

**JANUARY 2016  
CLARION CONNECTION  
FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH  
201 3<sup>RD</sup> AVENUE NE  
CLARION, IA 50525**

**Pastor: Rev. Mike Gudka  
Church Phone: 515-532-2845  
Pastor Mike's cell: 515-835-7847  
Parsonage: 602-6202  
Email: [pastormikegudka@gmail.com](mailto:pastormikegudka@gmail.com)  
Website: [www.clarionumc.com](http://www.clarionumc.com)**

Secretary: Jodi Kraft  
Office Hours: Monday - Friday 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon  
Email: [jodi@clarionumc.com](mailto:jodi@clarionumc.com)

Church Treasurer: Andy Schutt 532-3334  
Financial Secretary: Jodi Kraft  
Ad Board Chair: Carolyn Etter

Custodian: Tim Wesenburg  
Hours: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday - afternoons, Wednesday off



If your email address has changed please email the change to the church office at [jodi@clarionumc.com](mailto:jodi@clarionumc.com)

**SUNSHINE VISITS -**

If someone is ill or in the hospital and would like Pastor Mike to make a Sunshine Visit to them, please let him or the office know. We don't always know when someone is in need of him visiting.

**Your Giving Makes a Difference**

2016 Needed weekly: \$3,928

**LITURGIST** - January - Jeff Farwell

**COMMUNION STEWARDS:** January 3 - 8:45 a.m. - Deb Keller and Donna Miller  
11:00 a.m. - Joella and Todd Sorenson

**Communion Stewards, Greeters, Ushers and Liturgists** - There is a sign-up sheet for 2016 at the back of the church. Please sign-up at your earliest convenience and thank you for volunteering.

## GREETERS:

January 3 - 8:45 a.m. - Jeff Farwell  
11:00 a.m. - Abby and Dean Kirstein  
10 - 8:45 a.m. - Carol Townsend  
11:00 a.m. -  
17 - 8:45 a.m. -  
11:00 a.m. -  
24 - 8:45 a.m. -  
11:00 a.m. -  
31 - 8:45 a.m. - Cindy and Doug Riley  
11:00 a.m. -



January - 8:45 a.m. - Carolyn and Dennis Bowman  
11:00 a.m. -



United Methodist Women have NEW cards for sale in the Fireside Room. The cards are marked on the end of the box. You may leave your money with the secretary or put it in a pew envelope on Sunday morning, mark it as such and put envelope in the offering plate. Thank you.



Life Serve of Iowa (blood drive) will be at the Clarion United Presbyterian Church on Tuesday, January 5 from 1-6 p.m. for a blood drive. If you can donate, please call 1-800-287-4903 to set up an appointment or come when you can as a walk in. Blood is always needed.

## THE BACKPACK PROGRAM

The Backpack program is an ongoing program and the following items are needed to help supplement the nutritional needs in the home of these families.

Items that go in the duffel bags weekly include:

- Microwave popcorn - 1 box of 3
  - Cereal - 12 oz. box or variety pack
  - Granola bars - 1 box
  - Munchies Snack Pack ex: peanut butter crackers
  - Mac and cheese - 1- 6.5 oz box
  - Fruit snack packs - ex. Peaches, pears, etc.
  - Instant mashed potatoes - 1 box
  - Dried pinto beans - 1 bag
  - Pudding snack pack
  - White rice - 1-16 oz. Bag
  - Canned chicken - 5 oz. can
- Please take items to the United Congregational Church - west door.  
Thank you for any help you can offer.



Happy New Year! We have so much to celebrate here at Clarion First UMC! We have a solid base of people that come to Church every Sunday and they are also very active in many other days of the week as well. We also have an incredible group that serve the Church less often, but still love and pray for this Church. We have those that come occasionally, and we are so glad to see them every time that they come. And God has placed us right in the middle of the harvest. Right in the middle of town that has almost 1,700 people with no church affiliation. Imagine what we would look like if all we did was bring in 10% of the lost into our Church family.

During the first quarter of 2016, I am hoping to take all of the things that I have learned about Clarion First UMC, along with all the wisdom in the Church Council, and together weave a new long-range plan. Like any Body of Christ, the Holy Spirit moves in different directions. And when we discern where the Holy Spirit is specifically and purposefully leading us and then focus our time, talent, resources, prayer, and witness into following that lead, then we can accomplish things that are completely beyond our comprehension!

And in order to accomplish these, we all will need to get out of our comfort zone a bit. And this includes me. Christ tells us that if we are truly for Him and actively following and serving Him, then we are being His true disciples. But if we are standing still, lagging behind, or refusing to be an active part of His Body, then we stand against Him. The goodness, joy, and energy that is found by being "all in" for Christ is simply a wonderful place to be.

So whether you are very active in The Body, occasionally committed, or even standing on the sidelines, make a commitment in 2016 to let the Holy Spirit find your spot in The Body of Christ where you can grow, learn, and give the glory to God.

There is a saying that goes like this, "*There is no learning without action and no deliberate action without learning.*" (Peddler, 1991). When we proactively and vigorously act in ways that serve Christ and serve others, then we become a different person, we are eternally changed. We are molded and made more like Christ.

So here are my two 2016 prayers for all of us, including myself:

1. Become aware of where you are currently loving God and loving each other, and see it through fresh eyes. And as you do, let your passion and commitment grow for this activity.
2. Pray and find ways where God needs you to be, but where you are currently not active. And then get out there and do it.

When you are pushing yourself further, you will make some glorious mistakes. Or as I like to say, "You will create some wonderful learning moments." You cannot learn and grow if you only keep doing the same things that you always have done. I believe that when you are doing something new, end up doing something not quite right, that this is NOT a mistake. Instead it is an opportunity to let God continue to mold you. It is only a mistake when we have the same circumstances and do it incorrectly again.

So let's become a Church that is filled with "learning moments." In other words, let's get excited when people are trying new things and having a few hick-ups along the way. Let's not be afraid to let the

Holy Spirit take us to new heights. Let's expand upon what we do well, and let's jump in and follow any new directions the Holy Spirit has for us.

God bless and Happy New Year! Pastor Mike

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**Friendly Reminder -**

Pastor Mike is not in the office on Monday's. Please respect his day off by waiting until Tuesday to contact him with church business. (If it is an emergency, I'm sure he wants you to contact him. If it can wait, call him on Tuesday.)

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**January Sound Technician Schedule**

- January 3 - 8:45 a.m. - Sound - Kim Marker  
   Computer - Makena Marker  
   Camera - Andy Young  
           11:00 a.m. - Sound - Chance Wahl  
   Computer - Stan Busick
- January 10 - 8:45 a.m. - Sound - Kathy Watts  
   Computer - Kim Marker  
   Camera - Andy Young  
           11:00 a.m. - Sound - Chance Wahl  
   Computer - Stan Busick
- January 17 - 8:45 a.m. - Sound - Kathy Watts  
   Computer - Kim Marker  
   Camera - Andy Young  
           11:00 a.m. - Sound - Chance Wahl  
   Computer - Stan Busick
- January 24 - 8:45 a.m. - Sound - Kim Marker  
   Computer - Makena Marker  
   Camera - Andy Young  
           11:00 a.m. - Sound - Chance Wahl  
   Computer - Stan Busick
- January 31 - 8:45 a.m. - Sound - Kathy Watts  
   Computer - Kim Marker  
   Camera - Andy Young  
           11:00 a.m. - Sound - Chance Wahl  
   Computer - Stan Busick



Thank you to the Pastor Mike, SPPRC Team and UMW for your gifts this Christmas. I love my job here at the First United Methodist Church, it's a busy job to have with many things to do but I enjoy all of it, so thank you everyone, I am truly blessed!

Have a Great New Year!

Jodi Kraft, Church Secretary

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**End of year reports---**Treasurers' of the various committees please bring all your books to the church office to be audited. Would be great to have these by Wednesday, January 20th. Thank you!



## Calendar

- 1 - New Year's Day - Church office closed
- 3 - Communion Sunday
  - 8:45 a.m. Traditional Service
  - 10:00 a.m. Sunday School
  - 11:00 a.m. Contemporary Service
- 4 - 3:30 - 6:00 p.m. Hiz Kidz
- 6 - 8:30 a.m. Bibles and Bikes (Church library)
  - 3:30 - 5:00 p.m. CHICKS
  - 4:00 p.m. Quarterly Committee meeting in the church kitchen
  - 6:00 p.m. Youth Group team meeting
  - 6:00 p.m. Praise Team practice
  - 7:00 p.m. Chancel Choir practice
  - 7:00 p.m. Education Team meeting
- 9 - 7:30 a.m. UMM
- 10 - 8:45 a.m. Traditional Service
  - 10:00 a.m. Sunday School
  - 11:00 a.m. Contemporary Service
- 11 - 3:30 - 6:00 p.m. Hiz Kidz
- 12 - 5:30 - 6:30 p.m. Girl Scouts
- 13 - 8:30 a.m. Bibles and Bikes (Church library)
  - 6:00 p.m. Praise Team practice
  - 6:30 - 8:00 p.m. Youth Group
  - 7:00 p.m. Chancel Choir
  - 8:00 p.m. Worship Team meeting
- 14 - 7:00 p.m. SPPRC team meeting
- 15 - Church office closed
- 17 - 8:45 a.m. Traditional Service
  - 10:00 a.m. Sunday School
  - 11:00 a.m. Contemporary Service
- 18 - No School, No Hiz Kidz
  - 7:00 p.m. Lydia Circle
- 20 - 8:30 a.m. Bibles and Bikes (Church library)
  - No Grace Stockwell
  - No Isabella Thoburn
  - 3:30 - 5:00 p.m. CHICKS
  - 6:00 p.m. Praise Team practice
  - 6:30 p.m. Trustees Team meeting
  - 7:00 p.m. Chancel Choir practice
- 23 - 7:30 a.m. UMM
- 24 - 8:45 a.m. Traditional Service
  - 10:00 a.m. Sunday School
  - 11:00 a.m. Contemporary Service
- 25 - 3:30 - 6:00 p.m. Hiz Kidz
- 27 - 8:30 a.m. Bibles and Bikes (Church library)
  - 2:00 p.m. Outreach (The Meadows dining room)
  - 6:00 p.m. Finance Team meeting
  - 6:30 - 8:00 p.m. Youth Group
  - 7:00 p.m. Church Council meeting
- 31 - 8:45 a.m. Traditional Service
  - 10:00 a.m. Sunday School
  - 11:00 a.m. Contemporary Service



# Women's Fellowship

## UMW Notes / January 2016

I want to thank all of you who attended our annual Christmas dinner. Thanks to Grace Stockwell Circle for a delicious meal and to the Executive Committee for an inspirational program. Thanks also to each of you who brought and shared your Angels. They made the evening special and complete.

I am looking forward to the start of a new year. The hustle and bustle of the busy months of November and December are now past. We can take time to slow down a bit and enjoy a slower pace for a while.

January would be a great time to pick up a book from our reading list and settle in when the wind is howling and the snow blowing across the fields. Nancy Nail will order books that we can read and then discuss together. Stop in and pick up the latest copy. Also remember that we subscribe to the Response Magazine. It can be found on the rack outside the nursery. If you haven't looked at one for a while, I think you will find the articles very informative and interesting.

The Bible devotion part of Bibles and Bikes is still meeting in the church library on Wednesday mornings at 8:30. We would love for you to join us.

Lydia will meet in the Fireside Room on January 18 at 7:00 p.m. The lesson is the Pledge Service by Cathy Farwell.

Isabella Thoburn and Grace Stockwell are taking the winter months off and will meet again in April.

Always keep our purpose in mind; it is what we are all about: United Methodist Women in Mission.

Best wishes for a healthy and prosperous New Year.

All in all we have much to look forward to. Whether you are in a Circle, a Bible Study, and the Reading group or are involved in the Church program in some other way, remember to **Live simply. Love generously. Care deeply. Speak kindly. Leave the rest to God!**

**Carolyn Bowman**

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**United Methodist Scholarships** are now available for youth, graduating seniors, current or future seminary students, etc.. Please see the flyers on the bulletin board in the entryway of the church sanctuary. If you have questions on how to get applications, etc. please contact Jodi in the church office at 532-2845.

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### Want to join? Need a Baptism?

Well why not decide to be baptized, have your child baptized, and/or join the Church on Easter Sunday, March 27? Traditionally, this is when everyone was baptized and joined the Church and what a great time it would be if you wanted to be a part of this long-held tradition! But if this date does not work for you, then we can select another one. If you want to indicate your desire to be baptized or join on the attendance pads, please make sure and fill in your contact information, or talk directly to Pastor Mike. Let's make this an extra special Easter Sunday!

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### Helping Fellow Congregation Members

Occasionally a fellow long-time congregation member will come to Pastor Mike needing some one-time financial assistance. These requests from congregation members can range from help with food, utilities, rent, sending a child to church camp, car repair, etc. Pastor Mike is looking for a group of "silent saints" that might be able to occasionally donate to help out a fellow congregation member. If you would like to be put on this list of "silent saints", please let Pastor Mike know and provide him with your contact information (phone and email address). Even if you are on this list, you are under no obligation to give when called upon. And this gift will be given to the congregation member as anonymous help.

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## QUARTERLY COMMITTEES

Some changes have been made to how the monthly committees work. The changes are that there will be at least 4-6 Chairpersons for a 3 month time frame.

This then changes the amount of helpers there are in that 3 month period. Putting the committees together for the 3 months allows for more people to help with serving and/or providing bars, etc.

Salads will no longer be solicited but will be ordered at the same time the sandwiches or hot dish is ordered. The family will be aware of this at the funeral home visitation. If they are requesting bars and cookies with a drink, the church committees will provide.

Each Sunday the committee will be responsible for putting fresh flowers such as a bouquet or plant on the altar. Bingo will also still be played at the Care Center at 2:30 p.m. on the last Friday of each month. In addition, the kitchen needs to be cleaned at the end of the month.

It has been suggested that the co-chairpersons get together before the new quarter starts so that various items can be discussed such as the flowers on the altar, BINGO, etc.

These changes have been thought about with the UMW Executive Committee for some time and on July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2015 they were brought up at the Administrative Board meeting and approved.

### January, February and March

January co-chairpersons: Bonnie and Bud Young, Kelly and Kent Kirstein

February co-chairpersons: Janice Murphy, Kathy and Adam Walton

March co-chairpersons: Judy Kirstein, NEED someone to assist

#### Additional Committee persons:

Sally and George Boyington	Casey and Cory Howell	Deb and Gary Keller
June and Allyn Christensen	Kim and Tim Marker	Jamie and Chance Wahl
Bill Drury	Nancy and Paul Ahlstrom	Lonny Barnes
Cathy and Jeff Farwell	Kristine and Robert Ahrens	Abby and Dean Kirstein
Deb and Mike Geary	Deanna and Kevin Lehman	Holly and Steve Martin
El Marie and Manie Nel	Dawn and Troy Schultz	Anna and Tyler Warnke
Jill and Jeremy Campbell	Beth Clutter	Micki and Chad Disney
Rosa and Jorge Martinez	Barb Nail	Tina and Doug Ziemann
Nora and Brandon Thompson	Todd Sorensen	Joella Steffenson
Darlene Borel	Allison and Austin Warnke	Jaqueline and Dustin Rief

For those on the committee and received letters, there has been some changes noted above with the co-chairperson list. Please note these changes. Still in need of a March co-chairperson, if someone wants to come forward and be a co-chairperson, please let Jodi in the office know 532-2845.

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#### Finance Committee - December Report

The Finance Committee has met in both November and December to develop a budget for 2016. The major issues the committee is facing is to find a solution to deal with both the funding for our general budget and also the three major renovation projects identified as important in keeping our infrastructure up to date and functional. The projects are: The replacement of the remainder of the church windows, the lighting, sound, and the audio/visual improvements for the sanctuary, and a kitchen update to make it more efficient.

Each area has need for significant improvements to be functional and add to our mission of serving God as a Congregation.

The Finance Committee is working with the Trustees, the Worship Committee and the UMW to coordinate the financial amounts needed to complete the major projects. We have determined this will need to be done over a 3-4 year time period.

Please contact any member of one of these committees if you have any questions, concerning any of these areas of improvements.

Respectfully,

Dennis Bowman, Finance Committee Chairperson

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Church Council Members,

Looking forward to working with all the Team Chairperson's as we begin our new year doing God's work for the Church. Wishing each of you a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Carol Townsend - Church Council Chair

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### **Trustees Hard at Work**

The Trustees are in charge of all of the building needs for both the Church and the parsonage. They have been hard at work this year and they wanted to say, "**Thank you!**" for the regular tithe donations that you make that enable them to maintain the Church property. And they want to say another big "**Thank you!**" to those who helped complete many of these tasks. The Trustees maintain a prioritized "To-Do-List." It is prioritized by how urgent a repair is needed and when funds might be available. So if you know of something that needs repaired, please see Ken Bernhardt or Pastor Mike to have the item added to the list. Here is a short list of a few of the items the Trustees have been able to fix and/or purchase in 2015:

- ~ \*In the process of replacing old expensive copier machines with much lower cost contract.
- ~ \*In the process of installing wireless internet throughout the Church.
- ~ \*In the process of installing new security system.
- ~ \*Obtained regular pest control for both the Church and parsonage.
- ~ Paid off the loan for the new roof.
- ~ Continued replacing windows on the church to save energy costs.
- ~ Repaired and resurfaced the front steps.
- ~ Replace leaking faucets in upstairs restrooms and replaced toilet seat.
- ~ Winterized broken windows in anticipation of future replacement.
- ~ Replaced lights that were out in the sanctuary with more efficient LED lights.
- ~ Replaced all of the fire extinguishers.
- ~ Cleaned out closets, Bell Tower, and removed old furniture from the parsonage.
- ~ Fixed the elevator (multiple times).
- ~ Changed phone and internet plan to save the church over \$400 per year.
- ~ Installed new phones in both offices.
- ~ Purchased new PC's for the Pastor and Secretary.
- ~ Had MidAmerican do an energy audit in both the Church and the parsonage and will be reviewing the recommendations to save energy costs.
- ~ Fixed pilot light on stove in kitchen.
- ~ Adjusted A/C airflow to make it more efficient.
- ~ Replaced door sweeps and weather stripping on outside entrances.
- ~ Fixed coat rack in classroom.
- ~ Will be installing seven-day programmable thermostats throughout the Church to save energy costs.
- ~ Had the grand piano tuned.
- ~ Replaced smoke alarm in Church.
- ~ Repaired water softener in parsonage.
- ~ Replaced CO2 and smoke alarms in parsonage.
- ~ Purchased new washing machine for parsonage.
- ~ Installed fence at Parsonage, painted some rooms, and cleaned the carpets.
- ~ Purchased a new microwave oven for the parsonage.
- ~ Plus many, many, many additional tasks!

\*The first four items were accomplished without increasing monthly costs by obtaining a much reduced copier contract.

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**End of year reports**---Treasurers' of the various committees please bring all your books to the church office to be audited. Would be great to have these by Wednesday, January 20th. Thank you!



# January Birthdays and *Anniversaries*

- 3 - Marlene Brown
- 5 - Jim Morford
- 7 - Alice Kay
- 8 - Alexandria Hackley, Teryl Marker
- 10 - Gavin Disney, Indy Johnson, *Linda and Scott McCormick*
- 11 - Luke Maxheimer
- 12 - Miriam Jensen
- 13 - Brenna Harklau, Hannah Leist
- 14 - Chad Disney
- 15 - Laura Beenken, Pam Smith
- 16 - Jenna Clutter
- 17 - Deb Geary, Sandra Larick, Jean Snively
- 18 - Katy Warnke, Dan Carey
- 26 - Manie Nel Sr.
- 27- Sara Abbas
- 28 - Kasey Adams, Raven Kinnetz
- 29 - Craig Warnke
- 30 - Darren Johnson
- 31 - Mark Bernhardt, Taylor Beenken

**Happy Birthday and *Happy Anniversary* to all!**

Note: If your birthday or *anniversary* is not listed, or we have the date wrong, please contact the church secretary.

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**Winter weather Church closings:** If we have winter weather on a weekday that requires us to close the Church and cancel all activities, please always remember, "*If the school district is closed then we are closed.*" So if the school district closed for weather issues, then ALL activities and committee meetings at the Church will be canceled. As for the possibility of canceling worship service on Sunday a.m., closings will be announced in two places. The first is on KJYL Christian Radio's website at [www.KJYL.org](http://www.KJYL.org). The second is that you can listen to KQWC - Webster City (please note that they only accept cancellation phone calls on Sunday mornings after 9:00 a.m.. So the announcement will be a little later in the morning.

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