

Strahan-A-Gram

Editors

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Mission Statement—“Growing Disciples for Jesus Christ”

Strahan United Methodist Church, 64632 360th St., (rural) Hastings, IA 51540

July 2020

Around the Community—

“Thank you—So much appreciated all the cards and comments on my Birthday cards All I can say is.....WOW...Except of course, I'm grateful for all of you being in my Life.. Just wanted to express my heartfelt gratitude and say....
THANK YOU
Colleen Gipe

Whoops, I clicked “Send” and realized that I missed the note from Bob Singleton. “Thanks to our church family for their thoughts and prayers during this difficult time. (of loosing my father, Al Singleton of Kansas)” **Bob & Paula Singleton**

. Our three churches have just experienced many Sundays of virtual worship services. These have been possible because of the dedication and talents of many of our people. Pastor Joni and others (Helen, Dan & Rob Hayes) have given us thought inspiring messages. Our children's time have gone to the outside world and used our animals as examples for the children. Some of our young people have provided the special music. Our virtual choir has been a very dedicated group to come and record for each week. Rita Godfrey has provided prelude and Postlude music and sometimes the special music. Jill Cuff has been the glue that has made all these parts come together. If you have not sent a personal note of thanks to each or all of them, they would certainly appreciate hearing from you. Dedication is important but knowing others do appreciate their efforts is a satisfying moment.

We are excited to **begin “in-the-building” worship services** again on July 5. Attached to the newsletter is a page of expectations for safety concerning our practices as we gather. Please study the guidelines and enjoy seeing each other with masks on. 😊 Page 2

Finally, it is here! Please click on strahaniowachurch.org to see the website for Pastor Joni's three churches. It is not “finished” as it will always be a work in progress. If you have pictures, announcements, and other information you would like to share, (or errors to be corrected) please contact Helen Pollock, the website administrator.

It is our understanding that **county fairs** are going to be much different than normal with each county making their own decisions on what will and will not be happening. **We support our 4-H and FFA youth** as they display their projects even if we can't be there to watch and cheer in person. **There will not be church at the Mills Co. Fair on July 12.**

LOOKING AHEAD—The **UMW will not meet in July.** They will try resume meeting in September.

Pastor Joni is attending seminary via online class the week of **July 6-10.** If you must contact her during that time, please do so between 9 a.m. and noon. She will not be in the office on July 8.

Rural Life Sunday will be celebrated on July 12th with a special offering collected to celebrate and support rural life and rural ministry. 100% of the funds stay in Iowa.

Strahan Administrative Council will meet in the church basement on **July 15 at 7:00 p.m.**

The **Stangl Family** will be presenting music in Malvern on **Sunday, July 19, at a joint worship beginning at 10:00.** They had to be rescheduled from last spring due to the virus, so we hope for a good attendance to worship with them as they honor our Lord.

On **Sunday, July 26,** we will again **meet in Malvern at 10:00** for a worship led by the Confirmation Class. Confirmation will be held at each of the local churches on August 2nd.

The **next SPPRC Meeting** will be at Strahan's basement on **July 29 at 7:00 p.m.**

Greetings from Pastor Joni!

I just finished worshipping with the laity in the virtual service that they provided on June 14, 2020, and I am drawn by the Holy Spirit to elaborate on the message given by Dan Pollock. If you missed the service, please find the email that was sent to you on June 13 with the link for the service and watch it.

First, I want to thank Dan for his honesty and willingness to share with us. We all have a story to tell, but many of us are too scared to share. It takes courage, but this is one of the most powerful ways that the Holy Spirit uses us to bring the message of the eternal gift of Christ to

others. My prayer is that Dan's message awakened you to ask yourself, "Why do I do what I do?" or "Why do I not do?"

Take the time to ponder these questions and pray about them. Why do you go to church? Why do you read scripture? Why do you pray? Why do you serve food and provide to those in need? Why do you teach Sunday School? As Dan suggested, do you do these things because they are something that you need to get checked off your list because you are a good Christian? Do you do them because that is what everybody else in the group is doing and you don't want to let them down? Do they all just seem like a chore to you and you are glad when the chore is finished?

Maybe you don't do them. Maybe you don't go to church regularly because when you go, you are reminded of your failures and how "bad" you are, and you end up just feeling guilty. Maybe you don't pray because you don't really believe that God hears you, or that your prayers don't make a difference any way. Maybe you don't read scripture because you tell yourself that you don't have time, or that you won't understand it anyway, so why try?

Do yourself a favor, and ask yourself "Why?" Dan mentioned a Michael Jr. YouTube video in his message. Before you go any further, please take the time to watch the [link](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LZe5y2D60YU) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LZe5y2D60YU> "Know Your Why."

It is my guess that many of you have forgotten your "why" for going to church, "why" you are a disciple, "why" you seek to make other disciples for Jesus Christ. Once you find your "why" the things that you used to find to be a chore, will become things of joy and purpose, and instead of dreading them, you will hunger and look forward to all the things that you "get to do" as a disciple of Jesus Christ.

In closing, I share the words of Junius B. Dotson from his book that the L3 (Loving, Learning, Leading) discipleship pathway group has been using, *Developing an Intentional Discipleship System: A Guide for Congregations*:

When we connect with the *Why* of discipleship, we grow in our faith in connection with others, become more generous, think and act beyond ourselves, and invite others into this new way of life in Christ. Being a disciple of Jesus is not, then, a list of *shoulds*, but rather is a way of being. If we successfully rediscover and connect with our why, discipleship becomes a way of being that we cannot help! We do not *have* to invite our friends to church and into this way of life following Jesus, *we get to!* We do not *have* to

attend a small group or read our Bible more, *we want to*. When we discover and rediscover the why of discipleship and seek to grow and mature as followers of Jesus, the transformation within us causes a great hunger and desire to do the things God calls us to do. If we lack this, we must circle back to discovering our why once again.

You are skeptical? Don't be. Just as Dan can, I can also personally tell you that it is true.

News for the **August issue of the Strahan A Gram** will be due on **July 27** for distribution on July 30th. Please respond to Karen and Helen. Check the letter-head logo for email addresses.

MALVERN – STRAHAN – WESLEY CHAPEL WORSHIP RE-ENTRY PLAN

BEGINNING JULY 5, 2020

The following is the Re-entry Plan set forth by The Iowa Conference Crisis Operations Team for the Iowa Conference of The United Methodist Church. This plan is guided by John Wesley's **Three Simple Rules**: Do no harm. Do good. Stay in love with God. The complete plan is posted on the church bulletin board. We are currently in Level 2: Yellow Light Status.

1. Strahan and Wesley Chapel: Enter from the front door only. Malvern: Enter from the front door or the office door.
2. Physical distancing of 6-10 feet between household/family units and others. Leave every other pew empty. No skin to skin contact.
3. High risk individuals should continue to shelter in place: over 60 years old, underlying conditions, tested positive or exposed to COVID-19 shelter in place for 14 days.
4. Wear cloth or manufactured face masks inside the church and while entering/exiting.
5. No offering of Holy Communion until further notice.
6. Group singing and liturgical responses will be avoided at this time.
7. Bibles, hymnbooks and songbooks will be removed from the pews. No bulletins. Scripture readings, etc., will be from the projection screen.
8. No-touch offering: plates for offerings will be located at the back of the church. Online offering is encouraged starting in July: www.strahaniowachurch.org.
9. No fellowship/coffee time. You are encouraged to leave the building after worship rather than mingling.
10. No Sunday School until further notice.

July 2020

Strahan United Methodist Church

“Growing Disciples for Jesus Christ!”

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 Happy Anniversary Bill & Cathy Pollock	2	3 Happy 55 th Anniversary Karen & Alvin Gee Happy Birthday Seth Christensen	4 Happy Birthday Tyler Pollock
5 Worship Service 9:45 am Happy Birthday Deb Frazee	6 Happy Birthday Brenna Moraes Happy Anniversary Carol & Chad Weeks	7	8 Happy 25 th Anniversary Kristy & Dave York	9	10	11 Happy Birthday Sophia Morrical
12 Worship Service 9:45 am Rural Life Special Offering	13	14 Happy Birthday Tim Grindle	15 Church Council 7:00 Happy Birthday Viviana Pollock	16	17	18 Happy Birthday Paul Morrical & Megan Hossle
19 Stangl Family Music Service 10:00 a.m. Malvern	20	21	22	23 Happy Birthday Julia McGrew & Ron Curtis	24 Happy Anniversary Heath & Jami Sayers	25
26 Worship at Malvern at 10:00 led by Confirmation Class	27 News due for August!	28	29 SSPRC meeting Strahan 7:00 Happy Birthday Morgan Moen	30	31	
Pastor Joni's office hours are Wednesday 1-5 p.m. and by appointment.						

