

Racine UMC Newsletter

401 East Main Street, Racine, MN 55967

March 2026

With Spring just around the corner, I think it most appropriate to again bring forth these beautiful words from our sister in Christ Kathy Hawkins. Her gift of poetry is so uplifting!

The Signs of Spring By: Kathy Hawkins

The dreary days of winter are soon to be in the past
As snow turns to rain and the earth comes alive at last
Crying children wanting to be outside to run free
Parents wondering if it will ever dry up so it can be
A trip to the farm to let the kids exuberantly run
The squeals and giggles describe all the fun
Traipsing down the driveway through mud and muck
Wanting to get to the puddles just like a duck
Standing at the edge looking as the water ripples in the breeze
The little ones know mom and dad would want them to freeze
The thoughts of jumping in are so urgently strong
Would it really be so awfully terribly wrong
When coming from behind they hear boots approaching
They turn to see the person they were hoping
With a smile and a laugh in jumps the crazy lady
Who on more than one occasion has been a bit shady
The splashing begins with various sizes of rubber boots
The squeals and hollers and oh the many hoots
Puddles being emptied one splash at a time
You would have thought they were losing their mind
Exhaustion eventually flows through all of their bodies
Clomping back to the house and snickering at the follies
Met by the stern eyes of dear old mom and dad
Knowing it's okay because they can't be mad
The drips and the dribbles of mud off faces so sweet
Surely they wouldn't be the ones to take the heat
That crazy lady was leading the charge they said
Grandma caused the uproar and should be the one sent to bed
Mom and dad stood shaking their head with disbelief
With a Grandma like that they were in for countless years of grief



OPEN HEARTS. OPEN MINDS. OPEN DOORS.

Worship on Sundays: In Sanctuary at 8:30am

Pastoral Support Team

Pastor Bridget Sheely

Email: bridget@countrywidecarriers.com

Pastors cell # 507-438-1352

Pastor Jon Marburger

Email: marburgerjon@gmail.com

Cell #507-227-6711

Racine UMC Office hours Thursdays 5-7pm Office Phone: 507-378-4801

Grace and Peace in the name of Jesus Christ:

If you have items you would like to be



published in the newsletter, please contact our church secretary, Norma Kenning, by the 3rd Thursday of the preceding month by emailing your

information to: Racine UMC

rsicumc@hmtel.com or by bringing your information to Norma during office hours (Thursdays, 5-7) If you would like to donate a gift, you may send donations to the address above or deliver it in person during Sunday morning worship services.

Calendar of Events

(Subject to change and/or be added to as the need arises)

March 2026

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--|-----------|---|--|---|---|---|
| 1 8:30 am Worship  | 2 | 3 | 4 Lenten Gathering 6:00pm meal Hosted by: Racine UMC | 5 Food Shelf 6-8 pm | 6 | 7  |
| 8 8:30 am Worship  | 9 | 10 Ad Council 6:30pm | 11 Lenten Gathering 6:00pm meal Hosted by: Brownsdale UMC | 12 Food Shelf 6-8 pm | 13 | 14 |
| 15 8:30 am Worship  | 16 | 17  | 18 Lenten Gathering 6:00pm meal Hosted by: Wykoff UMC | 19 Brownsdale UMC Noon Potluck Dinner Food Shelf 6-8 pm | 20  | 21 |
| 22 8:30 am Worship  Womens Appreciation Dinner @ Dexter UMC 6 pm | 23 | 24 | 25 Lenten Gathering 6:00pm meal Hosted by: United Church of Grand Meadow | 26 Food Shelf 6-8 pm | 27 | 28 |
| 29 8:30 am Worship  | 30 | 31 | | | | |

March Worship Schedule



Second Sunday in
March 1, 2026

Pastor Bridget Leading

As the Lord has told us. We don't know everything, but we know some things. We know God asks us to do justice, to love mercy, and to walk humbly. We know that Jesus said blessed are the peacemakers and that when you do it to the least of these, you do it to him. Maybe that isn't enough to build a life on, but it is a start. With those thoughts in mind let us come together this day in praise and thanksgiving of Him who gives us the call to go and discover what is and what will be...



Third Sunday in
March 8, 2026

Pastor Jon Leading

We are thirsty. And we just might be getting thirstier. Both physically and spiritually. Which leads me to ask... Did you ever do a kindness for someone and feel that the individual was not properly grateful? Did it make you less likely to help the next time around? When Jesus says, "Be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Matthew 5:48), do you think he meant putting up with complaints and overreactions when people's basic needs aren't being met? Do you think he meant, "Give drink to the thirsty, regardless of how they respond"?



Fourth Sunday in
March. 15, 2026

Pastor Jon Leading

Do you know what it is like to be chosen? Our texts today is about being chosen by God. Most of us don't think that we were chosen, certainly not to be king like David. But surely, we chose the jobs that we do and the hobbies that we pursue and the service that we perform, didn't we? But God chose too. And not just in the past tense, God is still choosing.



March 22, 2026

Pastor Bridget Leading

Here at the end of the Lenten observance (well, almost the end anyway), we have hints of Resurrection. We have "a foretaste of glory divine," as the hymnist Fanny Crosby says. As if the Spirit and the lectionary preparers knew that we would need something to help us through the next couple of weeks. As if they knew that without this reminder, we would find it a very hard road as we made our way stumbling behind the Christ who suffers and dies for us.

March 29, 2026

Pastor Bridget Leading



The story of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem, tells us that after his celebrated arrival. He went into the Temple and looked around at everything. As we gather here for worship today may it be with a sense that Jesus has walked in too and is looking around.

May our eyes be open to see Him, may our hearts be ready to be seen by Him, may our worship be worthy of His presence, and may we be transformed so that we see the world through His eyes. Amen.

Prairieland Parish Events

BROWNSDALE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Community Noon Lunch
Thursday, March 19th
12 O'clock – Noon
Bring your friends! Serving:
hot dishes - Salads - Desserts - Beverages
FREE WILL DONATIONS








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PARISH WIDE WOMENS APPRECIATION DINNER

Sunday, March 22rd.
6:00pm
Dexter UMC
Hosted by the Men's Group
Dinner & program



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Lent

Prairieland Parish will be gathering as Christ's community each week as we rotate Sanctuaries – There will be A light meal starting at 6pm Followed by an informal worship/study. This is a beautiful opportunity for us to journey though the Lenten. Season together by uniting as a Parish and accepting each other's invitation to praise of His Name in each other's Holy Sanctuaries.


Week 2 – Weds – March 4th
6:00pm meal served
Hosted by: Racine UMC
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Week 3 - Weds - March 11th
6:00pm meal served
Hosted by: Brownsdale UMC
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Week 4 – Weds – March 18th
6:00pm meal served
Hosted by: Wykoff UMC
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Week 5 – Weds – March 25th
6:00pm meal served
Hosted by: United Church of Grand Meadow
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Good Friday – April 3, 2026
7:00 pm Hosted by: Dexter UMC
No Meal served for this Service



Daily Lenten Scripture Reading Plan

| | | | | |
|---------------|---|---------------|------------------------------|--|
| Day 12 | Take a Break (Sunday, March 1st) | Day 30 | Luke 19-Luke 20 | |
| Day 13 | Matthew 25-Matthew 26 | Day 31 | Luke 21-Luke 22 | |
| Day 14 | Matthew 27-Matthew 28 | Day 32 | Luke 23-Luke 24 | |
| Day 15 | Mark 1-Mark 3 | Day 33 | Take a Break (Sunday) | |
| Day 16 | Mark 4-Mark 6 | Day 34 | John 1-John 2 | |
| Day 17 | Mark 7-Mark 9 | Day 35 | John 3-John 4 | |
| Day 18 | Mark 10-Mark 12 | Day 36 | John 5-John 6 | |
| Day 19 | Take a Break (Sunday) | Day 37 | John 7-John 8 | |
| Day 20 | Mark 13-Mark 14 | Day 38 | John 9-John 10 | |
| Day 21 | Mark 15-Mark 16 | Day 39 | John 11-John 12 | |
| Day 22 | Luke 1-Luke 3 | Day 40 | Take a Break (Sunday) | |
| Day 23 | Luke 4-Luke 6 | Day 41 | John 13-John 14 | |
| Day 24 | Luke 7-Luke 9 | Day 42 | John 15-John 16 | |
| Day 25 | Luke 10-Luke 12 | Day 43 | John 17-John 18 | |
| Day 26 | Take a Break (Sunday) | Day 44 | John 19-John 20 | |
| Day 27 | Luke 13-Luke 14 | Day 45 | John 21 (Good Friday) | |
| Day 28 | Luke 15-Luke 16 | Day 46 | 1 Corinthians 15 | |
| Day 29 | Luke 17-Luke 18 | Day 47 | It's Easter! | |



UMC Conference Article

Faith Formation and Spiritual Formation: A path toward the “Fruit of the Spirit”

By: Reid Baumann

All of us are on a journey in life—and part of that journey for many people is faith formation and spiritual formation. Although these terms may sound similar, they differ. For they mean specific things in our lives along our path.

The United Methodist Church has its own definitions of faith formation and spiritual formation. Faith formation is the process by which disciples are made, and faith is made strong, by learning about faith and living it in our everyday lives. Faith formation is a lifelong endeavor and can start at any age.

Spiritual formation grows along with and complements faith formation. This place is reached through many means, such as prayer, scripture reading, meditation, fasting, and discernment. Discerning means listening for the movement of the Holy Spirit in our lives—letting the Spirit guide our actions by being open to the whisperings of God.

Faith formation

Faith is formed by seeking a relationship with God. Teaching others about the faith, acting as a disciple, and trying to live life through a Christian lens can all be helpful parts of faith formation.

No one is too old or too young to engage in faith formation. Everyone can take their faith and share it with others as disciples, as well as grow in their faith their entire lives. Even a small, growing faith can be powerful. In Matthew 17:20, Jesus said, “Because you have so little faith. Truly I tell you, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you.”

Faith formation in our churches is often present for youth with activities like Sunday School, confirmation, and youth group. For adults, Bible Studies, prayer groups, and missions work help make disciples and strengthen faith. For all ages, Christian education helps our faith grow and thrive.

Spiritual formation

Spiritual formation is a central aspect of United Methodism, as early founders John and Charles Wesley were seeking to live Christianity in a way that fulfilled their hearts and opened all believers to the moving of the Spirit. This religious aspect of Methodism was confirmed to John Wesley during his Aldersgate Experience on May 24, 1738, when he felt his “heart strangely warmed” and became spiritually convinced of his own salvation.

Listening to the Holy Spirit through prayer, meditation, and discernment allows all peoples to live a truly rich life by seeing evidence of the fruit of the Spirit in their everyday lives—and sharing that lived experience with others. This formation allows people to grow into the image of Christ through God’s grace, which is the action of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

These works of the Holy Spirit come to us in three ways: Prevenient, Justifying, and Sanctifying Grace. Prevenient Grace connects us with God even when we aren’t yet aware of God’s presence in our lives. Justifying Grace is when we become aware, accept God, and are forgiven. Sanctifying Grace is the ongoing spiritual formation process that allows us to act in a Christ-Like manner and thus reflect Christ in this world.

Many ways to grow in Faith and Spirit

Faith formation and spiritual formation can take many forms, including through artistic expression, experiencing God’s creation, or simply taking a moment to breathe. Since the Holy Spirit can shape us in many different ways, it is important to be open to practices that are novel and unfamiliar, as well as familiar.

Baptism and Confirmation in the church are sacred moments where we commit to the development of faith and spiritual formation in others, while also recommitting to it in our own lives. It is a unique time to reexamine where we are with our own faith and spiritual formation.

Living the full breadth of our faith as Christ did makes us a disciple, and living true discipleship leads to a spiritual transformation, where the “Fruit of the Spirit”— such as love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control is present and shared with all we meet. (Galatians 5:22-23)

This is the life-changing gift that grows from engagement in faith and spiritual formation.

Name: _____ Date: _____

- AWAKENING
- BASKETBALL
- BLOSSOM
- DAFFODIL
- DAYLIGHT SAVING
- EASTER.
- EQUINOX
- FLOWER
- FRESH
- GREEN
- GROWTH
- HOLI
- KITE
- LEPRECHAUN
- LUCK
- MADNESS
- MARCH
- PARADE
- POT OF GOLD
- RAIN
- REBIRTH
- RENEWAL
- SHAMROCK
- SHOWERS
- SPRING
- ST. PATRICK'S DAY
- WINDY



WORD SEARCH DIRECTIONS: Find and circle the vocabulary words in the grid. Look for them in all directions including backwards and diagonally.

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| R | D | S | F | A | R | E | Q | W | N | L | A | A | P | Y | C | Q | N | O |
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Racine United Methodist Church
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RACINE
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Our mission is
to make disciples
of Jesus Christ for
the transformation
of the world

Sunday Morning Schedule
8:30 am in person

Church Website
<https://www.umcracinemn.org>


March  **2026**