

Sumner Center UMC Newsletter

March 2025

Note from Pastor...

As we walk through each day and navigate our way through ups and downs, joys and concerns, happy moments and heartache it becomes very clear that this earthly life is anything but redundant, mundane or one dimensional. Yes, we can feel at times that we are stuck in a rut. But the truth is we all have our peak and valley moments. So, how do you find balance when you feel as if the world is weighing you down?

Where do you go, what do you do to find your time of peace?

For many, our faith is an important anchor during these times. Understanding that there is something greater than ourselves and that we can give up our fears and troubles to God when things get rough is especially appealing in times of uncertainty, disappointment and even exhaustion caused by stress and anxiety. But boy, there are days when we need an extra reminder, or two, of God's love for us. Even the people of Phillippi needed Paul to remind them of whom they belonged to when Paul wrote them these words: "Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need and thank Him for all He has done. Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 4:6-7)

Friends as the Lenten season approaches, I encourage you to step out of the daily grind, resist the temptation to overload your schedule with too many events and gift yourself time with God in your favorite setting. Jesus said "I am leaving you with a gift-peace of mind and heart. And the peace I give is a gift the world cannot give."(John 14:27.) Are you ready to receive this blessed gift from God? Are you willing to share with Him your roses of the day and your thorns of the day as well? If the answer is yes, you must then also acknowledge that you cannot do so by squeezing God in. This means stepping away from this, that and the other thing and connecting with the one who calls you His beloved with your full attention. One of my favorite hymns is the Spirit Song written by John Wimber and the chorus of this hymn says: "Jesus O Jesus come and fill your lambs...". My dear friends if you are ready to be filled by the Spirit? I offer to you that there is a place you can start. Your community of faith family members are praying for all His children to come back home to be centered in His presence. To come back home and find peace - to come back home and find joy in union with each other. Do not be troubled for it is time to come back home to your Lord. To join as a faith family each week in full commitment to praising His name, hearing His word and praying for the guidance to build His kingdom on earth. We need each other for love, support, comfort, guidance and strength. "For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love and self-discipline (Timothy 1:7). And the foundation of our faith is rooted in being His church and growing in faith together.



OPEN HEARTS. OPEN MINDS. OPEN DOORS.

**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
Cell # 507-438-1352

Pastor Jon Marburger

Email: 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.

Calendar of Events

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

March 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2 11:15 am Worship 	3	4 	5  ASH WEDNESDAY At Sumner Center UMC 7:00pm	6	7	8 
9 11:15 am Worship 	10	11	12 Parish wide Lenten gathering with Soup & the word hosted at Sargeant UMC 6 pm	13	14	15
16 11:15 am Worship 	17  Brownsdale UMC Noon Potluck Dinner	18	19 Parish wide Lenten gathering with Soup & the word hosted at Racine UMC 6 pm	20 	21	22 Sumner Center Church Dinner 4-7pm
23 11:15 am Worship Parish Wide Women's Appreciation Dinner & Event 	24	25	26 Parish wide Lenten gathering with Soup & the word hosted at Brownsdale UMC 6 pm	27	28	29
30 11:15 am Worship 	31					

March Worship Schedule



March 2, 2025

Pastor Bridget Leading

Today we gather on the hinge between the Ordinary Time or season after the Epiphany and the penitential season of Lent. This is the moment that prepares us for that journey, even as it steeled Christ for the path of suffering. Therefore, it is a day of declaration, when we, once again, claim Jesus Christ as our Lord. We see him as he is, in a way, in this moment of Transfiguration. The glory we spoke of last week and will speak again at his death and Resurrection, is revealed in a visible way in this mountaintop moment. We

don't have to fully understand all that might be happening here, but we do have to look in awe and wonder at the glory of our God. Today is a day of celebration before a season of denial.



March 9, 2025

Pastor Jon Leading

We are on the threshold of the season of Lent – an opportune time to talk about temptation. We are at the very beginning where we stop and think, “Do we really want to do this or not?” And if we do, what does that mean for our lives for the next six weeks? Can we still function in normal society even though we've gotten this Lent journey thing going? As we gather today, let us do so with our own temptations in our

thoughts and our want for repentance on our breath.



March 16, 2025

Pastor Jon Leading

There are some experiences or some people who can make us feel small, who make us feel insignificant, make us feel unloved. It is a common human experience.

Who hasn't had that experience? Who hasn't felt that fear grip them at a weak or a painful moment? It is part of the human condition that there are times when we feel disconnected, diminished, and unloved. There might be tragic circumstances to cause such a feeling, or it may be the result of our own failures. Or it may be a misunderstanding. There are a million things, a million moments that can drive a wedge between us and the world, or between us and those we want to love, or between us and God.



March 23, 2025

Pastor Bridget Leading

The Christ who gathers us up invites us to live a life of fruitfulness.

That's the call hidden in our text for this week. We all want our lives to amount to something. Jesus gives us that sense of purpose and direction. We are called to bear fruit. What does that mean? What is fruitful? What kind of fruit? Who benefits from this fruit? That's part of

today's lesson: to learn to understand and experience our own fruitfulness.



March 30, 2025

Pastor Bridget Leading

The gospel text for this fourth Sunday in the season of Lent is a familiar story. We call it the Prodigal Son, or sometimes the Loving Father. But it is a story about wanting and searching for what seems lost but is always within reach if we know how to look. This story reminds us how hard it is to be as gracious as God seems to be, at least as Jesus describes the love of the creator. Like the older brother, we are reluctant. We aren't sure he's learned his lesson;

we aren't sure she's paid her dues yet. We hold back from the party that Jesus wants to throw for every soul that wanders into the fellowship of the church.

March Prairieland Parish Events

BROWNSDALE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Community Noon Lunch

Monday, March 17th

12 O'clock – Noon

Bring your friends! Serving:

hot dishes - Salads - Desserts - Beverages

FREE WILL DONATIONS

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SUMNER CENTER UMC CABIN FEVER DINNER.

Saturday, March 22nd -

4-7pm

Bring your friends! Serving

Sloppy Joes – Coleslaw – Chips

Cookies – Beverages

FREE WILL DONATIONS

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PARISH WIDE WOMENS APPRECIATION DINNER

Sunday, March 23rd.

6:00pm

Dexter UMC

Hosted by the Men's Group

Dinner & program



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Coming in Hot - By Kathy Hawkins

(Thank you, Kathy Hawkins, for sharing your gift of poetry with all of us!!!)

As a young dog experiences winter for only the second time
She apparently didn't remember that the weather can change on a dime
Soaking up the sun on a cold but somewhat sunny day
Chasing after squirrels that want to make her pay
Spending time scouting them out underneath the trees
She follows from branch to branch hoping to make them pay her fee
The squirrels with their cunning and devious ways
Have learned to scatter and confuse her staring gaze
The rest of the morning is spent traipsing around the farm
No other creatures around to give her alarm
Being called in to get her breakfast for the morn
Running at top speed before the cats could be warned
Jumping high to clear the steps onto the deck
Not realizing a dog can't skate on ice, oh what a wreck
Her rear sliding around and ending up coming in backwards
That's what you get for coming in fast with ice as a hazard
Lent is a time to slow down and keep your direction in check
Unlike a dog in know who prefers to come in hot when hitting the deck

Lent




Ash Wednesday – March 5, 2025
Hosted by: Sumner Center UMC
7 pm - No Meal served for this Service.

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Week 1 - Weds – March 12th
6:00pm meal served
Hosted by: Zion UMC, Sargeant

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Week 2 – Weds – March 19th

6:00pm meal served
Hosted by: Racine UMC

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Week 3 - Weds - March 26th
6:00pm meal served
Hosted by: Brownsdale UMC

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Week 4 – Weds – April 2nd
6:00pm meal served

Hosted by: Wykoff UMC

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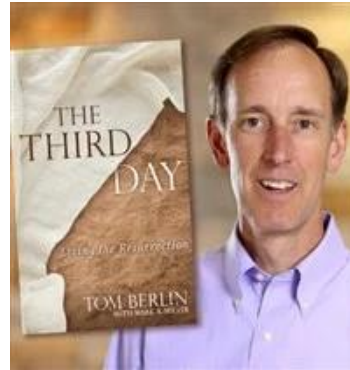
Week 5 – Weds – April 9th
6:00pm meal served

Hosted by: United Church of Grand Meadow

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Good Friday – April 18, 2025
7:00 pm

Hosted by: Dexter UMC
No Meal served for this Service



2025 Lenten Study:
'The Third Day'
by Bishop Tom Berlin

Bishop Lanette Plambeck and the Minnesota Conference Appointive Cabinet will host a Lenten study around the book "The Third Day". We as a parish will follow along with this weekly study as we gather each Wednesday evening for a brief light meal followed by a short video and discussion time in sanctuary.

In The Third Day: Living the Resurrection, Tom Berlin uses his gifts of storytelling and understanding the Scriptures to connect the reader to the experiences of several individuals around Jesus in his final days, focusing on new life and redemption rather than loss.

So, let us join Peter, Mary Magdalene, and Thomas as they feel the despair of losing Jesus and the surprise and joy that awaits them in the resurrection. This study traces events around these characters, along with Paul and the disciples at Emmaus, and how the resurrection transforms their lives.

If you are interested in purchasing a book for your own personal weekly meditation you may do so by ordering online at: Amazon, Christianbooks.com or Cokesbury.com

You do not need to purchase a book to join the Wednesday evening gatherings.

Rural Ministry Matters: Church Leader Support Group

WHEN

Friday, February 21, 2025 at 1:00 PM to 2:30 PM CT

Clergy and Laity are all welcome to join this group!

Rural Ministry Matters is a newly formed group to support those serving the Minnesota Annual Conference in rural settings. We had our first in person gathering in Brainerd in January, and it was attended by 25 people.

We will open with prayer, share in small breakout groups, and then leave space for folks to ask questions and share ideas. If you have a question to ask or something from your ministry you would like to share, we encourage you to send them to John Matthew (mrjohmatt@gmail.com) ahead of time.



Our mission is to gather as a community to provide hope, support, and share ideas for the specific challenges of rural ministry. It is our goal to gather quarterly in person and then meet the other months over zoom. In these gatherings, we will pray, share, connect, and rejoice in the multiple ways rural congregations make disciples of Jesus Christ and add to the vitality of their local community. This group is being formed and led by rural pastors and lay people from the Minnesota Annual Conference. Anybody with an affinity for rural ministry is welcome!

Upcoming Dates

Virtual Meetings: February 21 and March 21: Fridays at 1-2:30 p.m.

In-person Meeting: April 25: 10 a.m.-2 p.m., Hilltop UMC, Mankato

Information for Virtual Meetings: Email mrjohmatt@gmail.com to access the Zoom link.

Send an email to mrjohmatt@gmail.com and you will receive a response with the zoom link

Name: _____

Date: _____

Springtime

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

springbreak	chocolate	butterfly	umbrella	sunshine	daffodil	crawfish
vibrant	showers	rainbow	pastels	ladybug	holiday	goodies
flowers	buzzing	blossom	tulips	spring	rabbit	puddle
picnic	easter	carrot	bubble	bonnet	basket	seeds
peeps	march	lilac	grass	chick	candy	bunny
bloom	birds	april	rain	nest	lily	lamb
kite	hunt	eggs	duck	bees	new	may