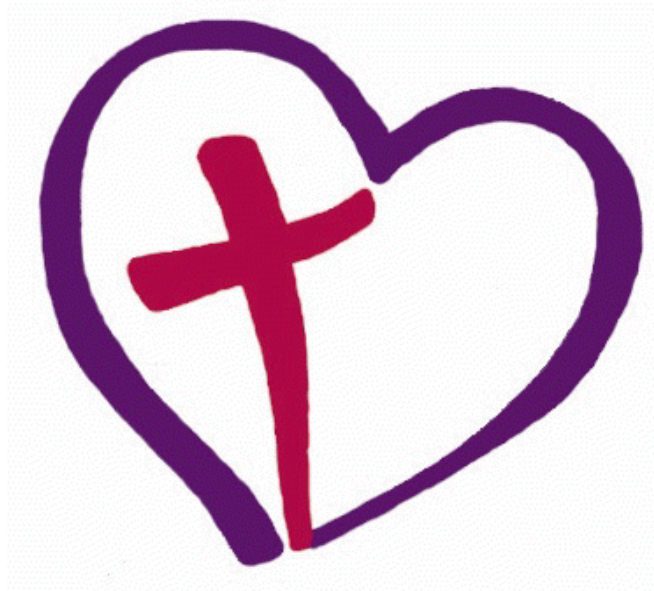




February 2025 Singing Tower

"Where You Belong"

Prayers Gifts Presence Service Witness



*The Newsletter
of the West Branch
United Methodist Church*

The Covenant

As we enter into February, we will begin a new series on Wesley Covenant Prayer. John Wesley adapted this prayer from the Puritan tradition that was so important to his parents, Samuel and Suzannah. It informed his theology and preaching. He expected the people called "Methodists" to pray this prayer at the beginning of each new year as a way of remembering and renewing their baptismal covenant. While we did not kick off 2025 with a Covenant service, we will spend 6 weeks walking through each line of the prayer and learning its significance in shaping our spiritual lives. ~ Pastor Beth



Lent Kicks Off March 5

During Lent, we will be walking through a series called “Let Love Rise.’ In this series we remember that Jesus called himself “The Bread of Life,” or that he said at the Last Supper, “This is my body broken for you.” We have come to know those elements as part of our ritual life of faith. Bread is part of church. But what is the connection between the physical recipe of bread and the spiritual preparation of Lent? How is God harvesting, mixing, and rising in our lives? How are we preparing and sharing those blessings of God? Join us during Lent as we discover these answers.

Lenten Study

I invite you to join me for a potluck Lenten book study each Thursday during Lent. We will be reading and discussing the book, ‘Cooked’ by Michael Pollen (available on Kindle and in paperback at all major booksellers). We will continue the discussion on the connection between food and community, sharing our favorite dishes each week. Begins March 13.



Warming the Unhoused

WBUMC will continue to collect items through the month of February. Let's fill the box in the back of the sanctuary labeled "Warming the Unhoused".

Needed Items: NEW warm socks and long underwear of adult sizes. GENTLY USED adult coveralls, gloves, scarves & hats. Canned goods, and reusable shopping bags.

The Missions Committee encourages you to give generously to those in need of warmth this winter.



Table of Grace

Look for details in the March newsletter on how you can help with the Table of Grace meal that WBUMC will provide on April 26th at the Wesley House in Iowa City. This meal is provided once a month to the unhoused and those with food insecurities in Iowa City. We will be asking for food donations and volunteers for serving and clean-up shifts on the 26th. ALL ages are welcome to volunteer!

Wednesday Night Discipleship

K4C and J8:11 will again have the opportunity to participate in Intergenerational Prayer Partners again this year! If you would like to join in on the fun, please fill out a "Getting to Know You" form and have it turned in by February 26th. Card exchanging will begin on March 5th. See the Intergenerational Prayer Partner articles in this newsletter for more details.

Wednesday Night Schedule:

5:30pm - PreK-6th Grade Class Time
6:30pm- Supper for ALL! (Parent Required)
7:00pm – 8:00pm – 7th – 12th+ Class Time

Congregation-Wide



Service Opportunity

Do you remember "Worship + 2"? The phrase refers to our commitment to our Christian spiritual growth by worship, plus service plus connecting with a church small group each month. If you are seeking a way to grow as a Christian, this approach will certainly lead you in the right direction.

In February, everyone aged twelve and over with a connection to WBUMC is invited to participate in a service event at a Crowded Closet Work Night on February 20th. On that Thursday night we will carpool from church at 4:30pm, and arrive at Crowded Closet's back door by 5 p.m. We will join other people from nearby churches and work together to prepare donations for sale in Crowded Closet's Thrift Shop. We will meet old friends and make new friends as we work together for two hours, chatting and laughing as we work!

If you are planning to join us, please sign up on the sheet in the entryway of WBUMC or by contacting Katie Sabourin or Rosamond Cumings by Feb. 15th.

Crowded Closet is a thrift store in Iowa City, connected to the Mennonite Central Committee, their international mission agency. Last year (2024) Crowded Closet sales exceeded 2 million dollars, all given in support of relief, service and development, worldwide.

Please join us for a fun evening of service and fellowship! Contact Rosamond Cumings or Katie Sabourin if you have questions.

LENT PRAYER PARTNERS

What: Intergenerational Prayer Partners

Who: Church Family: Adults AND Youth and Kids,

When: Ash Wednesday (March 5th) through Easter (April 20th)

How:

- 1) Fill out the Getting to Know You form and turn it into the Katie's mailbox by Feb 26th
- 2) Get your prayer Partner's name on Ash Wednesday.
- 3) Pray for your partner throughout Lent.
- 4) Both partners write/draw letters/cards for your partner each week throughout Lent. There will be tables to do this on Sundays at Worship and Wednesdays at Discipleship.
- 5) We'll provide a place to leave cards and pick up cards/letters.

Please no gifts, but handmade cards are welcome.

Sign up at the Welcome Table at Wednesday Night Discipleship or Sundays at Worship.

Contact Katie with any questions or concerns

Contact Ruth Blayer if you would like to volunteer to help at the Prayer Partner Table at Wednesday Night Discipleship.

Save the Date:

UWF is hosting a mini retreat on March 3rd at 6:00pm.

Come open for some rest and cup filling activities. Please bring a reusable cup to be filled. Everyone is Welcome!

Questions or to RSVP, please contact Katie Sabourin.

WBUMC's Financials

General Fund Account Balance as of January 1, 2025

\$38,138.37 (Checking and Savings combined)



Congregation Meeting March 2nd following worship!

ONGOING GROUP DATES FOR YOUR CALENDARS:

If you would like more information on these groups below, visit this link on our website:

[Ministry-Menu-Brochure-2025](#)

- LIFE GROUP - Thursday evenings
- C.U.P.S. - meets each Tuesday 9:30-11 am
- Thursday Bible Study meets weekly at 7pm
- **West Branch Seniors Potluck - 3rd Monday of every month, 12-1pm**
- Prayers and Squares meets the 4th Tuesday of each month at 1:30pm
- *Mary/Martha Fellowship meets the second Thursday of the month at 1:30pm*
 - **BedMats meets the 2nd & 4th Monday of the month at 1:30pm**
 - 9am small group meets every Sunday morning prior to Worship
- ***Sermon discussion group meets each Sunday after fellowship at 11:30***
- ***Sunday Fellowship -fellowship hall after 10 am worship ALL are invited!***
- United Women In Faith meets the first Monday of the month @6:30pm

JOYS, PRAYERS AND CONCERNS

CONCERNS AND THOSE NEEDING PRAYERS:

Mather's health and transition to assisted living
Mark Scharnweber health and chemo
Bette Potter adjusting to move to N.Liberty
Jim Blayer's health
Barb Wilcox's health
John-(Bev Spencer's brother) loss of wife and recent health issues
Gaylon Patrick, Lynn's brother treatment for leukemia
Anne Weinard health concerns
Patrick family in the passing of Neil, Lynn's brother
Cousins' family member cancer
Johannsen's in the loss of Beth's mother
Maggie Mowery's friend Angela
Maggie Mowery and her parents
Carolyn Hoxton's son with cancer
Todd Stoolman
Jodi Havill, her father & son Jordan
Sharon Castelda, Ron Cousins' sister
Katie Herring's health
Amanda Polson-Tinebra, Patrick's granddaughter

Those who are caregivers
Those walking the road of recovery
Those grieving for loved ones
Family members going through transition
Volunteers: school, community, and church

New members & Our Church Family
Students and teachers
Board and Staff
Confirmation Students

OUR NATION AND WORLD:

Those affected by Natural Disasters
Those affected by violence
Those struggling with mental health
Missionaries
All in conflicts and countries in crisis
Ukraine, Israel, Gaza and Lebanon
Civil unrest in our country
Our National, State, and Local governments
Safety of servicemen, women & their families
Those grieving during the holidays

SENIORS WITHIN OUR CHURCH COMMUNITY:

Crestview: Audrey Kofoed, Nancy Vincent, Laura Slach and Dick Stoolman
Tipton: Clarence Crew
West Liberty Heath Manor: Lucine Morrison
Bridgewater: Phyllis Langenhan and Chris Rushton

Prayer Cards are located in your pews.

Please share your joys with us along with your concerns.

Be sure to note if this request is to be kept confidential or if you would like it to be shared with CUPS, Prayer Team and/or added to the prayer list.

Please have received permission for a name to be shared.

Contact Ashley to add and remove individuals.

All requests will automatically be removed after 6 months unless Pastor Beth is contacted directly.

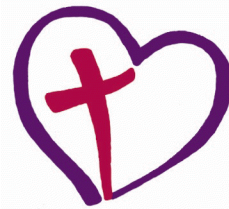
Happy Birthday!

1	Martha Luke	9	Chuck Donohoe	18	Troy Vincent
2	Ronnie Cousins	11	Kris Brack	19	Spencer Verlo
4	Jessica Shultz	11	Lisa Neuberger	20	Renee DeJong
5	Tim Wageman	11	Campbell Haganman	23	Nick Chiavetta
5	Kay Schieffer	12	Jodi Oswald	23	Trenton Schutte
6	Abby Knoop	14	Hannah O'Hara	25	Jan Mather
7	Taylor Dannenfelser	15	John Rushton	26	Katie Dauber
9	Kassie Bailey	17	Lexi Noble	28	Kirsten Nelson
		17	Bailey Donohoe		

Your Church Staff & Contact Information

Office #: 319-643-5489

Pastor: Pastor Beth Graham
580-279-2430
PastorBethGraham@gmail.com



Office Administrator:
Ashley Kaalberg
Westbranchumc@gmail.com

Youth Ministry Coordinator:
Katie Sabourin 319-530-3963

Music Director:
Maggie Mowery 319-321-5178

Or Visit our website at www.westbranchumc.org

OFFICE HOURS:

Ashley's office hours Wednesdays 9am - 1pm
She can be reached at Westbranchumc@gmail.com anytime!
Pastor Beth's office hours: Monday & Tuesday 1pm-3pm
Wednesday & Thursday 9am-Noon

In Person Blended Worship Service @10:00 am Sundays
Watch online live or at your convenience!
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCMuP-ZY4cXONtAp5t6lHFkq>

WBUMC - 203 N. Downey St - PO Box 750 - West Branch, IA 52358