



THE GLAD TIDER

Stevensville United Methodist Church

May 2021

Open Doors for Generational Blessing- Coming this Fall!



The walls and floors find their place in the new building, and I can't help but dance. What opportunities lie before us as a community of faith and what possibilities of growth and care await the community

of Stevi and beyond! This leap of faith to create a new ministry of Sapphire Early Learning Center and construct a beautiful building is like a seed that once sown, is now beginning to emerge with energy, life, and beauty.

As your pastor, I want to offer my great gratitude for all the ways you are already engaged in God's ministry through your presence, prayers, time, money, and witness.

In August we will gather together in small groups to share who we are, what excites us about SUMC, and what we envision for the future as God leads us. Through September we will prayerfully consider how we will be financial partners in this incredible ministry happening in and through SUMC.

Open Doors for Generational Blessing is the capital campaign that we will live into beginning this fall. If you feel called now to help develop that foundational support

with a larger and/or longer-term commitment, please contact Pastor Sarah. Each contribution is a gift, and this spring may offer you a unique opportunity to give generously from a tax return, COVID relief funds, property sales, or other means.

Turning to each other within the church and in the larger community to invest will empower the good work of SELC, civic partnerships and programming, and other ministries of SUMC to continue with vitality.





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Week
10:
Lumber
has
arrived!



Week 9: The gas line has been installed, tested and approved for use. We're just waiting on N/W Energy to set the new meter. The temporary rest room is up and running (so to speak). The current schedule says they will start floor framing this week and the trusses will be set starting May 20th. I had another idea for congregation involvement though: A contest on when the last truss will be set. Pick a day and then an hour of the day (as a tie breaker). Prize TBD.



Plates for walls are placed

Pine Street View

Perspective is
EVERYTHING!



College St. View

May we find wonder in the stars that cover us. May we find nourishment in the rain that covers the earth. May we find energy in the sun that lights our path. May we find hope in all the gifts that cover us each day, knowing that no matter what is over our heads, God can work with it all.



Worship for May Asters and Goldenrods

Growing Together in God's Love

Little, brace shoots emerge from the ground to welcome spring just as we emerge from the cozy places of winter into faith life together again. How does that work? Who might blossom in your presence? Did you know that who you are might be just what God needs to help another person thrive? Worship, the act of praise, love and faithful practice with God, gains traction, even depth, when done in a community. Let's be like the asters and goldenrods...let's grow together in God's love.

Inspiration and stories for this worship series is credited to *Braiding Sweetgrass* by Robin Wall Kimmerer.

May 2: Asters and Goldenrods: We Are One

Asters and goldenrods, bright purple and yellow flowers, grow together in a field. Why? Is there some attraction? Is there some mutual benefit? What about this eye catching pair can be learned about God's values? Their mutually beneficially relationship gives us reason to consider how we may gaze upon the world as God does, seeing the depths, interconnectedness and awe that exists in individuals made whole and one in God's Love. Can wonder and awe help us ask the good questions that draw us closer to one another in honor and care? Can beauty stretch our curiosity and aperture to take in more at the heart of what matters?

Scripture: Galatians 3:26-29

Prayer: Awesome God, made visible in all of creation, Jesus Christ, and the movement of the Holy Spirit. Thank you for bonds with others that enable us to grow more fully into who we're meant to be. Help us see such partnerships, such oneness in blessing, as a value and thus a characteristic throughout creation. Strengthen our Wonder muscle to embrace the mystery at the heart of the universe. Amen.

May 9: Frogs Crossing the Road & Other Things to Watch For

One who care-gives knows that the work is never done. There's always one more thing to clean, one more meal to prep, one more assurance to make, one more prayer to utter. Doing the right thing with care and intention is key. Many caregivers- mothers to small children, children for aged parents or relatives, partners to one another- invest in this effort with love, but the hope of a harvest, a "better" tomorrow really improves one's motivation. Apostle Paul tells us that continuing in good work for God will always yield a transformed heart, because as we keep on, we can become like the meek who will inherit the earth- satisfied with what is good, pure, and enough.

Scripture: Galatians 6:1-10

Prayer: Each day we ask for our daily bread, Dear God. Remind us that such a request will nourish us in body, mind and soul. That such bread will give us strength even while it reminds us of your steadfast presence and promise. May that daily gift transform us and the world by your grace no matter the circumstances. Amen.



May 16: Lichen: Being Transformed in Symbiosis

The lessons of our world take place in the smallest of organisms and their connections. Symbiotic relationships create a reality that leads to the separate organisms acting as one. They thrive by the blessing, the care, the work they do for the other that enables the wellness of both. Beyond this great benefit, comes a unique exchange of traits as well. Such infused qualities happen in nature, in marriages, even in exchanges and engagements across cultures. The surprises of such exchanges mirror the gifts offered to followers of Christ, the branches connected to the vine. Who will we be, together, anew?

Scripture John 15:1-7

Prayer: Thank you for weaving us together in such a way that we not only bless others, but we are made new and more of who you have envisioned us to be. May we have courage to experience and receive such changes as a grace you bestow. Remind us of the very relationships, partnerships, and civic connections that we hold that may serve in such a mysterious and magnifying way. Amen.

May 23: “Three Sisters”: We Each Play a Part

Corn, squash and peas have affectionately been named the “Three Sisters” for the way they cooperate, complement, and encourage survival. Through protection, support and partnership in very practical ways, these plants honor the unique qualities of the other while relying on one another in unity to thrive. How does this happen in the faith community, our homes, our families, and our environment? Who/What do you need to grow with in order to flourish and nourish and empower another’s growth in love?

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 12: 12-27 & Acts 2: 14-21

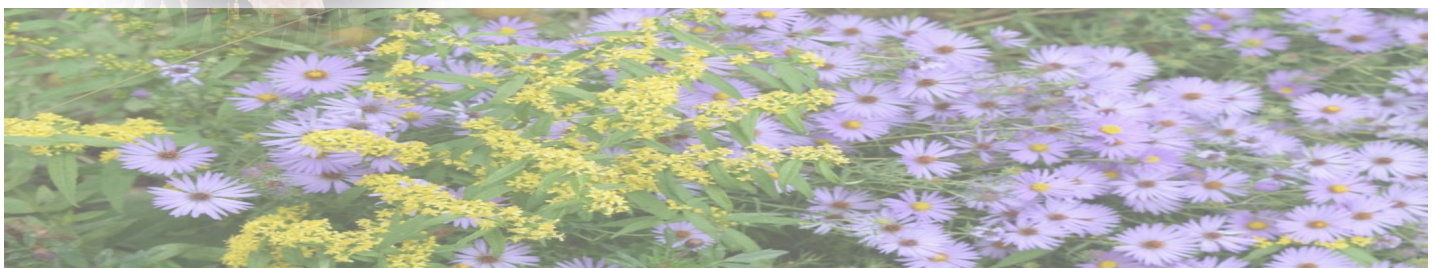
Prayer: Heavenly Father, thank you for the privilege of being united to Christ by faith and being part of your Body - the Church. Thank you for my brothers and sisters in Christ, and I pray that we would be united together in love. I pray that in all things we would learn to love You with all our heart and soul and mind and strength and put the needs of our brothers and sisters in Christ before our own, for Your greater praise and glory. Amen.

May 30: Trinity Sunday & Peace with Justice Sunday

The Holy Trinity exemplifies the best of partnerships, vulnerability, and giving all through love. God the creator, Jesus the savior, and the Holy Spirit work together to make real this love through all of creation, including the ways each human relates to another. Peace with Justice Sunday celebrates the qualities of the Trinity imbued in each of us including mercy, justice, and truth. When we pray to embody these, we pray that God’s will be made real in us and that these qualities take shape in the love of kin that calls them forth. How will we build up the kin-dom of God by living authentically in God’s image and likeness?

Scripture: Romans 8:12-17

Prayer: Abba, God! Thank you for liberating us from fear. Thank you for covering us with parental love. Thank you for giving us a spirit of courage to witness to your love that crosses every boundary. Reveal to us your image in the face of each person who is gathered here. Move us to extend your peace with justice to our siblings throughout your





Pastor's Note

Recently, I received an email that contained information that could help so many people, especially the elderly and dying, and their families. Beyond the article came the message, "My parents always told me to share things with the minister that might apply to others." This statement reminded me of the unique position I hold as a pastor as a hub of information, a resource of service, and a conduit of care and love. I receive these things and then have the opportunity to share, to pay it forward.

This has certainly been my experience this spring as information about the vaccine came across my desk or desires to beautify the church for Easter flooded in with enthusiasm and renewed hope of the season.



Likewise, the opportunities to serve children with Vacation Bible School or invest in the ministry of Sapphire Early Learning Center spring forth in ways that so many can partner and find blessing. I want to simply respond like one adjusting the lens of a camera: open up the aperture, let more light flow.



Still, I am humbled by this responsibility and trust. I reflect on how I do this well and where gaps exist or barriers have been erected (even unknowingly) to let the light, the information, the service, the care to flow in a natural and enriching way. As I wear the stole around my neck to represent my vocation of service to God by serving others, I seek to live more faithfully into that call.

Beyond a vocation of clergy is the call on all of the followers of Jesus, all the Easter people who claim the transforming mystery and power of the resurrection and love. "Go and make disciples." (Matt 28:18-20) The United Methodist Church identifies everyone, ordained or not, to be ministers. We are ministers by sharing the Good News of Love, healing with God's grace through our presence, prayers, and care, and returning each other to ourselves by acknowledging the belovedness of one another.

As a pastor, I'm ever grateful for the partnership with laity through this community of faith. We all have unique skills, graces, and callings. And together, we are all in ministry. I pray that each of us gets an encouraging letter like I received, "You are one that God will use so thanks for being in my world." Journeying in faith, Pastor Sarah

Pantry Partners Food Bank sent a thank you note! 40 pounds of food has been donated through Stevensville United Methodist Church so far this Easter Season! Let us continue being the Easter People. Donations can be given at the basket at SUMC.





Unified Board

Take a moment the next time you are in town and look at the Stevensville United Methodist Church and the changes in the last few weeks. Hopefully by the time you read this there will be a floor for the new building. In the name of progress what happens next?

Next on the agenda is financial forecasting related to operation of the Sapphire Early Learning Center. Keeping in mind our reason, as a congregation, for the SELC pursuit Lenny Johnson summed up our position for the end of 2021. “SELC...As much as it is a mission-focused effort that lives out the values of community engagement, building up children and families, and promoting education in a healthy, safe, and inspiring environment, this ministry will also provide income to SUMC.”

New income provides opportunities for which you have a voice. Please consider how you would like to see these funds spent by your Church. Keep in mind that we have gone into debt to build this addition, because of the pandemic many of our church ministry programs have stalled, and our organization has become considerably larger. I would like you to consider how you would like to see these funds spent by the Church. Your feedback is important and necessary for the continuation of this congregation and its ministries to this community.

As we venture together recognize we are all in this boat and it has indeed left the shore. At our recent Unified Board meeting we have realized that there are many things happening and many changes on the way. All of these changes are challenging but the future is bright for our church with the red steeple. A future filled with love, faith, and the sound of joy and laughter.

Thank you for your patience, thoughts, understanding, and prayers. Paul Ludington ~ Unified Board Chair

What's up with the roof? A Town Hall and building team update

During the April 18th Town Hall conversation, we discussed the next steps for the roof on both the new and historic building. We discussed the importance of the historic registration, the type of roof that would “look” good, the costs, and the sustainability.

First, the majority of the 16 people in attendance, including three who joined via zoom, endorsed the historic registry for its recognition of generational legacy, its value in providing a route for grants, and how it effects the market value of the building. While the historic registry requires certain maintenance and external looks, the group on whole felt it was worth it.

Following this discussion we covered the types of roof material. The new building has budgeted for an asphalt shingle that has some depth and a 40-year warranty. Recently, we received a bid to roof the historic building with a composite cedar shake with a “lifetime” warranty. Since the historic registry could be compromised with materials other than the shakes, the group determined to move forward with that material. The recommendation followed to put on the budgeted asphalt shingle on the new building as it will look similar and also save \$23,000 to not extend the shakes to the new building.

Finally, the Building Team recommends that the church move forward with a bid to reroof the historic building this Fall 2021. The first estimate is \$115,000. A second estimate is in process. It's important to note that until we finalize on the decision the prices can fluctuate with the cost of materials. Due to the recent escalation of building costs, the building team feels that it is prudent to get this under contract as soon as possible. While the cost of the historic roof is not budgeted in the SUMC general budget, the building team feels hopeful in both the fall capital campaign and the partnership with the contractor will help fulfill this long-awaited maintenance.

The Town Hall discussion is open to all. If you have comments or questions about these recommendations, the building team will hear them until May 5th when a final decision must be made. Please contact John Fisher as the lead project manager with your thoughts.

Mark Your Calendars



May 1, 2021~Festival of the Floor: Come and make your mark, enjoy the company of others, and have a snack. 4PM to 6PM on the new sub-floor of SELC.

Montana District Laity Learnings

Join the Congregational Resource Ministers (CRMs) the first Tuesday of every month at 7pm for a focused conversation. Each month will focus on an administrative or discipleship learning, which contributes to the work of creating beloved community and developing church vitality.

Zoom ID:97852748299. Password: 239086. If you need help connecting with zoom, please contact Eric Strader, estrader@mtnskyumc.org

May 4th – Identity and vision. What is the mission or purpose of your church?

June 1st- Staff Parish Committee Personnel. The work of human resources



Voices from the Field

“Standing with Women Leaders from Africa and Latin America” Monday, May 10, 2021 at 10:00 am ET (9:00 am CT / 7:00 am PT) virtual via Zoom ~ Register here

<https://us02web.zoom.us/join/9678912345?pwd=ZUJlYldOqhgTMpE9AUtt7ZkTi9FRlRlcXExbnBkaDZkdz09>

Meet Regional Missionaries Catherine Akale, Elmira Sellu, Finda Quiwa and Andrea Reily Rocha Soares, who will share real-life stories of courage and ingenuity and how United Methodist Women international work impacts lives of women and their families.

• **May 21, 2021~ Blood Drive** at the LDS Church on Main St from 12-6pm. People can register on line. The July drive will be on the 23rd. We hope to resume drives at our church by December

Stevensville UMC Meetings in MAY

MAY 16, 12:00—2:00 PM—Unified Board Zoom Meeting ID:84052002327

MAY 23, 12:00 PM—Town Hall in person and on Zoom Meeting ID:89880390275

Please come with your questions and ideas prepared to move forward in SUMC.

United Methodist Women are meeting in person again. Watch emails and mailbox for information.

Disciplines Sunday Study

Disciplines: a Zoom Study Experience for all. A lectionary based study of scripture. Sundays at 9am. Join via Zoom link or with Meeting ID: 833 5373 5385 Passcode: 887867

UM101: United Methodism Un-

packed What is the quadrilateral? Is grace for real?! How do Methodists live holy and active lives connected to God? You are encouraged to come. Gathering Thursdays at 2:00 PM. RSVP with the office if you're interested at all.

**Wednesday Bible Study
Hosted by Lenny & Karen
Johnson at 10am.**

For more information, please call
the office, 406-777-5443

Ways to Contact Us

Office phone: 406-777-5443

Office email: steviumc@gmail.com

Pastor Sarah's email: revsarahmerchant@gmail.com

Church website: steviumc.org

Office hours: Tues. through Fri. 9:00 A.M. to 2:00 P.M.



Ways to Connect:

In Person Worship: 9:00 AM Outside (weather permitting) & 10:30 AM Inside.

Live Streaming Worship at 10:30 on YouTube Channel & Facebook.

- o YouTube: Search for "Stevensville United Methodist Church." Look for the video that says "Live" in the bottom right corner.
- o Facebook: Search for "@SteviUmc." Scroll till you see the service.

MAY DAY Festival on the Floor!

The subfloor will be down so let's get down, too.

We're going to dance, BBQ, write notes on the wooden planks and celebrate this milestone in the building process of the new addition.

Bring your boots for line dancing, Irish clogs for stepping, and happy feet for a good time.

May 1 from 4-6pm. SUMC folks, future SELC families, Stevensville community:

All are welcome.

~ CHANGES OF ADDRESS ~
Bulk-rate mail is not forwarded.
If your address changes, if we have it wrong,
or if you no longer want to receive this newsletter,
please let us know.

ELECTRONIC SERVICE REQUESTED

Stevensville United Methodist Church
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Stevensville MT 59870

The Glad Tider

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