



Singing Tower



***The Newsletter of the West Branch
United Methodist Church***



**WORSHIP
OPPORTUNITIES**

**SACRIFICIAL
SERVICE**

GIVING

**TRANSFORMING
AND
NURTURING**

Beloved,

What, exactly, should I say to you? When I arrived in West Branch I was: single, had one cat, and still possessed a complete set of ten fingers. I was also darn near emotional burn out, a little overwhelmed, and trying very hard to not let any of that show. Now, here we are, 7 1/2 years later. I'm leaving West Branch with (in no particular order): two cats (although not the same), one Great Dane, one husband, two toddlers, and one less thumb nail. I'm leaving here restored, confident, more competent than I started, a little bit sad...and not trying to hide it at all. Being in ministry with you all has changed me in about as many ways a person can be changed.

My move out day has been set by the Annual Conference as June 6th. I will still be serving you at Annual Conference, but I will no longer be your pastor. Pastor Connie is coming, and it will all be good. I will no longer be your pastor but you will always be a part of my family. You were there when I fell in love and you were there when I became a mom. You were there while I navigated what it meant to be a pastor AND a wife AND a mom. To say that you have been formational in my life would be an understatement.

I have always seen such beauty in this community. You have the capacity to worship together with people you may not always see eye to eye with. You have the energy to dramatically change the life-situations for those hard pressed around you. You have the imagination to dream of the new thing God may want to do through you, and the intelligence to execute it. You have the heart for the whole community of West Branch. You have more resources and more gifts in your midst than you realize...claim them boldly and be creative! Be radically hospitable to one another and to those you haven't met yet. I cannot wait for Pastor Connie to see your best, most loving self.

I will not be your pastor anymore, but I will be praying for you. I will be listening for stories of the wonderful ministry I know you will do. We will be looking for places like here to help lead our denomination through this time, and I know you will have good things to share with us all.

For now, God's blessing be upon you all,

Alexis

JUNE SCRIPTURES

June 3

One Service, 9:30 am

*“Our Competence
is From God”*

*Reverend Alexis’
last Sunday as
our Preacher
Confirmation
Communion*

2 Corinthians 3:1-6

June 10

*Ruth Blayer
will Preach
“Fixed On”*

2 Corinthians 4:5-5:1
1 Samuel 8:4-11, 16-20

Psalm 138
Mark 3:20-35

June 17

*Reverend Ryan Russell,
(from First UMC
in Iowa City).
will Preach*

June 24

*Reverend Ryan Russell,
(from First UMC
in Iowa City),
will Preach*

Worship Opportunities

*Vacation Bible School will be
held at the Springdale UMC.
Details were not available
at the time of this printing.*

WORSHIP ON-SITE

9:00 am Sunday worship

Blended worship featuring liturgy, hymns,
praise music, a choir, and a message.
Communion is offered once a month.

10:30 AM SUNDAY REFUGE

Flexible worship style primarily featuring acoustic
praise music with our Refuge Band. There is usually
some kind of experience tied into a message that is
more conversational in nature.

WORSHIP OFF-SITE

You Tube Search for our channel WBUMC Iowa,
or follow the link from our website or Facebook
page. Services are usually posted by Thursday of
that week.

WORSHIP AT CRESTVIEW

2 pm, June 7, 2018

All welcome to this 30 minute worship time.

The next anticipated date is July 5, 2018

Note: a local church provides a worship experience
@ Crestview each Thursday @ 2 pm.
(FYI: Ruth Blayer will lead Worship @ Crestview
on June 14, 2018 representing the WB Friends
Church.

SPECIAL CELEBRATIONS June 1st and June 3rd

Because of the transition, we have moved Confirmation to this spring. Well! We have a huge class so we are going to confirm students at two different worship services, at one service (by their request!)

Friday, June 1st ~ 6:30 pm. We are having a send-off party for Rev. Alexis and family. Pulled pork will be provided. Please bring your own table service and a dish to share.

Sunday June 3rd ~ 9:30 am. This will be Rev. Alexis' last Sunday preaching. We will have baptisms and confirmation. The choir and Refuge team will help lead worship. The service will be followed with cake!



TO OUR CONFIRMATION STUDENTS!

*Will Bridges, Matt Colbert, Wyatt Fiderlein, Ava Finely,
Kyle Harold, Joe Heithoff, Marissa Herring, Gavin Hills,
Dalton Kaalberg, Jackson Kaalberg, Wes Neuberger,
Abbie Oaks, Kody Reginetter, Gabby Rushton, Ben Shortt,
Emmerson Thomas, Anna Waterman*

We are reviewing our Care Ministries activities of the past several years- and looking towards future efforts. As meetings are hard to schedule...Ruth Blayer will be asking to meet with varied persons to review and vision future efforts. If you have input (something that worked well, an idea, or to volunteer) please contact her. Thank You!

Ruth Blayer: pstrblayer@msn.com; 319-530-6648



A Word from the Wedding Coordinator, Nancy Lathrop

Please join me in congratulating Abigail Maske and Alex Hayes who were joined in marriage on May 12 in our sanctuary. Stephen Scheperle of Grace Community Church in North Liberty conducted the ceremony. Abi is the daughter of Lawrence and Joan Maske of West Branch and Alex, the son of Christopher and Kimberly Hayes of Iowa City. Many friends and relatives joined Abi and Alex in celebrating their joyous occasion. It was a personal pleasure to see that our elevator enabled attendance by a number of folks who may not have otherwise been able to attend.

My thanks to Ben Colbert who assisted me as “sound man.” Ben provided seamless transitions for recorded music during the ceremony.

May God bless Alex and Abi's marriage.

JUNE LEADERS / VOLUNTEERS

Worship Leaders

3rd: Ruth Blayer
10th: Carolyn Harold
17th: Ruth Blayer
24th: Julie Bridges

Fellowship

3rd: Costco Cake ~~~
Confirmation
10th:
17th: Homemaker's Class
24th: Birthday's Celebration

Check the weekly bulletin for more leaders and volunteers.

This year's statistics:			Last year's statistics for the same weeks:		
Week	Attendance	Giving	Week	Attendance	Giving
4/29/18	88	\$2807	4/03/17	101	\$4306
5/06/18	103	\$3323	5/07/17	103	\$5124
5/13/18	114	\$3099	5/14/17	107	\$3168
5/20/18	179	\$2462	5/21/17	99	\$2954
YTD AVG	106	\$3472	YTD AVG	88	\$3552

Prayer Shawl or Prayer Quilt

You are welcome to take a shawl or quilt for someone you know who needs a hug and prayer, whether for an illness, grief or life crisis, or whatever you feel the need. If you take one, please give us the recipient's Name/Date by recording in the Prayer Quilt/Shawl Journal. We hope to track to whom and where they go. Just let the recipient know that the shawl or quilt represents our love and care. We hope to enfold them with God's love and our prayers. There is no cost. Please give them the Note Card with the gift.

Prayers & Squares

**This small group meets regularly the fourth Tuesday
of each month at 1:30 pm
in the WBUMC Fellowship Hall. Please call Gloria Scharnweber at
643-2872 for more information regarding Prayers & Squares.**



Prayer Shawl Ministry: If you would like more information about our Prayer Shawl Ministry or care to join this informal small group contact Jan Mather at 319-643-5581, or by email at jm799@aol.com. Printed information about our Ministry and instructions is available in our WBUMC library or by contacting Lynn in the office.

ATTN: Vacation Bible School will be held at Springdale UMC. The details weren't available at the time of this printing. Stay tuned. Thank you kindly!

United Methodist Women

Wednesday, August 15th will be the next
UMW Executive Committee Meeting at 7:00 pm

The Mental Health Support Group

The next meeting will be *September 12, 2018*
at 7:00 pm at WBUMC

This information and support group is open
to the entire community.

Contact Lisa Kofoed (facilitator, 319-936-2051) for additional information.

*Enjoy reading? Open to connecting with others?
Ready for a unique way of faith challenge?*

Small groups are very Methodist and an excellent way to have fellowship and receive support as well as faith growth.

A new short term **small group** will be forming around reading **An Extra Mile: A Story of Embracing God's Call** by Sharon Garlough Brown (InterVarsity Press). The author, Sharon Garlough Brown, is herself a Pastor, as well as a Spiritual Director, so these stories have the ease of fiction reading but are very informative and faith inspiring. The book includes meditations and scriptures the group will use.

An Extra Mile

Wednesday evenings (6:30- 8 pm)

July 11-August 15, 2018

Small Group Room (UL 25) WBUMC

All invited!

Contact: Ruth Blayer, 530-6648; Martha Luke, 643-5629;
Lynn Freed 800-3654; WBUMC 643-5489

This is the 4th (and final) book in the Christian “**Sensible Shoes**” series following the story and spiritual journey of four women. (The earlier books are: Sensible Shoes: A Story About the Spiritual Journey & Two Steps Forward: A Story of Persevering in Hope and Barefoot: A Story of Surrendering to God) Reading the earlier books is not required. Purchase your own book (Amazon or other bookstores.)

An Extra Mile: A Story of Embracing God's Call includes the women of “SENSIBLE SHOES” navigating both deep joy and devastating loss. Can they find equilibrium in the midst of all that has changed?

Mary Martha Fellowship

will meet again on September 13th at 1:30 pm.

All are welcome.

C.U.P.S.

Connecting & Coffee
Understanding faith &
WBUMC news
Prayer
Sharing Fellowship

Tuesdays, 9:30-11:00 am, Room UL25
June 5, 12, 19, & 26, 2018

All welcome, come when you can.
*We intentionally pray for the
prayer list, and others.*

We also share a time when the Bible is read and discussion can be shared.
Know that you are welcome to add to the discussion, or just take it in quietly.

“Coffee & Devotions” at Crestview

11 am, Monday, June 4, 2018

The next anticipated date will be @ 11 am on July 2, 2018

Fellowship time beginning @ 10:00 am each Sunday.

Those attending either the 9:00 am worship or the 10:30 am worship can enjoy fellowship and refreshments together. NOTE: the **10:30 am** fellowship time on **June 3** following the one 9:30 am Worship service.

*“Together we serve, united by love,
inviting God’s world to the glorious feast.*

*We work and we pray through sorrow and joy, extending your love to the
last and the least.”* The Faith We Sing (TFWS) # 2175

ELEVATOR PROJECT UPDATE

- Total Pledged \$293,511
- Total Project Cost: \$625,000
- Loan Balance: \$130,185

We are pleased to announce that West Branch United Methodist Church has been established as a charitable organization eligible to receive Thrivent Choice Dollars.. If you have Choice Dollars available to direct, please consider directing to WBUMC. We plan to use Thrivent Choice grant funding to help with our Accessibility Project.



Prayer Chain

Thank you to those who have kept the church informed of prayer concerns and provided updates and kept us aware of hospitalizations. Please know

we would rather have three calls from family/caring friends than miss a need. Please contact the church office with prayer requests or to join the prayer chain. 643-5489 or youbelong@westbranchumc.org

Jim Stuart
Kent Campbell, husband of Dale Thomas' sister Sue Ellen of Springville, MO.
He fell and broke his arm and leg on April 24th. He is also dealing with metastasized cancer.
Peg Anderson
Our new Pastor, Church family, and unity.
Joan Lewis
Volunteers: school, community, and church.
Camie Kelley
Amanda Polson-Tinebra, Lynn and Shirley Patrick's granddaughter
To the Crestview residents including:
Joan Jamison
Darlene Lenz
Mary Phelps
Audrey Rex
Byrdetta Wehrman
Those struggling with mental health.
Jim Blayer
Christi Musgrave, battling cancer, cousin of Katie Herring.
Madi Nargang, niece of Phil and Amanda Rushton; cousin of Gabby.
John Wilcox.
Larry Meyer, Lynn Patrick's brother-in-law.
Kathy Fountain, a friend of Dale and Carol Thomas.

Jim Smith, Deb Fiderlein's dad.
Dakota, a friend/student of Andy Corr.
Karen Fieseler.
Barb Dinnen, Connie Laughlin's cousin.
Rusty, Kathy Harmon's cousin's son.
Carsten, son of Paul and Jessica, friends of Rob and Jenni Herring.
Sebastian, son of a co-worker of Andy Corr.
Prayers for the safety of service men and women, and their families. Including:
Charles Linnell, Navy Seal, cousin of Katie Herring
Brecken Peden, Navy Seal, friend of Katie Herring
Cooper Shimkus, Marine, grandson of Dale & Carol Thomas
Nicki Hesseltine, friend of Tracy Schutte.
Brady Verlo.
Erica Hoover, cousin of Tami Streinz.
Nick Holbrook, friend of Matt & Kris Brack.
Will, Gina Cousin's brother.
Family members going through transition.
Those who are caregivers.
Those walking the road of recovery.
Missionaries in the United States and around the world.
For all those caught in the middle of the conflicts around the world.
Our Country and our leaders.

Dear Friend,

How are you? I just had to send a note to tell you how much I love you and care about you.

I saw you yesterday as you were walking with your friends. I waited all day hoping you would want to talk with me also. As evening drew near, I gave you a sunset to close your day and a cool breeze to rest you ~ and I waited. You never came. Yes, it did hurt me, but I still love you because I am your friend. I saw you fall asleep last night, and longed to touch your brow so I spilled moonlight upon your pillow and face. Again I waited, wanting to rush down so we could talk. I have so many gifts for you! You awakened late and rushed off to work. My tears were in the rain.

Today you looked so sad ~ so all alone ~ It makes my heartache because I understand, My friends let me down and hurt me so many times too. But, I still love you.

Oh! If you would only listen to me, I LOVE YOU! I try to tell you in the blue sky and in the quiet, green grass. I whisper it in the leaves on the trees and breathe it in the colors of the flowers. I shout it to you in the mountain streams and give the birds love songs to sing. I clothe you with warm sunshine and perfume the air with nature scents. My love for you is deeper than the oceans, and bigger than the biggest want or need in your heart. Oh! If you only knew how much I want to help you. I want you to meet my Father. He wants to help you too. My Father is that way, you know.

Just call me ~ ask me ~ talk with me. Oh! Please, please don't forget me. I have so much to share with you.

Okay, I won't hassle you any further. You are free to choose me. It is your decision. I have chosen you and, because of this, I will wait ~ because I LOVE YOU!

*Your Friend,
Jesus*

June Birthday's



- 2 Gabby Rushton
- 2 Emma Soukup
- 3 Tracy Schutte
- 4 Landen Connell
- 6 Becky Knoche
- 6 Alden Miller
- 7 Kathy Prybil
- 8 Dave Bridges
- 8 Lori Waters
- 8 Kalyn Wheatley
- 11 Janis Crew
- 12 Ellen Verlo
- 12 Shirley Patrick
- 13 Tyler Laughlin
- 14 Judy Pine
- 14 Kelsey Daedlow
- 15 Dave Warden
- 15 Emily Harold
- 17 Julie Kelly
- 20 Tyler Oswald
- 20 Rachel Oswald
- 21 Jim Scott
- 21 Amanda Rushton
- 22 Allie Waterman
- 22 Kathy Woody
- 22 Landon Dauber
- 24 Eric Ewald
- 26 Chris Thomas
- 26 Pam Hinkhouse
- 27 Tyler Warden
- 27 Lydia Hahn
- 29 Lucine Morrison
- 30 Jeff Lathrop

Your Church Staff & Contact #'s

Office #: 643-5489

Pastor: Reverend Alexis Johnson 430-0700

Care Ministries Pastor: Ruth Blayer 530-6648

Office Admin/Ministry Assistant: Lynn Freed 800-3654

Music Director: Dale Thomas

Refuge Musician Leader: Ben Colbert

Pianist: Maggie Mowery

Custodian Becky Knoche

youbelong@westbranchUMC.org

revalexis@westbranchumc.org

WestBranchUMC.org

June 3

ONE SERVICE 9:30 am
9:30 am

Reverend Alexis' last Service
"Our Competence is From God"
Confirmation
Communion
Acts 10:44-48
2 Corinthians 3:1-6

June 10

Ruth Blayer
Preaching
"Fixed On"
2 Corinthians 4:5-5:1

June 17

Reverend Ryan Russell
from First UMC,
Iowa City

June 24

Reverend Ryan Russell
from First UMC,
Iowa City

Sorry if we don't have your birthday on our list; please contact the office so we can add it on for next year!