



Garner United Methodist Church

885 Maben Ave., Garner, IA 50438

Rev. Kristin W. Peters; Email: pastorkristingumc@gmail.com

Pastor's Office Hours: Flexible; please make an appointment

Admin. Assistant's Office Hours: 9-2, M-Th., Phone 641-923-2191, Email: garnerumc@comm1net.net



GUMC is a community of ordinary people seeking to put into practice the extraordinary love of God.

A Message from Pastor Kristin

GRANDMOTHERS OF GOD

Dear GUMC,

When December arrives each year, it seems like we are flooded with images and messages about creating "perfect" holiday moments. Feel-good Christmas movies, television commercials, and even our beloved Christmas songs depict harmonious families snuggled up by the fire, gleefully playing together in the snow, or crowded around a full table.

That's not the reality for many of us. At Christmas some of us will hang stockings by the fire and feel the pain of loved ones who have passed. Some of us will carefully plan the seating chart of the holiday dinner table to keep apart the relatives who are not speaking to each other. Some of us will observe Christmas alone because our family members are far away, or estranged, or choosing to spend the day with someone else.

Real Christmas rarely looks like a Hallmark movie or a Thomas Kincaid painting because real families, made of real people, celebrate Christmas. People make mistakes. Relationships can be complicated, sometimes even broken. Families can be messy.

On Christmas we celebrate God-made-flesh, and we tend to emphasize the God part while ignoring the flesh part. But Jesus was a real person! He was born into a family that was complicated and messy, much like our own.

During Advent this year at GUMC, we will be studying Jesus' genealogy as it is told in the Gospel of Matthew. This long list of names is something we often gloss over, but it is notable for two reasons. First, Matthew includes five women in his telling of Jesus' family tree (Luke mentions none). Second, these women are surprising because they are not the virtuous, maternal figures we often celebrate. They are women with bad reputations and heartbreaking stories who are also cunning and faithful, loyal and bold.

As we explore Jesus' family tree, we will be reminded that he was not born to perfect people. He was not born for perfect people, either. He was born to heal those who feel broken, to free those who are used or abused by the powerful, and to love those with messy families, bad reputations, and complicated stories. Jesus was born to and for people like us.

THAT is the real Christmas.

In Peace,
Pastor Kristin



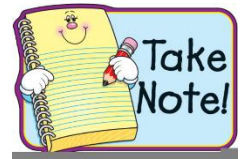
Worship Tech Assistants: Jill Blank, Stan Isvik, Kevin Sweers, Jody East, Steve East, Beth Myers, Ruth Legge, and John Bowman

December Quarters: Heating Assistance

Sunday, Dec. 15: Choir and Children's Christmas Program (during regular worship)
Tuesday, Dec. 24: Christmas Eve Worship, 5 p.m.

Change in Sunday School Schedule

Youth will not have Sunday School on Dec. 1 but will have Christmas program practice at 9:30 a.m. No Sunday School will meet (adult or youth) on Dec. 29.



The holiday season is upon us, and we are all busy planning our festivities with family and friends.

In October you donated nearly \$300 in quarters for God's Pantry, and we sent them a donation of \$500. November quarters will be used for Christmas giving; we will be sending a check for \$500 to Duncan Heights for them to purchase Christmas gifts for their clients.



During December we will be collecting for heating assistance for those in need in our area.

Thank you to all for being so generous.

--The Missions Committee

November Ushers and Fellowship Servers

Join us for coffee and fellowship after our worship service each Sunday in the Fellowship Hall.

These are the **December ushers:**

Dec. 1: Mark Ricke and Pat Trulson

Dec. 8: Jim Hill and Rob Legge

Dec. 15: Jake Pringnitz and Rick Gilbert

Dec. 22: Terri Beshey and Russ Trulson

Dec. 24: Russ and Barb Trulson

Dec. 29: Steve Wood and Mike Brown

These are the **December fellowship servers:**

Dec. 1: Jan Sweers and Kevin Sweers

Dec. 8: Jerry and Ronna Myers

Dec. 15: Grandma's Treats (See note below)

Dec. 22: Ted and Susan Hovda

Dec. 24: None – Christmas Eve

Dec. 29: Doug and Marilyn Jass

Grandma's Treats: We will be celebrating Grandmothers of God during Advent, and Pastor Kristin has asked us to share pictures of our grandmothers. A lot of us associate our grandmothers with cookies or treats. The Hospitality Committee thought it would be fun to incorporate the theme with fellowship and share our grandmothers' treats! We are inviting everyone that would like to share one of the treats that your grandma used to make to bring a plate of one dozen cookies, bars, candy, etc. to share for fellowship time after worship on Dec. 15.

Thank you for your service. If you are unable to serve, please switch with someone or call Susan Hovda at 641-923-2909. If you find a substitute or switch, please let Lori in the church office (641-923-2191) know as well.

December and January Worship Leaders

Below are the worship leaders for December and January. If you have a conflict, feel free to trade with someone and then let Lori in the office know (641-923-2191). Please contact Debra Hill (artwoman825@gmail.com or 641-425-2511) if you need a last-minute replacement.

These are the **December worship leaders:**

Dec. 1: Robin Sweers

Dec. 8: Josh Omans

Dec. 15: Debra Hill

Dec. 22: Lorene Dykstra

Dec. 29: Mel Hiscocks

These are the **January worship leaders:**

Jan. 5: Robin Sweers

Jan. 12: Ted Hovda

Jan. 19: Deb Trulson and Jackson Trulson

Jan. 26: Beth Myers



United
Women
in Faith

This Month's Bible Verse: 1 Peter 4:10 (RSV)
As each has received a gift, employ it for one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace.

UWF Unit Christmas Party – Saturday, Dec. 7, 2 p.m.

Circle Meetings

Sarah Circle: Monday, Dec. 2, 6 p.m.
Prairie View

Martha Circle: No Meeting in December

Joy Circle: Thursday, Dec. 19, 9:30 a.m.
Hostess: Maurene House; Program: Kay Mestad

Rebekah Circle: TBD
Christmas Brunch

Another calendar year comes to a close with the beginning of the season of Advent. Officers have been elected and installed, Circle and Unit meetings have been planned for the coming year, and the halls of church are about to be decked. Our UWFaith Unit Christmas party is planned for Saturday, Dec 7, at 2 p.m. You are asked to bring a Christmas towel, a purse if you carry one, and some finger foods to share. Guests are most welcome at this event, and there will be extra towels available.

This is also the time of year when we celebrate our continued support of missions and their work to support families and individuals. Because of your donations, pledges, and commitment to projects, the Garner UWFaith will contribute monies toward the support of Families Forward, Northern Lights Alliance for the Homeless Shelters (NLAHS), God's Pantry, Single Moms in a Loving Environment (SMILE), Crisis Intervention Service, and Hospice of North Iowa.



We are blessed to be a blessing,
Debra Hill

Blue Christmas Service

GUMC will be hosting a Blue Christmas service on Monday, Dec. 16, at 6:30 p.m. in the chapel. This is a time of hope for ALL those whose year has been a struggle, including those who have had a death, divorce, loss of job or home, or other loss, as well as for those feeling down. Please join us and invite others to this meaningful service.



Pay Us a Visit!

Check out GUMC's updated website:
<https://umcgarneria.org/>
Fine-tuning is still in progress;
we welcome your feedback.



Walk the Labyrinth

Tuesday, Dec. 10
GUMC Fellowship Hall
Guided Walk: 3 – 3:30 p.m.
Available for Individual
Walking: 3:30 – 7 p.m.

Come plug in to some
sabbath rest through this
calming, meditative,
prayerful practice.

Pecans for Sale

If you missed out on
ordering pecans in
November, Rebekah Circle
has extra bags available
for purchase.
Cost: \$15
Bag Size: One Pound
See Barb or Myra if
interested.

Poinsettia Order Form - **\$9.00** each

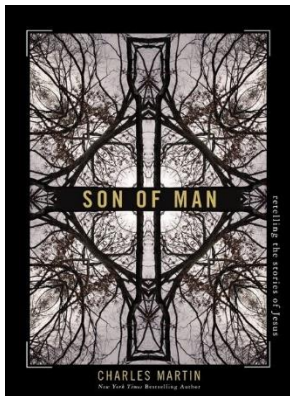
Person Ordering: _____

In Honor of _____

In Memory of _____



If you'd like to purchase a poinsettia to beautify our sanctuary this December, please fill out this form, put it and your payment in an envelope, and turn it into the church office (may be put in the offering plate on Sundays). If paying by check, make checks payable to GUMC with *Poinsettia* in the memo line. Poinsettias may be purchased in honor of or in memory of someone. Please take your poinsettia home with you after the Christmas Eve service. These order forms can also be found on the table in the church lobby.



Check It Out: *Son of Man: Retelling the Story of Jesus*

by Debra Hill

This book written by Charles Martin will “stick with you,” according to a friend who recommended it to our book group. Intrigued, I stopped at a Barnes & Noble while traveling recently and purchased it for myself. It is a collection of twenty-six short stories, so I found it easy to return to and reread those stories that required a second contemplation. Just reading the introduction alone will deepen your faith and move you to a stronger respect for Jesus. You will also encounter stories about the lives of his disciples in this book that is labeled as Christian fiction. Check it out, read it, and let it draw you into a deeper understanding and love for the Savior.



Garner Community Blood Drive

Garner United Methodist Church
885 Maben Ave. | Garner

Tuesday, December 17

1:00 PM - 6:00 PM

Text: LIFESERVE to 999.777 | Call: 800.287.4903 | Visit: lifeserve.info/schedule



PASTOR'S ANGEL TREE AN OPPORTUNITY TO GIVE

You are welcome to take a tag from the Christmas tree in the lobby; each tag contains information for a gift idea for a member of families we're sharing joy with this Christmas season.

Purchase and wrap the gift and return it with the tag to Pastor or Lori on or before Thursday, Dec. 19. Let's spread some Christmas cheer!



December Birthdays

Ben Furst	Dec. 1	Winona Schulz	Dec. 16
Anders Albertson	Dec. 2	Sheri Weaver-Isvik	Dec. 16
Rich Welsh	Dec. 2	Brisbane East	Dec. 19
LeAnne Blanchard	Dec. 5	Bob Abele	Dec. 20
Paul Nelson	Dec. 5	Lukas Fry	Dec. 23
Barb Haugland	Dec. 6	Kim Nelson	Dec. 23
Rev. Lou Peters	Dec. 7	Lisa Schoneman	Dec. 25
Kris Hanson	Dec. 8	Jenna Chizek	Dec. 30
Drew Furst	Dec. 10	Jessica Trulson	Dec. 30
Aaron Abbas	Dec. 13	Mike Brown	Dec. 31
Jess East	Dec. 15		

December Anniversaries

Al and Teri Jenniges	Dec. 15
Greg and Paula Schoneman	Dec. 15
Kris and Joan Hanson	Dec. 16

If your name, birthday, or anniversary is listed incorrectly or is missing, please call the church office so we can update our information. Thanks!

Contact Us

Church Office

Phone: 641-923-2191

Email: garnerumc@comm1net.net

Administrative Assistant's Office Hours: 9 a.m. – 2 p.m., M-Th

Office Closed on Fridays

Look for GUMC on Facebook by searching *Garner Iowa United Methodist Church*

YouTube Channel: Garner IA UMC-Media

Website: <https://umcgarneria.org/>

Rev. Kristin W. Peters

Email: pastorkristingumc@gmail.com

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