



# The Visitor

Vicksburg United Methodist Church

Volume 24, Issue 1

January 2017

## Inside This Issue

Pastor's Article	2
Birthdays	2
Anniversaries	2
Mail Bag	3
Announcements	3
Ask the Pastor	4
Mission Moments	4



*May God's love light your way  
and lead you into a new year  
that shines with His special joy.*

*Happy New Year!*

### Church Staff

#### Pastor

Dr. Bufford Coe

#### Administrative Assistant

Polly Preston

#### Financial Assistant

Darcy Osborn

#### Choir/Praise Band Director

Tamra Stamm

#### Custodian

Paul French

#### Heart & Hands Teacher/Director

Amber Morris

#### Heart & Hands Teacher

Kelli Young

#### Heart & Hands Assistant

Amber Smith

#### Kids Hope USA Director

Barb Blatt

#### Youth Director

Hank Stamm

#### Newsletter Editor

Polly Preston

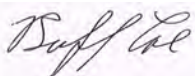
## Pastor's Article

This past fall, the Church Council conducted a survey of the congregation in which we asked a number of questions about our church's ministry. Thank you to all of you who took part and made your opinions known. The results of the survey were discussed by the Council at our meetings in October and November and by the various groups responsible for our congregation's ministries. If any of you have not yet seen the results of the survey and would like to do so, I can provide you with either a paper or an electronic copy of the complete report. While there was a lot of information in the survey that will guide our ministries in the future, this month I want to share just one general observation that came to me as I thought about the survey results.

**We need to do a better job telling our story!** It was striking to me how many of our people did not know much about the ministries we offer. 53% of the respondents had no opinion about our Sunday School, 58% had no opinion about our small group studies, 44% had no opinion about our youth ministries, 52% had no opinion about Vacation Bible School, and 40% had no opinion about adult groups such as United Methodist Women! I am in a privileged position because I see a lot of ministry that is not obvious to many in the congregation. I hear the stories about the difference our preschool is making in the lives of children and their families. I see the dozens of boys and their families who gather here for Boy Scouts and Cub Scouts and I feel proud every time another one of them earns his eagle award. I hear about the spiritual growth taking place in our Sunday School classes and our youth ministry and I witness the enthusiasm of our Vacation Bible School children as they learn more about God. Last week I saw a steady stream of families coming here to pick up the Christmas gifts they could not afford on their own. Yesterday I delivered almost \$100 worth of groceries to a homeless family living in a motel and today I signed a voucher authorizing housing assistance to one of our church families facing eviction. We are doing some wonderful things! We are making a difference in the world, but many in our congregation are not aware of it. Of course, it is natural that we will focus our attention on the ministries God is calling us to fulfill and not spend a lot of time talking about what we are doing, but these stories need to be told! We want people to recognize that God is at work among us, and they will not know that unless they know what is happening! We need to use every means available to tell our story, including the newsletter, the Weekly Good News, the screen announcements, announcements during worship, our web site, our Facebook page, the South County News, posters, fliers, bulletin inserts, and any other creative means we can devise. This is a story that needs to be told, so let's tell it!

Thank you to all of you who contributed to the congregation's Christmas gift to us as well as all of you who gave us personal gifts. We are grateful for your love and support. May God bless you this holiday season and throughout the coming year.

Love in Christ,



Dr. Bufford Coe

## Church Leaders

### Church Council

#### Finance

Don Dailey (ddaileysu@gmail.com)

#### Trustees

Ken Akin (gm-ken@outlook.com)

#### Personnel

Andrea Read (readandrea28@gmail.com)

#### Pastor Parish

#### Caring Ministries

Barb Addis (Bb1a2b3@aol.com) &

Vera Walker (vrwlkr@yahoo.com)

#### Global Missions

Tom Aitken (twaitken@att.net)

#### Memorial

Ken Franklin (drkenfp@mac.com)

#### Worship

Brad Addis (braddis109@aol.com)

#### Preschool Advisory Board

Jessica Hawkins (jessiejean317@hotmail.com)

#### Wills & Trust

Chris Morris (morrisslaw@ameritech.net)

#### Nominations

Pastor Buff Coe (buffordc@aol.com)

#### Abuse Prevention

Hank Stamm (henrystamm3rd@yahoo.com)

#### Lay Leader



## January Birthdays and Anniversaries

### Birthdays

- 1 John Cleveland
- 3 Barbara Adams
- 5 Ken Akins  
Vera Walker
- 6 Stacy Cron  
Therisa Hiemstra  
Lois Myers
- 7 Liam Miller  
Robert Parsons
- 9 Melissa Woods
- 10 James Thompson
- 11 Marilyn Durham
- 12 Brock Agnone  
Kevin Moore
- 13 Greg Berndt  
Elizabeth Heikes
- 15 Jim Worthington
- 17 Loretta Brundige  
Linda Cleveland  
Nicola Hosner
- 19 Aileen Greanya
- 20 Deb Sponseller  
Wyatt Thompson
- 22 Sydney Hambright

- 22 Betty Thomas
- 23 Greg White
- 24 Brianna Moberly
- 25 Wade Stacey  
Kyle Stevens
- 26 Phyllis Barrett  
Ken George  
Kelsey Stevens
- 27 Justin Carrier  
Dessie Harris
- 28 Andrea Read  
Janet Zang
- 29 Charlene Dailey  
Katie Geiger  
Lynn Griner  
Dawnara Rollins
- 30 David Nic  
James Smola
- 31 Steven Ensing  
Mike Hardy  
Dolores Morton

### Anniversaries

- 1/20 John & Linda Cleveland  
1/21 Jim & Vicki Worthington  
1/29 Eugene & Janet Zang

## Mail Bag

### Thank You

The 2016 Bazaar took in a total of \$1,155.50. A HUGE thank you to all who donated items to sell and for all those who worked. We could not do it without all your help. ~ Linda Cleveland & Diana Pomeroy

### Thank You

**A big thanks to you if you helped in any way at our annual church bazaar!**

- Thank you if you donated handmade items!
- Thank you if you donated baked items, jams, jellies, etc!
- Thank you if you donated soup!
- Thank you if you made ole' bolins or worked in the kitchen.
- Thank you if you worked in any way during set-up or the sale!
- Thank you if you shopped the sale for goodies or gift items!

Because you helped, we were able to raise over \$1,000 for our church's general fund. Thank you!

## Thank You for Your Service

As most of you know, Dr. Kathy Rix completed her service as our Administrative Assistant on October 31. She continued to serve as our Financial Assistant through November and came to the church two days a week. Kathy's last day was December 16. She spent much of her last two weeks training Darcy Osborn to do the work of the Financial Assistant. Darcy has now assumed those responsibilities and will serve as our Financial Assistant for the immediate future. We are grateful to both Kathy and Darcy for the important work they do.

### Newsletter Deadline

The deadline for the February issue of *The Visitor* is Monday, January 23. Items must be received, preferably via email, by end of day to be included for February. The newsletter will be distributed with the Good News on January 26.

### Scrip Cents Order Dates

The order dates for Scrip Cents are Tuesdays, January 3, 17, and 31. The orders need to be in the office no later than 2:00 p.m. on ordering day.

### Holiday Office Schedule

The church office will be closed on Monday, January 2, in observance of the New Year's holiday. We will resume regular office hours on Tuesday, January 3.

### It's the New Testament Portion of Disciple Fast Track !!!

Lots of time to sign up if you haven't already. For this half of Fast Track, the book is only \$15.00. We get together on Thursday evenings at 6:30, starting January 5. Come on and join in!! Contact John Cleveland, Vera Walker, or the Church office if interested.

## Now Hiring!



**Heart and Hands Preschool is looking for a long-term substitute** to cover a maternity leave for one of our teachers.

- **Requirements:** an early education teaching degree or CDA certification
  - **Responsibilities:** teaching a M/W/F 4's class 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. and a T/TH 3's class 9:00 a.m.-11:30 a.m.
  - **Time frame:** January 9- May 26
  - **Pay Rate:** \$50 per day
- Please contact preschool director Amber Morris for more information: 269-649-2343 ext. 106 or [heartandhands@vicksburgumc.org](mailto:heartandhands@vicksburgumc.org)

## New Member Orientation Sessions

All adults and high school students who are interested in joining Vicksburg United Methodist Church are invited to attend the orientation session that will be held from 2:00 until 4:00 p.m. on Tuesday, January 3.

The class may also be of interest to persons who are already members but want to learn more about The United Methodist Church or our local congregation. .

Our new members will be welcomed into the congregation during the worship services on Sunday, January 8. For more information, contact Pastor Buff.

## Baptism Scheduled

The sacrament of Holy Baptism will be celebrated in the worship service on Sunday, January 8. Parents who wish to present their children for baptism should contact Pastor Buff. On Thursday, January 5 at 7:00 p.m., there will be a meeting for the parents of children to be baptized. At this session, we will discuss the meaning of baptism and review the baptismal liturgy. The meeting will last about an hour.

## Storing of the Greens

The Christmas decorations will be taken down at 1:00 on Thursday, January 5. We customarily do this after worship the first Sunday in January, but since the first Sunday in January is New Year's Day, we had to find another date. We know that many people cannot be available on a Thursday afternoon, but some of you can! If possible, please plan on being here the afternoon of January 5 to help store the Christmas decorations away for another year.



## Ask the Pastor

### Question

For much of the Bible, we read of men having multiple wives and concubines. We weren't able to decide when that became the customary situation, nor when it ended. Could you shed some light on polygamy for us as to start and end times?

### Answer

I'm afraid I couldn't find a clear answer to your question. The first mention of polygamy in the Bible is in Genesis 4:19 and the latest is the harem of the Persian emperor described in the book of Esther. Polygamy is not mentioned in the New Testament, although the Jewish historian Josephus records that Herod the Great had nine wives. Polygamy appears to have been more common among wealthy men. *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible* says that, aside from royal marriages contracted for political reasons, "the need and desire for sons was the most prominent factor. In the seminomadic and agricultural periods of Israel's history the possession of several wives made a large working force available to tend the flocks and the fields. The maintenance of the nation's manpower could also have been a consideration in the perpetuation of polygamy." *The Interpreter's Dictionary* also notes, "Social change and the breakdown of the seminomadic way of life, as well as the effect of other cultures, reduced the practice of [polygamy] and encouraged the more general practice of monogamy."

### Question

In my morning reading I came across Proverbs 26:4-5.

“Don't answer the foolish arguments of fools, or you will become as foolish as they are. Be sure to answer the foolish arguments of fools, or they will become wise in their own estimation.”

Proverbs 26:4-5 NLT

These seem pretty relevant to our social media and fake news issues of today.

These two proverbs seem to me to be a direct contradiction to each other. However, I love a good puzzle. Do you have any insight or reference that can help me understand what Solomon was getting at here?

### Answer

It is not uncommon for proverbs, whether biblical or secular, to contradict each other. A good sample can be found at <https://beebo.org/smackerels/contradictory-proverbs.html>. Some bits of wisdom might apply in one situation while a different situation calls for a different response. It takes wisdom to know which approach is appropriate in a particular case. For a more thorough response to this question, see <https://gotquestions.org/Proverbs-26-4-5.html>.

## Mission Moments

Thanks to everyone who supported Missions throughout the year. You have made a big difference in the lives of the approximately 800 people that are served locally by agencies we support.

A special “Thank You” to those who supported the South County Community Services Christmas programs. Over \$700 was raised for Christmas food baskets and the Angel Tree provided gifts for 13 families composed of 53 people. This was one of the most successful years for this program, and people were so grateful.

As always, **Thank You**, for all that you do.

The Mission Team

## An Opportunity to Minister

Brad and I have been privileged to be part of the Wednesday afterschool ministry to middle school youth, also known as The Shed. This school year we have had up to 20 middle school youth at one time and have served about 30 different youth. They show up at church after school on Wednesdays. Some watch a movie, others practice their musical instruments, do homework, play card games, or just have recreation time in the gym. Brad and I feed them a light supper around 4:30 and then they attend HELIX with Hank Stamm.

As Brad and I are heading to Florida for three months, we are looking for volunteers to fill our duties as chief cooks and bottle washers. If this is a ministry you feel led to, or if you would just like to serve our youth, please contact Hank Stamm for all the details. We have been blessed to be a part of this ministry and we're sure you will be also.

Sincerely, Brad & Barb Addis

## From the Susanna Wesley Circle

The football season is almost to play off time, which means that Super Bowl Sunday is not that far off (February 5th to be exact!). The Susanna Wesley circle will be offering sub sandwiches again this year. The subs are between 6 and 8 inches with 3 meats and 2 cheeses. The price is yet to be determined so watch the Weekly Good news for pricing. Subs are available through pre-order only and you can place your orders the 2 Sunday mornings before Super Bowl weekend (January 22 and 29). The subs will be assembled on Saturday morning and can be picked up from 11:00 - 12:00 that morning, or picked up on Sunday morning after you worship.

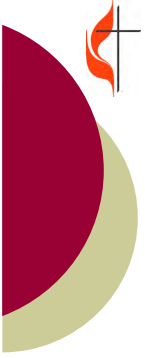


All money from this fundraiser is used to help South County Community Services provide Christmas for those in need during the holiday season.

So, take it easy and let us fix your sandwiches for you!

## From the Sunday School Department

A BIG thank you to the wonderful students that complete our Sunday School Pre-K to Middle school program. The kids did an awesome job of helping to lead every aspect of worship on December 11 from songs to prayers to the message it's self. If you see Sawyer or Harrison Barton, Mac or Vaughn Read, October Moberly, Megan Burke, Henry or Lily Stamm, Morgan or Eric Beehler or Alex Geiger, let them know how proud our church is of them! And of course, thanks to Katie Geiger for helping so much this year during my illness and for Tamra Stamm's accompaniment during the kids songs while Karla and Barb backed up the hymns. It takes a village, or a church to raise a child and I'm so glad we can do that!



## Vicksburg United Methodist Church

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Vicksburg MI 49097

Phone: 269-649-2343  
Fax: 269-649-2538  
E-mail: [reception@vicksburgumc.org](mailto:reception@vicksburgumc.org)

### 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!**

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WE'RE ON THE WEB!  
[WWW.VICKSBURGUMC.ORG](http://WWW.VICKSBURGUMC.ORG)

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