



# Eagle Grove United Methodist Church

Love God, Love Others, Change the World

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

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

Church Office: (515) 448-4701

Dial-a-Devotion (515)448-3355

## JULY 2020

**July 1**– Meet & Greet with Pastor Alaire on Church Lawn from 5:00—7:00 P.M.

**July 5**– Outdoor Service @ 10:00 AM with Agape Feast

**July 7**– Dial-a-Devotion—Kurt Knudsen

**July 7**– Meet & Greet with Pastor Alaire on Church Lawn from 10:00-11:00 A.M.

**July 8**– Re-entry Task Force Meeting @ 5:30 P.M.

**July 8**– Ad Council Meeting @ 6:30 P.M.

**July 12**– Outdoor Service @ 10:00 AM

**July 14**– Dial-a-Devotion– Janet Kramersmeier

**July 14**– Meet & Greet with Pastor Alaire on Church Lawn 10:00-11:00 A.M.

**July 19**– Outdoor Service @ 10:00 AM

**July 21**– Dial-a-Devotion– Maggie Wright

**July 22**– Meet & Greet with Pastor Alaire on Church Lawn from 6:00-7:00 P.M.

**July 26**– Worship Outdoors @ 10:00 AM

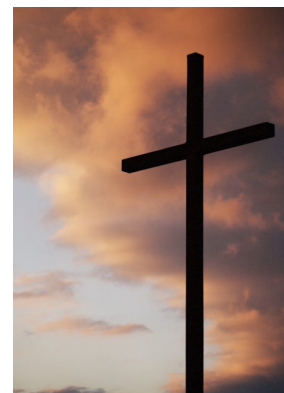
**July 28**– Dial-a-Devotion– Sharon Seibert

**August 2**– Worship @ 10:00 A.M. (inside or outside TBD) with Holy Communion



**Worship July 5–  
10:00 AM Outdoors, in  
your car or lawn chair.**

**Bring a little bread or  
crackers and some-  
thing to drink as we  
celebrate beginning  
our time together with  
an Agape Meal.**



Pastor: Alaire Willits

Office Secretary: Amy Hunt

Financial Secretary: Denise Helmick

Treasurer: Tracy Crail

Organist: Ann Shriver

Choir Director: Cheryl Ketcham

Custodian: Sara Ell

Ministers: ALL MEMBERS

## A column with no name yet!



I grew up hearing stories, not necessarily from books, but from my family. Everyone has a story, everything is connected (look up 6 degrees of separation), and knowing “the rest of the story” often fills in a lot of blanks. God’s a part of our stories, even if we don’t see or understand clearly. God is faithful.

The best way to get to know others is to hear their stories. My dad, farmer and hog buyer, wrote a weekly column for the Stratford paper. He put some of them together into a book, *Stories from SwedLand*. Dad loved to talk and loved more to hear others tell their stories. With some, he felt a commonality. From others, he learned something new. I’m still not sure which he loved more. He was a man of questions – “Why?” “Did you ever wonder about...?” “What if...?” - followed often by “tell me about that.” And that’s how he got to know people.

I want to get to know you, each of you. I’ll gladly share info about me, maybe more than you want to hear. But I suspect we have more things in common than we realize. I grew up in Stratford. Now I’m back, on that same farm. My mom lives in the Eastern Star Home in Boone. I have 3 children, 4 grandchildren, have had a bunch of jobs, from teaching to bookkeeping. I’ve worked in the church for a long time, as an educator, and now as a pastor. I go by Pastor Alaire, or just Alaire (rhymes with Claire).

But I want to hear your stories! And like my dad, I love to sit and talk, especially over a cup of coffee! This Covid-time makes that very hard to do in the ways we normally would. Like everything else these days, we need a new way. Under “normal” times (which don’t exist anymore), we’d have a potluck or at least coffee and food. In this “new normal”, we have to keep distance and mask. I haven’t figured out how to drink coffee through a mask. So, here’s the plan.

First - I’m going to bring my lawn chair up to the church, and be out on your beautiful church lawn. You’re invited to stop by, and we’ll figure out how to have a little conversation (you can bring a lawn chair if you want!). I’ll be there **Wed, July 1, 5 pm – 7 pm** and then **Tues, July 7 and 14, from 10 am – 11 am, and July 22 from 6 pm - 7pm**. Yup, I’ll sit there, waiting for you. Come on by, stop for a minute, or 5 or 10! Please wear a mask. Raining? I’ll sit under the awning on the ramp by the parking lot.

I’ve got a second idea to get to meet some of you – in your driveway! Seriously, I’ll come to you, and we can stand outside and talk for a little bit. I’ll probably be doing this on Wednesdays or Thursdays, and I’ve had some offers from SPRC and other leaders to come with me, so you’ll know I’m not some random person! If you’d like a stop-by chat, please call and leave a message on the church answering machine, and we’ll get these going about July 9 or so. These will be scheduled in advance, and we’ll mask.

I also want to clarify a little about my time, and how to contact me. First, I only live 35 miles away – and while I may be part-time, I am always available for emergencies. **Always!** My phone is 712-212-5333 and like so many of you, until I get your names and numbers in my phone, I won’t pick up, so leave a message. I’ll get back to you asap. Text is good, but also tell me who you are, please. Email will be a great way for us to connect. [alairew@gmail.com](mailto:alairew@gmail.com). I’m on Facebook, and you’re welcome to friend me, but know that’s my personal page.

As we share our stories, we’ll travel on this journey of faith together, bumps and smooth places, joys and tears, laughter and frustrations. God uses ordinary people to do extraordinary things. What’s ahead? Only God knows – and God goes with us! –**Pastor Alaire**

## FORWARD WE GO....

I'd like to think I have many gifts for ministry, but one I know I don't have - the ability to tell the future! There are times, especially now, when that would be assuring, comforting, and a most valuable skill. Sadly, I'm just not able to predict with any degree of accuracy when or how this covid-time will play out. Wouldn't that be nice!

So, we plan...knowing full well changes may happen. As your re-entry team has talked, they knew

1. Everyone misses worship in the sanctuary.
2. Everyone misses seeing each other face-to-face
3. Everything is changing...and we want to keep everyone safe and well.

With that being said, the re-entry team is listening, planning, talking, listening more, and discovering how FLEXIBLE they need to be. We know at some point in the future, Sunday worship will resume back in the sanctuary. The space is beautiful; God is there, and we all can feel it.

When will that happen? Well, the short answer is "we don't know for sure." Mid-July is a target, but a moving target. Covid has warped our sense of time; these last 3 ½ months seem like forever! Are we comfortable enough to be together? When services resume indoors, masks will be required, as well as those 6' distances between family groups. The service itself will likely be shorter, to minimize time together. Hymnals and Bibles will not be in the pews; everything will be on the screen. Music will be listened to, prayers said in our hearts, not out loud. We're learning how to minimize risk, difficult as letting go of our old ways can be.

An absolute day to begin....?????? Everyone is still apprehensive, and worship ought to be a time to relax, not worry and fret. That day will happen when enough folks are OK with that. Your reentry team wants your input.

Moving forward...we'll continue worship on Sundays at 10 am. In July, we'll start outdoors – bring a lawn chair, or you may stay in your car. We'll let you know as plans change. Bear with us as we figure out how to get quality sound.

Moving forward...beginning July 5, I'll be putting the message and prayers by about 7 am on the church's FB page. We'll get them on the church website as well. At least, in the beginning, it won't be the whole service...be FLEXIBLE, please. We've got some fantastic ideas (now if technology was as simple!). Email, but no Facebook? we'll get the reflection to you as well on Sunday morning. No computer? Let the office know and we'll mail it out at the beginning of the week.

Moving forward... this separate FB reflection will continue indefinitely. When services move into the building, you may not feel ready to be with everyone else. This reflection can be part of your worship at home, whenever you'd like to use it.

Moving forward...so many possibilities! Can we stream services? How can we chat with each other from our homes? How do we let others know what's going on? Are there different things we can do because of social media?

Moving forward... please be FLEXIBLE. If you're comfortable, worship Sundays from your lawn chair, out of your car. We all need to be fed, and coming together is an excellent way to do that. But we do need to mask and distance – always! Please be forgiving. I can promise everything will not go as smoothly as we wish (often because that's just the nature of technology today!). But, we'll practice, and try again, and practice and learn and grow.

Moving forward...Making disciples for the transformation of the world. Who knows all the new ways we'll discover to do that.

– Pastor Alaire

## Pastor's Pen from Rev. Jim Roth for July 2020

### “Hey! Did You Know....? Final and First”

To the Members and Friends of the UMC Churches of both the Eagle Grove and the Town & Country Parish settings.

I am electing to write this one article to both (as my move date is fast approaching). It has been and continues to be an honor and privilege serving the Lord and loving the people of God, while in pastoral ministry for nearly 20 years (my appointment anniversary date being 8-15-2000). The same holds true for my pre-clergy church memberships involved with ministries of the laity. “Hey! Did You Know....” the Missions Together (formerly Rainbow Covenant) and Midwest Missions Ingathering (formerly Thanksgiving Ingathering with Iowa-Nigeria Partnership) are both essentially ministries of the laity? That means that we are to celebrate ministries and missions together, laity in partnership with the clergy, and all the while in prayer for all the suppliers and recipients of the projects and programs.

The missions/ministry aspect of the Body of Christ (the church) has been special to me since accepting a nomination to join the Missions Commission at my home church (First UMC Morris, Illinois) back in the late 1980s. Different Times and Different Annual Conferences. But what is common is a love of and for the people of God everywhere through outreach of all kinds, locally and world-wide.

And what has become common (mid-July through mid-August) is for retailers to be in friendly competition with each other to offer incredible “Back-to-School” bargains! Let us then take advantage of these sales, for the sake of the children of God. This can be through local Backpack Programs and Fill the Bus appeals. And this can be through donations of supplies to assemble the Midwest Missions Student Kits (recipe below).

Blessings and Peace. In Christ's Service,  
Pastor Jim Roth

P.S. Fond Farewell, Friends (at the greater Eagle Grove area)  
Looking forward to Future Friendships in Christ (at the T&C Parish Setting)

### **STUDENT KIT FOR 2020**

- 3 Notebooks-1 Subject Spiral (8" x 10-1/2")
- 1 Pair of Student Round-Tip Scissors
- 1 Ruler (12" long with metric)
- 1 Box 24 Crayons
- 1 Pencil Eraser (2" or larger)
- 1 Pencil Sharpener (1" size)
- 1 Box 12 Colored Pencils
- 6 Unsharpened Pencils
- 1 Cloth Bag (with one handle)
- \*Patterns at “ [midwestmission.org](http://midwestmission.org) ”
- \$2.00 (for shipping)
- Complete Kit Value: \$16.00
- Empty Bag Value: \$6.00



*A BIG THANK YOU TO JON ROWEN FOR LENDING US A TRANSMITTER THAT WE ARE CURRENTLY USING FOR OUR "DRIVE-IN" SERVICES. IT PROVIDED US A WAY OF LISTENING TO THE SERVICE ON RADIO STATION 88.3.*

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***Congrats to Katie Spellmeyer, who graduated in December as an RN. She is currently employed as an oncology nurse at the University of Iowa hospital.***

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Welcome:

Axyl Dean Monroe Alt, son of Justin and Alana Alt, he was born on June 22, 2020 at a healthy 8lbs. 15oz. He will join his siblings Adalie age 8, Jevan age 6, and Jayda age 2 at home.

Proud Grandparents are Kelly and Melody Amonson and Lynnsay Alt.

Great-Grandparents are Lyle and Gwen Amonson

"We appreciate all the praying you have done for us and can't wait to introduce him at Church"



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**PRAYER CORNER** Georgianna B Derricklee H Kayne C Cory J Lucinda A Don R Mark T Todd W Jim S Denny T

Kirby A Gwen J George K Travis R De-escalation of Racial Tensions ("with Liberty and Justice for all")

COVID Virus Crisis Pandemic (all issues/concerns) EG-UMC Ad Council, Committees,

and Task Forces Pastoral Changes throughout Iowa (including EG-UMC and Dows' church)

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## **Treasurer's Report**

COVID-19 has presented additional challenges for us financially. Thank you to those who have continued to support the church with your gifts throughout this pandemic. Through May 31, we were approximately \$7,000 short of meeting our monthly operating expenses. To avoid overdrawing the checkbook, we have 'borrowed' \$6,750 from a savings account; our hope/plan is to re-pay this by year-end. Our shortfall is actually a little more than \$17,000 when including five months of apportionments. With one week left in the month, June giving will be significantly less than April and May. As we hit mid-year, the projected shortfall is roughly \$22,000 to meet all of our obligations thus far. We recently appointed a task force to review all expenses of the church. If you have any suggestions or questions, please visit with Larry or Peg Hill, Don or Lavonne Deuel, or myself. Until we are able to return to the sanctuary for worship, we are asking that you mail your offering to :

Eagle Grove United Methodist Church  
P.O. Box 101  
Eagle Grove, Iowa 50533.

Please pray that our financial situation will improve throughout the rest of the year.

Respectfully,

Tracy Crail