

February 2021

# Sumner Center UMC Newsletter

## Sunday Worship



Weekly Worship Services are offered each Sunday via Sumner Centers Facebook page or if you do not have access to the internet contact Pastor Bridget and a weekly DVD of worship will be mailed to your home. During this time of a pandemic we are trying new and innovative ways to come together in the name of Jesus Christ.

**Pastor Bridget Sheely**

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### *Pastors Notes...*

*"He must increase, but I must decrease."*

(John 3:30)

This Lenten season I have decided to use the above verse as a daily mantra to remind myself that my biggest obstacle to a personal relationship with Jesus is not something external, but me. Lately, I've been going through what I would consider to be a drought in my relationship with God. It's not bad. It just feels stagnant. I think we all go through times where we feel we're really moving towards God and times where we're either moving away or standing still. When you're in those times of little to no growth, it is wise to examine the cause. Sometimes there is no particular reason. All relationships have seasons of heavy growth and then seasons of little growth. But it can also be a symptom of a roadblock that you've put between yourself and God.

I often still come to God with the attitude of "what can you do for me" instead of "what can I do for you". Many times, I treat God as the servant and myself as the master, when it needs to be the other way around. I think this is a common problem. Humans are naturally selfish creatures.

**How often do our prayers involve asking for our will to come true without even stopping to ask whether it is God's will?**

**The more we take our eyes off our own will, the clearer we're able to see God's will.**

**What roadblocks are keeping you from moving closer to God that you can work on tearing down during Lent this year?**

### **Walking the Path – by Justin Farley**

*Today my journey begins. I will walk the winding path. That you have set before me. I will leave behind the comforts of yesterdays –*

*The stability of life without unforeseen change  
Where I am the captain of my soul, The master of my destiny, And the ruler of my fate. But now I leave the wide, empty fields  
And enter through the narrow gate –*

*Where I depart from my crumbling kingdom and admit that I'm not fit to rule. I choose to become a servant of your will and refuse to feed mine any longer. I choose to be weak and in the process grow stronger with every piece of me that gets replaced with you.*

*I don't know where you will lead me. And if I'm honest, I'm terrified Because every inch of my mind Is telling me that it's foolish To venture into the unknown with Only faith as my guide. But my heart knows that faith is more than enough*

*And when the road gets tough, you'll be there by my side. My spirit soars singing That I shall be released, as soon as I find that I've lost myself and discover that you have increased.*

# The Way to Start your Day...

Go outside and face the East and greet the Sun with a blessing, chant or song that you made yourself and keep for early mornings. Do not fret if you do not know how to make a song it is very simple. First, don't try to think what words to use until you're standing there alone. When you feel the Sun, you'll feel the blessing, chant or song too. Just open your heart and release it. You see, a morning needs to be greeted. A new day needs to be honored. It is our responsibility to welcome the Sun and create a good day for it. We must also make a good world for it to live in one day at a time. So, as you rise out of bed tomorrow remember to look to the East and offer your blessing. And if you are very lucky there may be a time when the sky thanks you back with colors of beauty and magic. **Now that's the way to start a day!**

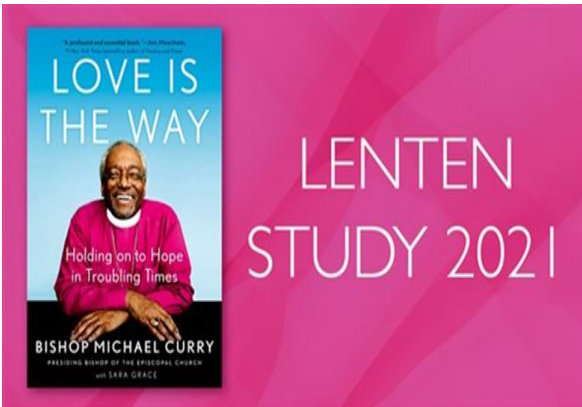
## Calendar of Events

(subject to change and/or be added to as the need arises)

### February 2021

### Black History Month

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2 	3 FEED THE BIRDS  © Can Stock Photo Day	4	5	6
7 Online Worship  © Can Stock Photo	8 Boy Scout Day 	9	10	11	12  Abraham Lincoln's Birthday February 12, 1809	13
14 Online Worship HAPPY Valentine's Day	15 HAPPY PRESIDENT'S DAY	16 Happy Mardi Gras!  FEAST FAST	17  Ash Wednesday Online Worship	18	19	20
21 Online Worship	22  George Washington's Birthday 1732	23	24 Online Lenten service with Pastor Bridget "Love Is the Way" Study	25	26	27
28 Online Worship						



Do you remember that old song, “They’ll Know We Are Christians By Our Love?” Love is our way. For God so loved the world that God gave the fullness of who God was and is, God became human, so that we would know love and discover that this is the way to life for all people. This is not only the gift we have been given, but it is our calling. As the apostle Paul says in Colossians, “Wear love. It’s your basic, all-purpose garment.”

Wear love. Breathe love. This is what the world needs more than ever: people who know the height and breadth and depth of love, and because of that, choose love as the way they live. If we want a different world, it starts with us and how we love.

For our Lenten study this year, we have chosen Bishop Michael Curry’s book “Love is the Way: Holding on to Hope in Troubling Times.” Yes, he is an Episcopal bishop, but that is our spiritual home as Methodists because John and Charles Wesley were Anglican priests (the Anglican church became the Episcopal church when it came to the U.S.) In each chapter, Bishop Curry—through his practical theology and storytelling from his own life experience—answers a question you might be asking about love: How do I find God’s love? Do I have to love my enemy? Can love really change the world?

For six weeks, we will journey together in this way of love. We will cover two chapters a week, and each week will be introduced with a video from a member of our Appointive Cabinet. We will also post a small group discussion guide for the week. If your congregation is not organizing small groups around this study, then we invite you to ask a couple of friends to read with you and to meet virtually once a week to talk about the book and how you are putting love into action in your life.

One person at a time, living the way of love, becomes a movement. This is what the Jesus movement looks like. Or, to put it in reverse, as Bishop Curry said: “If it doesn’t look like love, if it doesn’t look like Jesus of Nazareth, it can’t be claimed as Christian.” Because how do you know a Christian? By their love! Looking forward to a loving Lent with you as we lean into “Love Is the Way.”

### **Wednesday Lenten Service Schedule**

(subject to change upon covid-19 vaccine status)

- Feb 17: Ash Wednesday Combined Online Service**
- Feb. 24: Chapters 1&2 with Pastor Bridget Sheely**
- March 3: Chapters 3&4 with Pastor Jon Marburger**
- March 10: Chapters 5&6 with Pastor Laura Nordstrom**
- March 17: Chapters 7&8 with Pastor Bridget Sheely**
- March 24: Chapters 9&10 with Pastor Jon Marburger**
  
- Holy Week: Chapters 11&12 in review with**
- April 1: Maundy Thursday**
- April 2: Good Friday**
- April 4: Easter Sunday**

**Wednesday Evening Lenten Services will be offered via Facebook/YouTube link/email**  
**(If you choose to purchase a book you may find it on Amazon for \$17.33 or contact your Pastor.)**

You do not need a book to share in this Lenten service experience

# Tips on Reading the Bible Daily

Plan Length: 365 days

Estimated Completion Date: Wednesday, July 14, 2021

Seventh month of daily biblical connection. If you would like to start now no worries, it is never too late to begin connecting with the Word.

1. Start reading the Bible today -- there is no
2. Set aside a specific time each day. Set your great, but feel free to use any time that works
3. Read the Bible for the sake of learning, not a short prayer to God before you begin, asking understanding, then be refreshed by the words you read!



better time, and there's no reason to wait. schedule and then stick to it. Mornings are consistently for you. simply to accomplish your next reading. Say the Holy Spirit to give you wisdom and

**Day 184 - Job 26-28; Acts 11**

**Day 185 - Job 29-30; Acts 12**

**Day 186 - Job 31-32; Acts 13:1-23**

**Day 187 - Job 33-34; Acts 13:24-52**

**Day 188 - Job 35-37; Acts 14**

**Day 189 - Job 38-39; Acts 15:1-21**

**Day 190 - Job 40-42; Acts 15:22-41**

**Day 191 - Psalm 1-3; Acts 16:1-15**

**Day 192 - Psalm 4-6; Acts 16:16-40**

**Day 193 - Psalm 7-9; Acts 17:1-15**

**Day 194 - Psalm 10-12; Acts 17:16-34**

**Day 195 - Psalm 13-16; Acts 18**

**Day 196 - Psalm 17-18; Acts 19:1-20**

**Day 197 - Psalm 19-21; Acts 19:21-41**

**Day 198 - Psalm 22-24; Acts 20:1-16**

**Day 199 - Psalm 25-27; Acts 20:17-38**

**Day 200 - Psalm 28-30; Acts 21:1-14**

**Day 201 - Psalm 31-33; Acts 21:15-40**

**Day 202 - Psalm 34-35; Acts 22**

**Day 203 - Psalm 36-37; Acts 23:1-11**

**Day 204 - Psalm 38-40; Acts 23:12-35**

**Day 205 - Psalm 41-43; Acts 24**

**Day 206 - Psalm 44-46; Acts 25**

**Day 207 - Psalm 47-49; Acts 26**

**Day 208 - Psalm 50-52; Acts 27:1-25**

**Day 209 - Psalm 53-55; Acts 27:26-44**

**Day 210 - Psalm 56-58; Acts 28:1-15**

**Day 211 - Psalm 59-61; Acts 28:16-31**



# Fundraising Event!

*The greatest among you shall be your servant. Mt. 23:11*

**Racine UMC & Sumner Center UMC are collaborating to –  
raise funds with the intention of purchasing gift cards  
in the spirit of Gratitude  
for our Frontline County workers.**

**Our Mission is to sell yard signs displaying John Wesley's 3 simple rules:**

Mower County Sheriff's Department = 25 cards

Fillmore County Sheriff's Department = 19 cards

Grand Meadow Police Department = 3 cards

Grand Meadow First Responders = 15 cards

Chatfield Area Ambulance = 24 card cards

Stewartville First Responders = 36 cards

Grand Meadow Area Ambulance = 25 cards.

Spring valley Area Ambulance = 18 cards

Total = 165 gift cards



**We are in a position to purchase 90 cards at this time.**

**Please consider donating or reaching out to others so we may reach our goal. We need to collect \$750.00 more. Recommended \$15.00 donation per sign.**

## CONTACT INFORMATION

Send a Direct Message by Facebook Messenger to Racine's Facebook page or Sumner Center's group page

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100% of all donations will go for the purchase of \$10.00 gift cards for our local hero's!

**The success of this fundraising mission is in your hands!**

**Your action to help sell these signs will be a true blessing to our frontline workers!**

# *2020 in review*

**1 Corinthians 15:58** (New International Reader's Version)

*58 My dear brothers and sisters, remain strong in the faith. Don't let anything move you. Always give yourselves completely to the work of the Lord. Because you belong to the Lord, you know that your work is not worthless.*

Our circumstances have not diminished our faithful cause.  
Our faith community has held strong and active in the past year of trials and tribulation.  
God bless all the working hands of Christ!!

## **2020 Christian Studies offered**

Faithful and Inclusive: The Bible, Sexuality, and the UMC  
Reckless Love: 5-week Lenten study on Jesus' Call to Love Our Neighbors  
Racism: How Should Christians Respond?  
Incarnation: The different names we give to Christ and the difference He makes in our lives  
Weekly Worship study materials

## **Community Outreach**

Supporting The Cancer Telethon  
Lenten donations for BACA (Bikers against child abuse, Spring Valley Chapter)  
Easter baskets shared throughout the congregation  
Monthly Newsletter  
Implementing an online weekly worship connection  
Phone call connections  
2020-21 Fillmore County School Supply drive  
Angel Tree gifts of love and compassion  
UMW financially supporting several local Care Centers during Christmas  
Several Special Offerings  
Love Offering for the Mn Annual Conference  
Local food bank donations

## **National and International Outreach**

World Service Fund Prepares men and women for effective ministry  
Ministerial Education Fund Underwrites and finances general church activities that are administrative in nature  
General Administration Fund Supports global ecumenical efforts by partnering with Christian organizations to witness to a common Christian faith, meet human suffering, and advocate for peace and justice all over the world.  
Interdenominational Cooperation Fund Supports active bishops, who oversee and are responsible for the congregations in their respective episcopal areas,  
Episcopal Fund Supports operations, programs and capital improvements at United Methodist-affiliated, historically black colleges across the United States; The United Methodist Church supports 11 historically black colleges and universities, more than any other religious denomination.  
Black College Fund Supports the only United Methodist-related, degree-granting university in Africa—serving students from all countries across the continent.

**NEW CHURCH STARTS**

**UMCOR**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## ON THE ROAD TO EASTER WORD SEARCH



Ash	Holy Week	Palm Branch
Wednesday	Holy Thursday	Forty Days
Sacrifice	Good Friday	Jesus
Almsgiving	Holy Saturday	Passover
Prayer	Easter	Foot Washing
Fasting	Palm Sunday	Resurrection
Lent	Purple	Love

