

# Sumner Center UMC Newsletter



OPEN HEARTS. OPEN MINDS. OPEN DOORS.

## August 2024

### The Stars and Stripes By Kathy Hawkins

The lonely flag pole in the middle of the greens  
Stands tall watching over the land without even a slight lean

The red and white stripes remember those tears  
Of wars that brought this country many fears

Stars of white on a background of blue  
Flies high for those states from old to new

Some call her Old Glory as she shows her wave  
Fighting for the freedom and home of the brave

One person alone cannot bring peace to all  
**It takes a country joining together to answer that call**

As the breeze moves this flag for all to see  
Asking that we turn us and them into we

Yes we are the people filled with pride in our hearts  
Working together to make this country one instead of parts

Remember our history but build on that beginning  
**Divisions no more, only help each other to be winning**

Our flag as she flies is the same across this country so vast  
Let us be neighbors and friends and write a new past

Keep our stars and stripes flying for all the years to come  
She flies for all in the country, not just for some

Let your heart feel the love of this beautiful land  
That she stands to protect with each caring hand

Thank you to Kathy Hawkins for her beautiful and  
inspirational words! Let us all be leaders of unity and stop  
this movement of division in our great land!!

**One Nation Under God!!**

**Sunday Worship:  
In Sanctuary at 11:15am  
&  
Sumner Center UMC Facebook  
Page**

Visit our Church Website at:  
<http://www.sumnercenter.com>

**Donations may be sent to our mailing  
address:  
25378 151st Ave  
Spring Valley, Mn 55975**

**Pastoral Support Team  
Pastor Bridget Sheely**

Email: [bridget@countrywidecarriers.com](mailto:bridget@countrywidecarriers.com)  
Cell # 507-438-1352

**Pastor Jon Marburger**

Email: [marburgerjon@gmail.com](mailto:marburgerjon@gmail.com)  
Cell #507-227-6711




### Grace and Peace in the name of Jesus Christ

If you have items you would like to be published in the newsletter, please contact Pastor Bridget by the 3rd Thursday of the preceding month by emailing your information or dropping at Church. The light of God remains to shine bright in our community only by your generous giving heart! If you would like to donate a gift, you may send donations to the address above or deliver it in person during Sunday morning worship service

# Calendar of Events

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

## August 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3
<b>4</b> 11:15 am Worship  Dexter UMC Ice Cream Social 4-6 pm	5	<b>6</b>  8 <sup>th</sup> Annual NNO at Racine UMC 6-8pm	7	8	9	10
<b>11</b> 11:15am Worship  Children's bible study with Kathy Hawkins – 10:30am	12	13	14	15	<b>16</b> <b>VBS at            Dexter            UMC            5-8pm</b>	<b>17</b> <b>VBS at            Dexter            UMC            9-12noon</b>
<b>18</b> <b>All Parish            VBS            Celebration            Combined            Worship            Service at            Dexter UMC            10:00 am</b>  <b>No service at            Racine today</b>	<b>19</b>  <b>Book Study            At            Brownsdale            UMC 6 pm</b>	<b>20</b> <b>Book Study            at Grand            Meadow            United            2 pm</b>	21	<b>22</b> <b>Book Study            via zoom            6:30pm</b>	23	<b>24</b>  <b>Ad Council            Meeting            10 am            At church</b>
<b>25</b> 11:15 am Worship	<b>26</b> <b>Book Study            At            Brownsdale            UMC 6 pm</b>	<b>27</b> <b>Book Study            at Grand            Meadow            United            2 pm</b>	28	<b>29</b> <b>Book Study            via zoom            6:30pm</b>	30	31

# August Worship Schedule

**August 4, 2024**

**Pastor Jon Leading**

Paul says to us today – “and remember to what we were called.”

What is that calling? To be like God. To love like Christ. Our initial reaction is to recoil, to raise our hands in defeat and declare that this is something beyond the realm of possibility. How in the world can I act like God? How can I love like Christ? Yet it is our goal to become like Christ. That’s the name we have taken – Christian, little Christ. That’s the road we are on. But since we are striving to imitate God, then we also imitate God’s grace, with ourselves and certainly, with everyone else around us.

**KIND**  
*But become kind to one another,*  
**COMPASSIONATE**  
*tenderly compassionate,*  
**FORGIVING**  
*freely forgiving one another*  
*just as God also by Christ freely forgave you.*  
EPHESIANS 4:32

**August 11, 2024**

**Pastor Bridget Leading**

Every fourth week of November, we tell ourselves that Thanksgiving should not just be a once-a-year thing, but a way of living every day. In our scripture today - Ephesians 5:15-20 is a call to remember that belief. “giving thanks to God the Father at all times.” At all times! This isn’t just about being thankful for food and plentiful harvests. It is about finding blessings in everyday living. It is a call to move our thinking away from what we think we don’t have toward what we have already been blessed with. It is shifting from a scarcity mindset into a realization of the abundance of God’s providence. But even as we do so, we must also take time to acknowledge that there are many who are left out of the abundance, not because of the lack of resources, but due to unequal distribution. That is why we are invited to share what we have, so that all might have something. How do we give thanks at all times? By living our gratitude each and every day.

BE VERY CAREFUL,  
THEN, HOW YOU LIVE -  
not as UNWISE, but as WISE,  
MAKING OF EVERY ONE  
the most OPPORTUNITY,  
BECAUSE THE DAYS ARE EVIL.  
THEREFORE DO NOT BE  
FOLKISH, but UNDERSTAND  
what the LORD'S  
will is. EPHESIANS 5:15-17

**August 18, 2024**

**All Parish Combined Worship to Celebrate VBS**

**Where: Dexter UMC. Time: 10:00 am**

Today we gather in His name as we celebrate our amazing children. For the last couple of days our kids have gathered with the knowledge that not only does God provide for our physical needs but His also gives us provisions to nourish our spiritual self. We receive His nourishment through the power of prayer.

GIVE US  
this day  
OUR DAILY  
Bread  
Matthew 6:11

**August 25, 2024**

**Pastor Jon Leading**

Today we center our focus on being doers of the word. This isn’t about works of righteousness, but about living out the salvation we have received by grace through faith. In part, we are asking, “You’ve been saved or claimed by Christ, so what now? How will your life be different, look different, act different because of that primary relationship? What influence does faith have on your actions?” In one sense, we are still the same – human, fallible, sinful. But in another sense, we are new creations, ready to embrace a new reality of living. Whether we’ve done this now for years or

every good  
AND  
perfect gift  
COMES FROM  
above  
JAMES 1:17

whether we are newly minted followers of Jesus, we continually ask ourselves how – “is it with our souls” and with our living these days.

# ANNOUNCEMENTS



We will be hosting our 8<sup>th</sup> Annual National Night out

**Tuesday: August 6<sup>th</sup>**

**6pm -8pm**

At the Racine United Methodist Church parking lot  
Woodfire oven pizza and ice cream will be on the menu

If you are available to volunteer for this event, be on the lookout for a sign-up sheet at the church.

Come, get to know your neighbors, enjoy some great treats and fun for all!

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**It's time for VBS!!!**

**August 16<sup>th</sup> 5-8 pm (Friday evening) and August 17<sup>th</sup> 9am-12 noon (Saturday morning)**

**Age 3 years old through 5<sup>th</sup> grade**

**Where: Dexter UMC**

**Science experiments.**

**Mission projects**

**Story time**

**Games and fun**



**Delicious snacks**

**Music**

**Story time**

**JOINT PARISH WORSHIP SERVICE.**

**SUNDAY AUGUST 18<sup>TH</sup> @ 10 AM.**

**ALL SIX CHURCHES WILL COME TOGETHER FOR ONE SERVICE AT DEXTER UMC**

**YOUR ATTENDANCE IS VERY IMPORTANT TO OUR CHILDREN!!!**

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**Farmers' MARKET @SUMC**

June 19, 26, July 3, 10, 17, 24, 31,  
August 7, 21, 28, September 4  
(No market 8/14-VBS week at SUMC)  
**4-7 pm**

*Through the Farmers' Market @SUMC, we hope to*  
-increase access to fresh, affordable, nutritious food-  
-support local farmers and businesses-  
-foster an atmosphere of community fellowship-  
-offer sustainable products that respect and protect our environment-

Held rain or shine at Stewartville United Methodist Church  
900 John Wesley Ave NW-Stewartville, MN  
For vendor information, contact Kristin Gontea  
SUMC Director of Outreach  
kristin.gontea@stewartvilleumc.org 507-533-4625

**ICE CREAM SOCIAL**

**DRIVE – THRU**  
(PICNIC TABLES will be available)  
Dexter United Methodist Church  
**Sunday, August 4**  
**4:00 – 6:00 PM**  
Sloppy joes and potato salad,  
Homemade ice cream and  
apple or rhubarb crisp  
**Free will Offering**

**Prairieland Parish**  
**Is joining Together for a 6-week book study titled:**  
**“Go Fish”. By author Andy Stanley**

**Each week we will watch a 12-minute recorded session by Andy Stanley followed by a time of connectional open forum and discussion.**

Pastors Jon and Bridget are offering 3 different study groups for your convenience. We hope one of these sessions will work for your schedule.

**Group 1 – will meet in-person Monday’s @ 6pm**  
**Led by Pastor Bridget @ Brownsdale UMC**

August 19th –August 26th – September 9th – September 16<sup>th</sup> – September 23<sup>rd</sup> – September 30<sup>th</sup>  
(note there will be no meeting on September 2<sup>th</sup> in honor of Labor Day)

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**Group 2– will meet in-person Tuesday’s @ 2 pm**  
**Led by Pastor Jon @ United Church of Grand Meadow**

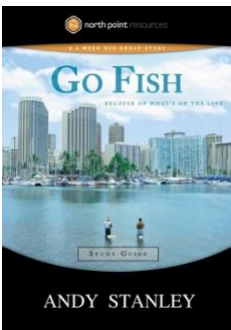
August 20<sup>th</sup> – August 27<sup>th</sup> – September 3<sup>rd</sup> – September 10<sup>th</sup>  
September 17<sup>th</sup> – September 24<sup>th</sup>

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**Group 3 -will meet via zoom Thursday’s @6:30pm**  
**Led by Pastor Bridget & Pastor Jon**

August 22<sup>nd</sup> – August 29<sup>th</sup> – September 5<sup>th</sup> – September 12<sup>th</sup> – September 19<sup>th</sup> – September 26<sup>th</sup>

**Meeting ID – 852-0481-0148**



You may go on-line to purchase your own book or reserve a book with Pastor Jon or Bridget for \$7.50

**Tell Faith-Filled Fish Tales**

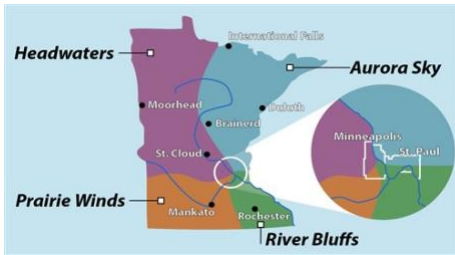
Fishing stories. We’ve all heard them. “It was this big.” “You should have seen the one that got away.” People love to tell stories of their fishing adventures. When it comes to faith, however, most people clam up. Why is it we can’t talk about what God has done in our lives as naturally as we can spin fishing tales?

In this six-session companion study to the “Go Fish” Andy Stanley explores the motivation behind sharing our faith. Discover God’s heart for those who don’t know Him and the role that we can play in introducing others to Him. Along the way you will be equipped with tools that will help you make sharing your faith a natural part of your life.

**Story Behind the Book**

Andy Stanley, senior pastor of three North Point Ministries campuses, with a cumulative congregation of more than twenty thousand, has had countless conversations with everyday Christians who struggle to share their faith with confidence and ease. Though not everyone has “the gift,” evangelism is something we’re each called to. This curriculum was designed to take the fear out of sharing the good news of Christ, and to help you talk about it as naturally as you would that exciting fishing trip last weekend!

## Four new districts take effect July 1, make way for diversity and innovation



On July 1, the Minnesota Conference will formally move from five to four districts, each of which has a new name:

- Headwaters (northwest): Superintended by Rev. Becky Jo Messenbrink
- Aurora Sky (northeast): Superintended by Rev. Laurie Kantonen
- Prairie Winds (southwest): Superintended by Rev. Dr. Woojae Im
- River Bluffs (southeast): Superintended by Rev. Michelle Hargrave

Each district will include a mix of urban, suburban, and rural churches. The district lines have been redrawn, with the new lines moving through and across what is now the Twin Cities District.

For the past two years, the Minnesota Conference has piloted having four district superintendents rather than five—with churches in the Big Waters District shared between them. Meanwhile, Bishop Lanette Plambeck and the Bishop’s Leadership Team (BLT) spent close to a year exploring redistricting possibilities and recommended the move from five to four districts. In late May, members of the 2024 Minnesota Annual Conference Session overwhelmingly voted in favor of the shift. The new district boundaries were set by Bishop Lanette Plambeck and the Cabinet, in consultation with the BLT. The four districts will be served by four superintendents—to be called “conference superintendents” going forward.

The initial impetus for going to four districts was to reduce costs in recognition of financial realities facing the conference, but there are additional benefits that have shaped the shift as well: creating strategic alignment around our shared mission, addressing the metro-Greater Minnesota divide that conference constituents have named, and investing in innovation. The change provides new opportunities to live into our gospel imperatives to grow in love of God and neighbor, reach new people, and heal a broken world.

The superintendents voiced enthusiasm about their new districts and the breadth of geography that each one will cover.

“We have the opportunity, in this new structure, to develop relationships between the Twin Cities area and Greater Minnesota,” said Rev. Michelle Hargrave, superintendent of the new River Bluffs District. “We’ve already begun talking about possible pulpit exchanges and connections across the district. I am also excited about the added diversity that comes with this change.”

Rev. Becky Jo Messenbrink, who will begin her role as a

superintendent on July 1 when the new districts take effect, echoed that sentiment.

“I look forward to serving the clergy and churches in the Headwaters District,” she said. “Our diverse settings are our strength and something to be valued. We have much to learn from one another about the variety of expressions for following Jesus.”

The superintendents are also excited about the new names of the districts they will be leading—which were suggested by conference constituents and chosen by the BLT and the Cabinet.

When Rev. Laurie Kantonen heard the name of her district—Aurora Sky—her first thought was how frequent and widespread the aurora borealis has been this year. More people in more places have had the opportunity to see and appreciate the beauty of this night sky phenomena. But Kantonen also noted that you have to be paying attention to catch this wonder as it comes in the dark of night.

“I have often heard that God does some of God’s most amazing work in the dark,” she said. “I think we have so much opportunity in The United Methodist Church going forward, but we need to pay attention and watch for what God is doing in our midst.”

Bishop Lanette said when she visited each of the five current districts last year, both clergy and laity voiced concern about a perceived disconnect that seemed to separate the Twin Cities metro area from the rest of the conference. Their input motivated her to design a way forward that would help address that gap.

“I believe the four new districts provide an opportunity to close that gap and invite each district into new and renewed relationships that will foster unity, support, innovation, and mission effectiveness within the Minnesota Conference,” she said. “I am looking forward to the varied ways each district will embrace a new way forward and embody what it means to grow as disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.”

# COUNTY FAIR WORD SEARCH

S K G Y R N Y D N A C N O T T O C D I O  
P N Y Y A M N N R O C P O P D P B O L B  
S C E P T L N F A I R G R O U N D S I T  
Y G G W B W K F O C B B Y S R O P W W M  
A T L C N S N A C K S A B N R S P E M G  
W L T E P W I B E B M N W R R P R N O P  
O O B C E Y P N M D N N B A L U V T H U  
S V C K P H T S G N F E C U T K C E C I  
R U V A S R W I K C Y R N L V C H R H E  
G E A G A D B S E N E B U G C O I T I K  
E Y T N C C L S I P W C T N S T L A C A  
L R C H H E U E M R I U D I N S D I K C  
B E I U G R M U I R R V Y R O E R N E L  
G I W V R U B E G F F E S E O V E F N E  
P T E I O D A A V L R V F H L I N K S N  
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P E L S T E K C I T U W L A A N V G S U  
S E F R L A V I T S E F L G B D K P L F  
E H P W O R E M M U S S F D H F P E A A  
S L E M O N A D E B O O T H G K H W B T

## WORDS

AGRICULTURE  
BALLOONS  
BANNER  
BOOTH  
BUMPER CARS  
CHICKENS  
CHILDREN  
COTTON CANDY  
ENTERTAIN  
ENTRANCE  
FAIRGROUNDS  
FERRIS WHEEL  
FESTIVAL  
FIELDS  
FUNNEL CAKE  
GATHERING  
LAUGHTER  
LEMONADE  
LIVESTOCK  
POPCORN  
RIDES  
SNACKS  
SUMMER  
TICKETS

Find the words hidden vertically, horizontally, diagonally, and backwards.