

CONNECTION @VMUMC



Pastor Cathy's Corner

Dearly Beloved,

Grace and peace to you, Van Meter UMC Family! In this last month of summer, your schedule may be filled with last-minute vacations, buying school supplies, fall sports practices, harvesting and preserving garden produce, the Iowa State Fair, and family reunions. Just like in June and July, summer schedules can be so busy that we feel pulled in multiple directions at once. When life feels like a chaotic sprint, it's easy to feel disconnected to God, as our spiritual rhythms and practices get buried under our busy schedules. Be assured that God knows you're not perfect and doesn't expect you to be. Even 5 minutes can be enough time to connect with God.

Like the last two months, I'm sharing a few more spiritual micro habits we can all try to draw close to God, and maybe even grow in our faith. Remember, if one micro habit doesn't work for you the first time, try it the next day, at a different time of day, or try a different micro habit. Here are a few more to try.

Don't Do It Alone: Stay Connected to Your Faith Family

When life gets overwhelming, our first instinct might be to isolate--to skip church because we're exhausted or avoid a small group because we're behind on everything. But isolation is the opposite of what our souls need during busy seasons. Faith was never meant to be a solo journey. Community provides encouragement, accountability, and perspective when we're too tired to see clearly.

Ways to stay connected even when life is full:

- Find a church to visit even while traveling
- Text a trusted friend to share prayer requests or verses that spoke to you
- Listen to faith-based podcasts during workouts or commutes
- Join or stay committed to a small group that fits your schedule

The writer of Hebrews understood this need, "And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another". (Heb 10:24-25) At Van Meter UMC, we want to walk through every season of life together, including the busy ones.

Embrace Grace and Keep Moving Forward

The truth is we're all going to have days when you forget to pray, weeks when you don't read your Bible, and seasons when your spiritual life feels dry. You aren't a bad Christian. You're human. Busy seasons are temporary, but the spiritual habits you develop during them can strengthen your faith for years to come. The goal isn't perfection; it's persistence with grace.

Here are some gentle ways to extend grace to yourself:

- End each day by naming one thing you're grateful for
- Focus on one spiritual habit at a time instead of overwhelming yourself
- Ask God to show you one area where he's inviting you to grow
- Remember that starting over is always an option

August 2026

Pastor Cathy's Corner Continue.....

God's mercy meets you fresh every single day -- even in the messy, chaotic, beautiful busy seasons of life. The beautiful truth is that you don't have to choose between living fully and following Jesus wholeheartedly. With intentionality and grace, you can stay close to God even when your calendar looks like it was organized by a caffeinated chipmunk. Jesus said, *"Come to me, all you who are tired and are carrying heavy loads. I will give you rest."* (Matthew 11:28). Jesus is present in your early morning rush, your afternoon stress, and your late-night exhaustion.

Friends, remember that staying close to God is about recognizing that he's already present in everything you're doing. Invite him to be part of the conversation of your life. You'll be glad you did.

In Christ's gracious love, Pastor Cathy



THANK YOU to everyone who helped behind the scenes to get VBS off and running. We have xxx kids signed up and ready to roll. Shout out to those who are helping this week make VBS a huge success.



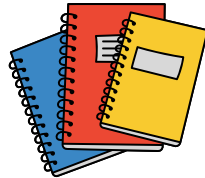
Our Middle School Summer Bible Series **YOUnique** met for 8 weeks in June and July.

The students worked to figure out themselves a little more which helped them to better understand their individual relationship with God and how to grow even closer to God every day of their lives! We learned a lot and had so much fun. Thank you to everyone who supported this program!



MISSIONS

STUDENT KITS



Missions is collecting materials for Ingathering student kits. The kits will go to underprivileged children in the US and in support of international humanitarian aid missions. A student kit may be a child's primary educational resource.

School supplies are now on sale. Please consider filling a student kit for Missions. The list of materials for each student kit is very specific, so please use the list below when shopping. Place all items in the cloth bag you can get from the church or in a plastic grocery bag. We will collect these kits until **Sunday, October 25**.

STUDENT KIT

- ☒ 3 notebooks - 1 subject spiral, 8" x10¹/₂"
 - ☒ 1 ruler - 12" long with metric
 - ☒ 6 unsharpened pencils (please, no advertising)
 - ☒ 1 pencil sharpener
 - ☒ 1 eraser - 2" or larger
 - ☒ 1 box 12 colored pencils
 - ☒ 1 box 24 crayons
 - ☒ 1 pair student scissors (round tip)
- Place all items in the cloth bag.



Adel Good Samaritan Food Pantry Donations

Conditioner is the personal item of the month. Place your donations in the tub marked in the entryway.

Thanks for the donations!



Misson of the Month

Foster SQUAD

The Foster SQUAD provides resources to Iowa foster families as they care for our community's most vulnerable children. They believe every child deserves the dignity of having their own personal hygiene products and their own bag and blanket. The Foster SQUAD provides Care Kits to children and teens entering the foster care system in Iowa.

For the month of August, we will be collecting the items listed below. Our goal is to deliver a couple filled bags for each age group and deliver them the first week of September

Infant Kits

Diaper Bag	Baby Soap	Board Books
Diapers (all sizes)	Baby Lotion	Warmies
Wipes	Blanket	Sippy Cups

Toddler Kits

Backpack	3-in-1 Soap	Toothbrush/Toothpaste
Pull Ups	Warmies	Water Bottle/Sippy Cup
Wipes	Book	Coloring Books/Crayons
Blankets		

School Age Kid Kits

Backpack	Flashlight	Water Bottle
3-in-1 Soap	Book	Blanket
Activity Book	Toothbrush/Toothpaste	

Teenager Kits

Backpack	Ear Buds	Blanket
Flashlight	Deodorant	Tampons/Pads
Water Bottle	Toothbrush/Toothpaste	
Adult Coloring Book		



August 2026

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Marilyn Traxler
 Liz Lundberg
 Hayley Carlson
 Katie Vaught
 Tim Champion
 Becky Pashek
 Molly Champion
 Kaleb Myers
 Regan Heckman
 Bill Miller
 Stacy Peterson
 Lauren McNace
 Connie Waller
 Jameson Herman
 Kimberly Wemer
 Anton Van Syoc
 Julia Herman
 Loren Ritter Schmoll
 Ryan Carlson
 Leo Hayes
 Darlis Wambold



UPCOMING DATES

2	Worship Service, Communion	10:45 AM
4	Trustees	6:30 PM
5	Youth pool night	6-8:30 PM
6	Youth service project	9:15 AM - 12:45 PM
9	Worship service	10:45 AM
10	VM city council	7:00 PM
11	Admin. council	6:30 PM
16	Worship Service	10:45 AM
23	Worship Service	10:45 AM
	Blessing of the Backpacks	
	Confirmation	
24	First day of school @ VM	
24	VM City Workshop	6:00 PM
25	Kids Shopping Day Planning Mtg	7:00 PM
30	Worship Service	10:45 AM
30	SPRC meeting	4:00 PM

Happy Anniversary

Elizabeth & Jed Alexander
 Leslie & Joe Herman
 Mickey & Terry Vande Kamp
 Lauren & David McNace
 Laura & Rodney Heaton
 Amy & Bill Beck



Blessing of the Backpacks August 23

Pastor Cathy will be blessing our children's, teens' and college students' backpacks and computer bags.

Feel free to bring your backpacks and computer bags to church so they can be blessed.

Please Pray For...

***those under medical care**

Annette (Kim's friend), Tom H. & family (son of Sherry H.), Kim (Marva's friend), Todd B, Jeremiah and Jackson (Cody J's nephews), Geri R, Delores (friend of Donna S), baby Lydia (Pastor Cathy's granddaughter) and her parents Emily and Stephen, Roger C, Clark and Mary M (Holly G's parents), Bailey B, Ray (father-in-law of Amy F), Betty J, Kathleen G, Shirley J, Melvis J, Gene D, Nyla P, Keith G, Ila T, Peggy M.

***those recovering** (from illness, abuse, natural disasters, loss)

***those living with challenges**
(immigrants, caregivers, refugees, disabled)

***those in harm's way** (in war zones, first responders, medical professionals, people defending civil liberties)

***communities with immigrant populations**

***those who grieve**



Ways to Give to Your Church



Your gifts help to nurture children, support families, create community, and share our faith. All your gifts are greatly appreciated.

You can now give through:

- * our Van Meter UMC Venmo account (use QR code below)
- * the Bill Pay function offered by your bank or credit union
- * in person
- * mailing a check to:
Van Meter UMC
P.O. Box 149
Van Meter, IA 50261



THANK
you

VBS THANKS YOU

A heartwarm thanks to everyone who helped make Vacation Bible School, Rain Forest Falls a huge success.

We couldn't have done it without you.



CONNECTION

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**Worship Service 10:45 AM
Pastor Cathy Nutting**



August 2026