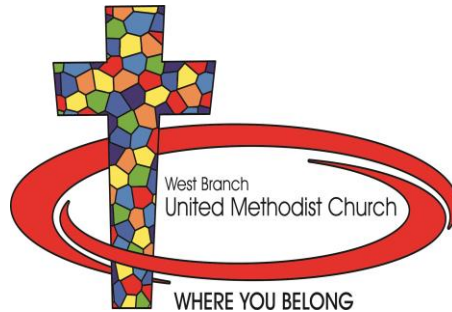


JULY 2019



Singing Tower

The Newsletter of the West Branch
United Methodist Church



"Where You Belong"

- ❖ PRAYERS
- ❖ GIFTS
- ❖ PRESENCE
- ❖ SERVICE
- ❖ WITNESS

Cherish the Moments

Selma UMC celebrated their 150th Anniversary as a church on June 2. All three churches I served 1998-2005 worshipped together that day: Selma, Douds and Lebanon. Former pastors were invited to come back and I am thankful our DS encouraged me to go. I am thankful for Pastor Lynn Patrick preaching for me that Sunday and celebrating communion here with you! My daughter, Becca and her children, Jada & Willie went along to see where their mom lived during high school. It was a blessing to see many people from the three churches and to worship together, and to hear a great sermon by the D.S. of the Southeast District, Rev. Dr. Lillian Gallo Seagren. It was sad in one way that some had died and a few had Alzheimers and were in care centers and couldn't come. But I saw and visited with a young woman I had baptized as a baby 20 years ago, and a couple I officiated their wedding 18 years ago! Seems like yesterday. Time goes fast... cherish the moments today.

This got me to thinking...West Branch UMC has a special celebration coming up, don't we? I'm not sure if the official beginning date is the year the first church was built or dedicated, or the new building on this location. We will have to check this out so we don't miss an important anniversary!

June 7-11 was Iowa Annual Conference. Thank you to Ruth Blayer for preaching for me June 9! Thank you for your prayers for our retired pastors: Bob Cummings and Lynn Patrick; our lay member, Barb Wilcox and me. Rosamond Cummings and Shirley Patrick were there every day also, in the visitors section. It was a good conference and I was blessed by Bishop Laurie Haller's gracious and loving leadership, spiritually in worship and during the business parts of our time together. She preaches from the heart and shares her love for God and for each and every single one of us! I thank God she is our Bishop. The young people called Diakanos serve us and help us every day and they presented a great skit and tithed 10% of the offering given to them to Iowa Camping Programs.

It was sad to see the vote to close Pictured Rocks UM Camp near Monticello. I had just been there for a retreat for continuing education a few days before that, on June 4-5! Now we only have Wesley Woods at Indianola and Okoboji UM Camp in northeast Iowa. Pictured Rocks is open the rest of the summer for camps as planned. Pray for Greg and his wife and two sons as they look for another job and for all the workers and camp counselors at Pictured Rocks as they go through this transition.

Thank you to Pastor Lynn Patrick for planning the services June 16 when his granddaughter shared the miracles she has experienced in her life and June 23 when he preached. I appreciate your dedication and commitment! Thank you to Ruth Blayer for providing pastoral care when I was at conference and on vacation!

When I was on vacation our family had some good times together, one day all my children and grandchildren (and 2 great-grandchildren- *by marriage*) were together. ☺ We celebrated Rachelle's birthday as she and her husband, Joe, were here from Arizona! I was able to attend church with my parents on Father's Day, and with my brother and his wife the next Sunday, so that was special to me. Between that I was also blessed to go to Wisconsin to visit a dear friend. Lori and I went to kindergarten together and she and her husband, Denny, live on an acreage with 4 horses, so I enjoyed that! The

challenging part was that Lori has Alzheimer's. I wanted to visit her while she still remembers me. Our families lived near each other in Mason City and we became very close. Her mom, Irma, is the one who witnessed to my mom about Jesus and that's how my mom and our family became Christians! Wayne and Irma and their family and our family have been close throughout the years because of that special bond. I remember going to Bible school at their church and Lori going to Bible school at our church after we moved to the farm. Fortunately, sometimes Lori could remember the good old days and we had a few good visits and laughs about those memories!! Again I am reminded to cherish the moments we have.

The song Gloria Gather wrote, "*We Have This Moment Today*" keeps going through my mind, about making memories of what was today...The chorus: "We have this moment to hold in our hands, and to touch as it slips through our fingers like sand. Yesterday's gone, and tomorrow may never come, but we have this moment today."

A Scripture comes to mind, that was written in the cover of my Bible by an evangelist who spoke to us at church camp: "*And now, just as you trusted Christ Jesus as your Lord, you must continue to follow him. Let your roots grow down into him, and let your lives be built on him. Then your faith will grow strong in the truth you were taught, and you will overflow with thankfulness.*" Colossians 2:6-7

So I encourage you to keep growing in your faith this summer, wherever you are. Keep reading and studying God's Word, go to church and Bible studies, and grow your roots deep in Christ. Cherish the moments!!

In Christ's Love, Pastor Connie

~THANK YOU A special Thank You to Pastor Connie who graciously led the June 3 "Coffee & Devotions" time at Crestview when Ruth needed to be elsewhere. Also, Pastor Connie brought the Message and shared Holy Communion at the June 9 Worship time at Crestview. Team work is wonderful!

~Help Needed

We are in need of a Praise Band Director for our Contemporary Worship service at 10:30 a.m. Sunday mornings. Short practice and set up at 10:00 a.m. with another practice time to be determined. This person would be responsible to working with the pastor and youth leader, choosing the songs, seeking volunteers to sing and play, putting the words of the songs and the order of worship on power point, leading the group and worship service, practicing with the volunteer singers/musicians. On months that have 5 Sundays we have a blended worship service this person would help plan.

Lay Member's Report on 2019 Annual Conference

By Barb Wilcox

This year's Annual Conference of the Iowa United Methodist Church took place, as usual, in Des Moines. Almost

1,000 ordained and lay members of our church were there.

Thank you, congregation, for entrusting to me the responsibility of representing you. It is an inspiring and humbling experience.

The **Good News** is that our Bishop Laurie Haller is a truly powerful vessel of the Holy Spirit. Her leadership is balanced and consistently thoughtful, while also being accepting of the human passions and feelings that broke forth occasionally. Her sermons during that event, along with everything I have read that she has posted on the IAUMC.org website, are based upon her love of God and her faith in the power and grace of Jesus to lead us through the tough times we are now experiencing.

This year's theme was Creating Difference Makers in Ministry with the Poor. Our congregation's offering -- 4 \$25 gift cards, were blessed and returned to us so that we might share them when the need presents itself. Thank you to those who responded to that opportunity so that our church can minister to people in need here in West Branch.

Bishop Laurie repeated this message several times this year, "Remember, you are poor. You do not have the resources to save yourself, fix your problems or change the world. Only God does. But you can change the three feet around you. And the United Methodist Church can change the world with the incredible resources that we have in every part of our globe." Please, I urge you, go online to iaumc.org, and click around until you find our Bishop speaking in one of the many videos available on the page. She inspires me each time I hear her speak. My second-hand report does not do her justice. If all our apportionments did was pay her salary, it would be money well spent!

Speaking of money, here are some highlights from our 2019 conference.

1. We decided to sell Pictured Rocks Camp. The camp will continue operating for this summer, and then be sold to Camp Courageous, which is located nearby. Camp attendance has been low for a while, and we, the delegates, voted, reluctantly, to ok the Board of Camps decision to sell it. Proceeds of the sale will stay within the Iowa United Methodist Camping Program. I have the information sheet that explains this decision, if anyone is interested in reading it.

2. The Rainbow Covenant missions program which we have participated in for more than thirty years has evolved into

In Mission Together. The traditional approach to mission has often been needs-based, short-term relief. The new vision emphasizes partnership, recognizes that relationships are more lasting than projects, and that long-term development builds self-sufficiency, instead of dependence. Advance Specials will continue to need our financial support. But we are invited to develop new ideas locally. Please share any ideas you may have with our Mission committee, of which I am a member!

3. A Resolution **Disapproving the Traditional Plan** passed by the General Conference in St. Louis in February was passed by the delegates at this year's Iowa Annual Conference. It was passed by a majority of the delegates, but has no power to change what happened at the General Conference. The 2020 General Conference, to take place in Minneapolis, MN in May, will no doubt revisit the same issues. Stay tuned for an update next year!

4. We closed 8 United Methodist churches in Iowa this year. Our membership, attendance and financial support are all on a downward slide. But it is not just the United Methodist Church that is declining. In the US and around the globe, churches are experiencing a definite contraction. In addition to this general cultural decline, the United Methodist Church's recent internal conflict over sexuality issues has resulted in a dramatic decline in financial support by its own member churches. This is upsetting news. But I did not see fear or despair in the faces around me in the convention center. I saw leaders reporting the facts and cutting budgets. Mission and ministry programs were cut drastically and jobs have been eliminated. While we will still have 8 district superintendents, they will be sharing the 4 remaining administrative aides.

How, then, can I end this report by mentioning Joy and HOPE?

Because, as Christians, Hope and Joy are not based upon our financial status. For us, Hope comes from Jesus' resurrection, and Joy comes from being a child of the Everlasting God. Therefore, we will continue our testimony within our community here in West Branch, Iowa. As members of God's family we invite others to join us as we do what we can, and have mercy on each other. 😊

ACCESSIBILITY PROJECT UPDATE

- Total Pledged \$293,511
- Total Project Cost: \$625,000
- Loan Balance: \$106,274.70

Upward and Onward UPDATES

Let us ALL be inspired and moved to step forward to help with the drive to get the Accessibility Project loan paid off (!) and move **Upward and Onward**. Your participation and help are vital! Your past and FUTURE gifts make a difference!

Carol Jones says,

“When I was making a pledge toward the elevator, I wasn’t expecting to ever use it. After having a knee replacement, I so appreciate having the availability and use of the elevator! “

She says, “Thank You!”

Peg Anderson has spoken often of how the improvements and the elevator make it possible for her to attend church as well as go downstairs to enjoy the fellowship time with others. This would not be an option- and thus a huge loss to her- without the elevator. She says, “Thank You!”

Jim Blayer honestly never expected to need an elevator so much while only in his 60s. His spinal stenosis makes walking and stairs difficult. He says, “Thank You!”

A fundraiser being planned is a vendor site at the Saturday **August 3, 2019**.

Hoover Days. Stop by and support this effort! Help is needed....Consider lending the gift of your time to help with this: Contact: Ruth Blayer

Much to Celebrate:

As a 5th Sunday, on **June 30, 2019** we had one **9:30 am Worship service** during which **new members joined** and we **honored those 80 years of age and beyond**. The **potluck following** was a great time for continued community and fellowship. (We anticipate a picture ready for the August Newsletter.)

Welcome to new members. **Congratulations** to those we honored. **Thank you** to those who helped.

The next 5th Sunday is September 29, 2019. May we again use it to God’s glory and the benefit of WBUMC.

You're Invited to MISSION U 2019

An Adventure in LEARNING, LOVE, LAUGHTER, & LONG-RANGE EFFECTS!

Join us this summer or fall for an amazing experience in LEARNING! The 2019 Spiritual Growth study, entitled *Practicing Resurrection: The Gospel of Mark and Radical Discipleship*, is wonderfully enlightening and engaging. Rev. Lanette Plambeck, will lead us in new learning, along with helping us experience joy and refreshment.

For more LEARNING, Mission u participants have two choices. The new 2019 study celebrates our UMW Anniversary: *Women United for Change: 150 Years in Mission*. You'll be amazed to learn how fast the organizations took off after discovering the plight of women in other parts of the world and then realizing there was much to be done at home, as well. The continuing "issue study" is entitled *What About Our Money? A Faith Perspective*. Rev. Kathryn Yarnell, director of our Iowa United Methodist Foundation, will lead us in considering how we as Christians can address the widening gap between the "haves" and "have-nots" in our country and around the world.

While the primary purpose of Mission u is Learning, LAUGHTER and LOVE will abound! Use this as a personal retreat, sharing good times with your UMW sisters. Music, skits, and worship are an important part of our experience, offering a community of love and support.

Of course, the real purpose of Mission u is to have a LONG-RANGE EFFECT on our understanding of mission, our commitment to United Methodist Women, and our close relationship with other women who share passion and interests. We are United Methodist Women, Faith, Hope, Love in Action!!

Did you know that Youth and children are invited to be a part of Mission u? Trained leaders will offer the study of the Gospel of Mark with age appropriate materials. The emphasis will be LAUGHTER, LOVE, and LONG-RANGE EFFECTS with LEARNING happening along with the fun times. Please note that an adult needs to accompany each youth or child, staying with them at the hotel. Bring them along for a great shared experience!!

There are district scholarships available for 1st time attendees! And, clergy, remember that CEUs are available. We welcome your participation with us. See you there!

Barb Oakland
barb.oakland@gmail.com

This year's statistics:			Last year's statistics for the same weeks:		
Week	Attendance	Giving	Week	Attendance	Giving
6/2/19	71	\$4,020	6/3/18	163	\$4583
6/9/19	52	\$1824	6/10/18	51	\$1668
6/16/19	57	\$1842	6/17/18	86	\$3047
6/23/19	58	\$3578	6/24/18	98	\$2626
6/30/19	numbers were not ready by press time				
YTD AVG	81	\$3446	YTD AVG	104	\$3326

UMW News

Events locally and around Iowa:

July 10th @ 9am- Springdale UMW July brunch. RSVP to Jo Leighty (643-2453) or Amy Budreau (643-7273)

July 21st-23rd Mission U at Marshalltown

August 9th 9am-2:30pm East Central District Mission Study Day at Maquoketa UMC

August 26th 6:30pm West Branch UMW Executive Board meeting

Service Opportunity for various ages

Fun, outside and helping others! Join us!

In a busy summer we also remember ways to be of service to others and WBUMC. We need reliable volunteers to help with a site during **Hoover Days** on **Saturday August 3, 2019**. This could be a family team, adults or youth. This is a fundraiser to work toward paying off the Accessibility Project loan at West Branch UMC. Many have benefitted from the improvements at church which include the elevator.

Contact: Ruth Blayer or the office. *Thanks so much!*

Meet your new Office Administrator



Greetings! My name is Manda Frauenholz-Brown and I am a West Branch native. I grew up here in this Church (Rich & Barb's daughter) and graduated with the class of '98. So many great changes have happened with both of us since the last time I was in this building ☺ I have a 12 year old (Zeb) who is going into 7th grade here at WBMS, and also own a consignment shop a block away called "Izzys Treasures". I graduated from Simpson College with a BA in Religion/Music and while working full time as a Single mom earned my master's in Education from Kaplan University. Let's just say I'm great at multi-tasking and have a drive to get things done! I am super excited to serve you in the capacity of Office Administrator and look forward to working with every single one of you! Stop in sometime and say hi ☺

~Manda

Missions

Let's keep up our tradition for our July missions program! School Kit Items/Cash for Backpack Supplies & WB Student Assistance Fund

Our collection will be the same venue as last year, our goal remains: 100 school kits

BUT since the need is Greater, we have increased to \$600 cash for backpacks & Student Assistance Fund for West Branch Schools.

Goal Completion Date: July 28 with Dedication Aug 4.

New this year all School Kits will be going to Midwest Missions. **Please note minor changes.**

Midwest Mission School Kit Includes:

1 pair blunt scissors – Blunt tip only; no plastic scissors

3 notebooks – spiral or top bound pads--70+ sheets per notebook- No composition notebooks

1 Box 12 Colored Pencils (New for 2019)

1 hand held pencil sharpener – must be over 1 inch long

6 UNSHARPENED pencils

1 24-COUNT box of crayons- only 24-count boxes, please.

1- 2 gal Ziplock bag

We'll soon be seeing back to school sales so please keep this list with you and consider picking up some supplies to donate to this important cause. Cash donations are also welcome! Cartoon characters are acceptable, but no advertisements or church symbols please. Money given will be used to purchase filled backpacks for West Branch students' pre-K-8 and to assist middle & high school students.

Please designate your donation for "July Mission".

New Office Hours! (Summer hours)

Tuesday 8:30 am-3pm

Wednesday 8:30am-noon

Thursday 8:30am-noon

Friday 8:30am-noon

Please understand things come up, and I will need to be out of the office during those hours occasionally, but I will do my best to be here during those hours. You can always call me, or email me and I will do what I can remotely. ☺

K4C Leaders

If you were a teacher during the 2018-2019 school year or if you would like to volunteer to help out next year with K4C, I would like to invite you to a meeting to vision for 2019-2020 K4C. July 10th at 6:30pm please join us in the church library for a discussion on what worked this year and what we would like to try for next. Hope to see you all there with open minds and bright ideas! If you can't attend but have ideas, please email them to Katie Sabourin before the meeting. Thank you!!!

J8:11

We are in need of High School volunteers to help with Vacation Bible School! If you love to play games, dance, or help kids learn about how much God loves them, please consider volunteering! Let Katie Sabourin know if you're in.

Middle schoolers are invited to come to their own class led by Jessica Grace during Vacation Bible School. Please check out how to sign up in the VBS article.

Vacation Bible School

ROAR! Life is Wild – God is good!

August 4th-8th @Springdale UMC

Meals nightly

Aug 4th- 5:30pm-8:30pm

Aug 5th -8th - 5:45pm-8:30pm

Ages 2 years old – 8th grade

To Register call Amy Budreau @ 643-7273 ASAP so we can be sure to have adequate food and t-shirts!

Program will be held on Sunday August 11 at 10:30am (kids please arrive at 9:30am to warm up) @Springdale UMC

We still need volunteers! Please contact Katie Sabourin if you would like to help one evening, two or all. Thank you!!!



Worship Opportunities

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 Refuge

Flexible worship style primarily featuring acoustic praise music with our Refuge Band.

Communion is offered once a month.

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.

“Coffee & Devotions” at Crestview will be **11 am, July 1, 2019.**

All are welcome to join this 30 min. activity. On July 1 the **Special guest** will be **Emily Harold** sharing about her interests. Emily has kindly shared her flute playing at Crestview in the past. We look forward to learning more as she heads off to college and business. **Thanks Emily!**

The next anticipated date will be @ 11 am, on August 5, 2019.

Worship @ Crestview

2 pm, Wednesday July 3, 2019

(NOTE: due to the Holiday the July date has been changed)

All welcome to this 30 min worship time.

Note: a local church provides a worship experience @ Crestview each Thursday @ 2 pm.
(FYI: Ruth Blayer will lead Worship @ Crestview on **July 11, 2019** representing the WB Friends Church.)

Senior's Potluck

July 8th at Noon

All are welcome to participate on the 2nd Monday of each month in the WBUMC Fellowship Hall. Please bring food to share and your table service.

For more information call Janet Vikel 643-2485, or Judy Cottingham 643-5949

C.U.P.S. Group

(**C**onnecting & coffee, **U**nderstanding faith & WBUMC news,
Prayers and **S**haring fellowship)

Tuesdays, 9:30-11 am, UL 25 (July 2, 9, 16, 23, & 30th, 2019)

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

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

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

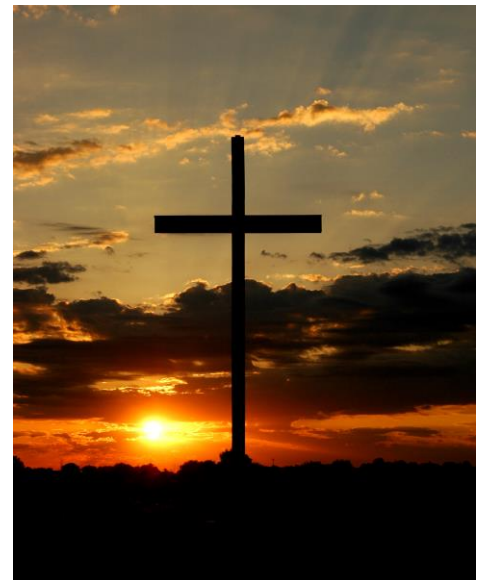


This small group meets regularly the fourth Tuesday of each month at 1:30 pm in the WBUMC Fellowship Hall.

Please call Gloria Scharnweber at 643-2872 for more information regarding Prayers & Squares.

When asked what I should put in this space, my son Zeb replied, "a picture of the cross". This is the picture he picked out for you all to enjoy ☺

(https://lesleyknox.files.wordpress.com/2011/03/cross_sunset1.jpg)





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

Peg Anderson is in Mercy Hospital
Andy Corr's mother Sylvia diagnosed with Lung Cancer
Kent Campbell- Dale's brother-in-law
Ed Spencer
Deb Woods
Barbara Howard, daughter-in-law of Vivian Howard.
Chris Thomas, son of Dale and Carol Thomas.
Gina Cousins
David Hosier, son-in-law of Colleen Vargason
Pauletta Broyles, Becky Knoche's mom.
Sharon Castelda, awaiting a lung transplant.
Ron Cousins sister.
Todd Stoolman
Nathan Trent, Gloria Scharnweber's nephew.
Bob Kline, husband of Janet (Jay) Kline
Ethel Oswald, parent of Don (Sara) Oswald.
Russell and Christine Smith, Bette Potter's son-in-law and
Daughter. Pray for family concerns.
Dana Kolpin, currently undergoing treatment.
Joyce Scharnweber, Mark Scharnweber's sister.
Camie Kelley
Amanda Polson-Tinebra, Lynn and Shirley Patrick's granddaughter
Prayers for the safety of service men and women and their families: Including, Brecken Peden, Navy Seal, friend of Katie Herring

To the Crestview residents including:
Ruby Franke, Joan Jamison, Audrey Kofoed, Darlene Lenz
Audrey Rex, Phyllis Sondergard, Byrdetta Wehrman
Christi Musgrave, battling cancer, cousin of Katie Herring
Madi Nargang, niece of Phil and Amanda Rushton;
cousin of Gabby
John Wilcox
Kathy Fountain, a friend of Dale and Carol Thomas
Jim Smith, Deb Fiderlein's dad
Dakota, a friend/student of Andy Corr
Barb Dinnen, Connie Laughlin's cousin
Rusty, Kathy Harmon's cousin's son
Brady Verlo
Erica Hoover, cousin of Tami Streinz
Nick Holbrook, friend of Matt & Kris Brack
For all those caught in the middle of the conflicts around the world.
Those grieving for loved ones.
Family members going through transition.
Those who are caregivers.
Our church family, and unity.
Those walking the road of recovery.
Volunteers: school, community, and church.
Those struggling with mental health.
Missionaries in the United States and around the world, including the Kies family, missionaries in Mutare, Zimbabwe.
Those affected by natural disasters.
Our country and our leaders.

July Birthday's



1Bonnie Hahn
2Julie Waterman
2Lisa Corr
4Maggie Johnson
4Ahlena Kelly
6Sherri Anderson
6Sara Oswald
8J.D. Sexton
10Katey Noble
10Linda Stoolman
10Lynn Patrick
10Anna Waterman
11Jim Searson
13Jason Kofoed
13Ed Spencer
13Mike Anderson
13Joan Gibson
14Don Oswald
17Missy Stoolman
18 Alex Miller
19Taylor Perks
24John Wilcox
25Gloria Scharnweber
25Alyssa Tisinger
25Jeanna Hills
28Barry Anderson
30Julie Radford
31Jennifer Wasion
31Glen Taylor
31Kevin Lathrop
31John Fiderlein
31Linda Albrecht

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

Your Church Staff & Contact #'s

Office #: 319-643-5489

Minister: Pastor Connie Markle
563-370-6724

Care Ministries Pastor: Ruth Blayer
319-530-6648

Office Administrator:
Manda Frauenholz-Brown
319-325-6486

Youth Ministry Coordinator:
Katie Sabourin
319-530-3963

Music Director: Dale Thomas

Pianist: Maggie Mowery

Custodian Becky Knoche

youbelong@westbranchumc.org

pastorconnie@westbranchumc.org

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