

DECORAH FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

MARCH 2026 The Tower

Welcome to March.

Matthew 11:28-30 says:

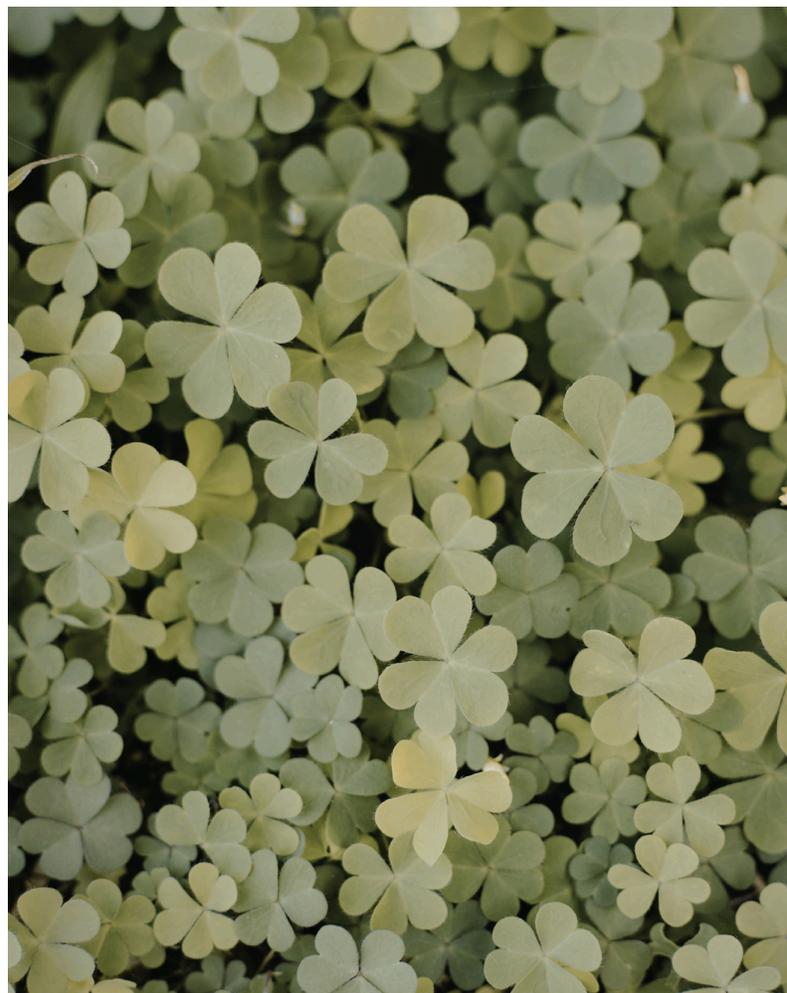
28 “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30 For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”

Psalm 62:1-2 says:

Truly my soul finds rest in God; my salvation comes from him.
2 Truly he is my rock and my salvation; he is my fortress; I will never be shaken.



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Continued on next page



And John 14:27 says:

27 Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

This month, the Bishop's Lenten Bible study began. We spent an hour talking about authoritarianism, leadership, and scripture. The discussions are hard to have and can be mentally, physically, and spiritually draining as we try our best to take an honest look around our world. At the end of the study for this first meeting, the Bishop reminded us to breathe, to take rest. And it hit me that in every aspect of our lives, this is not only sound advice but is based on scripture. God knows we need to rest for our overall health and wellbeing as well as being able to do God's work.

We live in a society that pushes us to be on the move and busy, full schedules are sometimes seen as a badge of honor. But we also live in a broken world where there is so much that can and does overwhelm us. Let this be a reminder to take those breaks, those moments to breathe deep and let go of the weight on your shoulders, even if just briefly.

My colleagues like to remind each other that when we feel burned out and as if we can go no further, or depressed and anxious, we need to take time to find a spot and rest. In 1 Kings we get the story of Elijah running for his life and feeling overwhelmed, depressed and anxious. He was ready to throw in the towel, so to speak. But God did not let him quit. Instead, God let him sleep and fed him and gave him water to give him strength for the work ahead. *Sometimes a nap and a snack can do wonders.*

Rest, breathing, taking time to put down the burdens and worries of the world is important so that we may continue in the work God calls us to, whatever that work is. It's okay and expected of us to take time to reset. So, the next time you start to feel overwhelmed by the world or your calling in it, remember to eat some food, drink some water, take a rest. If that is not enough to convince you to take care of yourself in this way, remember, even Jesus slept in the boat in the middle of the storm (Luke 8:22).

From Syd:

Wednesday, March 4

UW Faith Monthly Meeting

General Meeting at 1:00

Executive Meeting at 12:15

Program - Virginia Leidahl

Hostess - Candace Arp

Mat Weaving on March 4th and 18th.

10:00 - noon

Quilters will meet each Tues morning from

9:00 - 11:00.

**The altar flower chair for March is Candace.
Please contact her if you would like to provide
flowers for a Sunday in March.**

Can you help us be of service to Luther College students this March?

We'll have boxes and/or bins in the church entryway to help collect individual bags of food for students who may be experiencing hunger or won't have access to food during the upcoming Luther College Spring Break.

Please read the email below from Erika Roth, coordinator for the Luther College Little Free Pantry, for details.

Feel free to reach out to the front office with any questions.

Dear Decorah Area Congregations,

My name is Erika Roth and I am a freshman at Luther College. I am the current coordinator of the Little Free Pantry. The Little Free Pantry is an on-campus resource that is 100% donation-driven. We help provide food for students who may be experiencing hunger or who don't have access to food. The pantry is especially important during breaks when almost all on-campus food options are closed.

*With **Spring Break** coming up on **March 23**, I am asking for your help in supplying food for these students who are staying on campus. I am asking for you and your congregation to collect **bags of food that could support the needs of one person each**. All the **food collected should remain good until April 1st without the use of a refrigerator**.*

*I am setting a goal of 50 bags to be created among the Decorah area congregations for the students staying on campus. I will **pick them up on Sunday, March 15**, or the bags can be dropped off in the College Ministries office in the Center for Faith and Life on campus.*

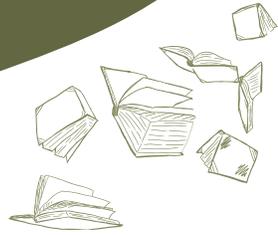
Feel free to reach out if you have any questions! Please let me know if you wish to participate in this program by March 2, and I will send you more information.

*With gratitude,
Erika*

BOOK STUDY

2026

From Pastor Cat



MEETING DATES

March 8 and 22 –
chapter 9 and chapter
10 (one chapter each
week)

April 12 and 26 –
chapter 11 and chapter
12 (one chapter each
week)

May 3 and 17 – chapter
13 and chapter 14 (one
chapter each week)

I am continuing on in a climate change cohort, and I am still taking you along with me. This year, our church is on a journey to look at climate change through a lens of faith and what we can do to affect change and provide care for all of creation. Our book/Bible study this year started in November, and we will be meeting after coffee twice a month to look at responses that people from various backgrounds have looked at. The question?:

Do we have a moral obligation to take action to protect the future of a planet in peril?

Each meeting we will look at various responses from a variety of people and hopefully through our discussion come to our own answer to this question. There are also suggestions on how to take action at the end of each chapter. The books are available on Amazon in various formats and range in price from \$8.99 (paperback, 2011) to \$12.05 (hardcover).

You can also request a copy at Decorah's own Dragonfly Books.

As of the writing of this article you can get a kindle version for \$9.99.

The book is entitled:
Moral Ground: Ethical Action for a Planet in Peril,
edited by Kathleen Moore and Michael Nelson.





VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Home Visits

A message from Pastor Cat:

As you might recall, in 2025, it was my turn through the Annual conference to complete my Safe Gatherings training and background check. While going through the training, I discovered that I am supposed to have another person go with me on visits so there are always two adults doing visits to provide a safe environment for all involved. With that in mind, and with guidance from our District Superintendent, I am creating a list of volunteers who are able to join me on visits to our homebound members. I break up the visits into two days a month. Ideally, we would have enough people signing up and being willing to join me so that the volunteers would go on visits two to three times a year and not have it be a large commitment on time. I have visits scheduled for **Thursdays** mostly on our calendar, but this is not set in stone, and I am flexible on days and times for visits.

I could work within your schedule. I currently have a few volunteers but am always looking for more.

AUDIO SYSTEM UPDATE



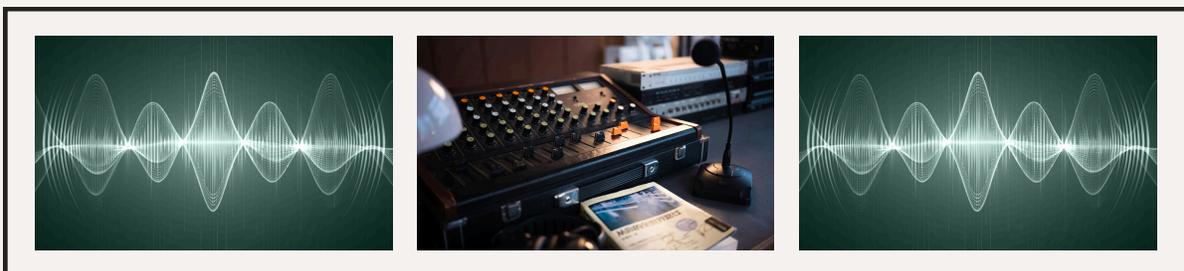
Do you hear that?

It's the sound of wonderful news!

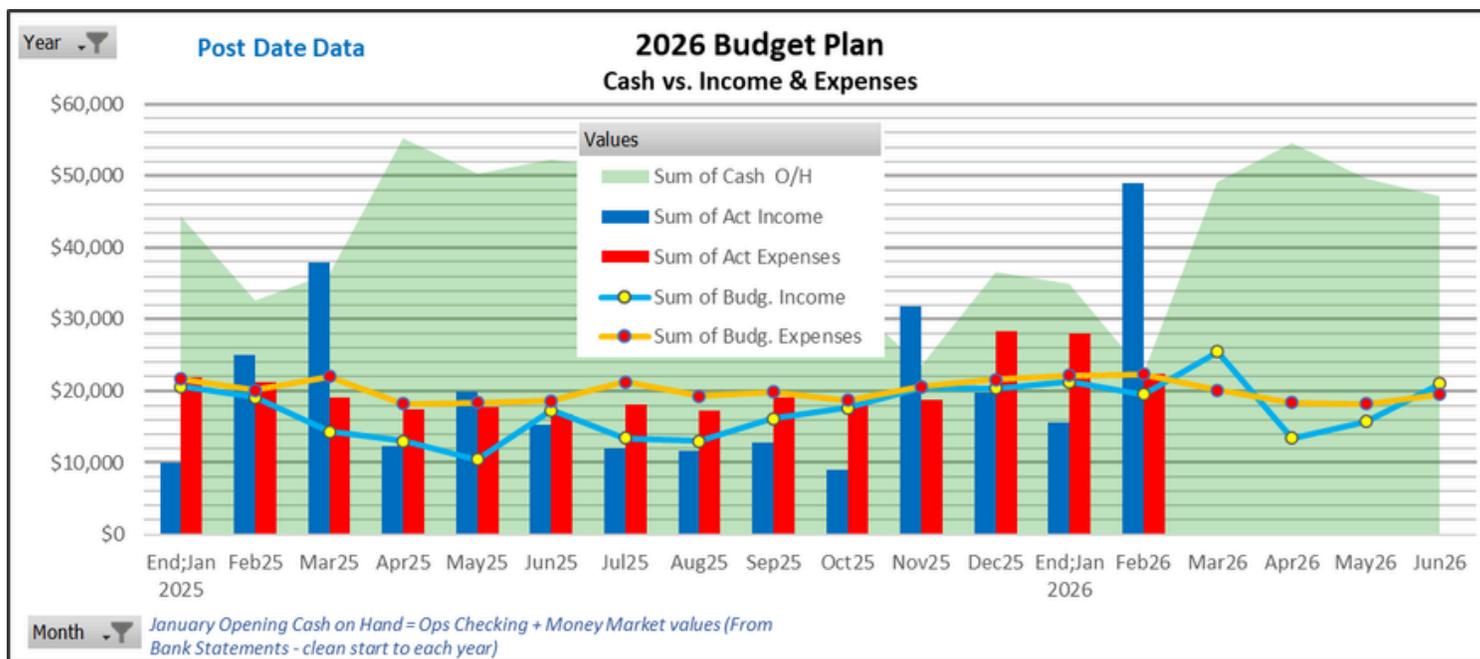
West Music has begun the installation of our new church audio system.

DFUMC also received a grant from the Depot Outlet in the amount of \$3,500 to help cover the costs of the new system.

We would like to extend our heartfelt **thanks to the Depot Outlet** for being a sponsor of this important project. This is truly a tremendous community.



Treasurer's Corner



February has proved to be a wonderful reversal of fortune!

I believe that our graphic is worth a thousand words!

While we are a few days away from our month close, the numbers presented here are directionally correct and very welcome!

- February income set a new one-month record; we brought in \$49,012 vs. a plan of \$19,549!
- Expenses landed almost exactly on plan; \$22,312 vs. a plan of \$22,351.
- Our stewardship campaign has turned out to be a huge success, as I mentioned at Sunday's service.
 - We have 44 individuals/families pledging \$178,804 vs. an income target of \$211,934. This is an 84% to goal ratio! Probably our best ever commitment level. We typically see somewhere in the 65-70% ratio.
 - Now I should remind you that we did pass a deficit budget, so the \$211K income target is still below our expense budget of \$235K, so we will still need to carefully manage that gap.
- Our checking account now stands at \$24,683.
- Our money market account is currently holding \$25,080.
 - I will be able to move some more \$\$ into the MMkt account in the next day or two.
- Benevolent activity has quieted down now that the Trustees' grants have paid out.
 - Our current balance is \$15,271.
 - Expected payouts for the month are:
 - \$14,556 - Trustees' grants (these are starting to "clear through.")
 - \$620 - our standard Decorah Food Pantry collection.

Please let me know if you have any questions regarding our financial position.

Stay warm and safe everyone!

Peace and love,

Steve Rarick, Treasurer
(847) 830-9891 mobile



IOWAFAITHANDCLIMATE.ORG/2026SURVEY



EVERYONE is invited to attend the 2026 Decorah Community Food Pantry Annual Meeting!

Join in **Monday, March 9th at 5:30 p.m.** at the Winneshiek County Community Services Building at 607 Washington St.

Brief tours of the pantry are available following the meeting.

Please take the “Climate Change & Our Congregation” Survey online!

The survey can be completed online in just a couple of minutes & your valuable input provides important data to Rev. Cat’s Climate Cohort.

You may also access the survey via our DFUMC Website or via our Facebook page.



All About Easter Lilies

Easter Sunday this year is **April 5th**. Easter lilies can be brought in & left in the front office or entryway anytime leading up to Easter Service in April. Please refrain from placing lilies on the altar before Easter. Lilies can be obtained from wherever you like, but if you are ordering your Easter Lily from Country Garden, **please call before Good Friday, April 3rd**, as this is the Friday they intend to deliver them to the church. You can reach them at: **563-382-1148.**

February's Valentine Party

WAS A GREAT SUCCESS



From Syd:

Quilters were happy to give Nancy Eichinger the red and white quilt made for her. She was very surprised and grateful! It was so nice to have her with us today!

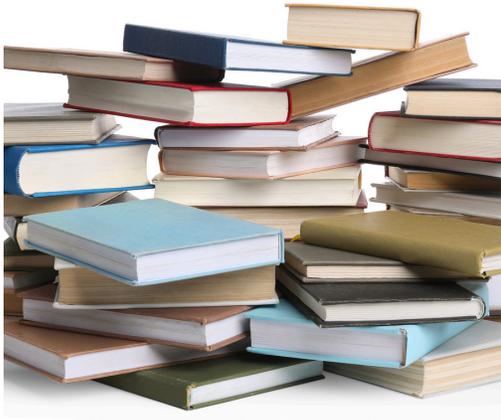
From Deb Tekippe:

Thanks for a great day!

We have so many talented crafters!



Thank you to everyone who attended



BOOK CLUB

From Jane: For the month of March the FUMC book club will be reading “The Turtle House” by Amanda Churchill.

The Decorah Public Library has new hard cover copies available to purchase for \$10. We will be meeting at Sherry Shilling's house located at 710 South Ave in Decorah. The gathering will take place at 1:30 p.m. on Thursday, March 19th.

For more information on joining the discussion please contact Jane Hardy at 563-382-5316 or email jhardy3333@aol.com.

Birthdays

- 3/4** Lorraine Rear; Mark Rhodes
- 3/6** Nancy Limberg
- 3/9** Karen Van Der Maaten
- 3/10** Tina Shedinger
- 3/13** Marc Folkedahl
- 3/16** Andrew Rhodes
- 3/20** Mary Lou Hageman
- 3/22** Carter Rissman
- 3/27** Barb Dale
- 3/29** John Lubke, Mark Landas
- 3/31** Leslie Smith





COFFEE SERVERS

LITURGIST

Flower Chair: Candace Arp

March 1:	Cheryl & Drew Pellett	Nancy Ruen
March 8:	Nancy Ruen & Syd Stephenson	Dave Arp
March 15:	Youth Pancake Breakfast	David Scott
March 22:	Candace & Dave Arp	Ann Duder
March 29:	Nancy Ruen & Du Huang	Mark Landas

UPCOMING EVENTS



UW Faith Monthly Meeting

Wednesday, March 4th

- General Meeting at 1:00 p.m.
- Executive Meeting at 12:15 p.m.

Program - Virginia Leidahl

Hostess - Candace Arp

Decorah Community Meal

Thursday, March 5th, 5 p.m.

*Decorah Lutheran's Fellowship
Hall at 309 Winnebago St.*

16th Annual Oneota Film Festival

Thursday - Friday, March 5th & 6th

Downtown Decorah

*See poster on front office window
for more details.*



World Day of Prayer

Friday, March 6 - 1:30 p.m.

UCC Fellowship Center

This year's program is from the women of Nigeria, based on Matthew 11 verses 28 - 30.

Everyone is welcome!

All Vets Breakfast for 8th Grade D.C. Trip

Sunday, March 8th, 8 a.m. - Noon

All Vet's Club, 104 State St.

Food Pantry Annual Meeting

Monday, March 9th, 5:30 p.m.

*Winneshiek County Community Building
607 Washington St.*

Youth Pancake Breakfast Followed by Michelle Amdahl Presentation on Braille

Sunday, March 15th,

following service

DFUMC Fellowship Hall

Mission Madness

Saturday, March 28th, 9 a.m.

*First United Methodist Church
in Cedar Falls*



Birthdays & additional event information on attached calendar.