

MARCH 2026

THE CROWS NEST

SPRINGDALE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
MONTHLY NEWSLETTER



INSIDE THIS MONTH'S ISSUE

Rebecca's Reflections
Upcoming Events
February Worship
Lent: Turning Outward Together
Family Faith Night
Coins for Lent 2026
West Branch Food Pantry
Wednesday Night Discipleship
Conference & Circuit News
Ad Board Minutes
SUMC 2026 and Beyond Ministry Planning

BIRTHDAYS

2 - Mitchell Knoop
5 - Kimberly Bowles
7 - Paula Rogers
12 - Judy Curley
12 - Richard Frauenholz
16 - Joel Edge
16 - Jaclyn Grace
18 - Claire Grandt
21 - Kathy Knoop
21 - Zac Stout
22 - Kathy Grace
23 - Gusi Lopez
23 - Deborah Schoenfelder
23 - Kristen Wespheling
24 - Darrall Brick
24 - Rylee Grace
24 - Trish Irey
24 - Jessica LeDoux
24 - Ellie Miller
25 - James Schoenfelder
28 - Livy Baker
28 - Reta Gruwell
29 - Abby Bergmann
30 - Trent Tisinger
31 - Kim Hartz

ANNIVERSARIES

12 - Steven & Jessica Grace (21)
17 - Kaleb & Shannon Martin (5)
30 - TJ & Cassie Philipp (2)
Robert & Reta Gruwell

SUMC'S MISSION, VISION & VALUES

Mission

We exist as a church to make disciples, bringing persons to Jesus Christ and to Christ's community.

Vision

*The Church bulges with attendance; Babies cry in the back pew; and Cheerios can be found on the floor.

*Many people get their hands dirty serving God's church and God's children.

*Persons of all ages regularly meet together in every nook and cranny for spiritual support and nurturing.

*Congregations gives joyfully.

Values

*Everything we do is based on our worth as God's children and seeing that in others.

*We use all we have and are to serve God and God's people.

*We believe in joy, content to give thanks to the Lord in all things even through tough times of darkness.



REBECCA'S REFLECTIONS

The adult Sunday School class has been studying Adam Hamilton's book, "Simon Peter: Flawed but Faithful Disciple" this year. As we enter the season of Lent, our class has "arrived" in Jerusalem with Jesus and the disciples. What we are discovering as we look at the story from Simon Peter's eyes, is a constant struggle to be faithful when it seems easier to run away in fear. Simon Peter frequently made statements of commitment, for example, that he would never desert Jesus or run away. Yet when the difficult times arrived, Simon was often the first to collapse. At the moment in the courtyard of the high priest, when he could have professed his support for Jesus, in Jesus' hour of need, Peter instead denied three times that he even knew who Jesus was. Thankfully, this was not the end of Peter's story. After the resurrection, Peter went on to lead not only the church but to bring others to faith. He often preached about his own failings and failures.

Lent is a time for all of us to reflect on our faith and our commitment to that faith. It is a time for reflection, self-denial, and growth. There are lots of opportunities for spiritual growth this season—the Lenten Bible Study is not only in person on Thursday mornings at 9:00 am at the church, the study is also online on our Facebook page. There are videos linked to the study on Youtube. You can also read the scriptures for each Sunday in Lent, listed below, as a way of going deeper.

Join us for worship in March as we prepare for Holy Week and Easter.

Rebecca

CONGRATULATIONS, ELIAN DZANGUE!!



As our church member prepares to welcome her precious twins, a few members are organizing a card shower to help celebrate and support her.

If you feel led to participate, you may bring:

- Gift cards
- Diapers (all sizes welcome)
- Children's books

This is not a church-sponsored event, but a joyful opportunity to show love and encouragement.

Items may be dropped off at Springdale UMC by March 22.

Let's help her begin this new adventure surrounded by care and community.

Mommy to Bee

UPCOMING EVENTS

- March 4 - Discipleship Night @ WBUMC, 5:30 p.m.
 - March 5 - Lenten Study @ SUMC, 9 a.m.
 - March 9 - Family Faith Night; 6-6:45 p.m. @ SUMC
 - March 11 - Discipleship Night @ WBUMC, 5:30 p.m.; UMW @ SUMC, 6:30 p.m.
 - March 12 - Lenten Study @ SUMC, 9 a.m.
 - March 14 - District Leadership Training 9a.m. - Noon @ First UMC
 - March 18 - NO Discipleship Night (Spring Break)
 - March 19 - Lenten Study @ SUMC, 9 a.m.
 - March 23 - Bingo @ Crestview, 2:30 p.m.; Ad Board, 6 p.m.
 - March 25 - Discipleship Night @ WBUMC, 5:30 p.m.
 - March 26 - Lenten Study @ SUMC, 9 a.m.
 - March 29 - Palm Sunday, Donkey Walk 9:30 a.m.
 - April 2 - Maundy Thursday @ SUMC, 7 p.m.
 - April 3 - Good Friday Service @ WBUMC, 7 p.m.
 - April 5 - Easter; Sunrise Service @ SUMC 6:30 a.m.; Breakfast to follow; Worship with communion @ 10 a.m.
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MARCH WORSHIP

Theme for the Month:

March 1

Second Sunday in Lent, Communion

Scripture: John 3:1-17

Sermon: "Searching"

March 8

Third Sunday in Lent

Scripture: John 4:5-15

Sermon: "Thirsty"

March 15

Fourth Sunday in Lent; Birthday Sunday; Fellowship

Scripture: 1 Samuel 16:1-13

Sermon: "Forgotten"

March 22

Fifth Sunday in Lent

Scripture: John 11:1-6, 17-45

Sermon: "Grieving"

March 29

Palm Sunday; Donkey Walk

Scripture: Matthew 21:1-11

Sermon: "Hosana"

**Adult Sunday School at 9 a.m.
Wednesday Night Discipleship 5:30 p.m. - WBUMC**

SONG OF THE MONTH



LENT: TURNING OUTWARD TOGETHER

Paula Rogers
COME Chair

FAMILY FAITH NIGHT



2nd Monday of the month
6:00 PM - 6:45 PM



Springdale United
Methodist Church
554 290th Street
West Branch, IA 52358

We're starting something
new in March! A short,
relaxed Family Faith Night
once a month.

No weekly commitment.

Just food, faith, and time
together.

Everyone is welcome.



www.springdale.church

COINS FOR LENT 2026

During Lent, we are reminded to examine our lifestyles and ask, **"What can we do for others?"**

Part of faith formation at any age is compassion and offering a serving heart to our neighbors. We need to demonstrate compassion to others now more than ever. Lent is a good time to commit to giving money to a project that helps those in need.

One way to involve the family is to **collect coins during Lent** and donate the money after Easter. Follow our [Coins for Lent Giving Calendar](#) as a guide.

Choose a Project

If you decide to do this as a family or as a congregation, first determine where you would like your money to go. Regardless of their age, everyone should have a voice in the decision. Maybe a community food bank could use funds to purchase food for the hungry. Perhaps you could contribute to a project beyond your local community.

Heifer International is an agency that addresses needs around the world and helps families become self-sufficient in sustainable ways. The United Methodist Church and Heifer International share a vision of ending hunger and poverty. You can find out more about Heifer International at Heifer.org. You may know of another project to which you would like to give your money. Visit the United Methodist **General Board of Global Ministries** website at <https://umcmmission.org> to find Advance mission opportunities to donate money. Ask within your United Methodist annual conference or district to find other local projects to support. Select an agency that would appreciate your contribution.

How to Collect the Coins

Once you have selected a project, decide what coins you want to collect. You may want to contribute a quarter for every item on the giving calendar. You may want to simply collect loose change and give whatever coins you have for each item. [Interesting conversations can be had here regarding the elimination of the penny from our money system.]

Now make a container to collect the money. Use a plastic tub, jar, or a coin bank that you aren't currently using in your home. Decorate it and place it where the entire family can see it (and contribute to it).

Items on the daily guide will remind us of all we have and how little others may have. Each Sunday, pray as a family for the project and the people who will benefit from your gifts. Our giving begins on Ash Wednesday and concludes with Holy Saturday. During Lent, Sundays are for worship and praise to God and are reflected with a weekly day of prayer.

By Kevin Johnson



WEST BRANCH FOOD PANTRY DONATIONS



March

Pancake Mix and Syrup

April

Canned Fruit and Fruit Cups

43 pounds donated in 2026
2% of our goal

WEST BRANCH CLOTHES CLOSET

Coming Soon! Opening March 24th

Apparel & Accessories – Everything Available at No Cost

A new community clothing closet is starting in West Branch! This isn't just a store — it's neighbors helping neighbors. Our goal is simple: provide free clothing and accessories to members of our community while creating a place where generosity makes a direct impact.

Spring is in the air — it's the perfect time to declutter. Items you no longer need can go right back into our community and bless someone else at no cost.



We are currently accepting donations of:

- Gently used, clean everyday clothing from Infant to Adult sizes.
- Workwear
- Shoes in good condition
- Gently used winter gear

All donations must be clean and scheduled for drop off or dropped off during operation hours. No clothing donations can be left outside of the clothing closet or building. Due to limited space, the closet workers have the right to refuse certain items.

- ☐ Address: 225 N. Maple St. (Room next to the Food Pantry)
- ☐ Contact Information: Michelle Ritter
- ☐ Opening March 24th.

Every Tuesday from 4:00 PM – 6:00 PM; and
Every third Saturday from 9:00 AM to Noon.

Together, we can strengthen our community — one neighbor at a time.

Please note that this is different from the Bear Closet. If you have West Branch Apparel you would like to donate, Please continue to give those items to the Bear Closet.

WEDNESDAY NIGHT DISCIPLESHIP

5:30 p.m. - PK-6th grade classes meet in classrooms
6:10 p.m. - Family Worship
6:30 p.m. - Family Supper in Fellowship Hall
(Parent/Guardian required for students in 5th grade and under)
7-8 p.m. 7-12 grade Youth Group

CONFERENCE, DISTRICT AND CIRCUIT NEWS



For More Visit:

[Iowa Conference](#)
[Southeast District](#)
[United Women in Faith](#)

District Superintendent

Rev. Brian Oliver

Email: brian.oliver@iaumc.org

Phone: (319) 382-0436

District Leadership Training

March 14 @ First UMC in North Liberty 9 a.m. - Noon

[You are asked to register by Friday, March 6th.](#)

Critical Conversations and Conflict Transformation

Presented by: Rev. Ryan Christenson

How are you and your church at coming together with passion and ideas? When important conversations arise, do you navigate them constructively—or does the fire quickly burn out? Sometimes, those sparks of creativity and conviction can lead to harmony and world-changing mission, but other times they ignite dissonance and division.

The truth is: conflict happens. “Conflict” simply is the presence of two or more ideas held by people that care about them. That’s why it’s essential to equip church leaders with the skills to engage in critical conversations and transform conflict.

This 90-minute workshop will provide practical tools, teaching, and strategies you can take back to your congregation. Together we will:

Explore the nature of conflict and why it matters.

Review best practices for speaking and listening well.

Reflect on personal tendencies in conflict situations.

Consider actionable strategies for your local church.

Join us to transform conflict into an opportunity for deeper connection and stronger ministry.

Workshops:

Aye-Yi-Al: Artificial Intelligence's Ethics and Opportunities For Ministry

Presented by: Mr. Lyle Muller

We can ignore artificial intelligence, or we can embrace it for our ministries. Either way, it is here, and it presents ethical issues we must consider while also realizing the newly evolving ways we can use it for deeper exploration of the Bible and spreading the Gospel to others.

Missions in a Connectional System

Presented by: Rev. Michelle Williamson

This will give us a chance to look at where our Mission apportionments, go; as well as looking at Special Offerings and the wide variety of Conf. and Denominational Advance Special. There will be handouts and lists with descriptions of the many mission opportunities we have.

From Firefighting to Fruit-Tending—Spiritual Leadership for Church Boards and Committees

Presented by: Rev. Chris Childs

If leadership were mostly about having the right answers, the church would already be thriving. Yet many boards and committees find themselves caught in reactive decision making, conflict avoidance, and constant firefighting—often with the best of intentions.

This workshop invites participants to reimagine spiritual leadership not as problem-solving under pressure, but as cultivating a non-anxious, hopeful presence grounded in clarity about God’s mission and purpose for the congregation. Drawing on practical tools and leadership practices developed at Grace Ottumwa, we will explore how emotionally healthy leadership helps churches discern direction, resist the pull of anxiety-driven urgency, and refocus the church on its missional calling.

Participants will reflect on the qualities they seek in leaders, the mission field their congregation is uniquely called to reach, and how sustained focus on that calling reshapes the work of boards and committees—especially when the fires are loud.

Navigating Resources for an Older Adult

Whether you are an older adult or a caregiver for an older adult looking for services it may be difficult to know where to start. Join us for a presentation on navigating resources available in our community and how to access them with Johnson County Aging Specialist, Jeff Kellbach. Jeff will discuss where to start and who can help when an issue arises.

Open to all who have an interest in this important topic.

When: 9 a.m. Sunday, March 8

Where: North Liberty First, a United Methodist Community of Faith

AD BOARD MINUTES

Springdale UMC Leadership Board meeting Minutes

February, 23, 2026

Attendance: Rebecca, Steven, Jessica G., Lynda, Julie, and Paula

1. Opening Devotion and Prayer
 1. The Struggle of a Servant
3. SPRC
 1. April 2 - Maundy Thursday
 2. April 5 - Sunrise Service 6:30, breakfast, Worship 10 a.m.
 3. April 12 - Pulpit Exchange - Diane to present about her trip to Argentina
 4. April 19 - Steven Preaching
5. Card Shower for Elian (gifts from church family) Gift Cards, Books, Diapers
 1. Bring gifts to church by the morning of March 22
7. Drum Set
 1. Jessica will reach back out to the school to try and get a solid answer as to whether they want it or not.
9. Paula has completed Certified Lay Servant training and will complete Certified Lay Speaker Training in April. Steven will need to be recommended to maintain his Certified Lay Speaker designation. Rebecca will contact DS to get a Charge Conference scheduled.
10. Goal Review
11. Next Meeting - March 23, 2026 @ 6 p.m.
12. Closing Prayer

SUMC 2026 AND BEYOND MINISTRY GOALS AND PLANNING

Goal

Key Action Steps

Timeline

Resources Needed

Increase outreach

Identify at least 3 community events for presence or sponsorship; develop simple materials; set up volunteer sign-ups

Ongoing

Flyers; social media posts; volunteer schedule

Increase family attendance

Host family-friendly worship & outreach events quarterly (e.g. picnic, mini-VBS, outdoor service)

Ongoing

Family-friendly activities; food budget

Show appreciation for current attendees

Create quarterly recognition Sundays (e.g. "Birthday Sunday"); thank-you notes

Ongoing

Cards, refreshments

Organize and store church photos

Gather photos; assign a small group to organize photos and develop a storing system (digital and/or physical)

Q2 2026

Photo boxes and/or scanner

ADA Building

Finalize accessibility plan; obtain bids; research grant opportunities

Q1 2026

Contractor bids and grant research

Grow worship attendance by 5% each year

Track attendance; launch invite campaign; feature personal testimonials on social media

Ongoing

Data tracking sheet; social media posts

Separate praise/worship time

Pilot an alternative or contemporary service once per month

Q2 2026

Committee

Outdoor worship/picnic

Schedule at park or church lawn; plan lunch & music

Summer/Fall 2026

Committee

Bi-Annual Bible/Book Study

Identify a study

Q1 & Q3 2026

Curriculum/book; identify a study leader

Lenten Devotional Book

Collect devotions from members; publish by Lent.

Q1 2026

Printing or digital platform

Bless the Animals Sunday

Select date; promote

Fall 2026

Marketing, supplies

Christmas Caroling

Organize routes and songbooks

December 2026

Committee

Weekly blog devotions

Create schedule of authors; make weekly posts

Q1-Q4 2026

Website access

Update Church Directory

Collect info/photos; publish printed & digital copy

Q4 2026

Camera; printing; design

Worship at Little Bear

Contact campground; schedule annual summer service

Annually through 2027

Volunteer; bulletins; sound system

Mission day to Matthew 25 (CR)

Coordinate service team

Annually through 2027

Volunteers

Engage with local celebrations

Participate in at least 2 community festivals each year

Ongoing

Volunteers; identify celebrations

Better utilize west wing & closet

Inventory space; create multipurpose plan (storage ministry use)

Q2 2026

Volunteer

Church-wide clean-up/purge

Annual spring cleaning day

Q2 each year

Create cleaning list and recruit volunteers

Grow connections within circuit

Host or join shared worship/mission events

Ongoing

Identify opportunities

Weekend Retreat (Youth and/or adult)

Plan small retreat at local camp

2026-2027

Identify programming; location; date; promote

Rebuild youth programming

Recruit 2 volunteers; plan quarterly youth events and/or Sunday programming

Q2 2026

Volunteers; curriculum

155th Anniversary Celebration

Form committee at least 1 year in advance; plan worship; meal; and community event

2029

Committee formed by 2028

Revised Yule Buffet

Refresh menu & decor; invite community

Annually beginning 2028-2030

Committee

Increase pastoral support (1/2 to full-time)

Stewardship campaign; reassess budget & needs

2027-2029

Assessments

Long-term stewardship study

Implement multi-week giving & vision series

2026-2028

Committee

Upgrade/update Kitchen

Assess needs, fundraise, and complete renovation

2027-2029

Committee

Seal Time Capsule

Identify items to include

Q1 2026

Announcement as to date

Sew personal dignity kits for Midwest Mission

Recruit sewers or those willing to learn

Q2 2026

Machines, sewing materials