

# Sumner Center Newsletter

## March 2026

With Spring just around the corner, I think it most appropriate to again bring forth these beautiful words from our sister in Christ Kathy Hawkins. Her gift of poetry is so uplifting!

### The Signs of Spring

By: Kathy Hawkins

The dreary days of winter are soon to be in the past  
As snow turns to rain and the earth comes alive at last  
Crying children wanting to be outside to run free  
Parents wondering if it will ever dry up so it can be  
A trip to the farm to let the kids exuberantly run  
The squeals and giggles describe all the fun  
Traipsing down the driveway through mud and muck  
Wanting to get to the puddles just like a duck  
Standing at the edge looking as the water ripples in the breeze  
The little ones know mom and dad would want them to freeze  
The thoughts of jumping in are so urgently strong  
Would it really be so awfully terribly wrong  
When coming from behind they hear boots approaching  
They turn to see the person they were hoping  
With a smile and a laugh in jumps the crazy lady  
Who on more than one occasion has been a bit shady  
The splashing begins with various sizes of rubber boots  
The squeals and hollers and oh the many hoots  
Puddles being emptied one splash at a time  
You would have thought they were losing their mind  
Exhaustion eventually flows through all of their bodies  
Clomping back to the house and snickering at the follies  
Met by the stern eyes of dear old mom and dad  
Knowing it's okay because they can't be mad  
The drips and the dribbles of mud off faces so sweet  
Surely they wouldn't be the ones to take the heat  
That crazy lady was leading the charge they said  
Grandma caused the uproar and should be the one sent to bed  
Mom and dad stood shaking their head with disbelief  
With a Grandma like that they were in for countless years of grief



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**

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**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)

## March 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>1</b> 11:15 am Worship 	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b> Lenten Gathering 6:00pm meal Hosted by: Racine UMC	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b> 
<b>8</b> 11:15 am Worship 	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b> Lenten Gathering 6:00pm meal Hosted by: Brownsdale UMC	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>15</b> 11:15am Worship 	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b> 	<b>18</b> Lenten Gathering 6:00pm meal Hosted by: Wykoff UMC	<b>19</b> Brownsdale UMC Noon Potluck Dinner	<b>20</b> 	<b>21</b>
<b>22</b> 11:15 am Worship  Womens Appreciation Dinner @ Dexter UMC 6 pm	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b> Lenten Gathering 6:00pm meal Hosted by: United Church of Grand Meadow	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>29</b> 11:15 am Worship 	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>				

# March Worship Schedule



**Second Sunday in**  
**March 1, 2026**

**Pastor Bridget Leading**

As the Lord has told us. We don't know everything, but we know some things. We know God asks us to do justice, to love mercy, and to walk humbly. We know that Jesus said blessed are the peacemakers and that when you do it to the least of these, you do it to him. Maybe that isn't enough to build a life on, but it is a start. With those thoughts in mind let us come together this day in praise and thanksgiving of Him who gives us the call to go and discover what is and what will be...



**Third Sunday in**  
**March 8, 2026**

**Pastor Jon Leading**

We are thirsty. And we just might be getting thirstier. Both physically and spiritually. Which leads me to ask... Did you ever do a kindness for someone and feel that the individual was not properly grateful? Did it make you less likely to help the next time around? When Jesus says, "Be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Matthew 5:48), do you think he meant putting up with complaints and overreactions when people's basic needs aren't being met? Do you think he meant, "Give drink to the thirsty, regardless of how they respond"?



**Fourth Sunday in**  
**March. 15, 2026**

**Pastor Jon Leading**

Do you know what it is like to be chosen? Our texts today is about being chosen by God. Most of us don't think that we were chosen, certainly not to be king like David. But surely, we chose the jobs that we do and the hobbies that we pursue and the service that we perform, didn't we? But God chose too. And not just in the past tense, God is still choosing.



**March 22, 2026**

**Pastor Bridget Leading**

Here at the end of the Lenten observance (well, almost the end anyway), we have hints of Resurrection. We have "a foretaste of glory divine," as the hymnist Fanny Crosby says. As if the Spirit and the lectionary preparers knew that we would need something to help us through the next couple of weeks. As if they knew that without this reminder, we would find it a very hard road as we made our way stumbling behind the Christ who suffers and dies for us.

**March 29, 2026**

**Pastor Bridget Leading**



The story of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem, tells us that after his celebrated arrival. He went into the Temple and looked around at everything. As we gather here for worship today may it be with a sense that Jesus has walked in too and is looking around.

May our eyes be open to see Him, may our hearts be ready to be seen by Him, may our worship be worthy of His presence, and may we be transformed so that we see the world through His eyes. Amen.

# Prairieland Parish Events

## BROWNSDALE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Community Noon Lunch

Thursday, March 19th

12 O'clock – Noon

Bring your friends! Serving:

hot dishes - Salads - Desserts - Beverages

FREE WILL DONATIONS

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## PARISH WIDE WOMENS APPRECIATION DINNER

Sunday, March 22<sup>rd</sup>.

6:00pm

Dexter UMC

Hosted by the Men's Group

Dinner & program



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# Lent



Prairieland Parish will be gathering as Christ's community each week as we rotate Sanctuaries – There will be A light meal starting at 6pm Followed by an informal worship/study. This is a beautiful opportunity for us to journey though the Lenten. Season together by uniting as a Parish and accepting each other's invitation to praise of His Name in each other's Holy Sanctuaries.

Week 2 – Weds – March 4th

6:00pm meal served

Hosted by: Racine UMC

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Week 3 - Weds - March 11th

6:00pm meal served

Hosted by: Brownsdale UMC

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Week 4 – Weds – March 18th

6:00pm meal served

Hosted by: Wykoff UMC

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Week 5 – Weds – March 25th

6:00pm meal served

Hosted by: United Church of Grand Meadow

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Good Friday – April 3, 2026

7:00 pm Hosted by: Dexter UMC

No Meal served for this Service



## Daily Lenten Scripture Reading Plan

<b>Day 12</b>	<b>Take a Break (Sunday, March 1<sup>st</sup> )</b>	Day 30	Luke 19-Luke 20
Day 13	Matthew 25-Matthew 26	Day 31	Luke 21-Luke 22
Day 14	Matthew 27-Matthew 28	Day 32	Luke 23-Luke 24
Day 15	Mark 1-Mark 3	<b>Day 33</b>	<b>Take a Break (Sunday)</b>
Day 16	Mark 4-Mark 6	Day 34	John 1-John 2
Day 17	Mark 7-Mark 9	Day 35	John 3-John 4
Day 18	Mark 10-Mark 12	Day 36	John 5-John 6
<b>Day 19</b>	<b>Take a Break (Sunday)</b>	Day 37	John 7-John 8
Day 20	Mark 13-Mark 14	Day 38	John 9-John 10
Day 21	Mark 15-Mark 16	Day 39	John 11-John 12
Day 22	Luke 1-Luke 3	<b>Day 40</b>	<b>Take a Break (Sunday)</b>
Day 23	Luke 4-Luke 6	Day 41	John 13-John 14
Day 24	Luke 7-Luke 9	Day 42	John 15-John 16
Day 25	Luke 10-Luke 12	Day 43	John 17-John 18
<b>Day 26</b>	<b>Take a Break (Sunday)</b>	Day 44	John 19-John 20
Day 27	Luke 13-Luke 14	Day 45	John 21 (Good Friday)
Day 28	Luke 15-Luke 16	Day 46	1 Corinthians 15
Day 29	Luke 17-Luke 18	<b>Day 47</b>	<b>It's Easter!</b>

**READ**  
 your Bible  
 & PRAY  
 every day  
 & you'll  
 grow,  
 grow,  
**GROW!**


# UMC Conference Article

## Faith Formation and Spiritual Formation: A path toward the “Fruit of the Spirit”

**By: Reid Baumann**

All of us are on a journey in life—and part of that journey for many people is faith formation and spiritual formation. Although these terms may sound similar, they differ. For they mean specific things in our lives along our path.

The United Methodist Church has its own definitions of faith formation and spiritual formation. Faith formation is the process by which disciples are made, and faith is made strong, by learning about faith and living it in our everyday lives. Faith formation is a lifelong endeavor and can start at any age.

Spiritual formation grows along with and complements faith formation. This place is reached through many means, such as prayer, scripture reading, meditation, fasting, and discernment. Discerning means listening for the movement of the Holy Spirit in our lives—letting the Spirit guide our actions by being open to the whisperings of God.

### **Faith formation**

Faith is formed by seeking a relationship with God. Teaching others about the faith, acting as a disciple, and trying to live life through a Christian lens can all be helpful parts of faith formation.

No one is too old or too young to engage in faith formation. Everyone can take their faith and share it with others as disciples, as well as grow in their faith their entire lives. Even a small, growing faith can be powerful. In Matthew 17:20, Jesus said, “Because you have so little faith. Truly I tell you, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you.”

Faith formation in our churches is often present for youth with activities like Sunday School, confirmation, and youth group. For adults, Bible Studies, prayer groups, and missions work help make disciples and strengthen faith. For all ages, Christian education helps our faith grow and thrive.

### **Spiritual formation**

Spiritual formation is a central aspect of United Methodism, as early founders John and Charles Wesley were seeking to live Christianity in a way that fulfilled their hearts and opened all believers to the moving of the Spirit. This religious aspect of Methodism was confirmed to John Wesley during his Aldersgate Experience on May 24, 1738, when he felt his “heart strangely warmed” and became spiritually convinced of his own salvation.

Listening to the Holy Spirit through prayer, meditation, and discernment allows all peoples to live a truly rich life by seeing evidence of the fruit of the Spirit in their everyday lives—and sharing that lived experience with others. This formation allows people to grow into the image of Christ through God’s grace, which is the action of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

These works of the Holy Spirit come to us in three ways: Prevenient, Justifying, and Sanctifying Grace. Prevenient Grace connects us with God even when we aren’t yet aware of God’s presence in our lives. Justifying Grace is when we become aware, accept God, and are forgiven. Sanctifying Grace is the ongoing spiritual formation process that allows us to act in a Christ-Like manner and thus reflect Christ in this world.

### **Many ways to grow in Faith and Spirit**

Faith formation and spiritual formation can take many forms, including through artistic expression, experiencing God’s creation, or simply taking a moment to breathe. Since the Holy Spirit can shape us in many different ways, it is important to be open to practices that are novel and unfamiliar, as well as familiar.

Baptism and Confirmation in the church are sacred moments where we commit to the development of faith and spiritual formation in others, while also recommitting to it in our own lives. It is a unique time to reexamine where we are with our own faith and spiritual formation.

Living the full breadth of our faith as Christ did makes us a disciple, and living true discipleship leads to a spiritual transformation, where the “Fruit of the Spirit”—such as love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control is present and shared with all we meet. (Galatians 5:22-23)

**This is the life-changing gift that grows from engagement in faith and spiritual formation.**

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

- AWAKENING
- BASKETBALL
- BLOSSOM
- DAFFODIL
- DAYLIGHT SAVING
- EASTER.
- EQUINOX
- FLOWER
- FRESH
- GREEN
- GROWTH
- HOLI
- KITE
- LEPRECHAUN
- LUCK
- MADNESS
- MARCH
- PARADE
- POT OF GOLD
- RAIN
- REBIRTH
- RENEWAL
- SHAMROCK
- SHOWERS
- SPRING
- ST. PATRICK'S DAY
- WINDY



WORD SEARCH DIRECTIONS: Find and circle the vocabulary words in the grid. Look for them in all directions including backwards and diagonally.

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