The Newsletter
The United Methodist Churches
of
Laurens & Varina, Iowa

For the week of October 11, 2026 **Volume 41** **Issue 6**

Greetings in the name of Jesus, Church!

I've been too long getting the summary of the ministry survey to you and I apologize. Some information has already been shared and acted on - particularly around worship and Bible study. But here are the results of your input to my questions for both churches (which I now admit were not very well stated).

Varina:

Worship: With regards to the worship questions the overwhelming percentage of folks (77%) preferred a mix of traditional hymns and contemporary songs (like from the Faith We Sing). Also, most folks want to keep the liturgy in the bulletin (73%) for the primary reason that if the computer glitches. However, a comment not on the survey was that having the screen makes it easier for some folks to read it. Lastly 82% of folks prefer using traditional communion liturgy. All of these things have already been implemented.

Spiritual Growth: 83% of folks would like Bible study opportunities with the majority (58%) preferring doing reading and study directly from the Bible, 25% using some kind of study from a book on Bible books, and 17% a guided video study. We pretty evenly split on day and time with no clear consensus. As you may have seen in the newsletter several weeks ago, we did start a video study on Acts. I do plan on making some other opportunities available after the first of the new year.

Mission/Outreach/Member Care: When it comes to hands-on mission, understandably a good number of folks didn't feel they would be able to physically take part (64%), but did feel that missions are important. There are opportunities for less physically demanding ways to serve in missions at Midwest Mission in Jefferson. Over 90% of folks understand that member care is an important ministry. What I didn't phrase well is how each person can be involved in providing member care (or continue to). More on that to come.

Laurens:

Worship: With regards to the worship questions the results were similar to those of Varina. Most folks (50%) preferred a mix of traditional hymns and contemporary songs (like from the Faith We Sing), about 28% would like to see some kind of contemporary music with a video of some kind. Also, most folks want to keep the liturgy in the bulletin (69%) for the primary reason that if the computer glitches. However, a comment not on the survey was that having the screen makes it easier for some folks to read it. Lastly 67% of folks prefer using traditional communion liturgy and

33% would like us to incorporate a contemporary style for communion (this is something that I will probably work in from time to time). Everything else has already been implemented.

Spiritual Growth: 84% of folks would like Bible study opportunities with the majority (55%) preferring to use a book guided study, 27% reading and studying directly from the Bible, and 18% a guided video study. Again, we're pretty evenly split on day and time with no clear consensus so we'll try to mix it up as best we can. As you may have seen in the newsletter several weeks ago, we did start a video study on Acts. I do plan on making some other opportunities available after the first of the new year.

Mission/Outreach/Member Care: When it comes to hands-on mission, we're pretty well split down the middle with participation (58% wishing to and 42% not) which is okay! For those who do, we can explore opportunities close to home as well as the possibility of serving at Midwest Mission in Jefferson or possibly other locations in the state. Equally important is to make it available to the youth. Again - not surprisingly - Over 90% of folks understand that member care is an important ministry. In addition to the card ministry, what I didn't phrase well is how each person can be involved in providing member care (or continue to). More on that to come.

Closing: Thanks again folks for sharing with me and I look forward to working with our leadership to bring some of what we've discovered into how we live our our faith here in the communities our churches serve.

Blessings in Christ Jesus

Pastor Jim

November Acolyte Schedule

11/1: Kwynn B & Feinox W.
11/8: Sami Z. & Gage G
11/15: Jacob S. & Reagan H.
11/22: Matt R. & Gage G.
11/29: Reagan H & Kamry B.

December Acolyte Schedule

12/6: Reagan H & Feinox W.
12/13: Matt R. & Jacob S.
12/20: Gage G. & McKenna E.
12/27: Kwynn B. & Sami Z.

. . . to Sue and Frank Bringleson for the geraniums that were in the east planters all summer and all the care you gave. They were beautiful!

. . . Jerlynn Svuba for the fall arrangements of pumpkins and gourds in the east planters. They remind us that fall is here!

Usher Schedule:

October 18: Clayton Rubel, Monty Potter, and Jerry Sobotka
October 25: Frank Bringleson, Doc Van Genderen, and Terry Spanier
November 1: Virginia & Richard Garner, and Jason Gustafson
November 8: Greg Hertz, Brad Rubel, and John Sobotka
November 15: Kelly Tate, and Hunter & Jennifer Valentine

Liturgist Schedule:

October 18 & 25: Pat Sullivan
November 1 & 8: Kelly Tate
November 15 & 22: Amy Gustafson

Acolyte Schedule:

October 18: Samantha Zylstra and Matt Rubel
October 25: Reagan Hertz and Jacob Sobotka
November 1: Kwynn Bailey & Feinox Wiley

If you are unable to work on your date, please find a replacement and let the office know at 712-841-4476.

October 18: 3rd Grade Bibles will be given at worship service.
Sunday School Kids age cherub - 3rd grade will be singing in church
Administrative Council Meeting in Laurens at 11:30 AM. All are welcome to attend.

October 19: Charge Conference in Emmetsburg at the Methodist Church @ 6:00 PM.

October 21: Administrative Council Meeting in Varina at 7:00 PM. All are welcome to attend.

October 31: Trunk or Treat and Touch a Truck at the Fire Station 5:00-6:30 PM

OUT OF OFFICE

Sue will be out of the office on Monday, October 19th. Pastor Jim will have his regular office hours of 10:00 AM. -1:00 PM.

Varina Announcements . . .

Community Coffee Dates for the Month of October:

Wednesdays: 14, 21, and 28
Time: 9:00 AM – 11:00 AM
Everyone is welcome to attend.

Varina Mary Circle Meeting
Date: October 14, 2026
Time: 1:00 PM
Location: Fort Dodge Apple Orchard for lunch
NO Program-Fellowship Time

DAMASCUS ROAD Church

Donations Due to the Varina UMC by November 1.

Needed-personal hygiene products for men and good used clothing for men

Hats, mittens, and socks due at the church by November 29.

October 18th following worship service at the Varina UMC.

Ingathering Donations are due at the:

Varina UMC by November 1.

Laurens Announcements . . .

Holiday bazaar

The Laurens United Methodist Women will be holding their annual bazaar on Saturday, November 21, 2026! We are starting a little earlier this year at 9:30 a.m. We will be serving lasagna for a noon lunch starting at 11:00 a.m.
There are many ways for everyone to participate in helping to make this bazaar a success! We have sign-up sheets available in the church narthex for making Christmas cookies; baked goods for breads and cinnamon rolls, pies, muffins, sweet breads; casseroles; treat of month items; good as new items; wood signs; knitting and embroidery items; and for workers the day of the bazaar!
Proceeds from this bazaar are used to help support several local groups: Laurens Congregate Meals, Laurens Care Center, Laurens Food Pantry, Caring lunches, Shaya Bee, the Laurens minister discretionary fund, and our church budget.
Mark your calendars to join us on Saturday, November 21, 2026!

Good as New:

We will be having tables with good as new items as part of our bazaar! There is a table in the fellowship hall that you can drop things off on. We do not want any clothing. Just gently used items! Remember that all items are sold by donation only, nothing is marked. At the end of the bazaar, all items will be taken to Goodwill or Fresh Start Market in Spencer. The last day to bring items will be November 18, 2026. Thank you for your contributions!

Jumpy Monkey Coffee

We are going to be selling Jumpy Monkey Coffee at the Laurens Methodist Church Bazaar on November 21, 2026. We are taking advance orders for this coffee and there will also be some coffee packages available during the bazaar. We need your pre- order by October 25. The pre-order forms are in the church narthex. Your coffee will be available for pick up the day of the bazaar, and that is the time you will pay for the coffee. All packages are 12 ounces and will be sold at $13.00 a package.
Jumpy Monkey Coffee is packaged by individuals with disabilities supported by New Perspectives, Inc. in Sioux City, Iowa. This is a not-for-profit corporation that provides rehabilitative and vocational services for individuals.

Silent Auction

The Navity which will be auctioned during the Holiday Bazaar is on display in Fellowhip Hall.

Laurens Public Library Foundation Fundraiser

free-will baked potato bar

venmo

5-6:30 pm

Thursday, October 15

at the First Christian Church

Annual Soup Supper

OCTOBER 18TH 4:30-6:30PM

Emmestburg First United Methodist Church
Family Life Center

SPONSORED BY THE OUTREACH COMMITTEE
*PROCEEDS GO TO OUTREACH MINISTRIES

FREE WILL Donation

Soup Supper

Gluten Free Menu Available!

Sunday, October 25 4pm-7pm

Lost Island Lutheran Church

3797 310th Street Ruthven

Directions @ LostIslandLutheranChurch.org

Serving Chicken Noodle, Chili,

Vegetable Beef (gf) & Ham & Bean (gf)

Homemade Bread and Pies (gf options)

Lost Island Lutheran Church

ELECTION DAY

SOUP AND PIE SUPPER

Bethany Lutheran Church

Tuesday November 3rd

Serving from 4:30-7:00

Chili, Chicken Noodle & Broccoli Cheese

Pies, Bars, and Beverages

Call 841-2181 Delivery

Free will offering

Moonlight and MUNCHIES
OCTOBER 22ND
5:00 - 6:30 PM
Join us downtown Laurens
Dress up in your favorite costume
and come join the fun of
trick or treating
at the local businesses!

CITY OF LAURENS
Let's get
Spooky
Spooky Spooky Spooky
Everybody
TRICK OR TREAT
Knock to the left.. Knock to the right..
Ring that doorbell ya'll.
but only on
SATURBAY, OCTOBER 31ST
4:30 PM - 7:00 PM
Everybody
HAVE A BALL!
Treats Treats Treats

TRICK-OR-TREAT AT
LAURENS CARE CENTER
SATURDAY
OCTOBER
31
4:00-5:00 PM
BRING YOUR TRICK-
OR-TREATERS TO
LAURENS CARE CENTER
FOR A SPOOKY
GOOD TIME.
LAURENS CARE CENTER 304 E. VETERANS RD. LAURENS, IA 50554

HALLOWEEN
TRUNK OR TREAT
October 31st
5:00 - 6:30 PM
Laurens, Iowa
Fire Station
FIRE STATION
TOUCH-A-TRUCK
We'll also have
All
Welcome!
CHIPS
Hot dogs, water,
and chips served as well.

Halloween
at the
Laurens Public Library
The Magic of Michael Merrile
Fun for all ages!
7:00 pm Saturday,
October 31st

201 W. Main, Laurens, Iowa 50554

Laurens UMC
Stewardship, Prayer Requests & Worship Schedule

Stewardship for October 2026:

	Weekly	Year-to-date	Special
Total Receipts for 2026		$ 95,553.14	$ 4,294.40
Total Receipts received for October 4:	$ 3,047.00	$ 98,600.14	$ 243.19 Sept. Qtrs. Ingathering Missions
Total Receipts received for October 11:	$ 3,503.00	$ 102,103.14	$
Total Receipts received for October 18:	$	$	$
Total Receipts received for October 25:	$	$	$
Projected Budget Needs 2026:	$ 3,979.66	$ 210,922.00	

Attendance for October 4: Worship Service: 63 Sunday School: 28
Attendance for October 11: Worship Service: 32 Sunday School: 22
Attendance for October 18: Worship Service: Sunday School:
Attendance for October 25: Worship Service: Sunday School:

Tom Domek, Dave Alstott, The Farmers, Barb Davis, Amy Wilcox, Sam Paton, Deb Spanier, Deborah Wingler, Thaine Hopkins, Robyn Cornell, Mandy Reese, April Dalby, Pat Boughey, Amy Gustafson, Karen Johnson, Terry Spanier, Edward Schmidt, Kay Schrecengost, Methodist Church, nursing home residents, our church, victims of all natural disasters, those battling illness, our men & women of the armed forces, our world, and people in Ukraine, and people of Israel.

LAURENS UMC WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Sunday, October 18, 2026:
Youth Sunday School 9:15-10:10 AM
Adult Sunday School 9:30-10:00 AM
Fellowship Coffee 10:00 AM
Worship @ 10:30 AM

321 Main, Varina, Iowa 50593

Varina UMC
Stewardship, Prayer Requests & Worship Schedule

Stewardship for October 2026:

	Weekly	Monthly	Special
Total Receipts for 2026:			
Total Receipts received for October 4:	$ 1,398.00	$ 1,398.00	$ 50.00
Total Receipts received for October 11:	$ 424.00	$ 1,822.00	$
Total Receipts received for October 18:	$	$	$
Total Receipts received for October 25:	$	$	$

Projected Budget Needs for 2026: $ 633.15

Attendance for October 4: Worship Service: 32
Attendance for October 11: Worship Service: 19
Attendance for October 18: Worship Service:
Attendance for October 25: Worship Service:

Bev Morris, Brian Larsen, Little Evelyn, The Farmers, Barb Davis, Amy Wilcox, Gloria Mobley, Jo and Bruce Erie, Mandy Reese, Marie Breon, Denise Tegels, Paul Kraft, Milton Voss, Carol Siepker, Walt Collins, Julia Collins, The United Methodist Church, our nation, victims of all natural disasters, victims of violence, our men & women of the armed forces, our world, people of Israel, and people in Ukraine.

VARINA UMC WORSHIP SCHEDULE:

Sunday, October 18 2026
Worship Service at 9:00 a.m.

If you are unable to join us for in-person worship, please worship with us online as our worship services are live-streamed on the Laurens United Methodist Church Facebook page @ 10:30 a.m. every Sunday. Worship services are also available on our website at www.laurensumc.org. Just click on "Sermons/Devotions."

If you or a loved one is ready to be removed from or need added to our prayer list, please call the church office @ (712) 841-4476.

Any items for our Sunday bulletin need to be submitted to the church office @ (712) 841-4476 or methodist@laurensumc.org by 9 A.M. Friday morning. Any items for our weekly church *newsletter* need to be submitted by 9 a.m. on Monday mornings. Thank you for your cooperation.

Contact information:

Rev. Jim Davis: Pastor's Cell phone: 319-321-1705

Pastor's Email: eyeowaypastor@gmail.com

Sue Jarvis, Administrative Assistant: Office (712) 841-4476

Email: methodist@laurensumc.org

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