

The Visitor

Vicksburg United Methodist Church

Volume 24, Issue 2

February 2017

Inside This Issue

Pastor's Article	2
Birthdays	2
Anniversaries	2
Mail Bag	3
Mission Moments	3
Sunday School	4
United Methodist Women	4
Heart & Hands Preschool	4
Announcements	5
Kids Hope USA	6
Prayer Closet	6
Just for Laughs	6
Calendar	7

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Polly Preston

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Choir/Praise Band Director

Tamra Stamm

Custodian

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Heart & Hands

Teacher/Director

Amber Morris

Heart & Hands Teacher

Melissa Hodges

Heart & Hands Assistant

Amber Smith

Kids Hope USA Director

Barb Bladt

Youth Director

Hank Stamm

Newsletter Editor

Polly Preston

is patient & kind
 DOES NOT ENVY OR BOAST
 IT IS NOT PROUD OR RUDE
 not self-seeking or easily angered

Love

keeps no record of wrongs it does not delight in evil
 REJOICES WITH TRUTH
 always protects & trusts
 hopes and perseveres
 LOVE NEVER FAILS

first corinthians thirteen: four to eight

Pastor's Article

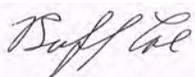
The dates are set for our 2017 confirmation program! Confirmation is the process through which middle school students make their personal profession of faith and are received as professing members of the church, whether they were baptized as young children or not. We will focus on what it means to live as a follower of Jesus Christ, with special emphasis on the ministry of the church. Our Confirmation program is a combination of activities at our own church building as well as field trips to other ministry settings.

Specifically, the confirmation schedule will be as follows:

- Saturday, February 25, 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.—A day of activities at the church. Lunch will be provided.
- Saturday, March 25, 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.—A second day of learning activities at the church. Again, lunch will be provided.
- Friday, April 28-Saturday, April 29—A field trip to Detroit. We will leave in the late afternoon or early evening on Friday and spend the night at a church in the Detroit area. On Saturday, we will visit ministries in the city such as the Methodist Children's Home and Cass Community Social Services.
- Thursday, May 18, 7:00-8:00 p.m.—A rehearsal of the confirmation service in the sanctuary for the students and their parents.
- Sunday, May 21—The students are confirmed in either of the Sunday morning services.

More details will be available as the dates get closer. Confirmation is a wonderful opportunity for young people who are now old enough to make some of their own decisions to make a personal profession of faith and commitment. Pastor Buff and Lisa will lead our confirmation program, along with our Youth Director, Hank Stamm. Please feel free to contact any of us with questions. There are over twenty middle school students in our congregation who are eligible for confirmation this year. We hope to see many of you in our confirmation program.

Love in Christ,



Dr. Bufford Coe



Church Leaders

Church Council

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Pastor Buff Coe (buffordc@aol.com)

Abuse Prevention

Hank Stamm (henrystamm3rd@yahoo.com)

Lay Leader

Brad Addis (braddis109@aol.com)

February Birthdays and Anniversaries

Birthdays

- 1 Julie Griffin
- Marianna Hiemstra
- 3 Charles Myers
- 3 Anessa Read
- 5 Steven Dibble
- 6 Rex Bragg
- 7 Laurie Nic
- Avery Slancik
- 8 Tom Hardy
- Hayden Hayes
- 9 Noni Heikes
- 11 Todd Dibble
- 14 Lauren Burke
- Alexandria Oswald
- 16 Walter Gose
- 17 Jolene Cron
- Audrey Linebaugh
- Katie Strohauer
- Cande Vermeulen
- 18 Jill Barton

- 19 Frances Howard
- Anna Sponseller
- 20 Kristopher Dibble
- Laverne Swinehart
- 21 Adalynn Brundige
- Betty Gruber
- 23 Bonnie Sellers
- 26 Andrew Falconer
- Diana Girolami
- Taylor Linebaugh
- Lilly Puckett
- 27 Sara Carrier
- Judi McNett
- 28 Brian Eberstein
- Edward Haberle
- Christopher Young

Anniversaries

- 14 James and Joan Smola
- 17 Chuck and Vera Walker
- 18 Larry and Sally Kohler
- 22 Billy and Barbara Adams

Mail Bag

Thank You

Dear Church Family/Caring Ministries Team, to just say thank you for all you have seen us through doesn't seem adequate. You have walked alongside of us through the final stages of Mom's journey here on earth. You have supported us, comforted us, and given us strength through Mom's final year with us. She thought of VUMC as home over the last several years, and you showered us all with love. Your gift of the prayer shawl and floral arrangements, poinsettia, and cards have been the visible signs of that love and care for her! Your words of support and comfort and your warm and gentle hugs have all sustained us through the year and after Mom's passing. With so much love and gratitude for our church family, ~ *Lisa and Buff and family*



Thank You

To Member Care, thank you for the bright and cheering poinsettia for Christmas. ~ *Laverne Swinehart*

Thank You

Since we are in the spirit of giving, I wanted to take some time to thank the church this holiday season. This church has helped craft my childhood, future, and spirituality. Right now, this church is even helping me through college. To me, that is important. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to apply for the Vicksburg UMC Student Scholarship. I appreciate the consideration each and every time my application is looked over. Thanks again. Happy Holidays! ~ *William Smola*

Thank You

Dear Friends at VUMC, THANK YOU for your kind support of the children in the Friday Pack Program at Generous Hands. We cannot begin to thank you enough for your recent gift, and we are absolutely thrilled to have your continued support!

Your gift will help with the food expenses, as we are now sending food home weekly with over 300 children. Your support has repeatedly played a key role in our success in keeping up with the growing number of children in our community needing food assistance.

Thank you again for your compassionate support. With warm regards, ~ *Sheri Louis, Executive Director of Generous Hands, Inc.*



Mission Moments

First, Thank You, for your generous giving to the SCCS Christmas baskets and angel tree gift programs. You helped many people in the South County area, however the need continues. The +10 program is the fund raiser that addresses local hunger all year long. By picking one or more weeks during the year to donate \$10 or ten dollars worth of food you support Generous Hands and South County Community Services throughout the year. The Sign Up sheet is on the tall mission hutch near the office. You can designate funds or food to either Generous Hands or SCCS. Undesignated funds are split equally between the two organizations. Make checks payable to VUMC, put +10 in the memo line along with your designation if desired or place the food in the basket in the hall by the library.

Cash for Throwaways

While signing up for +10, notice the jars on the shelves. These jars represent Cash for Throwaways. Although Spartan label and Campbell labels have been discontinued,

Box Tops for education are still needed. Family Fare cash register receipts are now used to earn money for the church.

You can also turn in pop can tabs or any other aluminum tabs and even aluminum lids (use a magnet to check that aluminum is not magnetic as some cat food and soup cans have these). They must be washed clean.

Another way to help those, especially the homeless, in the Kalamazoo area is donating to purchase a coat or sleeping bag that John Cleveland has talked about, made by employees that were in need or were formerly homeless.

The Empowerment Plan
1401 Vermont St
Detroit MI 48216

Contact John Cleveland
 Thanks again for all that you do!
 Your Mission Team



Last chance to order your
Susanna Wesley Circle

Super Bowl
Sub Sandwiches

January 29!

\$6.00 each

Pick up Saturday, Feb. 4 from 11:00 to noon
or Sunday, Feb. 5 after Worship.

Sunday School News

We have quietly been plugging away in studies this January as we entered the season after Epiphany. Things will liven up on the last Sunday of January when the bi-annual Fish Races take place in the Children and Youth Divisions of Sunday school. The kids have learned that Jesus called many fishermen to follow him and become "fishers of men". The races are a fun way to remember that Jesus not only called the disciples, he "sent them out" as well.

Sunday School Lenten Study

Last year, the entire Sunday school department followed **The Way** Bible Study by Adam Hamilton during the Lenten season culminating on Easter Sunday. We have chosen to do another study together this year. We will be following the **24 Hours That Changed The World** Lenten study also written by Adam Hamilton.

What a difference a day makes. You hear people say that phrase all the time. It could not be truer than when talking about the last day of Jesus' life. In *24 Hours That Changed the World*, Adam Hamilton will help us experience and understand the significance of Jesus' suffering and death like never before. He retraces the day that changed human history in his usual straightforward yet easy, conversational style that speaks to both long-time Christians and those who are simply curious about the story of Christ's crucifixion.

In the DVD, Hamilton draws on insights from history, archaeology, geography, and the Bible and takes us to the Holy Land where he provides a deeper understanding of the most amazing day in history. We visit the sites where those earth-shaking events took place, and we walk where Jesus walked along the road that led to the pain and triumph of the cross.

Even if you don't usually come to Sunday school, you will want to come during this special season. Adults can join either the Connections class or the Kum Join Us class, and all new children and youth are welcome to their respective classes downstairs with Miss Katie, Miss Lisa, Hank and Matt.

This is one of the greatest opportunities to study together as your own family unit and with your church family. Don't miss out. The study begins March 5 at 9:50 a.m.

Vicksburg United Methodist Women IMPORTANT 2017 UMW DATES!

March 25 – Spring Fling, Wesley Foundation at WMU!

April 24-27 – Spring Rummage Sale!

April 28-29 – Spiritual Growth, Crystal Springs UM Camp!

May – All Daughter Banquet – date to be announced.

June 21 - Evening of Mission, Hartford UM

July 13-15 – Mission U at Albion College!

September 23 – District Annual, Sodus Chapel Hill UMC

September 25-28 – Fall Rummage Sale!

October 21 – Annual Conference, Mt. Pleasant UMC!

December – Community Christmas Celebration – date and time to be announced!



You are welcome to attend any or all of the above plus our UMW General and Circle meetings- you don't have to be a member! Interested? Questions? Call Aileen at 649-9003 for more info!

General meetings are 4/06, 5/04 (field trip), 6/01 (picnic), 7/06, 8/03 (potluck) & 10/05.

Watch for info about the Spring Fling & the Rummage Sale in the March "Visitor".

Heart & Hands Preschool

Heart and Hands Preschool is pleased to announce that Mrs. Young, our morning co-op teacher, had a baby girl on Tuesday, January 17 at 12:35 a.m. Eloise Mae weighed 6 lbs., 13 oz. Kelli and her family are doing well.

We have hired a long-term sub to finish out the school year in the morning co-op classes. Her



name is Melissa Hodges. Melissa lives in Plainwell. She has years of early childhood teaching experience and 5 children of her own. Melissa has an associate's degree in Early Childhood Education and is attending Western Michigan University to obtain a

bachelor's degree in Child and Family Development. Her first two weeks have gone great, and we are excited to work with her for the rest of the 2016-2017 school year.

Enrollment for the 2017-2018 school year begins February 1. Please help spread the word to friends, family, neighbors, etc. They can visit our website or call 649-2343, ext. 106, for more information.



Update on Pop Tabs, Labels and Box Tops

- Spartan stores have discontinued the collection of Spartan labels for cash. However, we are collecting Spartan cash register receipts for cash!
- Campbell/Pepperidge company has discontinued their "labels for education" program.
- We are continuing to collect box tops for education i.e. Cheerios, fruit rollups, etc. (learn more at www.boxtops4education.com) which benefits Generous Hands.
- **Note change on pop tabs:** Previously we collected aluminum pop can tabs. Now we can collect **washed, clean lids with tabs of any metal;** the whole lid and not just aluminum. So! Pet food, soup, pop cans tabs, etc. are being collected for the UMW District Community House. Over the decades, the saving of the aluminum tabs has helped to pave their parking lot, bought a station wagon for special needs transportation, coffee, recreational supplies and is presently helping to fund the First Step House to help women. Please collect **washed, clean** lids in a large mouth container (zip lock bags are great for this) and bring to the collection cabinet by the workroom door at the top of the main stairway.



THANK YOU FOR ALL YOU HAVE DONE AND WHAT YOU CONTINUE TO DO. TOGETHER WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE!



Scrip Cents Order Dates

The order dates for Scrip Cents for February are Wednesdays, February 1 and 15. The orders need to be in the office no later than 2:00 p.m. on ordering day.

Newsletter Deadline

The deadline for the March issue of *The Visitor* is Monday, February 20. Items must be received, preferably via email, by end of day to be included for March. The newsletter will be distributed with the Good News on February 23.

**Coming March 19
Great Gospel Sing-Out!**

Wedding Coordinator Needed

We are in need of one or more wedding coordinators. The basic responsibility of the wedding coordinator is to serve as the host to the wedding party and others who might need assistance. It means attending the wedding rehearsal and being present for up to four hours the day of the wedding. The pay is \$100 for each wedding. For more information, or to apply, see Pastor Buff.

Welcome Center Helpers Needed for 2017

We are looking for volunteers (single or couple) to help cover the Welcome Center for 2017. You will welcome members and newcomers and answer any questions as they arrive for worship.

Please arrive by 10:30 and stay until just before the service begins. During June, July and August this time may change due to summer worship schedule.

This is a great way to get to know other church members and greet new people coming to our church.

If you would like to sign up for a month in 2017 or have any questions, please contact Karen Simpson at 269-978-8717.

Empty Spots on the Flower Chart

Everyone enjoys seeing beautiful flowers on the altar during Sunday morning services. They are especially meaningful when they are in honor of a person or event.

Anyone who has a special person or event they would like to celebrate or commemorate is invited to provide altar flowers for Sunday morning worship services on any given week. The flowers are yours to take home after the service.



You can celebrate anniversaries, birthdays, memorials, accomplishments, etc. If you don't have a special event or person to celebrate, you are still welcome to provide flowers.

The flower chart hangs on the bulletin board in the Narthex. Simply pick a Sunday, sign your name and list the event you are honoring.

Connections Class
EUCHRE/GAME NIGHT
Saturday, February 25
7:00 p.m.
Family Life Center

Kids Hope USA

Why Do Relationships Matter?

Recently Dr. Emilie and David Staal, Kids Hope USA President/CEO, sat down and discussed this important aspect of our ministry. The following is part of that talk.

Why do relationships matter? Dr. Emilie says, "Every child needs a stable caring relationship with an adult." David says, "It is the whole reason that this program exists. Because that's what is missing in a lot of our students' lives."

He shared a story about his own Kids Hope student. He was taking him back to his classroom after their mentoring session when the student just stopped in the hall and gave him a big hug. It was a very long hug. David asked the child if everything was OK. "Yes, I just needed a hug," the boy replied.

His hug went beyond just a hug and became holding onto this adult, holding onto what this relationship meant in his life. Most children have a fair amount of adults in their lives, but that does not mean that they are all positive relationships. David was providing something that he desperately needed -- reliability, caring, validation. He showed up at this boy's classroom every week to spend time just with him. When this happens week after week, Kids Hope students say to themselves, "Wow, I'm important. I'm worth something."

Children need to have a safe base to operate from. They need to have adults they can count on, and they need time in their week when they can relax and anticipate with joy. Children's lives today can be very tumultuous and stormy. They are looking for someone and some place to hold onto so that they won't be tossed to and fro. Kids Hope mentors are that "someone," and that "some place" is their weekly mentoring session.

Attachment and bonding promote brain growth and development. When children feel secure, wonderful things can happen. Are you an adult that some child can count on? Can you be someone who shows up for one hour a week and is excited to see them? Can you change a child's life for the better? Can you pray for a child? Can you give good hugs?

Talk to Barb Bladt (649-2275) if you would like more information about becoming a Kids Hope USA volunteer (hug expert).



"Yes, the disciples followed Jesus... but not on Twitter."

Prayer Closet

Lord, give me the faith to take the next step, even when I don't know what lies ahead. Give me the assurance that even if I stumble and fall, you'll pick me up and put me back on the path. And give me the confidence that, even if I lose faith, you will never lose me. Amen.

When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the river, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through the fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you. Isaiah 43:2

As children, some of us prayed, Now I lay me down to sleep, I pray the Lord my soul to keep, Peace and safety till I wake, This I pray for Jesus' sake. Amen. The simplicity of our prayers reflected a simple trust. Sometimes, Lord, it's good for us to return to simplicity when life gets complicated, to remember the basic things we once knew without question. Bring rest to our bodies and minds through a simple trust in your ability to keep us and care for us. Amen

As a mother comforts her child, so I will comfort you... Isaiah 66:13



Just for Laughs

Farmer Gossman called the vet and said, "My horse is very very sick. She's lying down and won't eat anything and is making strange noises."

The vet came and looked over the horse and said, "You're right - she certainly is ill - and she needs some very strong medicine."

He took a bottle out of his box, put two pills into his hand and said, "Give her these. The pills should make her better."

"How can I give them to her? She won't eat anything," the farmer asked.

The vet handed him a long tube and said, "Put this tube in her mouth, then put the pills in the tube and blow. That'll take care of it."

The next day the vet came to the farm again to check up on things. "How's your horse?" the vet asked.

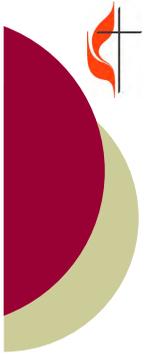
"No change," the farmer said, "but I've been feeling very ill myself."

"Oh?" the vet said. "Why?"

"Well, I did what you said," the farmer answered. "I put the tube in the horse's mouth and then put the two pills down it - just like you said."

"And?" the vet asked.

"She blew first!"



Vicksburg United Methodist Church

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Sunday Worship

Celebration & Praise: 9:00 a.m.
Sunday School: 9:50 a.m.
Worship Service: 11:00 a.m.

Church Office Hours

Mon-Thurs: 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

Alive in Christ, and it Shows!

WE'RE ON THE WEB!
WWW.VICKSBURGUMC.ORG

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