

Sunday  
**January 17, 2021**  
9:30 a.m.

## Second Sunday after the Epiphany

Pastor Greg

Becoming disciples,  
serving God's world.



### **Call to Worship:** "Could There Be Peace?"

*From John 1, "Look the Lamb of God! Could there be peace?...Come and see!" Music by Tim Coons.*

### **Confession**

O Holy One, we call to you and name you as eternal, ever-present, and boundless in love. Yet there are times, O God, when we fail to recognize you in the dailyness of our lives. Sometimes shame clenches tightly around our hearts, and we hide our true feelings. Sometimes fear makes us small, and we miss the chance to speak from our strength. Sometimes doubt invades our hopefulness, and we degrade our own wisdom.

Holy God, in the daily round from sunrise to sunset, remind us again of your holy presence hovering near us and in us. Free us from shame and self-doubt. Help us to see you in the moment-by-moment possibilities to live honestly, to act courageously, and to speak from our wisdom.

### **Hymn:** #377 It Is Well with My Soul

### **Assurance of Pardon**

The good news in Christ is that when we face ourselves and God with the awareness of our need, we are given grace to grow, and courage to continue the journey.

Friends, believe the good news of the gospel. In Jesus Christ we are forgiven.

### **Prayer from the Book Jesus Used:** Psalm 139:1-18

*The Inescapable God; a Psalm of David*

<sup>1</sup> O Lord, you have searched me and known me. <sup>2</sup> You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from far away. <sup>3</sup> You search out my path and my lying down, and are acquainted with all my ways. <sup>4</sup> Even before a word is on my tongue, O Lord, you know it completely. <sup>5</sup> You hem me in, behind and before, and lay your hand upon me. <sup>6</sup> Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is so high that I cannot attain it. <sup>7</sup> Where can I go from your spirit? Or where can I flee from your presence? <sup>8</sup> If I ascend to heaven, you are there; if I make my bed in Sheol, you are there. <sup>9</sup> If I take the wings of the morning and settle at the farthest limits of the sea, <sup>10</sup> even there your hand shall lead me, and your right hand shall hold me fast. <sup>11</sup> If I say, "Surely the darkness shall cover me, and the light around me become night," <sup>12</sup> even the darkness is not dark to you; the night is as bright as the day, for darkness



217 S Main St  
Vicksburg MI 49097  
269-649-2343  
vicksburgumc.org

Pastor Greg Culver  
231-675-4452  
gpculver@mac.com

is as light to you. <sup>13</sup> For it was you who formed my inward parts; you knit me together in my mother's womb. <sup>14</sup> I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; that I know very well. <sup>15</sup> My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth. <sup>16</sup> Your eyes beheld my unformed substance. In your book were written all the days that were formed for me, when none of them as yet existed. <sup>17</sup> How weighty to me are your thoughts, O God! How vast is the sum of them! <sup>18</sup> I try to count them—they are more than the sand; I come to the end—I am still with you.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

**For the Kids: "Come and See"**

*Words and music by Michael J. Tinker  
([www.michaeljtinker.com](http://www.michaeljtinker.com)).*

**Scripture Lesson:** John 1:43-58

**Sermon:** "Never Alone"

**Hymn:** #526 What a Friend We Have in Jesus

**Prayers of the People, and the Lord's Prayer**

Loving God, we welcome you into our homes, into our lives, into our hearts, asking that you would make your presence known to us both today and throughout the coming week.

We thank you, Lord, for another day of life, for this new year, for the promise of a miraculous, persistent, "won't-abandon-us-no-matter-what" eternal hope, despite the chaos, the disorder, the destruction we face.

Gracious God, we humbly offer prayers of support to the many suffering and hurting in our world. For the lonely and heartbroken, we pray for your comfort and your peace. For the sick and the tired, we pray for your grace and your strength. For the persecuted and defenseless, we pray for your stamina and your justice. For the confused and the disoriented, we pray for your wisdom and guidance.

Mysterious Creator, we're standing on the edge of another year that will likely be

emotionally, physically, financially, spiritually demanding. Every day the news, the notifications, the tweets — moments of anxiety around politics and pandemic so thick, so intense, it's hard to breathe. There are moments, dear Lord, when many of us feel as if we're left with nothing. No more patience, no more energy, no more fight, no more hope and even sometimes no more love.

And God, we need you to sustain us, to revive us, to hold us, to reorient us, to call us to your marvelous service in love of neighbor and in bringing about your kingdom which knows no sickness, no suffering, no delusion, no injustice, no end. Patient God, in this troubling time of political division, uncertainty, amid the shouts, the name-calling, the retorts, the blaming, we ask that you would teach us to listen. Teach us to listen to those far from us — the whisper of the hopeless, the plea of the forgotten, the cry of the anguished. Teach us to listen, O God, to ourselves. Help us to be less afraid to trust the holy voice inside. Teach us to listen, Holy Spirit, for your voice — in busyness and in boredom, in certainty and doubt, in noise and in silence. Teach us, oh Lord, to listen, to hear, to live the words that Christ himself taught us... Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

**Offertory**

**Dedication of Gifts and Self** — based on John 1:43-51

*Thank you so much for your continued prayers and financial support! You are a blessing to the church!*

Merciful God, you provide us with so many opportunities to follow Jesus' teaching and to live as modern day disciples. We sometimes respond to your call with enumerable excuses or unfounded worries. We confuse our spiritual longing with the

need for possessions. Yet these things only provide a false sense of security. As we offer these financial resources, transform us so that we are stirred to hear your call on our lives. We pray in the name of the Redeeming One, Jesus the Christ. Amen.

**Parting Words:** "The Parable of the Good Samaritan"

*Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. delivered his final speech "I've been to the Mountaintop" on April 3, 1968 which included a commentary on "The Parable of the Good Samaritan" based on Luke 10:25-37.*

## Benediction

No matter how frightening the world may become; no matter how frightening the individual circumstances of your life may be today or may become tomorrow, you need not be afraid, for God is with you. God goes before you to guide you, beside you to be your best friend, behind you to protect you, beneath you to support you, and above you to give you vision and courage and hope. If you will remember that, then the peace of Christ that passes all understanding will be with you too.

In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

## Prayer for Family and Friends

### Previous Requests

Myrna Forsythe passed away on Jan. 2. Please remember the family in your prayers. Pray for every family undergoing difficulties. Pray for persecuted Christians around the world.

## This Week's Celebrations

### Birthdays

1/17 Linda Cleveland  
1/19 Aileen Greanya  
1/20 Deb Sponseller  
Wyatt Thompson

1/22 Betty Thomas

1/23 Greg White

### Anniversaries

1/20 John & Linda  
Cleveland

## Drive-In Worship

**9:30 Sunday mornings  
in the church parking lot**

tune your radio to FM 101.1

**also live stream at**  
[meet.google.com/ybu-swbd-ocn](https://meet.google.com/ybu-swbd-ocn)

A Google account is required to watch. If you do not have a Google account, please email Alex ([aensing@vicksburgumc.org](mailto:aensing@vicksburgumc.org)).

You can also listen to services over the phone. Before the start time of the service, call (413) 340-2217 and enter the following pin when prompted: 950 134 510#.

**Later, watch your email for YouTube link.**

## VUMC's Mission Statement



## The General Rule of Discipleship

To witness to Jesus Christ in the world, and to follow his teachings through acts of compassion, justice, worship and devotion under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

## In Service to Our Country

Walker Polsinelli  
Tyler Smith

Geoff White

## For Cheer and Hello

David Bretz  
Barb Griner  
Flossie Lang  
Robert & Carmen Parsons

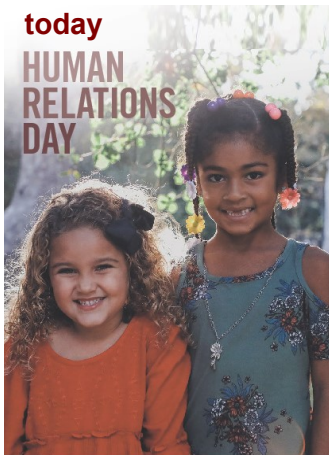
Marv Starbuck  
Mina Willett  
Betty Witcher

## Church Council meeting

Church Council will meet on Monday, Jan. 25, at 7:00 p.m. Anyone who wants to may join the meeting with Google Meet or by phone. Check your email for Google Meet link and phone number.

## Prayer requests are available by phone

You can hear the weekly prayer requests by calling the church (649-2343). When the voicemail connects, dial 370.



Today is **Human Relations Day**. This offering supports Community Developers, United Methodist Voluntary Service and Youth Offender Rehabilitation programs.

If you would like to give, please make your check payable to VUMC and designate the offering on the memo line, then mail it in with your

regular giving (217 S Main St, Vicksburg MI 49097), or bring it to church with you on Sunday. You may also give online at [UMC Special Sundays Support](#).

### **Susanna Wesley Circle will meet**

Susanna Wesley Circle is planning to meet together on Thursday, Jan. 21, in the Taylor Room at 9:30 a.m. We will social distance, and there will be no refreshments. Please remember your donations for Generous Hands. We look forward to seeing everyone.

### **Thank you**

I appreciate the interesting Sunshine Bag that I received before Christmas, and I appreciate each person involved in that project under the guidance of the Member Care Committee. ~  
*Laverne*

## **This Week's Calendar**

### **Today**

9:30 a.m. Worship in the parking lot and online

### **Monday, January 18**

*no church activities are scheduled*

### **Tuesday, January 19**

*no church activities are scheduled*

### **Wednesday, January 20**

8:00 p.m. Midweek prayer meeting online

### **Thursday, January 21**

9:30 a.m. *Susanna Wesley Circle, Taylor Room*

### **Friday, January 22 - Pastor's Day Off**

*no church activities are scheduled*

### **Saturday, January 23**

*no church activities are scheduled*

### **Next Week**

### **Monday, January 25**

6:00 p.m. *Finance Committee online*

7:00 p.m. *Church Council online*

## **Coming deadlines**

- Items for the February newsletter are due to Polly ([reception@vicksburgumc.org](mailto:reception@vicksburgumc.org)) by Monday, Jan. 25.
- ShopWithScrip (formerly ScripCents) orders are due in the church office by 2:00 Monday, Feb. 1.

## **Midweek prayer meeting**

To join the online prayer meeting on Wednesday evenings from 8:00 to 8:45, please click this link: [meet.google.com/hii-yaux-ggs](https://meet.google.com/hii-yaux-ggs).

Otherwise, to join by telephone, dial:  
+1 415-604-0783; enter PIN: 815 342 983#.