



# *The Connection*

## **Osceola United Methodist Church**

*"A vital church connecting people with God and each other"*



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### **Thoughts from Pastor Amy**

*Your word is a lamp before my feet and a light for my journey. — Psalm 119:105*

*At that time the kingdom of heaven will be like ten young bridesmaids who took their lamps and went out to meet the groom. Now five were wise and five were foolish. The wise ones took their lamps and also brought containers of oil...the foolish bridesmaids said to the wise ones, "Give us some of your oil, because our lamps have gone out."*

I have been praying fiercely for my clergy friends who are moving this year. Any other year, moving is a nightmare for clergy, even though it also holds hope and anticipation. I am thankful to be spending another year here in a place I love without the agony of packing and unpacking, without the fear of meeting new parishioners who all look like a masked stranger or a face on Zoom. I am thankful that we are not going through the fears and heartache of leaving behind the people we have spent years loving this year or jumping into a community we do not yet understand in a time when distance makes listening to the community almost impossible. But for my colleagues this year especially, I pray and ask you to do the same. It is a difficult year to move to a new place. And this is the worst week.

The week of July 4 is always the worst in a new parish because it is the toe-stubbing week. It's the week when even though we know we are home, we still wake up in the middle of the night and turn in the wrong direction to get to the bathroom, stub our toes on the dresser's new location, and wake up everyone in the house with our screams. When we move, it happens to each of us on differing nights, so it is also the week of no sleep. When we are somewhere new, it is difficult to find our way in the dark. This is not just the story of those who are moving this year, though; it is the story of us all trying to navigate through this new time of COVID. It is not our first week here, but we still wake up in the night walking in the wrong direction.

The program I use for my fitness tracker keeps track of daily habits. One of the questions is, "Did you park far away today and walk?" I have to answer yes to that a lot lately because the first time I head to the door is the time I forget my mask and have to go back to the car to get it. Yes, I walk a lot through the parking lots these days! It is like going the wrong way to the bathroom in the middle of the night. I have been here a while. I should know what I am doing. When I am tired, though, I fall back into old habits. I start leaving my mask in the car. But friends, just as we cannot use the closet for the bathroom, we must go back for the mask. We must remember that even though we are tired, it is important to keep one another safe and to let God light our path. Someone said we can't do the ministry we did because it would be harder in this season of COVID. To that I say this: We do not stop doing ministry because it is hard. We don't stop worshipping because it is hard. We do not stop keeping people safe because it is hard. We do not stop loving our communities because it is hard. Just because it is dark doesn't mean finding our way is less important; in fact, it is more important than ever.

We are going to have a hymn sing at the park. It might be hot. It might mean dragging out a lawn chair. It might be different. But we do not stop doing ministry when it is hard. We are going to do a late summer meal. It will be all carry out or delivery. We will have to deliver more. We will have to hand out and organize curbside delivery which we have not done before. It might be different. But we do not stop doing ministry when it is hard. We are going to give away school supplies and clothes. It will all be curbside. We haven't done it that way before. It will be different. We will need to do more organizing ahead of time, different people doing different things, and it might be downright hard. But we don't stop doing ministry when it is hard. We are going to hold VBS. We will only have one age group each night and we will have adults move while kids stay in place. Some might be outside or in a strange place in the building to allow for it.

We will have to clean well every night. It will be different. But we do not stop doing ministry when it is hard. We are United Methodists. Maybe the Conference falls apart. Maybe the denomination falls apart. Maybe COVID makes things almost impossible. Yet we persist, because we do not stop doing ministry just because it is hard.

We do hard ministry because without it, everything would be hard. Without Jesus in our lives and world, it would all be downright impossible. And we are the ones who bring that to our community. We must persist! We must be stubborn! We must push on in whatever ways we can so that the community has a lamp before their feet and a light for their journey. This year, we are all somewhere different groping in the dark. May our lamps be full and ready because it will be a long time until dawn.

*Pastor Amy*

## **Tell Me the Stories of Jesus: The Summer of Our Savior**

Our new series is starting this week! We are going to explore some of the parables and stories of Jesus that help us understand better who our God really is. Our series will include an early **morning hymn sing at East Lake Park on Sunday, July 26** (rain date is August 2), at the park's new amphitheater on the west side of the lake (go left upon entering the park and drive around to the top to park. Handicap parking is on the road all the way around past the boat ramp or at the very top. Please leave these areas for those with mobility needs. There is plenty of room. Masks are encouraged for everyone's safety. Remember that to sing, we must be outdoors at least 12 feet apart. Try to help one another arrange yourselves accordingly. There is gobs of space to sit in chairs, on blankets, or even just on the steps of the amphitheater. We will meet to sing at 9:00 a.m. as it will be our regular worship that day. Feel free to pack snacks and drinks, but be sure to keep the park looking beautiful by carrying out what you bring in! Be ready to sing some of our favorite songs that tell the story of Jesus so that the whole park can hear!



## **Vacation Bible School – July 27-30**

Each class will have their own special night just for them!

**Class will be held 6:00-7:00 p.m. each night  
based on the grade just completed:**

**Monday: Preschool**

**Tuesday: Kdg & 1st**

**Wednesday: 2nd & 3rd**

**Thursday: 4th-6th**

**MUST  
REGISTER  
by  
JULY 20**

Masks are recommended and social distancing will be followed in order to keep the children as safe as possible. If anyone in your household is experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 please stay home. We will be taking temperatures at the door and anyone with a temperature of 100.4 or greater will not be allowed to participate.

Food will not be served but a prepackaged snack will be sent home with each child.

We understand some may not be ready to have their children interact with others at this time. Therefore we are also offering a one night video Bible School for each group. Materials will be automatically sent home with children that attend in-person. For others who wish to participate only from home, materials may be picked up hands free at the south door of the church from 5:00-5:30 p.m. on Monday, July 27 or by appointment by calling 641-342-2830.

In order to best prepare for your children and their safety class sizes will be limited. Please call the church by Monday, July 20 to reserve a place for your child. Looking forward to sharing God's love with all of you!

**HELP IS NEEDED!** Each night we will need two people for registration and eight to help the teachers with their classes. Prepackaged snacks will also be needed. Contact Melanie at 641-414-4053 if you are willing to help in any way.

## UMW News

by Sue Godfrey

The four Priority Issues for 2016-2020 selected by United Methodist Women are Economic Inequality, Climate Justice, Maternal and Child Health, and Criminalization of Communities of Color and Mass Incarceration. Between the impact of COVID-19 and "Black Lives Matter", all four issues have been highlighted in the news recently. Copies of news releases, recorded IPOD discussion through Faith Talks, and a list of books on these and other subjects through the Reading Program are all available at [unitedmethodistwomen.org](http://unitedmethodistwomen.org). If you are not into online searches I can copy some of the news releases and the book list from the reading program. Many of the books are available through the local library or can be purchased online. I can recommend So You Want to Talk About Race by Ijeoma Oluo. It's well written with real life events and explanations of concepts and phrases that can challenge one's thoughts. Notice I didn't say it's comfortable reading. I'm only half way through but I'm finding it helps me better understand the feelings and fears. I would be glad to share it. If anyone is interested let me know. If you have read something you found helpful or interesting let me know and I'll pass it on.

National is putting together videos and study guides to help women stay in touch with missions in place of the cancelled Mission-U. These will be available through [unitedmethodistwomen.org](http://unitedmethodistwomen.org). The district meeting is still scheduled to be on Zoom this fall – more details later.

Locally, in July we are trying out the 2<sup>nd</sup> of our own version of virtual meetings. I type the devotion, program thoughts, and any updates shared by members and send out by mail or email as requested. Not quite the same as in person, but it is helping to keep us connected during this time apart. Let me know if you'd like to be added to the mailing list!

UMW is still here and active! Please stay safe and well so we can meet again!



## Prayers Needed

Please keep our church family in your prayers including Pastor Amy & her family, our staff & their families, Tom Cox, Patricia Evensen, Dorothy Jeffreys, Norman Jenkins, Emily Lampe, Darlene Lundquist, Virginia Ogan, Mary Anne Rumley, Ray Russell, Sharon Webb. Also pray also for our conference denomination and world leaders. Call the office to start the prayer chain.

We ask for special prayers for all those who have been impacted by COVID-19.

## Sympathy & Prayers

We offer our sympathy & prayers to Ryan & Jamie Pontier and family on the death of Ryan's grandmother, LuElla Pontier.

## Congratulations

Congratulations to Rev. Lon Lewis for celebrating 40 years of ordination in the United Methodist Church!

## Parsonage

Have you noticed the parsonage has a new roof? The roof was damaged in a windstorm in March. The Trustees decided to go with a metal roof because there is less maintenance and it lasts longer.



## Garage Sale

We will be having a church garage sale so be saving your 'stuff'! The date is Saturday, September 19. More details later!!!

## Mission Trip

The dates for the 2021 youth mission trip have been announced! It is July 18-24, 2021 in Mexico, Missouri.



### OSCEOLA UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

130 W Grant St | Osceola, Iowa 50213-1623



#### The Congregation

Amy Johnson  
Anna Frohling  
Martha White  
Melanie Eddy  
Mary Gibson  
Martha White  
George Norris  
Jeri Lytton  
Lisa Wallace  
Kate Gaumer  
Ed Buesch

#### Ministers

Pastor  
Secretary/Financial Secretary  
Treasurer  
Education Coordinator  
Music Leader  
Bell Director  
Sound Technician  
Pianist  
Pianist/Organist  
Nursery Attendant  
Custodian

**SUNDAY: Worship 9:00 a.m. (No Sunday School)**

**NO Wednesday supper or worship**