

First Presbyterian Church of Mount Vernon, Iowa

Annual Report 2025



Annual Meeting of the Congregation + Sunday, January 25, 2026

Table of Contents

Pastor's Report.....	2
Congregational Annual Meeting Minutes - January 26, 2025.....	4
Session Report of 2025.....	13
Social Concerns.....	14
Personnel.....	15
Member Care.....	16
Building and Grounds.....	17
Christian Education.....	18
Finance Committee.....	20
Annual Financial Secretary's Report.....	21
Mission Disbursements.....	22
2025 Account Summary.....	23
Two-Year General Fund Expense/Budget Comparison.....	24
Terms of Call for Pastor Lorene E. Wunder.....	26

The Nominating Committee Report will be available at the Annual Meeting

2025 PASTOR'S REPORT

The older I get (57 as I write this), the more the years blur together and the harder it is to remember what happened when. I've become grateful for the Annual Report as a way to support my blurred memory. So here are the things I want to remember:

In many ways 2025 was the year of Charlie.

In April, Charlie came to the church office, just to talk. He had experienced homelessness since the pandemic and was in Mount Vernon because a friend offered a sofa to sleep on. At first, we just talked, offered water and our free wifi. Then I gave him a ride to interview for the new Fareway store in Lisbon. He was thrilled to be hired, but then panicked because he didn't have black shoes or pants, or a way to get to a store in Cedar Rapids to train. There were impediments everywhere. With no family to help him, I used some church discretionary funds. The goal was to be the bridge that helped get him to stability.

Eventually, I asked the Session to get involved. From June through the end of December, we did our best to help Charlie. He was hired part-time with hours and wages that promised to be just enough for him to afford the \$500 a month apartment we found. Session members helped him move furniture from Central Furniture Rescue in Cedar Rapids and provided the household basics. SELCC supported him with food, clothing, and rides to work. Things were looking good.

But in the fall he got sick and missed days of work meant less income. Then food prices went up and instead of getting the promised hours, they were cut back. Charlie found another job but once again, the hours they said they would give him never materialized. He looked for something else but options in Mount Vernon were few. After doing some research online, Charlie found a place in western Iowa that offered housing and the services he needed (including medical help for some long-neglected health issues). So we bought a bus ticket and put him on the bus the first week of 2026.

In so many ways, the experience was discouraging. A community of people committed to helping one person was not enough. Then I read an article about congregational ministry that said, the question is not "Did it work?" but "Was it faithful?" We were faithful in our efforts to help Charlie. Several times in the spring I heard the message that we are called to respond not to all the needs in the world but to the person standing in front of us. We did that, and trust that God will continue to take care of Charlie using other faithful people.

There are other things worth remembering. To be blunt, 2025 was a hinge point in history, a dangerous moment in which people of faith were called to decide where they would stand—with God and the oppressed and marginalized, or with the principalities and powers of the world. I felt the call—as did our congregation—to do what we could to stand with God.

So while we were quietly helping one individual, we were also very much involved in public witness.

- In January, at the prayer service held at the National Cathedral, Bishop Mariann Edgar Budde exhorted the new president to “have mercy” on the people who were scared and vulnerable (e.g. immigrants and trans people). Despite their clear biblical roots, she was excoriated for her remarks. So the following Sunday we colored in letters spelling HAVE MERCY and displayed them where the community might also see them (and they grace this report’s cover).
- After the Iowa legislature rammed through legislation in the early hours of February 28 stripping legal protections from trans people in Iowa’s civil rights code, our congregation hosted a Community Prayer Vigil on the Rainbow Steps that afternoon. It was very well attended and several folks asked about continuing.
- So, we had additional gatherings on March 14, 28 and April 11 which involved singing, sharing stories, and sometimes a meal. These brought together people from our church and the wider community.
- On summer Fridays June 13-August 15, our church served as a free lunch site through SELCC’s Summer Meals Program. Volunteers were so enthusiastic, we filled the signup within a few days. It was a wonderful program to be part of!
- When Minnesota state representative Melissa Hortman and her husband were assassinated in their home on June 14, I was asked to help put together a prayer vigil for that event in Memorial Park. It was deeply moving to hear former Iowa senator Rob Hogg talk about his friend, Melissa, and to stand together in grief.
- The fall Narrative Lectionary texts from the Hebrew Bible provided timely lenses through which to view events in our nation and world, and this was reflected in my preaching.
- In November, I helped organize a community book group to read through Hannah Reichl’s book, *For Such a Time as This*. We meet on Sunday afternoons, about every three weeks.

Some other events this year include having Cristina Galán join us as Office Manager at the end of January. Cristina is a wonderful colleague and I am so grateful for her! In September, Rebecca Nickles began as our Director of Music and she is great, too. Huge thanks are due to Pat Hogan and Stacey Griffin who shared the responsibilities for music leadership so faithfully and ably for well over a year!

If there is a quote I want to remember for 2025 it is this one from Walter Brueggemann (who died in June of this year): *“The prophetic tasks of the church are to tell the truth in a society that lives in illusion, grieve in a society that lives in denial, and express hope in a society that lives in despair.”*

Now more than any moment in my lifetime, the world needs us to live out these prophetic tasks. I am beyond grateful to be in this time with this group of people. May we grow in faithfulness and fidelity to God’s purposes together.

Pastor Lori Wunder

**Minutes Of The Annual Meeting Of The Congregation
First Presbyterian Church of Mount Vernon, Iowa
January 26, 2025**

The Stated Meeting of the Congregation was called to order by Moderator Lori Wunder at 10:46 AM. She opened the meeting with prayer. Clerk Pat Hogan advised her a quorum was present, and the meeting proceeded. It was moved to approve the docket. It was seconded and the motion carried. It was moved to approve the minutes of the 2024 Annual Meeting. It was seconded and the motion carried.

Moderator Lori gave the congregation a few minutes to look over the Annual Meeting Report and then asked if there were any questions or comments. There was a question about our shortfall in contributions to General Mission and Local Global Mission in 2023 and 2024. Larry Petrick explained we had contributed in 2023 but did not in 2024 due to concerns about necessary parking lot, sidewalk, and landscaping repairs to the church that may cost as much as \$25,000.

Larry Petrick explained the recent Board of Pensions/Board of Health changes, in particular the medical portion. In prior years, BOP health coverage was for a pastor and dependents. Now, congregations are only required to provide coverage for the pastor. The Session voted to continue covering Lori and family, in the transitional participation plan which costs an additional \$2,400.

Jeff Bray reported the following were nominated to serve as Ruling Elders on Session: Kim Andresen, Roger Dana, and Patricia Hogan. After receiving no nominations from the floor, these nominees were elected unanimously. Thank you to Jeff Bray, Mike Cranston, Sue Deibner, and Pete Rian for their two or four years of service to Session.

Three members of the congregation at-large along with two members of Session make up the Nominating Committee. Emily Fitzpatrick has agreed to serve on the Nominating Committee from the congregation at-large but two more are needed. Jennifer Lengwin and Rozanne Petrick volunteered, and these nominees were elected unanimously.

Larry Petrick presented the Pastor's Terms of Call. This is the second year in a row that there has been basically no salary increase. He asked if there were any questions or if more discussion was needed. Roger Dana stated that we are in a truly unique, dangerous situation in our country and are needing Lori to speak to us about what is wrong and how people are hurting. We need her to be vocal about it. He stated her compensation needs to be raised and suggested a 3% increase in actual money in her pocket. He said that if we trust in God when the need is presented, we will respond and the money will be there. While a love gift is a nice gesture, this will help her now and in the long term. Discussion followed. Barb Bjork proceeded with a motion to increase Lori's cash salary and housing by 3%. The motion was seconded and carried. A motion to approve the updated Terms of Call was made, seconded and carried.

A motion to adjourn was made, seconded and carried. Moderator Lori Wunder closed the meeting with prayer at 11:12 AM.

Moderator Lori Wunder called to order the Annual Meeting of the Corporation at 11:13 AM. A motion to approve all business conducted at the Annual Meeting was made, seconded and carried.

A motion to adjourn was made at 11:15 AM, seconded and carried.

Respectfully Submitted,
Patricia Hogan, Clerk Lorene Wunder, Moderator

Highlights of Reports

Pastor's Report:

If there was a theme for 2025, this passage from Isaiah 43 might be it. Churches (and institutions in general) are famous for resisting change and preferring "the way it has always been done," but we made several changes this year, some by choice, some out of necessity.

STAFFING:

- DCE Jonathan Walsh “retired” at the end of 2024; Kristi Karwal Clark was our interim from February through July. The position now remains vacant.
- Office Manager Donna Warhover resigned in August; in September, Stephanie Turner started in that role.
- Treasurer Jonathan Walsh asked to be done by the end of the year; Nona Hutchinson agreed to replace him and received training in December.
- Nursery Attendant Chickadee Webster graduated from Cornell and moved in September; Nico Seda-Morales (another Cornell student) began that same month.
- Custodian Trent Bowman left us in November and Jeff Bray started.

MUSIC:

- In July, Stacey Griffin was welcomed to the congregation. Her background is in contemporary worship music, and she has brought that to the second and fourth Sundays. Pat Hogan plays the first and third Sundays.
- Both Pat and Stacey have declined a stipend or salary so play for us as a form of service and an act of worship.

MORE DIGITAL:

- At the Session’s suggestion to improve communications, I began making posts for Facebook and Instagram last spring. These are also used in the weekly newsletter and as an announcements slideshow before worship.
- Our church directory is online at [Instant ChurchDirectory.com](https://www.instantchurchdirectory.com).

MORE COLLABORATIVE MINISTRY:

- I continue to meet regularly with colleagues from Seeds of Faith ELCA and the Mount Vernon United Methodist Church.
- Rooted Youth Group (Middle School) meets Wednesdays 6:30-8:00, and a High School Bible Study meets Sundays 12:15-1:00. Our three churches share hosting.
- Vacation Bible School together was a blessing for all of us!
- New this year was a Good Friday Service hosted by First Pres and a Prayer Service on Election Eve hosted by Seeds of Faith.
- Serving on the Southeast Linn Community Center’s board has kept me up to date on the growing needs in our community and how our congregation can help address them.

Social Concerns:

Our main local mission partner is Southeast Linn Community Center. Rita Swales and Lori Wunder were SELCC Board Members in 2024 and kept many of the initiatives in front of us.

- Delivering Meals on Wheels during the months of April and October.
- Collecting Household Items (TP, tissues, paper towels, dish soap, laundry detergent, bath products) in April.

Donating \$302.75 to provide reduced cost pool passes for local families.

- Collecting Backpacks for the distribution of school supplies at the end of July.
- December (into January 2025) Collection of socks, underwear, diapers, and Depends.
- Noisy Offering donations for SELCC totaled \$2,386.20.

Other activities:

Following terrible flooding from Hurricane Helene in late September, the Presbytery of East Iowa encouraged congregations to put together PDA Clean Up Buckets. We filled six five gallon buckets and had many other supplies left.

We had a “Service & Sharing” Sunday on October 27. The majority of leaves were still on trees, so our work focus was inside and outside the church. After a shortened worship service, folks headed outside to rake, scoop up pine needles on the north side of the lot, pull weeds, and deadhead. Others did work inside the church, and Penny Gerber made lunch. It was another great opportunity for service and fellowship.

Personnel:

Committee members: Scott Larson (chair), Barb Bjork, Pastor Lori Wunder (ex-officio)

- Recommendations were made to hire Donna Warhover as Office Manager. Session approved.
- The committee continues to address two open positions in January 2024: Music Director and Director of Christian Education.

Member Care:

Committee members: Diane Clay (chair), Jeff Bray, Carol Dillard, Dixie Mackie, Mary Palmer, Fran Bray, Laura Werkman. Mid year Fran “retired” and Kim Andresen has joined us serving as our liaison to Session.

- Our devoted Prayer Chain members lifted up 75 requests for healing, support, comfort, and peace. Amen to the power of prayer and our Father's loving mercy.
- Cards were faithfully sent when needed, i.e. get well, sympathy, thinking of you, plus Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Easter greetings to our shut-ins.
- Delicious and welcomed meals were provided on seven occasions, and our "taxi" service was implemented ten times.
- Volunteers visited our shut-ins throughout the year taking treats and These Days devotionals. Pastor Lori and Jeff offered them the Sacrament of Communion in March, June, September, and December.

Building and Property:

Submitted by Ed Bjork & Gerald Gerber

HVAC

- Contracted Preventative Maintenance (PM) Services for the new addition (Sanctuary and Fellowship Hall is separate system) with Waldinger, the company that installed them in 2009.
- Repaired three inoperable HVAC units (Units in order of repair, 1 (nursery and common room), 5 (3rd floor), and 3 (Office and hallway). Have 5 total units)
- Pending actions: replace failed recirculating air motor (exhausts air from bathrooms), plan to replace blower motor in unit 2 (PM identified signs of near-term failure); contract Maintenance Services for Sanctuary and Fellowship Hall

Elevator

- Switched Elevator Inspection services from Schindler to Shumaker and contracted PM services for the elevator (not provided by prior service provider).
- Got the chair lift (sanctuary) removed from the State list of elevators requiring inspection.
- Pending action: Complete decommission of chair lift (removal of hydraulic oil from lift motor).

Siding

- Repair of siding damaged by the 2020 derecho was completed in March front door (to Sanctuary)
- Have a verbal commitment from Dave Bennett to repair the door jamb and paint the doors in spring 2025

Grounds

- Determined that NE corner of parking lot is cracked and severely eroded.

- Collected bids to repair parking lot NE corner.
- Identified that the SE rain spouting line is crushed under the sidewalk by the East door. Action is TBD.
- Pending: the marquee sign is painted shut and needs attention.

Christian Education:

Kristi Karwal-Clark started as Interim Director of Christian Education in February, remaining in that role until July. For the fall, Sue Deibner and Rita Swales volunteered to lead Sunday School.

Sunday School:

We continued to follow the Narrative Lectionary throughout 2024. Sunday School met weekly from January until the end of the school year.

January-May:

Teachers used Spirit & Truth Publishing's curriculum based on the Narrative Lectionary.

Summer:

Most of our Sunday school students attended Vacation Bible School.

September-December:

Rather than using the curriculum, Sue and Rita decided to invite the children to build with LEGO while they discussed the day's reading. They shared their creations with the congregation during coffee hour.

Sunday, December 22: No Rehearsal Christmas Pageant!

After several years without a children's pageant, we found a script, set out costumes and invited God's children of every age to participate in telling the story.

Vacation Bible School (VBS): "Digging In, Growing Deep"

Cooperative VBS put on by First Pres, MVUMC, and SEEDS of Faith ELCA

Sunday, June 30 through Wednesday, July 3 from 1-4 at Seeds of Faith

"Rooted" Youth Group (with UMC and Seeds of Faith Lutheran)

Middle School youth met weekly on most Wednesday evenings during the school year.

High School Bible Study with UMC and Seeds of Faith Lutheran

By request, we started a weekly bible study, Sundays 12:15-1:00.

Location rotates by month through the three churches.

Nursery Care

Chickadee Webster continued as our regular nursery attendant through September. Nico Sed-Morales, a new Cornell student, started in late September. Nico provides nursery care for younger children during worship and occasionally joins Sunday school.

Finance Committee:

Committee members: Becky Ahrens, Shane Austerman, Barb Bjork, Larry Petrick, and Jonathan Walsh

- We have a carryover balance of \$-145.50 for the upcoming year (2025).
- Collectively the members of the committee continue to assume the role of Financial Secretary of the church.
- We did not have an auction this year. Session decided to do it bi-annually.
- We did not have a stewardship campaign this year. We assume that the 2023-2024 pledge amounts will also be the 2025 pledge amounts unless we receive updated information.
- A thank you postcard with a personal message was sent to everyone who contributed financially to our church.
- Scholarships were awarded in the amount of \$300.00 to Uwen Boettcher, Madison Cranston, Andrew Heck, Jayce Pendergrass, and Trevor Weber.

Nominating:

Members: Jeff Bray and Mike Cranston from Session; Becky Ahrens, Ed Bjork and Emily Fitzpatrick elected by the congregation; Lori Wunder, ex-officio
The number of Ruling Elders needed to serve on Session according to our bylaws is no fewer than 5, and no more than 9.

Those completing terms in January 2025:

Jeff Bray (2nd term)

Mike Cranston (2nd term)

Sue Deibner (2nd term)

Jackee Austerman

Pete Rian

Rita Swales

Those continuing their terms (elected in 2023 and 2024):

Jackee Austerman (2nd term)

Rita Swales (2nd term)

Gerald Gerber

Emily Walsh

The Nominating Committee presents the following for election:

Kim Andresen
Roger Dana
Patricia Hogan*

If the way be clear, this would give us seven elders on Session.

*Patricia Hogan was elected Clerk of Session by the Session in January 2022, 2023 and 2024 and has had voice but no vote. Electing her will give her both voice and vote.

Nominees for Nominating Committee for 2024:

1. Emily Fitzpatrick
2. Jennifer Lengwin
3. Rozanne Petrick

Pastor's Terms of Call:

Pastor's Terms of Call were approved as follows:

Salary \$32,360
Housing \$29,215
SECA \$2,475
Total Effective Salary \$64,050

Medical Flex \$2,500
Pension/Medical \$27,542
Continuing Education \$2,000
Professional Expenses \$1,500
Auto Allowance \$2,100
Total Package \$99,692.00

4 weeks paid annual vacation
2 weeks paid annual continuing education
12 weeks paid maternity leave per occurrence
2 family weekends paid annual

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Respectfully Submitted,
Patricia Hogan, Clerk Lorene Wunder, Moderator

Session Report of 2025

PURPOSE: Maintain a spiritual government of the congregation for the mission of Jesus Christ.

PASTOR: Lorene E. Wunder, Installed Pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Mount Vernon, Iowa (October 24, 2010)

RULING ELDERS:

Class of 2026

Gerald Gerber
Emily Walsh

Class of 2027

Jackee Austerman - 2nd term
Rita Swales - 2nd term
Kim Andresen
Roger Dana
Pat Hogan

ACTIVE MEMBERSHIP SUMMARY as of January 1, 2025: 123

GAINS: 0

TRANSFERS OUT: Connie Proffitt to First Presbyterian Church of Cedar Rapids, IA

REMOVED DUE TO INACTIVITY: 0

DEATHS: Helen Meeks

BAPTISMS: Eliza Lisa Thenhaus, infant daughter of Kayla and Scott Thenhaus, born on September 4, 2024, received the Sacrament of Baptism during our Sunday, May 4 worship service.

MARRIAGES: Marissa Cranston married Ryan Izer on July 4, 2025.

CURRENT ACTIVE MEMBERSHIP as of December 31, 2025: 121

Respectfully Submitted,
Patricia Hogan, Clerk of Session

2025 SOCIAL CONCERNS

Our primary mission partner for several years has been Southeast Linn Community Center. They do so many things to serve the economically disadvantaged, children and senior citizens in our communities and surrounding areas. Lori Wunder and Marsha Acord were SELCC Board Members in 2025, providing a timely connection between our congregation and SELCC.

Summer Meals Program

In 2025, SELCC decided to offer free summer meals at lunch each week day. In order to also serve Mount Vernon we offered our church as a meal site. From June 9 through August 15, free lunch was served on Monday at MVUMC, Tuesday through Thursday at SELCC, and Friday at First Pres. An average of 49 meals were served each day. Any leftover food was packed in individual containers and taken to SELCC for clients to take.

Molly Cart-Hanson prepared the food at SELCC. Volunteers here set up for the meal, brought it over from SELCC, served and cleaned up. Thank you to everyone who helped out, especially Penny Gerber, Pat Hogan and Nona Hutchinson.

Other SELCC Support

- January (and December 2024) collected Socks, Underwear, Diapers and Depends.
- Delivered Meals on Wheels during the months of April and October. Thanks to everyone who signed up to help: Marsha Acord, Elaine Bishop, Barb Bjork, Mike & Lori Cranston, Cristina Galán, Pat & Dick Hogan, Kristy & Tom Parker, Rita Swales, and Lori Wunder.
- Collected Backpacks for the distribution of school supplies at the end of July
- Noisy Offering donations for SELCC totaled \$1,118.79

We had a “Service & Sharing” Sunday on November 9. The plan was to rake leaves in the community BUT the weather was cold, windy and snowy. So instead, we did work inside the church building and then shared lunch together. It was another great opportunity for service and fellowship.

2025 PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

The 2025 Personnel Committee members included Emily Walsh (from Session), Barb Bjork, and Lori Cranston and Pastor Lori Wunder in an ex-officio capacity.

In early January, Stephanie Turner resigned as Office Manager. A church member put us in contact with Cristina Galán. We interviewed her on a snowy day and she started on January 27. She has been a wonderful addition to our church!

In July, former Music Director Julia Andrews contacted Lori Wunder with the name of a colleague who was looking to play for a church. Lori had a phone call with Rebecca Nickles and Rebecca visited a church service. Believing it would be a good fit for both, Rebecca's first Sunday was September 21.

Rebecca's second child was due November 20 so part of our agreement with Rebecca was to give her maternity leave November 23 through January 4, 2026. Julia Andrews offered to cover that time period for us, including Christmas Eve.

In early November, custodian Jeff Bray had a catastrophic health crisis that left him paralyzed from the chest down. Cristina Galán covered the custodian responsibilities for November and much of December. Charlie Tierney was hired mid December.

2025 MEMBER CARE

Purpose: To care for the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of the members of our church.

Committee Members: Chair Diane Clay, Co-Chair Kim Andresen, and liaison to Session, plus Mary Palmer, Laura Werkman, Dixie Mackie, Carol Dillard, and Jeff Bray.

Our 39 devoted prayer chain participants offered up 75 requests for encouragement, hope, and support. We are grateful for the Lord's loving mercy, and the power of prayer.

Appropriate greeting cards were sent when needed including "thinking of you", follow up notes, plus holiday wishes to our shut-ins.

Welcomed meals were provided 14 times. Mary is our coordinator.

Our dear shut-ins were visited throughout the year. Pastor Lori and Elder Jeff (before his illness) offered communion in March, June, September, and December. We have 4 shut-ins; 1 in Cedar Rapids, 2 in Mt. Vernon, and 1 in Solon.

Our "taxi" service was implemented on 17 occasions. Diane is our transportation coordinator, and Laura, an alternate.

The Knitting Ministry has many beautiful prayer shawls and prayer squares available. None were given away in 2025.

I would like to thank my amazing, dedicated committee, and our many volunteers who have lovingly shared their gifts and time glorifying our Lord!

Sincerely, Diane Clay

2025 BUILDING AND GROUNDS

Asked Congregation to fund repairs to parking lot. Congregation responded and parking lot repair completed in May. Repair included fill dirt and seeding (Thanks, Mike Andresen)

Replaced Century Link phone and internet system with fiber system from Mechanicsville Phone Co. Change over reduced cost and improved service. Change required installation of wireless cell dialer for Alarm System.

Discovered the building Fire Protection and Alarm Systems had not received required annual inspections for over 5 years. Required inspection scheduled and completed.

Birds got into the sanctuary from the bell tower. Got the birds out of the sanctuary and closed the scuttle between the bell tower and the spire. (Thanks, Mike and Ed Bjork)

The Main door into the sanctuary has been repainted. (Thanks, Dave Bennett) Some wood repair and second coat is pending. Repair of the smaller door and the marquee expected to start in 2026. (Thanks, Ed Bjork)

Completed decommission of chair lift AKA sanctuary elevator (removal of hydraulic oil from lift motor)

As the costs for both the maintenance and repairs increased in 2025, we evaluated the cost /benefit of continuing the HVAC routine maintenance contract and determined it was no longer a benefit. We cancelled the maintenance contract and have evaluated alternative service providers for future needs.

Repair of broken section of rainbow steps, with touchup of smaller cracks completed just before Chalk the Walk. Rainbow steps repainted. (Thanks, Beth and Carl Riechers)

Plan to evaluate for any cracks in steps, need for a second coat of paint followed by a paint sealer to be done in the Spring. Repainting of and/or replacement of railings to all front entrances will also be reviewed.

Cleaned up and replanted the large flowerbed on the east side of the sanctuary steps. The selected plants should be in bloom for Chalk the Walk with changing color through the year. (Thanks, Beth Riechers, Beth Simon, Becky Ahrens, Elaine Bishop, Susan Brust, Nancy Redman). There is discussion about replacing the tree that used to be there. Input welcome.

Yard maintenance this year was done by Mike Andresen. (Thanks, Mike)

Submitted by Gerald Gerber (with Mike Andresen, Ed Bjork and Beth Riechers).

2025 CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Sunday School

We again followed the Narrative Lectionary throughout 2025. Sunday school met weekly during the school year. Sue Deibner and Rita Swales taught January through May and Sue Deibner taught September through December.

Sunday, December 21: Christmas Pageant!

On Wednesday, November 19 we had an early out at Sue Deibner's farm, together with costumes and Carlena Minor's animals. Jackee Austerman took photos of our kids in costumes, acting out the different moments of the Christmas story. They were wonderful! Then during worship on December 21, kids again wore costumes and read the story as slides were shown on the screen. It was wonderful!

Vacation Bible School (VBS): "On the Case"

Cooperative VBS put on by First Pres, MVUMC and Seeds of Faith ELCA

Sunday, July 13th through Wednesday, July 16th

5:15-8:99pm at the Mount Vernon United Methodist Church

Each evening started with a Family Meal for all kids and volunteers. Then participants took a closer look at the parables of Jesus to find clues about who Jesus is and what his ministry is all about!

"Rooted" Youth Group (with MVUMC and Seeds of Faith ELCA)

Middle School youth met weekly on most Wednesday evenings during the school year. Each week we played games, shared highs and lows, and read the bible together, followed by a different activity each week: study, games, art, or service. Each congregation took turns hosting and providing meals for the group by month. Staff from each congregation rotate leading the weekly programs.

In the summer, each congregation hosted an event so that Rooted Youth got together each month.

Rooted Youth led a Good Friday Service for all the churches at Seeds of Faith.

High School Bible Study (with MVUMC and Seeds of Faith ELCA):

In the spring, high schoolers met for a weekly bible study, Sundays 12:15-1:00.

Location rotates by month through the three churches.

Nursery Care

Maria Seda-Morales, a Cornell student, is in her second year of providing nursery care for younger children during worship and occasionally joins Sunday School.

THANK YOU

Thank you to all the teachers and helpers who made our Christian Education program for children and youth possible!

ADULT FORUM

The 2025 adult forum models the Church's motto "All are Welcome." The forum is led by Roger Dana and Nona Hutchinson, together with Pastor Lori. Two separate types of forums have evolved: book reviews and meaty issues. In either type, the discussion often moves to other issues relevant to the topic. For example, when we discussed Academic Freedom we were led to the state of current public education and issues related to "screen time."

Book reviews extend over several Sundays and do not require "homework" as the material of the day is read in the forum. This year we started on "For Such a Time As This: An Emergency Devotional" by Hanna Reichel.

Meaty issues are intended to discuss current events, and in 2025 these included: Academic Freedom and Anti Intellectualism, Climate Change Disinformation, Process of Scientific Publication, Autism Spectrum Disorder and Neurodiversity, Gerrymandering, and The Giving Ladder (an article by Chris Daunhauser.)

Attendees and members are encouraged to suggest (to Roger Dana) topics appropriate to an Adult Forum at FPC-MV.

2025 Finance Committee

Purpose:

To oversee the finances of the church and to propose our General Fund Operating Budget for the upcoming year.

Committee:

Becky Ahrens, Shane Austerman, Barb Bjork, Larry Petrick and Nona Hutchinson.

Highlights:

- The Finance Committee met virtually as needed.
- We have a carryover balance of \$ 5,754.46 for the upcoming year (2026).
- Larry Petrick has assumed the role of Financial Secretary for the church.
- We did not have an auction this year (session decided to do it bi-annually).
- We did not have a stewardship campaign this year. We are assuming that the 2023/24/25 pledge amounts will also be the 2026 pledge amounts (unless we have obtained updated information).

Scholarship Highlights:

- Scholarships were awarded in the amount of \$500.00 each to the following: Uwen Boettcher, Andrew Heck and Jayce Pendergrass.
- Five camperships were awarded in the amount of \$ 3,175.00 (total) for the year for the following campers: Ava Willems, Macklen & Beckett Meyer and Konnor & Nora Stewart.

2025 Annual - Financial Secretary's Report

Submitted by Larry Petrick

Patterns of Giving in 2025

Paid by those pledging	\$ 97,152.97
Paid by those non pledging	\$ 62,778.60
2024 Pledges paid in 2025	\$ 426.29
Building Fund pledges	\$ 3,000.00
Free Will Offering	\$ 1,329.00
Per Capita	\$ 417.38
Building Fund Campaign	\$ 19,598.17

General Fund	Pledged for 2025 (#)	Pledged for 2026 (#)
	\$ 90,338.00 (34)	\$ 114,232.00 (35)

Number and Distribution of Pledges

Amount per Week (<i>Annually</i>)	2025	2026
up to 14.99 (<i>up to \$779.48</i>)	11	8
15.00 to 29.99 (<i>up to \$1,559.48</i>)	6	7
30.00 to 44.99 (<i>up to \$2,339.48</i>)	2	2
45.00 to 54.99 (<i>up to \$2,859.48</i>)	4	2
55.00 to 79.99 (<i>up to \$4,159.48</i>)	2	3
80.00 to 99.99 (<i>up to \$5,199.48</i>)	2	4
100.00 and up (<i>\$5200 or more</i>)	7	9
	34	35

Memorial Funds Receipts

Helen Meeks	\$ 819.00
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Mission Disbursements (does not include in-kind donations)

Almost all was received from Noisy Offerings

Camp Bear Creek	\$ 228.19
Catherine McAuley Center	\$ 392.88
SE Linn Community Center	\$ 1,118.79
Tres Rios	\$ 329.86
Presbyterian Disaster Assistance	\$ 815.74
Presbyterian General Mission	\$ -

Total Donated	\$ 2,885.46
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2025 ACCOUNT SUMMARY

GENERAL OPERATING FUND	5,754.46
CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT (to be used for major building projects)	2,014.69
PERPETUAL BUILDING TRUST (principal -\$15,500- investment given to maintain the property of the church in perpetuity. Earnings may be used for this purpose.)	21,409.29
MARY BYERLY MISSION PROJECTS	12,809.19
MEMORIAL FUNDS (checking)	
DEACON FUND	1,424.48
JAY GUNN	1,165.00
TERRY LESSMEIER	3,000.00
JEANETTE MADSON (for DCE position)	20,555.00
SHERLEE PETERSON	1,034.04
ALLEN AHRENS	12,725.00
HELEN MEEKS	819.00
OTHERS	1,524.54
MEMORIAL FUNDS (in mutual funds)	22,160.68
KEEDICK SCHOLARSHIP (established with \$25k from Keedick Memorial - added \$10k from Dolezal Memorials and \$4k from Armstrong Memorials. Interest is to be used for camperships and up to 4 years undergrad scholarships)	72,640.22
YOUTH MISSION TRIP	779.16
PRAYER SHAWL (yarn for shawls)	512.09
2026 PLEDGES RECEIVED IN 2025	10,000.00
BLIND SPOT GRANT	364.32
BUILDING FUND	4,468.95
CIHA ESTATE	3,232.73
CONTINUING ED CARRYOVER	1,634.78
MUSIC (FARM) FUND	80,155.96

2-YEAR GENERAL FUND RECEIPTS/BUDGET COMPARISONS

Category	2024 Actual	2025 Actual	2025 Budget	Proposed 2026 Budget
INCOME				
PLEDGES	91,245.82	97,153.00	90,338.00	114,232.00
YOUR OFFERING	63,309.00	62,779.00	66,472.00	43,343.00
LOOSE OFFERING	1,136.10	1,329.00	1,200.00	1,200.00
PER CAPITA	722.36	417.00	900.00	800.00
PRIOR YEARS' PLEDGES	778.68	426.00	0	0
2025 Bldg CAMPAIGN	0	19,598.00	0	0
BUILDING FUND	0	5,375.00	0	0
PRIOR YEAR CARRYOVER	0	0	0	0
IN HOUSE LOAN	0	0	0	0
DESIG. CONTRIBUTIONS	1,000.00	2,350.00	150.00	0
BUILDING USAGE	460.00	1,073.00	0	0
MISCELLANEOUS	285.95	-30.00	0	150.00
TRANSFER FROM MEMORIAL (Director of Christian Ed)	1,550.00	0	13,200.00	13,200.00
TRANSFER EDWARDJONES	0	15,664.00	0	0
FUNDRAISERS	0	700.00	7,500.00	7,500.00
*TOTAL INCOME	160,487.91	206,834.00	180,260.00	180,425.00
EXPENSES				
PASTOR SALARY	30,354.00	32,360.00	32,360.00	32,360.00
PASTOR HOUSING	27,404.04	29,215.00	29,215.00	29,215.00
SECA	4,418.52	2,475.00	2,475.00	2,475.00
DEFERRED INCOME	0	0	0	0
TOTAL EFFECTIVE SALARY	62,177.00	64,050.00	64,050.00	64,050.00
MEDICAL FLEX	2,500.00	2,499.00	2,500.00	2,500.00
DENTAL		(467.00)		
MEDICAL-PENSION	24,299.00	26,700.00	27,542.00	30,104.00
PROF & AUTO EXPENSE	2,184.53	3,419.00	3,600.00	3,600.00
CONTINUING EDUCATION	2,358.94	2,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00
TOTAL PASTOR	93,519.00	98,201.00	99,962.00	102,254.00
SALARIES ...				
OFFICE MANAGER	7,940.65	11,540.00	12,480.00	12,480.00
CUSTODIAN	1,943.75	3,100.00	5,200.00	3,640.00
CHOIR DIRECTOR/KEYBOARD	0	1,750.00	12,000.00	7,875.00
CHRISTIAN ED DIRECTOR	1,550.00	0	13,200.00	13,200.00
TREASURER	1,460.00	3,195.00	2,080.00	3,120.00
NURSERY	1,285.00	1,633.00	1,820.00	1,820.00
PAYROLL TAXES TOTAL	1,152.89	1,093.00	3,579.00	3,223.00
WORKMAN'S COMP	594.00	693.00	700.00	700.00
BGRND CHECKS (personnel)	0	0	0	0
PAYROLL ACCNTING SVCES	1,275.00	1,125.00	1,375.00	1,175.00
TOTAL OTHER PERSONNEL	17,201.00	24,129.00	52,434.00	47,233.00

Category	2024 Actual	2025 Actual	2025 Budget	Proposed 2026 Budget
EXPENSES continued				
POSTAGE/OFF SUPPLIES	665.10	1098.00	450.00	450.00
COMPUTER	796.58	2,169.00	1,000.00	1,150.00
COPIER	4,044.58	3,675.00	4,200.00	3775.00
TELEPHONE	1,779.78	1,804.00	1,900.00	1,675.00
SESSION/PERSONNEL	90.00	0	100.00	100.00
PER CAPITA	5,356.00	5,622.00	5,622.00	5,735.00
ADVERTISING	85.00	77.00	100.00	100.00
CHRISTIAN ED & YOUTH	1,076.49	2,003.00	2,000.00	2,000.00
FELLOWSHIP	45.44	118.00	50.00	100.00
MEMBER CARE	52.80	119.00	125.00	125.00
OUTREACH	0	0	50.00	0
PROPERTY MAINT./SUPPLIES	11,117.71	31,644.00	8,200.00	9,025.00
INSURANCE	9,579.75	10,410.00	10,280.00	10,795.00
UTILITIES	13,402.91	15,053.00	14,750.00	15,475.00
MOWING/SNOW REMOVAL	1,465.95	1,625.00	1,500.00	1,500.00
GENERAL MISSION	0	0	3,850.00	3,850.00
LOCAL-GLOBAL MISSION	0	251.00	500.00	500.00
PASTOR'S DISCRNY FUND	0	0	100.00	100.00
STEWARDSHIP	159.41	47.00	50.00	50.00
WORSHIP		306.00	500.00	
MISCELLANEOUS	0	0	12.00	8.00
MUSIC/SOLOISTS/HANDBELLS	463.45	1,327.00	500.00	1,250.00
PULPIT SUPPLY	450.00	1,050.00	1,000.00	1,250.00
WORSHIP SUPPLIES	529.17	0	0	0
Total Other Expenses	<u>51,160.12</u>	<u>78,398.00</u>	<u>56,839.00</u>	<u>59,013.00</u>
TOTAL EXPENSES	161,880.00	200,728.00	208,965.00	208,500.00
DEFICIT	(1,392.00)	6,106.00	(28,705.00)	(28,075.00)

**2026 Terms of Call
For Pastor Lorene E. Wunder
and First Presbyterian Church of Mount Vernon, IA**

Salary	32,360
Housing	29,215
SECA	<u>2,475</u>
<i>Total Effective Salary (TES)</i>	<i>64,050</i>
Medical Flex	2,500
Pension/Medical	30,104
Continuing Education	2,000
Professional Expenses	1,500
Auto Allowance	<u>2,100</u>
<i>Total Package</i>	<i>102,254</i>

- 6 weeks paid annual vacation**
- 2 weeks paid annual continuing education
- 12 weeks paid Family Medical Leave (per PEIA Compensation Manual)
- 2 family weekends paid annual

***two additional weeks of vacation in lieu of salary or COLA increase, approved by Session*