

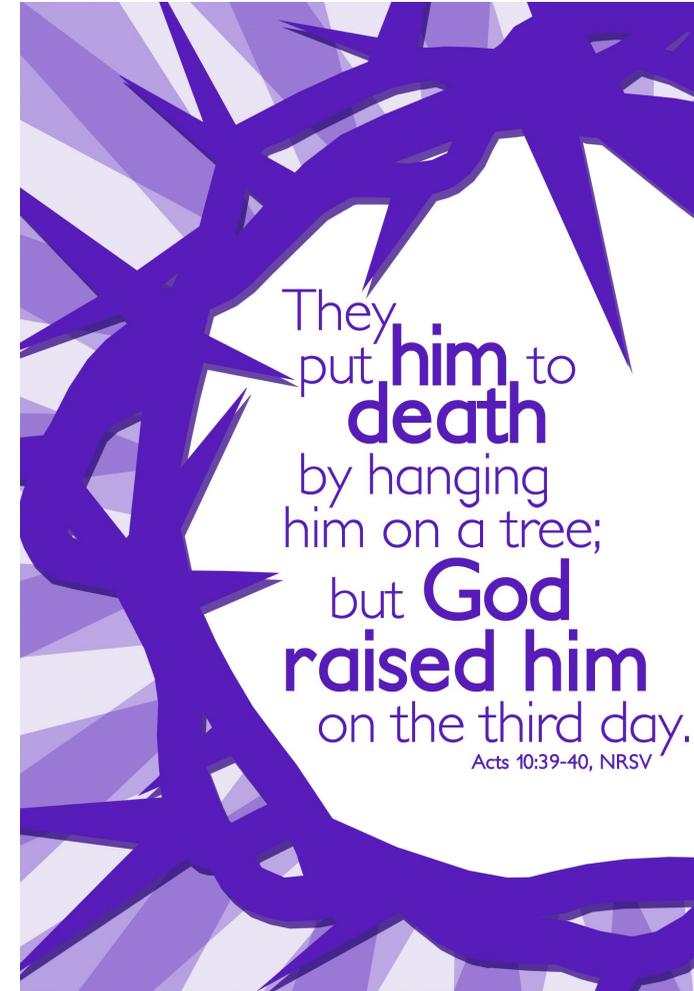
Guest Preacher: The Rev. Lee Schott

On Sunday, April 8, the three United Methodist Churches in Ottumwa will welcome Pastor Lee Schott of the Women at the Well United Methodist Church at the Women’s Correctional Facility in Mitchellville, IA. **The joint service will be held at the Ottumwa High School cafeteria at 10 am on April 8.** Following the service, there will be light refreshments and a question and answer session with Pastor Lee.

Named as one of the “15 People to Watch in 2018” by the Des Moines Register, Lee’s passion for prison ministry and helping women re-enter communities after serving their time has gained her recognition around the state and nation.

Lee is a graduate of Harvard Law and St. Paul School of Theology. She was a member of Valley UMC in West Des Moines when Pastors Jon & Leila were there.

Please plan on attending this special joint service sponsored by the three Ottumwa UMCs and bring family and friends! The Ottumwa High School cafeteria is completely handicap accessible.



Church Staff:

- Jon Disburg
Pastor
- Julie Vose
Office & Finance
- Michael Philipsen
Director of Music
- Anthony Navarro
Custodian

Staff may be contacted at the church or through the church’s email.

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FAX: (641) 684-8052

Pastor’s Cell Phone: (641) 680-7464
Church Office Hours: 9-12:00 T-F

E-mail: fumcott@gmail.com
Website: ottumwafirstumc.org

Julie’s office hours vary. Please call ahead if you need to see her.

From the Pastor



...and?? ...so???

Dr. Harrell Beck taught me most of what I know about

preaching over 30 years ago. He was a renowned preacher and teacher of the Old Testament. He touched hearts... changed lives...and, did so with both wit and scholarship. The secret to his preaching and his teaching were 2 small words...and & so; both in the form of questions.

A typical sermon-prep dialogue with Dr. Beck went like this:

Me: I'm preaching on the 23rd Psalm this week.

Beck: Tell me about the 23rd Psalm

Me: Written by David...original Hebrew text is straightforward and uncorrupted..."soul" should be translated "life"... "surely" can also be translated "only"...and the last line in Greek version is "I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever;" but Hebrew it is, "I shall dwell in the house of the Lord for as long as I'm alive."

Beck: (huge yawn...followed by uncomfortable silence) Wonderful, you've just proven you read the footnotes.and??

Me: (more silence) ...uh...and what?

Beck: Your folks have known this Psalm longer than you've been alive! ...and...what did you find interesting or

important about this familiar Psalm???

Me: I found it interesting that God's name's sake - God's reputation - depends upon us following the paths of righteousness.

Beck: (more silence) ...so???

Me: So...the level of respect a community has for God and God's word is directly related to the level of righteousness displayed by the faithful... low level righteousness means low level respect; high level righteousness means high level of respect for God and God's word...

Beck: (suddenly jumping up and down) Yes! Yes! There's hope for you yet, Iowa!

Though humbling, Beck's "...and??...so???" approach to preaching taught me more than just a homiletic method. He was teaching us all that faith itself must have bothand? and ...so?? to be meaningful and relevant in this world.

Jesus died for our sins and on the third day rose from the dead.

...and??? ...so???

The only answers to those 2 questions that will truly transform your life must come only from you. May your Easter worship, your prayers and your faith provide your answers.

Grace and Peace, Pastor Jon

MISSIONS UPDATE

NOTE: We are still taking Book Fair contributions to bless area elementary children!

On April 15th there will be a special offering for Native American Ministries. This empowers local outreach and educates Native American seminary students to serve God faithfully. The offering also helps preserve a rich cultural heritage. Please prayerfully consider a contribution to this special offering.

Crystal and Richard James appreciate your prayers and support for their recent missions trip to Haiti. Crystal is looking forward to sharing the message on April 15th, "Mission Possible: Haiti."

KNITTING CLASSES

Tuesdays & Thursdays in Fellowship Hall
April 17, 19, 24 & 26

Beginners

3:00-4:00 You will learn the knit stitch, cast on, yarn over, and bind off, while knitting a dishcloth. Materials will be available at the first class for around \$5. If you want to bring your own supplies, you will need 1 skein of Peaches and Cream cotton yarn and size 8 knitting needles, any length.



Sweater Knit-Along

4:00-5:30 Our project will be a textured, top down cardigan, with no seams. You will need size 6, 36 inch circular needles, and size 7, 16 inch circular double-pointed needles. Contact Linda Vogt for the yarn specifications for this project.

Contact Linda Vogt to sign up! These classes are open to the public!
(641) 777-6021



We would like to thank everyone for your concerns, prayers, phone calls and cards during my illness and hospitalizations. They were greatly appreciated and felt.

God Bless!

Donna Guest and Deanne McAllister

DISCIPLESHIP PATHWAY: WHAT ARE YOUR SPIRITUAL GIFTS?



Work continues on our FUMC Discipleship Pathway. We are now making an effort to develop the various components of the pathway. The current emphasis is on the assessment of spiritual gifts.

A spiritual gifts assessment is not a test. There are no wrong answers. Everyone gets an “A” on this one. The purpose is to help an individual identify his/her God-given gifts. The process aids in the understanding of the nature of spiritual gifts with the purpose of enhancing the effectiveness of the gifts by linking together with others.

Information on both online and paper/pencil versions of spiritual gifts assessments is available on the missions table in Fellowship Hall. We have volunteers willing to help those who want assistance. For those who are interested, a small group can help explain more about spiritual gifts.

Contact the church office or a member of the FUMC Ministry Council with questions or requests for assistance.

LAITY DAY WITH BISHOP LAURIE

Saturday, April 14; 9:00 am to 3:00 pm; Aldersgate United Methodist Church, 3600 75th St, Urbandale, Iowa.

Check-in starts at 9:00 with coffee and treats and material pick-up. The program begins at 9:45 and includes worship, missional presentations, a networking lunch, and a presentation by Bishop Laurie. A communion service will conclude Laity Day.

Laity Day is FREE and pre-registration is not required, but helpful! You will find a link on our website for registration, or call the church office and Julie will make sure you are registered.

Adult Sunday School to Study
“Resurrection” by N.T. Wright

“Resurrection” is a video study of Christ’s resurrection and its implications for our faith and lives. The study walks us through the political, historical and theological issues at stake in Jesus’ day and today. It is shot on location in Greece, Israel and England.

The Adult Sunday School class will begin the study on Sunday, April 15 at 9 am in the Pine Room. All are welcome. Bring your Bible!

SO, WHAT HAVE YOU HEARD?

Submitted by Marva Philipsen

Many of you may already be hearing talk of a possible merger with the other Ottumwa United Methodist Churches. The following is some factual information so that you can be well-informed on the actual happenings.

At this point, a possible merger is at an exploratory stage. A group has been formed that includes the pastor and 5 lay people from each of the three UMC congregations. The lay people from FUMC are Russ Sporer, Eldon Hunsicker, Brooke Fischels, Diane Jorgensen, and Marva Philipsen. I want to stress to you that the purpose of the group of 18 is not to make decisions. The group will be exploring and researching so that the congregations can benefit from that knowledge. The District Superintendent is available as a resource and to arrange any needed charge conferences. The District Superintendent is not requiring this exploration. Any decisions will be made by the members of the congregations.

Please understand that this will be a long, deliberate process. Also, while some of you may remember a past attempt to join the churches together, it is crucial that we let go of that experience and concentrate on the present.

The exploration group will be reading a helpful book called, *Vital Merger: A New Church Start Approach that Joins Church Families Together* by Dirk Elliott. Pastor Jon ordered a few extra copies. You may ask to borrow one or order one for yourself if you'd like to read it too. I'd like to share a paragraph from the beginning of the book to give you an idea of what this task looks like.

Merging churches can be a lot like merging families. Imagine that two people decide to get married, each with two children from a previous relationship. Both of them have their own home decorated to meet their own tastes and have customs that reflect their particular heritage. With marriage, this couple will attempt to start a new life together with their children.

We will be making every effort to keep the congregation informed and included. We would like to start by giving you the opportunity to communicate your observations and questions. In Fellowship Hall you will find an instruction sheet, index cards and a collection container. Follow the instructions and share your thoughts. Contact any Ministry Council member for assistance.

MINISTRY COUNCIL: Marva Philipsen, Diane Jorgensen, Eldon Hunsicker, Kim Arduer, Larry Chaplin, Margaret Trucano, Jan Tallman Klodt, Brooke Fischels, Sandie Kiple, Peg Campbell, Lory Chaplin, Deanne McAllister, Connie Agee, and Michael Philipsen.