

# The Asbury Connection

August 2020

**Deadline** to  
submit info for the  
next Asbury  
newsletter is  
**Aug 21**

\*\*\*\*\*  
\* Daughter, Esme \*  
\* Rose's arrival \*  
\* blessed Paul & Toni \*  
\* Rittscher of Good- \*  
\* year, AZ, on July 9. \*  
\* Congrats to them, & \*  
\* grandparents Tom \*  
\* & Pat Rittscher! \*  
\* \*  
\*\*\*\*\*

**AT&T customers:**

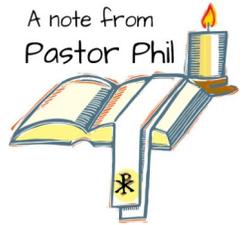
On 9/30, AT&T residential local service in Iowa will cease. For some of you, this means your home phone service will be discontinued. If you do drop a landline/ change a phone number, please notify the church & provide an alternate means of contact. Thank you!



[www.asburywc.org](http://www.asburywc.org)

Dear Friends;

It is my privilege to be starting my second month as the pastor appointed to the Webster City community through you, the people who are the Asbury United Methodist Church. May the truth, salvation, justice, grace, resurrection and love of God in Jesus Christ be made real through each of us. There are some items I wish to lift up to you in this article.



**A) I am grateful to the SPRC for setting up the Meet and Greets.** If you haven't yet had an opportunity to sign up, please do so by phoning Abby in the Office and sign up for a time slot. Due to the limited number of folk we can have, you must have a reservation to attend.

**B) The ReEntry Task Force\* is up and running,** and we are prayerfully discerning the criteria for when we may be able to return to larger group activities in our Sanctuary, and what will be the needs and requirements of the worshippers and worship leaders. Please keep us in your prayers, that we may respond to the witness of the Holy Spirit on how we must proceed.

**C) We will be having outdoor, Sunday worship at 10am beginning August 23.** We will be having it outside at the Amphitheater by the Lake (Briggs Woods). Please bring your own chair, and a mask to wear. It will not last longer than 35 minutes. In order for it to happen, we will need volunteers to help set up and tear down after each service, as well as help people get their chairs from their cars to the site. If we don't have sufficient volunteers, we will need to suspend outdoor worship. Please call the church office to volunteer!

**D) If you need to contact me,** you may do so through the church office, 832-5369, or you may email me at [philip.webb@iaumc.net](mailto:philip.webb@iaumc.net). If it is an emergency, please call me on my cell phone at (515)341-4666 (a Baptist layman sold me that number, it's a long story, ask me sometime).

**E) Other details will be forthcoming in emails from the Church Office.** If someone you know doesn't have email or a computer, please be neighborly and call to let them know what the emails say.

It is good to be here in Webster City. I have long known of this great town and outstanding church. May God bless you as we move forward in serving Christ in *all* we think, say, and do.

In Christ Jesus,

Phil Webb, pastor

## Watch Worship Online:

1. Go to [www.asburywc.org](http://www.asburywc.org)
2. Put your cursor on the word "Resources" (red bar at top)
3. In the drop down list, move your cursor down to the words "Video Library" & click once.
4. From the list of dates, click on the date you want to watch.
5. A box with a triangle will appear; click on the triangle. The video will load, then begin playing.



*Prayers & comfort to loved ones of:  
Wanda Cook, Donald Sharar, Shirley  
Hanson, Alice Widick, and Steve Butler*



## AUGUST Birthdays & Anniversaries

- 1, Ray Hutchison, Kelsey Griffith, Hayley Hupp; **Troy & Christine Hassebrock**
- 2, Sandy Crim, Dakotah Lovelace, Cody Sleiter, Roger Lyons; **Matt & Nikki Ehn**
- 3, Ann Dayton, Ruth Seiser Poland; Troy Hassebrock; **Terry & Marilyn Bottorff**
- 4, Loran Fletchall, Kaitlyn Kehoe, Ken Theobald; **Mark & Alicia Crouthamel**
- 5, Shirley Cross, Louis Lovelace, Jr.; **Lon & Ann Crosby**
- 6, Lon Crosby, Jo Fletchall, Carla Johnson; **Jay & Patty Bjerke; TJ & Lacy Mortenson**
- 7, Hailey Griffith; **Leonard & Colleen Rotschafer; Mary Ellen & David Malo; Matt & Trisha Hoffmann**
- 8, Bob Carden, Barbara Hadley
- 9, Kelly Stoakes, Devon Stoakes, Tiffany Bingham; **Don & Trudy Anderson; Rod & Betty Ruppel**
- 10, Karla Caquelin, Steve Krasean, Ryan Moenck, Tom Rittscher; **Bill & Lois Olson; Ron & Renee Godfredsen**
- 11, Sondra Carden, Laura Krasean, Dwain Noffke; **Doug & Lisa Schaa**
- 14, Travis Barrick; **James & Jennifer Rossing; Brock & Trisha Jacobson**
- 16, Jane Jacobson, Cade Mickelson; David Janson; **Loran & Jo Fletchall**
- 17, Michael Krasean; **Jack & Joyce Ferrell**
- 18, Ann Crosby, Bryan Swon, Andy Hejlik, Carol Smith
- 19, Lonnie Graves, Landon Johnson; **Melvin & Donna Longhenry**
- 21, Ross Haren
- 22, Allie Pineda, Marilyn Strain; **Tony & Teresa Tempel**
- 23, Kelli Bernard, Trent Mason; Mike & Jane Jacobson; **Dylan & Claire Huffman**
- 24, Jayden Mathis
- 25, Leandra Clum, Mark Kennedy; **Wade & Cindy Johnson; Kent & Lois Larson**
- 26, Mike Hames
- 27, Angie Meyer, Alan Shehorn; **Keith & Joan Gelder**
- 28, Sharon Hassebrock
- 29, **Ken & Kathy Theobald**
- 30, Adra Ann Goettsch, Wilbur Schumaker
- 31, Kaylee Schnathorst

**Rocky Railway VBS was great! We didn't want it to end, so we wanted you to have this train to color!**

### **Bishop Laurie Reflects on the 2020 Iowa Annual Conference:**

"Over the past year, I have shared a vision for the Iowa Annual Conference called Vision 2032: ...in 2032 relationships will be more important than theological convictions; innovation, creativity, and imagination will be more important than stagnation, rigidity, sacred cows, and the status quo. [...] our primary focus will be on the Great Commission and the Great Commandment: to go out into the world and make disciples of Jesus Christ and to love God and our neighbour in all that we do.

#### **Our Reality**

1. Attendance and membership in local churches continue to decline.
2. Some local congregations have been unable to find effective ways to offer Christ to their communities.
3. The Conference financial situation is serious and was reflected in the decision of the Legislative Session to:
  - \* not be bound to pay 100% of General Conference apportionments. This means that the primary decision to pay is up to local churches. All General Conference apportionment payments by local churches will be sent by CF&A to the General church.
  - \*The IAC budget line item for "uncollected apportionments" has been eliminated for the 2021 budget.
  - \*The adoption of the 2021 budget included additional reductions in Conference mission and ministry expenses while attempting to recapture the depletion of the spent reserves of 2019/2020.

...the only funding we receive to support out conference mission/ministry is through local church giving, and when that funding is gone, we have no choice but to reduce staff, programming, and ministry.

These are times that call for courageous decision-making. Gil Rendle's new book, *Quietly Courageous*... reminds us that we still have many congregations and clergy who want to go back to the way things were in the 1950s when churches were growing rapidly. ...but that day is long gone, and it is not coming back.

- Today most churches are trying to live off increased giving of a smaller number of older people. Unfortunately, this is unsustainable.
- Our buildings were constructed to be located for easy access to certain distances and travel patterns that are no longer convenient to current demographic shifts.
- The current average worship attendance in US churches is 75; not enough to sustain full-time ministry.
- We lament and at times deny the loss of the prosperity and waning influence of the church in our society.
- There's a lot of nostalgia going on right now. "Why can't the church be like it was when I was a kid?"

And finally, what is our plan? First, in this time, we will need to continue to strategically shrink, for we cannot do everything anymore. We must determine priorities and direct our resources in that direction in a prayerful and purposeful manner. Second, we will need an intentional missional focus on equipping clergy and laity to lead the church toward its identified outcomes, address adaptive challenges, and increase the number of healthy congregations and fruitful leaders. And third, we will need to demonstrate mercy, justice, courage, and hope. At the same time, we must not be deterred in our call to be missional and courageous leaders. Who are we now? Who is our neighbour now? And what is God calling us to make different now?

Blessings, Bishop Laurie

*(contact the church office, or visit [www.iaumc.org](http://www.iaumc.org) to read the Bishop's entire letter)*

Kit supplies for Midwest Mission are listed to the right. Please be on the lookout for good sales and help purchase items!

It is important to get item sizes as requested, otherwise they can not be sent. Personal Dignity Kit items can be placed in a 1-gal resealable baggie. Items can be dropped off at the CENTER doors at Asbury, under the table. Thank you!

#### **Personal Dignity Kit:**

- 1 bath towel — no kitchen
- 1 bath washcloth — no kitchen
- 1 comb — sturdy; no picks
- 1 razor with guard
- 1 nail clipper
- 1 adult toothbrush
- 1 toothpaste — 2.5oz or larger
- 1 bar soap — 3-4oz
- 1 shampoo — 15-18oz
- 1 deodorant — 2-3oz
- 10 band-aids — 3/4" by 3"

#### **Student Kit:**

- 1 ruler—12", with metric
- 1 pencil sharpener
- 1 pencil eraser—2" or larger
- 1 box of 12 colored pencils
- 1 box of 24 crayons
- 1 pair of student scissors
- 3 notebooks —1 subject, spiral, 8x10.5"
- 6 pencils — unsharpened

(Able to make a cloth bag? Call Pat for details! 832-2470)

Asbury United Methodist Church  
921 Des Moines St  
Webster City, IA 50595

“Return Service Requested”

Phone: 515-832-5369  
www.asburywc.org

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One of the most asked questions I am asked during the age of covid is “when is the church opening?” Or, “Are you open yet?” I often answer the question as truthfully as I can. But this past weekend I realized something: I don’t think we are asking the right question. And I absolutely have not been answering this question in the right way.

Because you see, the church, both Asbury and the church universal, have never been closed. The church has never stopped doing the work that she is called to by God. Worship is still happening, just in different ways. Ministries are still happening, though they look a little different. People are still being helped.

It was a quote I saw on Facebook that made me realize that our verbiage needed to shift. A Presbyterian Church posted this: “We’ve never stopped loving people, or worshipping God, or serving our neighbours —The church never closed. We’ll be thrilled to regather physically when we can do in ways that seek the welfare of the city. But ‘re-opening’ the church isn’t a thing.”

Can you imagine the difference this would make if we began to shift this perspective? Not just during covid, but even moving forward. If we continue to put the emphasis on the right parts of what the church should be, how much more could our world be transformed? How much closer could we be to having the kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven? Where could the church go if we took ourselves out of the center of the equation and put the work God is calling us to do where it should be? My stomach has butterflies just thinking about it—for two reasons. First, man, how amazing would that be? And two, man, I have a lot of work to do in shifting my own thinking and words to get there. It is going to be a lot of work, but I think it will be so worth it.

I am so looking forward to being able to worship in person with you again, while safely physically distancing, when it is safe for us to do so. But until that day, I look forward to doing church with you in these unprecedented times. ~ Jennifer