

The Circuit Rider

MARCH 2023



Centenary United Methodist Church

PO Box 111
82 S Hancock Street
Pentwater, MI 49449

Rev. Dr. Vaughn W. Thurston-Cox, Pastor



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Office Hours: Mon - Thur, 9am - 12pm

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CUMC Facebook news

Our Vision: To be the Breath of God in Community
Our Values: Loving God, Serving Others, Welcoming All

Circuit Rider



The Pastor's Pen

Rev. Dr. Vaughn Thurston-Cox

I am so grateful, and so very full. A bit jet lagged, but mostly grateful and full. Thank you for giving me time away to walk where Jesus walked. I imagine you will hear about it as we walk with him through the Gospel stories which mean so much to us. Some places impressed themselves more deeply into me than others, the Church of the Synagogue among them. A simple Crusader chapel, it isn't easy to find. We walked through the narrow, meandering streets of old Nazareth until we came to place where a short flight of

stairs ended in a door with a simple sign above it: Synagogue. It's easy to believe that most people probably walk right past it.

While people continue to worship there, it remains austere: gray stone walls, wooden benches, and a few plastic chairs. I can't take credit for the picture, but it is a good one. At least part of the structure goes back to the twelfth century, the time of the crusaders. Nazareth was just a small village at the time of Jesus. There wouldn't have been need for more than a single synagogue, and they were told it was there. The building didn't survive, but this is the place where Jesus worshipped as a child and then adult. It was where he listened to the words of Scripture and learned to pray. And he did this all in community.



Continued on page 3

Church of the Synagogue

The Pastor's Pen continued

When you dig into the word “synagogue” that’s what it means, the place of gathering. A community. God in Jesus didn’t only choose to show up on earth, he chose to be with us. This is why being church matters so much to me. It is the way of Jesus, who lived the human life to its fullest. In a time when I can turn on my television, or join a Facebook group and stream a worship service, community matters. Touch matters. Sharing my life with others in a meaningful way matters.

As the weeks and months pass I hope to continue sharing the blessing I received while on pilgrimage and plan on doing so in a special way Sunday, March 5. I hope as many of you as can will be here.

Be the Breath, *Pastor Vaughn*



Centenary United Women of Faith *Annual Lenten Brunch*

Guest Speaker
Rev. Sue Beckman

Tuesday March 28, 10 am in Fellowship Hall

Cost: Free of charge

Please RSVP by March 23: 231-869-5900, pentwaterumc@gmail.com

Invite your friends and family to join us

Centenary United Methodist Church

March 2023

Month of March at a Glance

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Key: Centenary Activities Community Activities			1 Community Dinner 4:30 - 5 pm Take out 5 - 6 pm Dine in 6:30 pm Bell Choir	2 10 am Senior Stretch 7 pm Zoom Lenten Study	3 10 am Prayer & Squares	4
5 9:15 United Methodism Study 10:30 am Worship Communion Sunday 11:30 Fellowship Time	6 10 am Senior Stretch	7 10:30 am Program Coordination Team 2 pm Meditation Group 6:30 pm Euchre	8 Community Dinner 4:30 - 5 pm Take out 5 - 6 pm Dine in 6:30 pm Bell Choir	9 10 am Senior Stretch 11:30 am Service Club 7 pm Jr. Women's Club 7 pm Zoom Lenten Study	10	11
12 9:15 United Methodism Study 10:30 am Worship 11:30 am Fellowship Time	13 10 am Senior Stretch 11:30 am Finance & Operations Team	14 10:30 Worship Team 6:30 pm Euchre	15 Community Dinner 4:30 - 5 pm Take out 5 - 6 pm Dine in 6:30 pm Bell Choir	16 10 am Senior Stretch 11:30 am Service Club 7 pm Zoom Lenten Study	17 10 am Prayer & Squares	18 11:00 am Michigan Dunes NSDAR
19 9:15 United Methodism Study 10:30 am Worship 11:30 am Church Potluck	20 9 am Caregivers Support 10 am Senior Stretch 6:30 pm Lake Assoc'n	21 9 am UWF Board 2 pm Meditation Group 6 pm Church Council 6 pm West MI SAIL 6:30 pm Euchre	22 4:30 - 5 pm Community Dinner 6 pm Brownie Troop 6:30 pm Bell Choir 6:30 Property Mgmt	23 10 am Senior Stretch 11:30 am Service Club 7 pm Zoom Lenten Study	24 10 am Prayer & Squares	25
26 9:15 United Methodism Study 10:30 am Worship 11:30 am Fellowship Time	27 April Circuit Rider articles due 10 am Senior Stretch 1 pm PSC Board	28 10 am Lenten Brunch 6:30 pm Euchre	29 Community Dinner 4:30 - 5 pm Take out 5 - 6 pm Dine in 6:30 pm Bell Choir	30 10 am Senior Stretch 11:30 am Service Club 7 pm Zoom Lenten Study	31 10 am Prayer & Squares	

Quiet Corner - *Thoughts and Prayers for a Praying Community*

From Darkness to Light

Christine Valters Paintner writes in ***Sacred Places*** and ***Sacred Time***:

“Winter call us into the grace of stillness and incubation, knowing the dark has her own wisdom that must be embraced before spring arrives again.”

What if winter was a gift that you needed to unwrap slowly and with great care? What gift might that offer for your own journey of discernment?



“Embracing the darkness—does not mean carrying a light into the dark, it means walking right into the darkness and exploring its landscape so that our other senses become heightened and attuned.”

What does the God of “hidden things” reveal to you in holy darkness?

Wendell Berry writes in “*To Know the Dark*” from ***The Selected Poems of Wendell Berry***:

“To go in the dark with a light is to know the light.
To know the dark, go dark, Go without sight
and find that the dark, too, blooms and sings,
and is traveled by dark feet and dark wings.”

From Barbara Brown Taylor’s book, ***Learning to Walk in the Dark***: “We learn so much through the darkest hours. We can all experience blessings that come through the times of darkness.”

From Prayers for a Planetary Pilgrim

Gracious God of the Cosmos, we are so grateful for your presence as we experience the winter hours of darkness and then light. Releasing our fears and grief, we come to sit in your presence assured that you know us better than we know ourselves...and you love us.

“As I prepare for sleep, may I join the seeds of plants that sleep in the long night of winter, as they

Quiet Corner - continued



await the sunrise of spring.
May I let go of this day with faith,
in the conviction that with
unconditional love you watch over
all that you have created.

May the hunger in my heart for
goodness, for truth, and for love
Remind me that you, and you
alone are the feast that satisfies.

O Guardian of Galaxies, Mother of
the Cosmos, and Father of Stars
beyond counting, may I sleep in
you tonight, Amen.

And from one of my favorite books, ***A Testament of Devotion*** by Thomas R. Kelly, comes my favorite quote of all time which I have shared with you in the past:

The Light Within

“Deep within us all there is an amazing inner sanctuary of the soul, a holy place, a Divine Center, a speaking voice, to which we may continuously return. Eternity is at our hearts, pressing upon our time-worn lives, warming us with intimations of an astounding destiny, calling us home unto Itself. Yielding to these persuasions, gladly committing ourselves in body and soul, utterly and complexly, to the Light Within, is the beginning of true life. It is a dynamic center, a creative life that presses to birth within us. It is a Light Within which illumines the face of God and casts new shadows and new glories upon the face of men. It is a seed stirring to life if we do not choke it. It is the Presence in our midst. Here is the Slumbering Christ, stirring to be awakened, to become the soul we clothe in earthly form and action. And He is within us all. “

Peace be with you in the darkness and the light. Sandy Lyon

From the Prayers & Squares group

“Though I do not believe that a plant will spring up where no seed has been, I have great faith in a seed. Convince me that you have a seed there, and I am prepared to expect wonders.” *Henry David Thoreau*

As we enter the month of March a quickening of new life begins to emerge. We know that Spring is right around the corner. We anticipate the gradual return of flowers, a tinge of green, milder temperatures and a flurry of birdsong.

So too, as we focus on our ministry of providing hope and comfort through the quilts we provide to those experiencing pain and suffering, it's important to realize that 'seeds of new life' are being planted; sometimes, in physical form as many of our recipients have returned to health. Yet we know that for those whose recovery hasn't happened in a visible way, they are still being given new life. The scrapbook that we've kept since the beginning of our ministry is filled with photographs of quilt recipients...as well as anyone involved in 'tying' the quilts...sporting expressions of joy, peace and gratitude.

When “one of our own” is deeply in need of an infusion of grace it brings home, for me, how essential it is for our 'family of Christ' to know itself as us in wholeness. One of the quilts Prayers & Squares prepared this month was for Dale Trierweiler, Mark's brother. Dale has recently begun chemotherapy for cancer.

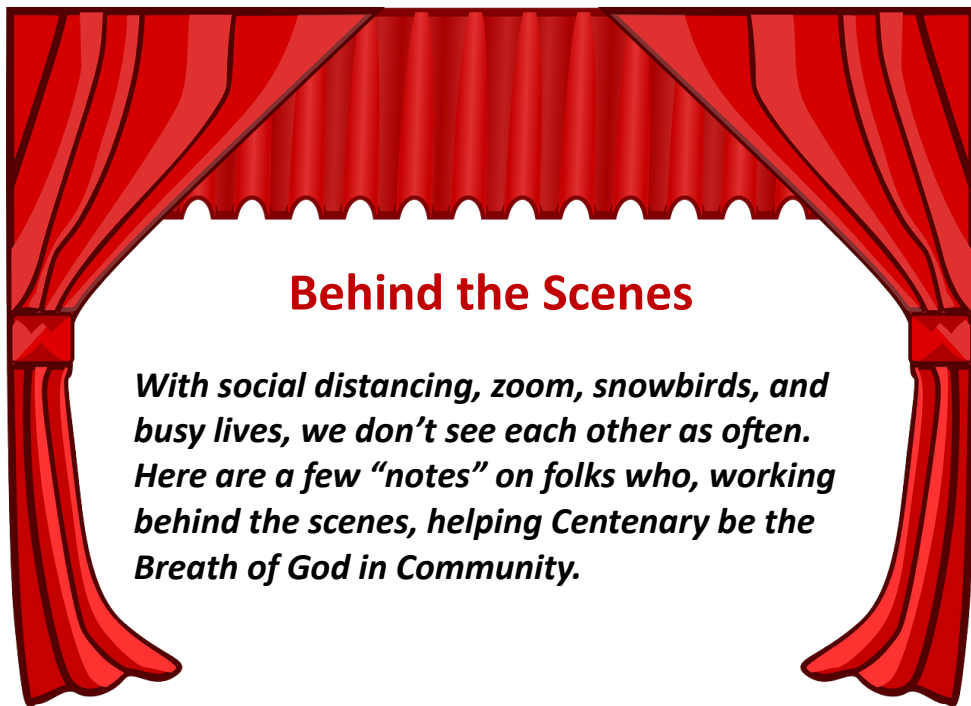
There were seven children in Mark's family of origin. Dale is Mark's last surviving sibling. Our hearts go out to Mark and his family. Facing one's mortality in such a profound way is daunting. Yet, God uses everything for good. We trust. We comfort. We pray. We witness. We love. When Pastor Vaughn first came to UMC I really liked the metaphor he reintroduced, “be the breath of God”. It's such a powerful way to live! So, we also 'breathe' with Mark and his family in this time of vulnerability...so they can experience 'new life'.



We continue, as the Prayers & Squares team to offer hope of new life through the beauty and prayers invested in our quilts. May we all plant seeds this month that produce faith and trust in a greater good.

Welcome to March!

Be blessed - **Carrie Roberts**



Behind the Scenes

With social distancing, zoom, snowbirds, and busy lives, we don't see each other as often. Here are a few "notes" on folks who, working behind the scenes, helping Centenary be the Breath of God in Community.

Who counts the collection?

On Mondays, **Patti Davidson** with at least one volunteer, usually **Judy Jankowski, Ellen Hamburger, or Susan Hacker**, counts out the contents to deposit and record on the donor's account. This also includes our donations received online. The software---always honor and respect your software because you need it---prints out reports that are reconciled and statements for all our contributors. All maintained with confidentiality in mind. Like to help? Just let Patti know.

Who writes the checks?

The budget and disbursement of funds must be in other hands. **John Faas** as treasurer writes checks for our bills and classifies the expenses (supplies, salaries, electricity, and all manner of things). And, while they do speak regularly, financial secretary and treasurer are absolutely separate in operation. John is also looking forward to working with **Janet Waidelich** as assistant treasurer.

Who does the dishes?

Many clean hands. Our Community Dinner volunteers are **Tim Barany, Eric Duval, Kyle Jansen, Bob Jeffries, Roy Martens, Diane Sanford, Mark & Linda Trierweiler, Bart Zachrich**, and **you** if you can - we would love the help! Pots and pans are at the new upgraded sinks, the Hobart does about everything else, and we have a home style dishwasher for coffee hour, service club, Lenten Breakfasts, potlucks, funeral luncheons, etc.

Who takes out the garbage?

Many people take out the garbage and recycles on Monday. On Wednesday nights the clean up crew takes out several loads, thanks to **Jerry Overla, Bob Jefferies, the kitchen crew**, and all who keep up with cleaning.

Anne Soles

Service Opportunity!



We are looking for help and fresh ideas for decorating the tables in Fellowship Hall and the annual

decorating for Christmas.

If you have an interest in one or the other, please contact the office ...

... 231-869-5900, pent-waterumc@gmail.com





Our United Women of Faith are collecting **NEW** gloves and mittens for the Pentwater Elementary School children during February and March.

If you would like to contribute to our LOVE Project, please put them in the glove and mitten box in the office entry.

Thank you!

Church Council Meeting Minutes

Centenary United Methodist Church - Pentwater Church Council - DRAFT Minutes - February 21, 2023

Members Present: Bart Zachrich, Pastor Vaughn Thurston-Cox, Shannon Larson, Patti Davidson, Beth Russell, Sandy Lyon, David DeNolf, Elaine Curtis George VanScoyoc (Zoom), Jean Russell, Elaine Konyha

Meeting opened at 6:05 with Pastor Vaughn offering an opening prayer.

A motion to approve the Minutes of January 17 was offered by Beth Russell and seconded by Jean Russell. Motion passed unanimously.

Pastor Vaughn presented a mini lesson on Theory U. He encouraged Council members to keep an open mind and an open heart. If we want to help the church move forward, it is important to suspend the voice of cynicism in order to maintain relationships here and out in the community.

David DeNolf shared several handouts about SMART goals. Our next step after identifying our values is to define our goals. SMART goals should be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time bound. Goals will help us turn our dreams into reality. He challenged each of the Council members to come up with two goals for the next meeting. One individual goal and one for the Church.

David and Bart have met with the Program Coordination Committee, chaired by Anne Soles, about creating goals for each of our ministry teams. They suggested that we look at making sure that each of our ministry teams are aligned with our mission, vision, and values.

Bart proposed a Saturday morning work day where Council members and Ministry team leaders meet to work together on aligning our values and creating goals with input from our Ministry Teams. Possible date is April 29 from 9 am – 1 pm with a break for lunch.

Pastor Vaughn asked for input regarding the Ash Wednesday service because of the hazardous weather being predicted. This was going to be a community service with Father Sam from the Episcopal church, Ron Christians from the Baptist church and Pastor Lenora from St. Paul United Methodist church. Since Pastor Lenora has Covid, Eric Bankstrom from the Methodist Camp has agreed to help lead the service. The imposition of ashes could be done as part of our Sunday morning service. Service could be live on Facebook but the imposition of ashes could not be part of the service. Another option would be to have the service Sunday evening.

Elaine Konyha volunteered to take minutes at the next meeting.

We still have a vacancy on the Church Council. Bart will get the nomination committee back together. Possible names mentioned to fill the vacancy are Janet Waidelich and Robin Marten.

Next meeting is March 21, 2023.

Respectfully submitted, Patti Davidson

Property Management Meeting Minutes

Property Management Meeting Minutes

February 8, 2023

Opening Prayer: Mat Hacker

Present: Bart Zachrich, John Faas, Jerry Overla, Roy Martens, Jim Crum, Mat Hacker

1. John reported he has met with the city building inspector and there don't appear to be any problems with our current plan. He will be getting estimates from Ruggles for construction of the sign base and a review of tuck point and sealer needs of the church exterior bricks. We are nearing the 10-year life of the current seal program. We need to get an estimate on the electronic sign that will go in the base of the brick structure.
2. Stain Glass windows: Materials are due by next week. Installation will depend on weather conditions.
3. Lower-level window replacement. Will complete painting and outdoor finishing touch-ups this spring.
4. Parsonage front door. The door will be ordered this week with an expected arrival of 6 to 8 weeks. We will install the door when it arrives.
5. John presented the current budget numbers and explained some of the various accounts the committee is responsible for. Also discussed the current plan to set aside funds for long term repair projects and funds received from the Ludington church.
6. Update on progress of "Security Review". Study committee is reviewing information from other groups. Roy volunteered to participate on this committee since he was a part of the group at the Baptist Church that developed their security program.
7. Update on freezer seal repairs. Seals have been ordered. The delay in getting the seals was due to a need to prepay for the order.
8. Update on wall divider in Wesley room. We will be getting estimates for this project. There was a brief discussion on the need for the divider. This will be re-reviewed once we have estimates in hand.
9. We reviewed the list of long-term projects and assigned individuals to get estimates. Roy will cover items 1 and 2. John will cover item 3 and 8. The Richey's will cover item 4. Mat will cover item 5. Bart will cover item 6. As we get information it will be added to the existing list.
10. Discuss needs for Winter Farmer's Market event February 11. John will handle the removal of tables and chairs after the Service Club meeting on Thursday. Jerry will replace the chairs and table on Saturday after the event.
11. Discussed the need to replace the electric soap dispensers with pump style dispensers in the kitchen area and other areas as the electronic devices are removed. Jerry is replacing the dispensers.
12. Roy, Jim and Dan will be replacing/repairing the window ledge at the top of the stairway to the sanctuary.
13. Water heater replacement at parsonage. The water heater will need to be replaced in the near future. The pipes connecting the water heater to the water supply are badly rusted and could develop a slow leak at any time. Plan is to replace the water heater when leak develops or when pastor is on vacation.
14. Discussed the possibilities of lighting the exterior of the church during nighttime hours to enhance the visibility of our beautiful building. This may be done in concert with the new sign project or be free standing. Further discussion will follow.

PROJECTS TO BE DONE AS FUNDS ARE AVAILABLE-ALL CURRENTLY ON HOLD

1. Parsonage roof replacement. Cost TBD
2. Parsonage siding replacement. Cost TBD
3. Sound system needs to be updated. Cost TBD
4. Sprinkler system for south side of church.

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Property Management Meeting Minutes continued

5. Parsonage deck project. Cost TBD
6. Fire sprinkler system at church. Cost TBD
7. Rekeying the church to include electronic locks on the NW entry. Estimate \$4000 to \$20000
8. Electric message screen in the entryway and possible fellowship hall. No estimate.
9. Possible air exchange system for the sanctuary. Cost TBD

Next meeting March 8, 2023, at 6:30.



Caregiver Support Group Change of Meeting Time

The Caregiver Support Group is moving its meeting time to 9:00 am, on the 3rd Monday of each month. Anyone from the congregation or community who is providing care for a spouse, parent, or other is invited to attend. We talk about resources, needs, events and care issues.

Monday, March 20th is our next session.

Stay in touch with us weekly through our Sermon Mail Service.



Many of you enjoy receiving the Circuit Rider every month. We also provide a weekly mailing which includes the gospel reading, sermon, bulletin, and weekly news. This has been a wonderful way to stay in touch with the church if you are unable to attend services. We would be happy to include you in the mailing. Just send us an email pentwaterumc@gmail.com or call the office 231-869-5900 to let us know you are interested.



Mercedes Sayles
Kitty Kokx
Verna Gregwer
Betty Graham
Ronda Hamelen Jenkins
Tim Zeeman
Lynn Voorheis



Cancer Treatments

Dale Trierweiler
Kaylum Dicks
Tammy
Suzanne Richey
Richard Wild
Father of Kim Kokx
Lori Tupper
Jane Jocke
Gayle Walker

*Names will remain on the list for four weeks and they can be resubmitted.
Please submit updates or corrections to the Pastor*

Birthdays

Katee Heath	03/08
Millie Petersen Hamlin	03/12
Karen J. St.Denis	03/15
Shannon Larson	03/15
Keith Wells	03/17
Jim MacGregor	03/28
Sylvia Shrauger	03/31



Anniversaries

Steve & Beth Russell	03/20
Matt & Susan Hacker	03/22



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Electronic gifts are fast and secure, and they reduce administrative costs, allowing more of every dollar to fund the important work we are called to do.

- Give anytime, anywhere to your favorite funds
- Schedule and manage recurring donations
- Make one-time donations to special appeals
- Pay for events, programs and other activities

If you would like to give electronically, visit our website or contact the church office.



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