or to keep private. Thanks to Leola for keeping our prayer chain going.

Frustrated as we've been, there's more good news! Look for articles about our finances and mission and outreach in this issue - they're filled with joy and hope! Your leadership have made some difficult decisions, and moved to new ways of doing things! Change, and it's not always THAT hard. A detailed overview is part of this newsletter (included if you receive a mailed copy, and sent via a separate email to those we have addresses for). After you look this over, if you have questions, here's another true statement – we want to answer your questions. Contact the office and we'll find the answer. Our intent is to be totally transparent. It's not gloomy, trust me! In fact, we're set up for new ideas and plans ready to create ways of transforming the world.

Mission giving, beyond the budget, has been great, especially considering so much of the outreach we'd like to do usually happens “hands on”. Gathering to work together can't happen yet.

Which brings me to the BIG question – where do we go from here? How can we be the church, beyond worship? We need and want your ideas. Text or email, or use those old methods – phone or card! How can we truly, literally be the hands and feet of Jesus...when hands and feet still need to keep distance! Give it some thought.

Pastor: Alaire Willits

Office Secretary: Amy Hunt

Financial Secretary: Denise Helmick

Treasurer: Tracy Crail

Organist: Ann Shriver

Choir Director: Cheryl Ketchem

Custodian: Amy Hunt

Ministers: ALL MEMBERS

What's what? Changes, and no Changes!

The church office is open Tuesdays, 10-11:30. Emails and messages are checked during the week by 4p.m. Monday - Friday.

Midweek update emails will continue to be sent by the pastor. If you are not receiving it, let her know alairew@gmail.com

We are moving to a more mid-month printing of our newsletters. Because of the way the church year falls, dates with shift a bit. Email is the best way to send information

egumc@goldfieldaccess.net

If you cannot email, call and ask for a return call so Amy can verify a voice-to-voice. Or you can drop off a written note on Tuesday mornings when we are here.—**Next newsletter —print February 16. Articles due February 12.**

Snow, ice, or really super cold on Sunday? In the past, we could have cancelled. Now, the pastor can be on Facebook from her home. If we've transitioned to in-person worship, we'll let you know by email and/or phone, because it would be wise for you to stay home.

Dial-A-Devotion

Tuesdays

January 26-Bev Wilde	February 16-Melody Amonson
February 2-Marilyn Sill	February 23-Pat Moser
February 9-Maggie Wright	

Something new for you—

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.

We survived 2020 in many ways, including financially. We were already behind financially when the pandemic first hit; we borrowed \$6,750 from our Turkey Supper to keep ourselves afloat through the first part of the year. Our giving went down, but some of expenses did also. The biggest change this year was the move from a full-time pastor to a part-time pastor on July 1. As we continued through the year, this savings helped us tremendously. Despite parking lot and online services only for most of the past six months, congregants continued to give faithfully. We repaid our savings account in full and by year-end, we also paid \$10,600 to the Conference. This is quite an accomplishment given our past financial struggles. We also reviewed all current expenses and trimmed where we could, which wasn't a lot but every little bit has helped.

We hope to see you back in church when you feel it is safe. In the meantime, you are able to mail your offerings (PO Box 101, Eagle Grove, IA 50533) or you can give online through our website. **These instructions are below.** Thank you again for your continued support of the operations and missions of our church.

Tracy Crail-Treasurer

We have exciting news to announce! We have 2 new and convenient ways to give your financial support to our church. There are 2 options.

#1) We have a new online service through Tithe.ly that allows you to give by clicking the 'Online Giving' button located on our website at eaglegroveumc.org.

#2) You can also go to the app store and download the Tithe.ly app for your i-phone or android phone and give using this app.

For questions or assistance please call Denise Helmick, Financial Secretary at 515-293-1224.

Thanks,
Denise

Thank you all so much for the cards, emails and messages on my mom's death. Your words were so comforting. The gift of the cross for the garden will find a home this spring, out in my flower bed. We give thanks for her 94 years and all the memories. Thank you all. Pastor Alaire

Keep the families of Lynne Jennings (12/31), Darlene Middleton (1/03) and Alma Sandall (1/02) in your prayers. What glorious lives they lived, serving God. Cards can always be sent to through the funeral home, if you don't have another address.

Being the church means helping others. Give yourself a pat on the back for our work in 2020.

Ingathering, cash and in-kind	\$2,716
Mobility Worldwide (carts)	\$2,100
Teacher Care Kits	\$1,100
Helping combat Hunger locally (Advent mission)	\$525
Eagle Grove Food Pantry	\$500
Eagle Grove School Activity Tickets for students	\$400
Overflow Ministries (fleece squares donated)	\$200
	\$7541

Lent is coming!!

In your mail the week of February 10, each household should receive information and a few ideas for reflection and worship at home during the season of Lent. Contact the office if you don't get one, or know someone who would also like to receive. We will have extra and love to share.



Feb 17, Ash Wednesday. Online service only. Specifics coming.

Feb 18, noon Lenten lunches begin – 2021 style!

No meal, no gathering in person. Each Thursday @noon, a different pastor will share a devotional time on their own church's Facebook page. The full schedule will be in Lenten mailing – and on our FB page.



Valentine's Day is coming – time to send some notes or cards to 5 or 6 friends from church and let them know you're thinking about them. Let's keep the connections going and growing. You can only imagine what your card will mean! Who do you miss seeing? Tell them.

A **BIG** congratulations Blanche Bosteder for being the recipient of the 2020 Allbaugh Award.

Blanche served as the secretary of the UMW for 25 years. She is active in circle, and serves on the board of SPRC. She has served 10 years on the board of Trustees for the Northern District of the UMW, as well as the building and location committee of the UMC.

At this time, she is also president of Rotary Auxiliary and Rotarian as well. She has served as president of the Equality Club and is now serving as their secretary. Presently, she is serving on Eagle Grove's Planning and Zoning Board. In her "retirement" she has entered the business of management of rental properties in Eagle Grove.

This doesn't even begin to describe what this generous woman does. She visits the sick, takes them to medical appointments and will, if able, do whatever you ask of her. She will serve on your committee if she believes it will help the community somehow. She has opened her home to three exchange students—in 2005 a girl from Ukraine and in 2019 a student from Italy and one from Japan. Her hobbies, if you can believe that she has any, are reading, gardening and dancing. In her prime, she would dance somewhere five nights a week.

We believe wholeheartedly that she has earned recognition for her efforts for the community of Eagle Grove. She fits every criteria asked for this award.