



April 11, 2025

GROWING IN CHRIST TO SERVE THE WORLD

FINDING HOPE IN GRIEF



Our family recently experienced a time of deep grief after saying goodbye to our sweet dog, Daisy. She had been a beloved part of the Parks family for nearly 14 years, bringing us constant joy and companionship. On Friday, March 28, we had to let her go, and that weekend was filled with tears and heartache.

Even as I stepped into Sunday morning that week, I found myself still emotional. Loss takes time to process. I still catch myself glancing at the front window as I back out of our driveway, expecting to see Daisy watching from her favorite blue bench. I still look for her in her usual spots around the house and yard. Though her passing wasn't unexpected, it still hit hard. Denial often becomes a quiet companion when we don't want to face what's ahead.



In my grief, I was reminded of another Friday—one that took place over 2,000 years ago. On that day, Jesus's followers were also overwhelmed with grief. They had watched—or heard about—the arrest, torture, and crucifixion of the one they had left everything to follow. Their teacher. Their friend. Their hope. With His death, they were left shattered, hiding in fear and confusion.

What's striking is that Jesus had tried to prepare them. He told them what would happen—that He would suffer, die, and rise again. (See Mark 8:31–33, 9:30–32,

10:32–34; Matthew 16:21, 17:22–23, 20:18–19.) But like many of us in the face of loss, they couldn't fully hear it, believe it, or understand it.

As followers of Christ today, we live on the other side of the resurrection. We know what happened on the third day. The tomb was empty. Christ conquered death. And because of that, we have the hope of eternal life. Still, there are many around us who may not yet know the joy of the resurrection. Some are walking through grief, fear, or confusion—just as the disciples did in those days between the cross and the empty tomb.

As we move through Holy Week and draw closer to Easter Sunday, I encourage you to be prayerful and watchful. Is there someone in your life who needs to hear the truth of Jesus? Someone who needs to be reminded—or told for the first time—that hope is alive?

May you experience the comfort of Christ, the promise of the empty tomb, and the grace of resurrection life this Easter season.

Pastor Helen



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Camp Sunday

Sunday, April 13
7:30 AM to 10:30 AM

ENJOY BREAKFAST PREPARED AND SERVED BY THE CONFIRMATION CLASS
FREE WILL DONATION GOES TOWARDS CAMP SCHOLARSHIPS

PALM SUNDAY

APRIL 13
8:15 AM AND 10:15 AM

ADOPT A STUDENT

April 13 & April 20

Donate \$300 to send a student to Summer Games University this Summer.

4:12

Pick up a "student" from the table in The Center to send to camp and pray for their camp experience.

Free will donations can be made online or by placing a donation in Joy Box marked "Camperships"

GOOD FRIDAY

IT IS FINISHED

APRIL 18 AT 6:30 PM
MARION METHODIST SANCTUARY

Hygiene Kits

It's again time to collect items for the Midwest Missions Hygiene Kits. These kits are distributed to people in the midst of a disaster around the world as well as at home. Marion Methodists have always responded generously to this mission. Please purchase as many kits as you choose, place items in a gallon plastic bag, and place them in the Mission Depot in The Center by May 31. Thank you.

- 1 hand towel - no kitchen towels
- 1 washcloth - no dishcloths
- 1 Adult toothbrush (no multipacks)
- 1 bar soap - 3-4 oz.
- 1 shampoo - 12-19 oz.
- 1 deodorant - 2-3 oz. (stick, roll-on, or pump)
- 1 lotion - 8-10 oz.
- 1 One-gallon resealable plastic bag

DEATHS: Joys and Concerns

March 16: Johnse Bushlack, brother of Josiah (Betsy) Bushlack and uncle of Syler, Eliah and Jonah Bushlack.

April Food Pantry Item - Macaroni & Cheese

Churches of Marion
Food Pantry

Monthly Food Drive

**APRIL COLLECTION ITEM BOXED
MACARONI & CHEESE**

Bring collection item to the Mission Depot in The Center

*New collection item each month!

BAPTISM NIGHT

WEDNESDAY, MAY 7TH
MEAL AT 5:45PM - SERVICE AT 6:30PM

REGISTER FOR BAPTISM
IN THE CHURCH APP

Consultation Update

Later this month, Marion Methodist will hear more about our three-year Priority Based Action Plan. In the meantime, we are encouraging church members to reflect and pray on Matthew 5:14-16 and how God may be calling you to Illuminate the Light of Christ.



"You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead, they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven."

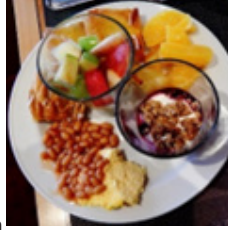
-Matthew 5:14-16 NIV

"Father, I pray Matthew 5:14-16 over my life. Let me never forget I am the light of the world. It is my desire to shine brightly before others, allowing my attitude, words, and actions to reflect the values of Jesus." In Jesus name, Amen.

Pastoral Care Message – Lenten Moments

Lenten Moments have been a long-standing Holy Week tradition, begun several decades ago by a previous pastor. Initially, they were held in the chapel of our historic downtown church, comprised of a short service featuring a speaker from the congregation followed by a delicious breakfast prepared by a wonderful team of volunteers. It began at 7am every weekday during Holy Week enhancing our Lenten worship experience and was planned so people could attend and still get to work if need be. It was a wonderful time of reflection and worship followed by a some great fellowship.

The tradition continued when we moved to 5050 REC Drive, but the Lenten Moments services were held in the upstairs Chapel at Carnegie and still included breakfast afterwards. That continued for a couple of years, nearly filling the chapel each of the five mornings. All was going well until the pandemic hit and we had to shift our Lenten Moments to online only. However, it proved to be a blessing in disguise, because with the online presence, the number of viewers has increased phenomenally and now talks are being shared with friends and family all over the country. The talks, which have always been such a blessing, are now testimonies shared many times over and viewed by many more than we could have ever accommodated in our chapel spaces.



Over the years we've heard from literally scores of members from our church family who've shared their struggles and their triumphs as they walk with Jesus in their daily lives. Tears have been shed, laughter has been shared and we've gotten to know and respect people in brand new ways as they shared their experiences.

I've been part of the planning for these services for more than 15 years and every year is such an amazing process as we invite the speakers for that year and plan for the recording and airing of each day's speaker. It's fun to watch how filled with doubts and uncertainty most of the speakers are when they're asked and how polished and wonderful their talks become for the day their particular piece airs. You can see how God has worked in and through them as they bring their story to fruition and I believe most, if not all, would say it was an amazing experience and a blessing to share their story.

Only once in all the years has a speaker been unable to participate due to a medical emergency. He let me know that morning, an hour or so before the Lenten Moments were scheduled to start, so my only option was to tell my story that morning. I'm sure my heart was pounding and my knees were knocking very loudly, but the Holy Spirit led me the whole way. Now I can sympathize even more deeply with the fear most speakers face on the day they record.

Please tune into this year's speakers during Holy Week – April 14-18, one speaker per morning. They'll be aired at 7am each morning on our church website, Facebook and our YouTube page. I'll guarantee your observance of Holy Week will be blessed in exponential ways!



God's blessings to you,
Vicki



At True North, kids will discover that they can trust Jesus in a wild world! True North is filled with awesome Bible-learning experiences kids see, hear, and touch! Kids, along with teen and adult guides, will spend the morning rotating through Glacier Games, Tundra Treats, Wild Bible Adventures, Exploration Station, and Playground Play.

Invite your family and friends, ages 3-6th Grade, to register as a Preschool/Kindergarten or Elementary participant.

Teen and Adults available to help with VBS can register as a Youth or Adult volunteer.



All kids are welcome on Sundays during the 8:15 or 10:15 AM Service and/or Wednesdays for the 5:45 PM Meal with Activities following at 6:30 PM.

**Now that we are experiencing spring weather, there may be times Pathfinder Kids enjoy time on the Playground. When the weather cooperates, we will visit the playground from 9:30-9:50 AM during Pathfinders Fellowship. On some Sundays, kids might also take a short trip to the playground during 10:15 AM Pathfinders. Your family is always welcome to visit the playground. It's a fun place for family time on a nice day!*

April 13 & 16
Jesus's Triumphant Entrance
(John 12:12-16)

April 20 & 23
Jesus has Victory over Death
(John 19:16-20:18)

April 27 & 30
God Provides for Elijah
(I Kings 17:1-6)

May 4
A Widow Shares Her Last Bread
(I Kings 17:8-16)

May 11
God Comforts Elijah
(I Kings 19:1-18)

**Mark your Calendars for Sunday, May 18, for a special church-wide lunch with free food and inflatables as we launch our 3-year Priority-Based Action Plan for Marion Methodist.*

LENTEN MOMENTS 2025

MONDAY, APRIL 14

Claire Atwood



My name is Claire Atwood, and I attend the 8:15 service with my husband, Tim. We've been members of the church for 30 years. We have two daughters, Madison and Morgan, and two wonderful grandchildren, Greyson (9) and Avery (4).

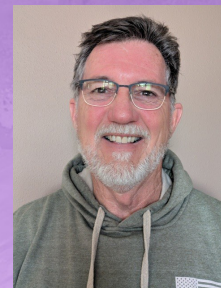
I'm actively involved in the church, teaching Sunday School, participating in a Women's Bible study, and leading a Small Group. I also serve on the Church Council. One of my most meaningful experiences was joining a mission trip to Haiti, and in 2020, we had the incredible opportunity to travel to Israel with the church.

Professionally, I work from home as a project manager at Sammons Financial Group. In my free time, I enjoy gardening, baking, camping, and bicycling. I've also ridden RAGBRAI, the annual bike ride across Iowa, nine times!.

TUESDAY, APRIL 15

Rich Smith

Rich Smith is married to Joan, his bride and joy of 45 years. He is a devoted husband and father of three adult children. Rich has a passion for helping people through various ministries, including men's ministry, prison ministry at Anamosa State Prison, and disciple-making. He enjoys golfing, bike riding on paved trails with Joan and friends, and smoking meat. Raised in Burlington, Iowa, he has lived in the Cedar Rapids area for 49 years. Rich retired from being a professional story-problem solver in the field of machinery drives. He is both a Certified Fluid Power Engineer and Fluid Power Instructor. Also, a Colson Fellow (applied Biblical World View studies), and is currently working on becoming a Certified Lay Minister through Marion Methodist church and the GMC.



WEDNESDAY, APRIL 16

Pat Beatty



Hello from the farm! I am Pat Beatty from rural Vinton. Garth and I recently celebrated 60 amazing years of marriage. We have 4 married children, 8 grandchildren and we have lived on the same farm in the same house for all of our 60+ years. Being raised in town, and then becoming a farm wife is a story of its own telling. Graduating from the U of I was a stepping stone to my years as an abstractor for our local Title Company. My walk in faith and joining our Marion Methodist community of believers has been humbling, and full of grace and blessings. I praise God for my journey.

THURSDAY, APRIL 17

Matt Kearns

Matthew Kearns (47) is married to the MM's Early Childhood Coordinator, Andrea, a father of three, and an engineer at Collins Aerospace. He has been with MM for some time and serves in many capacities such as one of your Lay Delegates to the Upper Midwest Annual Conference, supporting various committees within the church and conference, as well as looking to be commissioned as a Certified Lay Minister this June. But if you're looking for him, poke your head in the nursery and you'll likely find him helping out.



FRIDAY, APRIL 18

Elijah Bushlack



My name is Elijah Bushlack, I am currently a junior attending Linn-Mar High School. I am a part of band, choir, marching band, and show choir band. My parents are Josiah and Betsy Bushlack. I have 3 brothers, Syler, Max, and Jonah. I have grown up at Marion Methodist. I am active in 4:12 youth ministries. I am a youth intern and a part of both the 4:12 worship band and the 10:15 Sunday morning worship band. I have a strong passion for deepening my faith and have attended Summer Games for the last 4 years. I look forward to sharing my personal journey of becoming a disciple for Christ. I hope to inspire others to draw closer to God.

Join us online at 7:00 am

www.MarionMethodist.org/Watch-Live, Marion Methodist's Facebook page
or www.YouTube.com/MarionMethodistChurch