



May 2026 Singing Tower

The Newsletter of the
West Branch United Methodist Church



“Love God, Love People”

Greetings!

Happy May! This month we will be celebrating all month.
Please join us - and bring a friend!

On Sunday May 3rd, we will celebrate Senior Sunday.
Following worship, UWF will be hosting a brunch for the
graduating seniors and their families.

Sunday, May 10th is Mother's Day. At worship, we will celebrate
Christian families and remember how much we are loved.

May 17th is Ascension Sunday. We will celebrate Christ's return to
heaven after his time on earth. That evening at 7pm, we will be hosting
a Baccalaureate for all the graduating seniors in our community!

Sunday May 24th, we will celebrate Memorial Day and will honor those
who have gone on to heaven ahead of us.

Sunday May 31st we will celebrate Pentecost Sunday.
At worship we will celebrate the coming of the Holy Spirit to the
new Christian believers and the birthday of the church.
Come and join us at church this month!



Blessings,
Pastor Leila

Iowa UMC Camps Registration is Now Open



Scan to
Register!



We are Hiring
Summer Staff!



Scan to
Apply!

Thank You!!!

As we come to the end of another year of K4C and J8:11, we want to take a moment to celebrate and thank all those who helped make Wednesday Night Discipleship possible this year. We will be recognizing all of our WND teachers and volunteers during worship on May 17th. Please plan to be there to be thanked and to thank all of our volunteers!

We Need You!

During the month of May we'll be taking donations for Vacation Bible School. There will be the opportunity to give monetary donations and to sign up to bring in items for VBS snacks as well. Please keep your eyes peeled for signs of the rain forest for more information on how to give and how to volunteer. Thank you!

J8:11 After Hours

When: May 2nd 7:30pm-1:00am

Who: 7th – 12th graders

Where: WBUMC Fellowship Hall

What: Fun, Food, & Games! Like a lock-in
but you get to sleep in your own bed!

**Make sure you sign up and get your permission slip
turned in by May 1st**

Senior Sunday May 3rd

Help us celebrate our Graduating Seniors on May 3rd during worship. If you have a graduating senior in your family, please help them to remember to RSVP.

UWF will be hosting a brunch for our graduating seniors and their families after worship on the 3rd as well. Remember to keep our seniors in your prayers during this transitional time in their lives.

Time to Sign Up for VBS!!!

Whether you want to sign up as a participant or as a volunteer, follow the link below. Vacation Bible School is July 12th-16th with the program being during worship May 19th. Please keep all the preparations in your prayers and mark your calendar!

[RainForest Falls VBS 2026 :: VBS Pro :: Group Publishing](#)



Baccalaureate

You are invited to share in this special worship service to celebrate our West Branch Graduating Seniors on May 17th at 7pm at WBUMC. Please help spread the word to all those in our community.

Game Nights

When: 1st Sunday of the Month at 6:30pm this summer beginning in May

Who: All those who enjoy games

What: Bring a game to share and a snack to share if you'd like. We'll provide water & lemonade. We'll choose a game to play once everyone arrives. It will be fun for the whole family!

Garage Sale Update:

A HUGE thank you to everyone who donated, helped display, priced and helped with clean up for the Garage Sale! It is said it takes a village to raise a child, well - it takes an entire church to have a Garage Sale.

A total **\$1056.96** was raised for missions! THANK YOU!

COOKIE WALK raised \$235 for the church budget!

Thank you for the donations and for volunteering to help!

THANK YOU to everyone who came and shopped at both of the sales, too!

Lenten Offering Report:

The total given for Heifer International (\$760 from congregation) plus the offerings from Wednesday Night Discipleship youth (\$134.50) was \$894.50!

Therefore WBUMC was able to purchase 6 Baskets (chicks & able to send part of this



surpassed the goal and goats and 3 Hope bunnies). Since we were to Heifer Int while a

group of generous donors matched the donation for 3X the impact, 18 families will receive goats and 3 families will receive starter chicks and bunnies!! God's Timing is Wonderful!!!

West Branch Food Pantry: **650 items** weighing **620 pounds** were donated to the West Branch Food Pantry for a total value of **\$1250!!**

It made quite the pile around the altar Easter Sunday!

This will help many West Branch area families thanks to you!

Praise the Lord!

SPECIAL OFFERING:

Native American Ministries Offering will be Sunday May 17.

This offering empowers local outreach and educates Native American seminary students to serve God faithfully and also helps preserve a rich cultural heritage.

25% to General Board of Higher Education for scholarships for Native Americans attending UM schools of theology.

25% to General Board of Global Ministries to support the Native American Urban Initiative.

50% retained by the Iowa Annual Conference to support Iowa Native American Ministries.

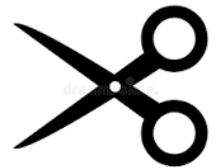
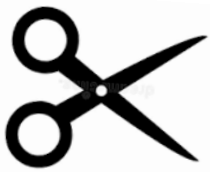
Envelopes will be provided on the table in the back of the sanctuary.

Please make checks to WBUMC, Native American Sunday in the memo.

Bed Mat Ministry

For the fifth year, this ministry hosted high school students (18) and adult chaperones (2) for the WB High School Service Day, sponsored by the WB National Honor Society, Wednesday morning April 22. All of these students were a joy to teach! They all learned to cut bags and weave them into bed mats in Fellowship Hall and how the Willis Dady Homeless Shelter in Cedar Rapids utilizes these Bed Mats. This crew worked on 16 bed mats.

Be watching for the date these mats will be blessed during worship prior to delivery to Willis Dady. Please continue to bring your plastic grocery/shopping bags to the church and place them in the container under the coat rack in the front entry. If you wish to join this vital ministry please come to our next meeting on Monday, May 11th at 1:30.



WBUMC's Financial Ins & Outs

March Income: \$12,045.50

March Expenses: \$ 15,972.36



ONGOING GROUP DATES FOR YOUR CALENDARS:

If you would like more information on these groups below, visit 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 as needed dependant on the time of year
 - Round Table meets on the first Thursday of the month at 9am
 - Men's Group meets the 2nd Tuesday of the month 7pm at Herb n' Lou's

JOYS, PRAYERS AND CONCERNS

CONCERNS AND THOSE NEEDING PRAYERS:

Bob and Rosamond Cumings
Patrick's granddaughter Elizabeth
Family of Lucine Morrison in her passing
Kofoed family in Audrey's passing
Lisa Corr's brother Pat Bright - cancer
Katie Herring Hospice
Tom Anderson's niece, Laura Williams'
breast cancer diagnosis
Diane Rotter's recovery
Jodi Havill health
Sara Hayward, Lynn Patrick's sister A Fib
Cousins' family member cancer
Maggie Mowery's friend Angela
Maggie Mowery and her parents
Todd Stoolman
Sharon Castelda, Ron Cousins' sister
Amanda Polson-Tinebra, Patrick's
granddaughter
New members & Our Church Family
Students and teachers
Board, Staff and Pastor

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
Civil unrest in our country
Our National, State, and Local governments
Safety of servicemen, women & their
families

SENIORS WITHIN OUR CHURCH COMMUNITY:

Crestview: Laura Slach
Tipton Cedar Manor: Clarence Crew
Tipton Prairie Hills: Ken Mather
Summit: Chris Rushton
North Liberty with daughter: Bette Potter
Atrium Village Hills: Ruth Lathrop

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

*Would you like to contact a patient at UIHC?
<https://uihc.org/send-letter-hospitalized-patient>*

***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.***

Happy Birthday!

| | | | | | |
|---|--------------------|----|-----------------|----|-----------------|
| 3 | Emily Slach Snyder | 9 | Wyatt Thompson | 19 | Skylor Maxson |
| 3 | McKenna Lentner | 9 | Leila Blackburn | 21 | Rob Rushton |
| 3 | Glen Waters | 12 | Laura Slach | 24 | Ashley Kaalberg |
| 4 | Kay Kiler | 14 | Derek Leith | 26 | Mitch Warden |
| 6 | Kris Perks | 14 | Brian Driscoll | 26 | Ben Shortt |
| 6 | Nick Heilmann | 17 | Todd Myrvik | 27 | Joan Lewis |
| 8 | Konnor Myrvik | 17 | Jennie Pine | 29 | Gary Hoskins |
| 9 | Mitchell Moon | 18 | Mick Beeler | 31 | Carolyn Hoxton |
| | | 18 | Trey Schutte | | |

Your Church Staff & Contact Information

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Pastor: Pastor Leila Blackburn
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Youth Ministry Coordinator:
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Katie Sabourin 319-530-3963



Office Administrator:
Ashley Kaalberg
Westbranchumc@gmail.com

Music Director:
123maggie9@gmail.com
Maggie Mowery 319-321-5178

[Or Visit our website at www.westbranchumc.org](http://www.westbranchumc.org)

OFFICE HOURS:

Ashley's office hours are on Wednesdays 9am - noon.
She can be reached at Westbranchumc@gmail.com anytime.

In Person Worship Service @10:00 am Sundays
Watch online live or at your convenience!
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCMuP-ZY4cXONtAp5t6lHFkg>

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