



Grace & Aurora United Methodist Churches
PO Box 60
Lamont, Iowa 50650

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MAY 2025 Newsletter

**Ragbrai is coming
to Lamont on
Saturday, July 26**

**Ragbrai
Organizational Meeting**
Lamont City Hall
Thursday, May 22
11:00 a.m.



Anyone interested in helping in any way,
please plan to attend.



NEWS FROM

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCHES OF



AURORA



LAMONT



STRAWBERRY POINT



Grace United Methodist Church

745 Washington St PO Box 60
Lamont, Iowa 50650
LamontAurora@gmail.com
www.LamontAuroralowaUMC.com

Aurora United Methodist Church

506 Luella St PO Box 143
Aurora, Iowa 50607

Pastoral Care

Pastor Lisa Schroeder
(319) 325-4566
Lisaschroederpastor@gmail.com

Prayer Chain

Jane Richmond - (563) 933-6248

Church Food Pantry

Deb Brown or Jane Richmond

Mobile Food Pantry

Kay Hoffman - (319) 361-8100

District Superintendent

Rev. Scott Keele Kober
Scott.keelekober@iaumc.org
(515) 207-7604

Iowa Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church

www.iaumc.org

SPRC Chair

Jerry Griffin - (319) 202-4592

Administrative Council Chair

John Cook

Sunday School

Julie Mather
Brettjuliemather@gmail.com

Church Secretary

Joanne Lamphier
HBLF4U@gmail.com
(319) 213-2541

Church Treasurer

Nicole Goedken
ngoedken91@outlook.com
(563) 608-2225

Other Contacts

JoAnn Crow—(563) 920-5273
Deb Brown—(563) 920-5450
Jane Richmond —(563) 933-6248

Greetings, Brothers & Sisters in Christ!

May Day, Cinco de Mayo, Mother's Day, Armed Forces Day, Graduations, Memorial Day and Ascension Day are the celebrations on the calendar for May. It will be a busy month as we complete a school year for the students and teachers and a program year in the church. I begin the month of May with a much-needed vacation. There are times when life just explodes and pretty much sucks the life right out of you and you need to refuel before you crash and burn! And even on vacation, we have three funerals/visitations, a work event for Scott and an appointment for my father-in-law in Iowa City. I'm at a loss on how to tame down my calendar and start living a life that allows for some down time. Do you struggle with this too? It has just been non-stop for several months, and as I look back, it has been too busy for several years. When I return from vacation, or maybe even while I'm on vacation, I'm going to spend some time praying about how I can get life under control. It might mean saying no to some things and delegating other things. Maybe we all need to do this. Before you start cutting all your church activities, remember that they should be at the top of the list of what you need to keep doing, and letting go of other things.

The month of April was a sacred and meaningful time, finishing up our Lenten journey with the devotional "Sanctuary for Lent" and remembering the events of the triumphal entry on Palm Sunday, the Last Supper on Maundy Thursday, the public condemnation and crucifixion on Good Friday and the mystery of the awesome gift of resurrection on Easter Sunday. Lent is a time when we contem-

plate and confess our sins and meditate on and give thanks for the great sacrifice of Christ who died on the cross for us. Then we celebrate the resurrection of Jesus and the gift of forgiveness and everlasting life that we receive because of his obedience to God. It is the high point of the Christian calendar. Where do we go from here? How do we take up our cross and follow Christ from this day forward? What does God expect from us to be faithful disciples and witnesses of the resurrection and live a resurrection life? Each of us must discern what God is calling us to do to live out the commandment that Jesus gave when gathered in the Upper Room with his disciples:

³⁴ "I give you a new commandment: Love each other. Just as I have loved you, so you also must love each other. ³⁵ This is how everyone will know that you are my disciples, when you love each other." John 13:34-35 Common English Bible

I hope that drawing close to God, reading a devotional and spending time in prayer will become a daily habit for you and will not just be a Lenten discipline you tried for a time. This time each morning grounds and centers me, reminding me that "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." But also reminds me that there are things that I need to set aside so I can do the things God wants me to do. Let us all spend time thinking about what God wants us to hang on to and what God wants us to let go of. This allows us to show love for ourselves and have more quality time to show love to others.

Serving Christ Together! Pastor Lisa

Regular Worship Times

1st Sunday of the month
 2nd Sunday of the month
 3rd Sunday of the month
 4th Sunday of the month
 5th Sunday of the month

Lamont

9:00 AM
 9:00 AM
 9:00 AM

Aurora

9:00 AM
 10:30 AM

Strawberry

10:30 AM
 10:30 AM
 10:30 AM Guest Speaker
 10:30 AM

Joint worship service with location TBA @ 10AM

Administrative Council**April 2025 Minutes**

April 14, 2025 - Pastor Lisa offered prayer to begin our meeting. Pastor reviewed March and April activities. Ragbrai organizational meeting dates are April 17 and May 21.

Minutes of the March 10, 2025 meeting were read and approved with the correction that Leon Goedken will make a shelf for the new equipment cabinet.

TREASURER gave her report with all bills paid. It was again noted that offerings have been decreasing. We have been giving the interest earned from two small trusts to Starmont Schools Dollars for Scholars. We have no functioning financial committee and have not made an effort to explain the church finances to the general congregation.

TRUSTEES are waiting for D&S Portables to come to root out the plumbing. A lamp shade in the sanctuary was broken and will be replaced.

PARSONAGE nothing to report.

MEMORIALS have a balance in account is \$2,250.87.

UWF Grief Support Group has had an attendance between 9 and 11 people. The group has met three times and continues to invite new people. Garage & Bake Sale dates are April 24, 25 & 26. Goodwill truck will pick up items on Tuesday, April 29. Time not known yet for the truck to be at the church. The group

has made donations for three children to attend camp. We also made a \$250 donation to cover the cost of two solar light kits to be sent to the Ukraine. The district UWF Shepherdess for our group is scheduled to come to the May meeting. Two quarters of our pledge to the district UWF has been paid.

MISSIONS March Mission Madness event was attended and reported on by JoAnn Crow. The UMYF donated \$125 for one solar light kit. Thirty East food boxes were filled on April 14. Several were delivered.

YOUTH UMYF will go the Aurora Youth Program on Wednesday, April 16. Sunday School and UMYF will be ending for the season at a date yet to be determined.

AUDIO/VISUAL Updated instructions have been left for operation when the Lamphier's are gone.

ADMIN ASSISTANT Paper plates and napkins have been ordered for church use. Replacement refills for the foil and plastic film dispensers are being sought. SIPS Downtown Lamont (Lamphier's business), has donated \$200 to our food pantry from a fundraiser.

OTHER Discussion occurred about possible Ragbrai participation.

OLD BUSINESS no items

NEW BUSINESS no items

ADJOURNMENT at 7:20 p.m.
 Jane Richmond, Recording Secretary

FINANCE COMMITTEE needs to be organized. If you have been on it in the past and/or would like to be involved, please let us know.

June Communion

Server - Need Volunteer
 Supplies - Need Volunteer

July Communion

Server - Need Volunteer
 Supplies - Need Volunteer

Ushers

May 11-Aurora
 May 18 - Youth Sunday
 May 25 - Greg Lee
 June 1 - Elaine & Marcia
 June 8 - Aurora
 June 15 - Youth Sunday
 June 22 - Randy M. & John R.
 June 29 - Joint Worship
 July 6 - Mardelle & Kaye
 July 13 - Aurora
 July 20 - Youth Sunday
 July 27 - Rosalind Brown Family

Scripture Readers

May 11-Aurora
 May 18 - Youth Sunday
 May 25 - Greg Lee
 June 1 - Jane Richmond
 June 8 - Aurora
 June 15 - Youth Sunday
 June 22 - John Richmond
 June 29 - Joint Worship
 July 6 - Jane Richmond
 July 13 - Aurora
 July 20 - Youth Sunday
 July 27 - Kaye D.

MAY 2025

UWF Minutes

April 8 2025—Six members + Pastor Lisa met at 1:35 PM. Pres. Jane read Romans 14:13. Deb did the Least Coin. The amended Mch. minutes were approved. Treasury is \$2045.43. 1st qtr. pledge for Pastor Doug has been sent.

OLD BUSINESS:

JoAnn attended Mission Madness in Cedar Falls & reported lots of volunteers.

There was a good turn-out for Mch. 30 Camp Sunday and potluck, especially by Strawberry.

3rd Sunday this month will be donation day for local emergency fund & 4th Sun. for Missionary Doug.

NEW BUSINESS:

Kaye moved, Deb seconded to donate \$250 for 2 solar energy kits to Midwest Mission for Ukraine; motion carried.

Visitation for Betty Opitz will be Fri Apr 11/ funeral 10:30 Fri the 12th here with catered lunch at the Legion; may need volunteers to serve meal.

Fri April 11 food for Easter baskets will be gathered .

Palm Sun. will be in Aurora at 9 AM; Aurora kids program will be Wed. 6:30; Maundy Thurs & Good Fri service will be in Lamont 6:30; Easter breakfast at 8 AM in Lamont preceding service at 9.

Deb moved, Renee seconded to donate a \$200 campership to another child; motion carried.

Garage & Bake sale will be Apr. 24-26; bring goods after Easter. Setting up will be 9 AM Mon the 21st. Kaye & Mardelle will be cashiers. Goodwill truck date is in flux. LOTS of volunteers needed to clean-up, box, and load truck.

RAGBRAI will come thru town July 26.

Pastor will be on vacation Apr. 28-May 12.


Readers are needed for Maundy Thurs. service.

There will be an AMOS meeting Apr. 26 in Jesup. Prayer & Self-Denial money will be collected today and at May mtg.

Jane did the lesson, Deb was hostess. Next month leader will be JoAnn and hostess Deb. Our shephardness may be in attendance.

Secretary, Glenda Schweitzer.

A Celebration of Life
will be held for
Thomas James Helms
(November 29, 1967 - February 26, 2025)



Date: May 10, 2025
Time: 1:00 - 4:00 PM
Where: Backbone Beach Lodge
A service will begin at 2pm
A light lunch will be served

THANK YOU!

- To all who did reading at special Holy Week services and helped set up and take down.
- To JoAnn and BilliJo for getting Palm Branches for Palm Sunday and those who brought lilies.
- To Jerry and JoAnn who organized fellowship time after Holy Week Service in Aurora.
- To Jarrod and Joanne for running PowerPoint and recording the Holy Week Program in Aurora.
- To everyone who helped with the Easter breakfast brought food, set up and did dishes.
- To everyone who helped set up and work at the Lamont Garage Sale.
- To those who attended the AMOS meeting in Jesup on April 26
- To all of you who support and pray for our churches and ministries.

Mobile Food Pantry

May 28, 2025
June 25, 2025
July 23, 2025

MAY 2025

In Memory of Doug Walters

Douglas Lee Walters, 73, of Lamont, Iowa, passed away on Friday, March 28, 2025, at his home. He was born on October 13, 1951, in Clarinda, the son of Dale and Shirley (Cortner) Walters. Doug was educated in the Adel-De Soto School District, graduating from high school in 1969. After graduation, he built and fell off silos until he was drafted into the United States Army. Doug was a proud veteran and a passionate Republican, which led him to numerous periods in Facebook jail.

Doug enjoyed cooking, watching MASH and the CSI crime series, and action movies. He was an "old, tired, grumpy" keyboard warrior.

Survivors include his four children, Doug (Lisa) Walters, Jr. of Colfax, Crystal (Ty) Cumberland, Nicole (Jason) Coble, and Caitlin (Jason) Klett all of Strawberry Point; 15 grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren, with two on the way; and a brother, Eric (Jen) Walters of Des Moines.

Doug was preceded in death by his parents; brother, Mike Walters; and sister, Becky (Russ) Jordan.



In Memory of Betty Opitz

Betty M. Opitz, 96, of Lamont, Iowa, died Sunday evening, April 6, 2025, at the Good Neighbor Society in Manchester, Iowa. Funeral Service: 10:30 A.M. Saturday, April 12, 2025, at the Grace United Methodist Church in Lamont with Rev. Lisa Schroeder officiating. Visitation: 4:00 to 7:00 P.M. Friday, April 11, 2025, at the Grace United Methodist Church in Lamont and for one hour before the service Saturday. Interment: Floral Hills Memorial Gardens, rural Oelwein, Iowa. Betty Mae Homewood was born April 8, 1928, in Delaware County, Iowa, the daughter of Lyle Ira and Mildred (Stone) Homewood. She graduated from Edgewood High School. On October 14, 1946, she was united in marriage to Leo Earl Opitz in Manchester, Iowa. Betty was employed at Exide Battery in Manchester, Iowa. She was a member of the Grace United Methodist Church in Lamont. Betty enjoyed knitting, baking, cooking, and gardening. Betty is survived by her 5 children: Lee Opitz of Aurora, Linda Steffen of Independence, Lonnie (Bonnie) Opitz of Aurora, Lana (Mark) Moeller of Strawberry Point, and Larry Opitz of Arlington; son-in-law: John Duwe of Guttenberg; 10 grandchildren; 25 great grandchildren; and 6 great great grandchildren. She was preceded in death by her parents; husband: Leo in 1972; daughter: Lois Duwe; granddaughter: Tami Corbin; great grandson: Beckett Opitz; and brother: Roger Homewood.



In Memory of Tom Helms

With hearts full of love and sorrow, we announce the passing of Thomas James Helms, mostly known as Tom, who left us far too soon on February 26, 2025, in New Braunfels, Texas.

A Celebration of Life will be held in Iowa on Saturday, May 10 from 1 to 4 p.m. at Backbone Beach Lodge at Backbone State Park near Dundee, Iowa. Memorials may be directed to Karen & Sam Kremer.

Born on November 29, 1967, in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, Tom lived a life filled with laughter, love, and an endless appreciation for the people around him.

From an early age, Tom was never one to sit still. He attended Iowa State University from 1986 to 1989 before moving to Houston, Texas, in 1989, where he built a life full of hard work, adventure, and deep connections. For most of his life, he was his own boss, running a crating business and working as a skilled handyman. His talent for woodworking was unmatched, and he took great pride in everything he created. More recently, he found joy in working as a porter at San Marcos Toyota, a job that allowed him to do what he did best - talk to people, make them laugh, and leave a lasting impression on everyone he met.

Tom was, without question, the life of the party. His Cheshire Cat grin, booming laugh, and quick wit made every room brighter. Whether he was at Old Ice House or The Happy Cow playing pool, shuffleboard, or Golden Tee, or out on the water with a fishing rod in hand, he knew how to make life fun. He loved watching old movies, golfing, playing dominoes (even if he got a little cranky when he lost), and spending time with the people he loved most. He never met a stranger - only friends he hadn't yet introduced himself to.

Family was everything to Tom. He was a loving father to his three children, John (37), Felecia (33), and Alec (25), and a proud grandfather to Caden and Kenzie. He also adored his daughter-in-law, Shaunna, John's wife. He was the cherished son of Sam and Karen Kremer and the late Ray Helms. He was a beloved brother to Mike (and his wife, Jodi), Lonnie (and his wife, Connie), and Keri.

He was preceded in death by his wife, Cindy, who passed nearly four years ago. Though his time with us was cut short, his love, laughter, and unforgettable presence will live on through his family, friends, and everyone lucky enough to have known him.

Above all else, Tom Helms was a man who loved deeply, laughed loudly, and left a mark on everyone he met. His favorite sayings, his legendary stories, and his ability to bring joy to any moment will never be forgotten.

Tom never wanted a funeral, and he sure as hell wouldn't want us moping around. He'd want us to keep living, laughing, and having a damn good time-By God!



Lamont Youth Goes Bowling



UMYF Yard Cleanup Day



UMYF Goes to King of Kings Movie



Hospitality Signup

Each Sunday after worship service, everyone is invited for fellowship. Goodies and coffee is served. If you would like to signup to bring treats, the notebook is in the library.

Offertory

If you are unable to make it in-person, offertories can be mailed to your church at the address on page 1 of this newsletter.

Mission Statement

Making God's love and grace known to all of his children.

Vision Statement

To see God's grace and love made known to all of His children regardless of age, race, ethnic background, gender, marital status, physical or mental ability, sexual orientation, gender identity, socio-economic status, religious preference or any other human condition.

SIPS DOWNTOWN LAMONT

Watch Facebook for updates on the opening date and hours. Quick and convenient healthy sips providing essential nutrients for energy and overall wellness to power through your day. A grand opening is being planned for late June.

AURORA LEGION BREAKFAST

All you can eat pancakes; also biscuits & gravy, sausage, ham & scrambled eggs with milk, juice or coffee. Carry-outs are available. Adults are \$10; 5-8 years is \$5 and preschool is free. Please join us the first Sunday of the month anytime between 8:00 a.m. and Noon. Be sure to get in on our 50-50 raffle while you are there. You do not have to be present to win.

COMMON GROUNDS COFFEE HOUSE

Wednesday Lunch Specials /Pickup 11:00—Noon
Carry-out only \$8/ meal

Sign up Friday before by calling Common Grounds 563-924-2371 (landline) or 530-300-0317 (cell).

The Common Grounds Coffee Shop is open Monday-Saturday from 6-9am for coffee and donuts.

Common Grounds Coffee Shop is also available for rent at \$20 per day. Please contact Karen Kremer at 319-961-8100 or Sharry McFarlane at 319-509-1166 for details.

A can redemption drop off is located in the alley behind Common Grounds. Please do not mix cans and bottles and we ask that beer bottles are brought in boxes per the Redemption Center.

We operate totally on volunteers. Thank you for supporting up.

LITTLE BLESSING BAKERY

Nestled in the little town of Aurora is a hidden gem. Margaret Butler opened up a bakery on February 4, 2025 at 109 Prospect St, Aurora. Be sure to visit and support this small business to get your baked goods and grab a cup of coffee while you are there. Heck, meet your friends there and enjoy it all together. Call for current hours: (319) 634-3240.



SPRC/AD Council Meeting

March 10, 2025—Pastor Lisa began

Working Hands

If you crochet or knit or just want to come see what we are up to, please come to Grace Lamont on Saturday, June 14th at 9:00 a.m. May will not meet.

UMYF Invites All 6th to 12th Graders

United Methodist Youth meets every first and third Wednesday of the month unless told otherwise. They meet from 6:30 pm to 8:00 pm. Meetings will begin again in the fall. Be planning for this.

Grace Food Pantry

Thank you all that keep our Matthew 25 project going! We are truly blessed. We are able to help many community families. Anyone in need of food, please contact Deb Brown or Jane Richmond.

[Food Pantry Needs](#)

Mobile Food Pantry

When: Typically the 4th Wednesday of the month at 3:30 p.m. Where: Line up in the alley behind the fire station in Lamont. Note: Bring two empty boxes to exchange for full boxes.

Prairie Hills Worship

Join us on the 4th Wednesday every month at 9 am in Independence at Prairie Hills Assisted Living.

Lamont Community Club

The 2nd Tuesdays of the month at the Lamont Community Center. Checkout their Facebook page for more details.

Common Grounds Meeting

The 2nd Tuesday of the month at 10am at the Common Grounds. Checkout their Facebook page for more details.

Lamont City Council Meeting

The 2nd Wednesday of the month at City Hall 7pm

MAY 2025							WEDNESDAY - Pick up your Common Grounds Special between 11am and Noon FRIDAY - Order your Wednesday Special from Common Grounds by 10 am FRIDAY & SATURDAY - Pastor's regular day off			
	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT			
					1 Lisa Vacation	2 Lisa Vacation	3 Lisa Vacation			
FIRST SUNDAY	4 Lamont 9:00 a.m. St Point 10:30 a.m. Aurora Legion Breakfast 8:00 to Noon Lisa Vacation	5 Lisa Vacation	6 Lisa Vacation	7 Lisa Vacation	8 Lisa Vacation	9 Lisa Vacation	10 Lisa Vacation			
SECOND SUNDAY	11 Aurora 9:00 a.m. St Point 10:30 a.m. Lisa Vacation	12 Lamont Church Meetings at 6:00 p.m.	13 Lamont United Women in Faith at 1:30 p.m. Common Grounds monthly meeting 10am	14 Lamont City Council meeting 7pm	15 GRIEF SUPPORT group 1pm in Grace Lamont basement Lisa Vacation	16	17			
THIRD SUNDAY	18 Lamont 9:00 a.m.	19	20	21	22 Ragbrai Meeting at City Hall 11:00 am	23	24			
FOURTH SUNDAY	25 Lamont 9:00 a.m. w/comm St Point 10:30 a.m.	26	27	28 Prairie Hills Worship Independence 9:00 a.m. Lamont Mobile Food Pantry at 3:30 p.m.	29	30	31			