



Please join us for worship.
Midway Kids: 10:30
Worship: 10:30

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THIS MONTH

Sundays —

Women's Bible Study 5:00 p.m.
Midway Students 4:30 p.m.

Mondays — 6:30 p.m.

Boy Scout Troop 68

Last Monday of Month—
Gorgeous Girls Lunch: 11 a.m.

Wednesdays —

Midway Hotel Lunch—Noon
Choir Rehearsal — 6:29 p.m.

Thursdays — 9-4:00

Sewcial open sewing

Yoga at 11:00

Men's Bible Study 6:00 p.m.
1st and 3rd—Twice Blessed
Open Noon to 5 p.m.

This Month

Tuesday, January 9—Noon
Second Tuesday Lunch in
Fellowship Hall

Monday, January 15, 6:00 p.m.
Ministry Council meeting
Martin Luther King Jr. Day

Friday, January 19

Give Back Day at
City of Refuge

10 North Garth, Columbia

Midway Locust Grove Church

LOCUST LEAVES



Volume 37
Number 1
January 2024



Beyond
the Pulpit

Pastor
Ben Lee

New Year, New Small Groups

Last semester, we officially launched our small group ministry with great success. The amount of feedback we received from those of you who participated was highly encouraging.

Our groups are intentionally set up to multiply, and that is just what they have done. I am pleased to share that we will grow from three to five small groups this Spring!

Each of our groups meets in the hosts' homes. The participants within each small group determine which day of the week and the time of the day their meetings take place. Sign-up forms will be available soon. Here is a list of our five small groups:

Group 1: Leader: Bill Roop
Host: Keith Andersen

Group 2: Leader: Mariea Caruthers
Host: Carolyn Doyle

Group 3: Leader: Laurel Groh
Host: Keith Groh

Group 4: Leader: Bob Moore
Host: Suzi Moore

Group 5: Leader: Lee Sommer
Host: Karla Sommer

Please reach out to me or any of the leaders or hosts with any questions you may have. I am very excited about all the new relationships being formed through this ministry area. With such a high number of new people worshipping at Midway Locust Grove, our small groups are proving to be an excellent way for folks to plug into the overall life of our church.

Whether you are relatively new to our church or have been here for decades, I hope you will consider joining a group and growing together this Spring!

Peace,
Ben

Ministries & Missions

Looking ahead to next year...



Any after Christmas shoppers, please be on the lookout for gift bags, tissue paper and tall tubes of wrapping paper. The elves who wrapped the presents for Twice Blessed Christmas Store were running a little low. They have plenty of boxes and ribbon. Thank you!

Happy 90th Birthday To Bob Grant



TREASURY NOTES

By Nedra Moreau

We ended this year in very good shape. Contributions to the general fund for December totaled \$32,000. For the year, we received \$277,731.76. I think this is the best year in the history of the church. Thank you, thank you to everyone!

We still need more for Firm Foundation so that we can complete all of the projects. I personally plan to give more and hope that you will join me so that we can reach our goal. Thank you to all who have given to the fund.

We are well positioned for the new year as we continue our church ministries. I anticipate seeing what we can accomplish.

Check the Bulletin Boards in Fellowship Hall.

Thanks to Angie Gerzen for preparing these boards for our information and fun.

Bob and Iola Grant welcomed a large crowd of family and friends to Bob's 90th birthday party at Fellowship Hall December 9.

(Editor's note: Subject to confirming, Iola will be celebrating her 68th anniversary of joining Locust Grove in 2024.)



Carolyn Doyle to review book at Tuesday Lunch January 9

Carolyn Doyle will review a book she edited from old family letters. We asked her for a preview. She responded:

In the early 2000's, my cousin Art Draper, and his wife Dorie, rediscovered letters written in 1885-86, by our great-grandmother, Fanny McClurg Draper, to her husband Charles Clinton Draper. They were living in Lebanon, MO, where CC was cashier in a bank, and made the decision to homestead in the Dakota Territory, now South Dakota. CC was to stay in Lebanon for a couple of months, earning money to fund the enterprise, while Fanny, their six children, (ages 13 years to 18 months), her father JW McClurg and her brother Joe went on ahead and started homesteading. That winter was far more severe than the past few seasons had been, CC was delayed in joining them, and her letters to him tell of their life that hard winter, and how she missed him.

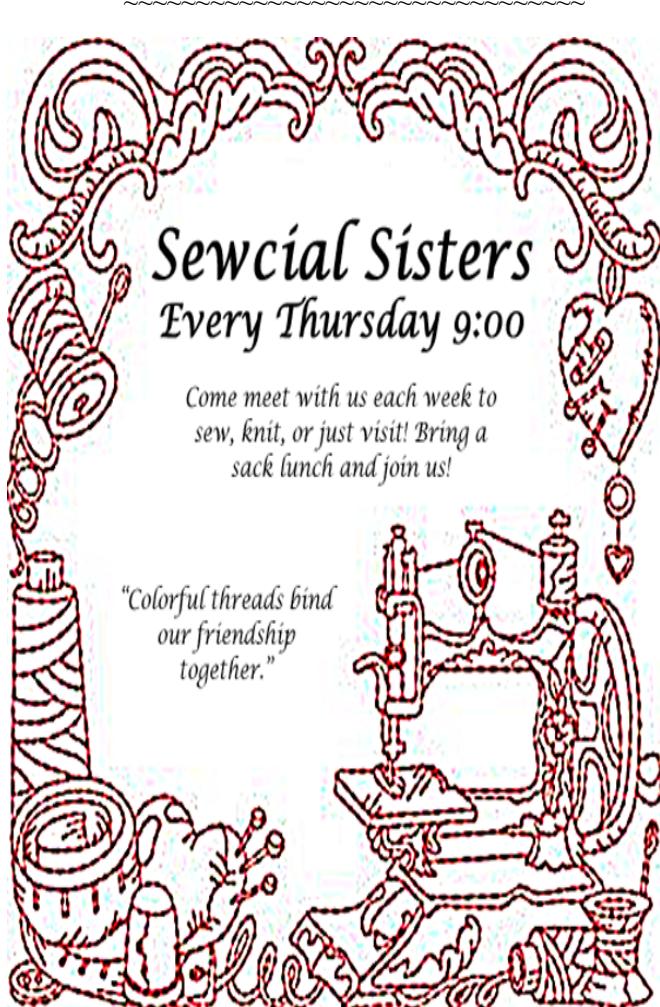
We started transcribing those letters, just for ourselves and to share with family, when we had a chance to have them published. The book, "My Ever Dear Charlie" came out in 2006, and is now out of print, although I think used copies may be available thru Amazon. At the time, I made a 1" to 1ft. scale model of the soddy they spent that winter in and will bring it to the lunch in January.

**Know something nice
about someone?
Let us know about it
for KUDOS.**

Happy Birthday January 2024

1 Trevor Walker	12 Julie Hovis-Bader
4 Craig Butler	13 Amber Klaas
6 Gabriel Gessling	18 Mary Bess Green
7 Heather Gessling	18 Jana Wirth
7 Daryle Moreau	19 Warren Filbert
8 Bess Henley	19 Bob Henley
9 Jerry Gerzen	19 Kate Johnson
9 Shelby Thomas	19 Noah Patrick
10 Tim Abrams	23 Bob Elder
10 Marianne Martin	23 Andy Strubel
11 Alaina Fuemmeler	29 Jody Patrick
11 Tami Gessling	29 Steve Baumgartner
11 Isabelle Gessling	29 Jane Ann Lee

If someone's name does not appear here and they do have a birthday this month, please let us know by email and we will update our records.



A mission which a number of our church family have participated in, Re-Member, has sent out its end of the year report. It gives an encapsulated picture of the work done on the Pine Ridge reservation with members of the Oglala Lakota tribe, and the connections and relationships made.

The projects volunteers work on are intended to improve living conditions for families on the reservation, mainly by helping meet the basic need for adequate shelter. Here, many homes are so overcrowded that children must share beds or sleep on the floor. Others lack running water and functional bathrooms. Wood is frequently the only source of heat. Unstable stacks of cinderblocks serve in place of stairs to reach the doors of mobile homes.

To meet such immediate, pressing needs, Re-Member volunteers build bunk beds for kids, sturdy outhouses, wooden access stairs and wheelchair ramps. They also install skirting to keep mobile homes warmer in winter and cooler in summer and, in the fall, cut, split, and deliver firewood. Some of the work is done in Re-Member's workshop, but much of it is performed on-site at homes across the Reservation.

ON THE REZ

With Kathy Hughes



The volunteers who visit Re-Member to learn about the Oglala Lakota and make life better on the Pine Ridge Reservation come from a diversity of backgrounds. Most come as part of groups affiliated with high schools, colleges, churches, or other organizations, but some come by themselves or with a few friends or family members.

In 2023: 560 volunteers participated in the 30 weeks between March and October, when weather makes it possible to travel to the site and around the reservation. There were more than 150 events involving cultural immersion, a key

element of the success of the Re-Member experience. The majority of the tribe live in trailers. 190 beds were built, delivered and assembled for families usually sleeping on the floor. 28 trailers were skirted. 32 ramps were





built, usually for families with a member in a wheelchair, greatly enhancing their mobility and eliminating the need for family members to carry them in order to leave home. 73 decks and steps were built. 42 outhouses were built, holes dug and installed.

Where else in America would a family be excited to receive an outhouse in this day and age? More than 1,000 pounds of fresh produce were grown and distributed to families. 785 loads of firewood were distributed during the winter, and specified donations were used to provide emergency

electric assistance and propane assistance, paid directly to utility companies.

“Every year is a wonderful and heart-wrenching experience. Re-Member doesn’t just put a band-aid on the issues, it actually works to empower the Oglala Lakota living on the Rez and the volunteers get to see that firsthand.”

Re-Member is now taking applications for volunteers for the 2024 season. The staff are amazing, the tribe is committed to Re-



Member as a long-term commitment on the Rez and are grateful for the work done. Re-Member hires tribal members as speakers/teachers and work crews whenever possible.

If you are interested I would encourage you to pull up their Facebook page or go on line to their website and read more about their program, the cost, etc. There are several of us looking seriously at attending Senior week – which is a little stepped down in terms of work commitments and pace! Plus it is cooler than the June and July timeframes we have attended before. We would LOVE to have you join us! Let Kathy Hughes know if you have any questions or any interest.





Thanks to Jim Johnson for this collage of the Choir and Midway Kids Christmas program. This December 10 "Once Upon a December" program included 52 performers before an audience of 181, and included dessert and a visit from Santa..

From the beginning of Advent on December 3 through Christmas, several families, including the Leveretts below, lit the Advent candles leading us to Christmas week's services.

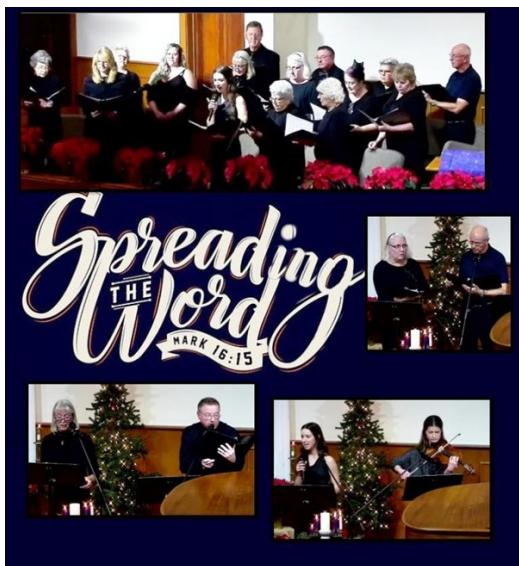
The Longest Night Service December 12 was especially for those who have experienced a loss and those wishing to offer support to those who were grieving.

In addition to the regular morning service on Christmas

Eve, there also was an evening service. As is the custom at our worship, music played a dominant role, by the choir and by individual members who shared their vocal and instrumental talents.

For those who missed any of these services, you may find them live streamed on YouTube on the Internet. All services are saved for viewing by searching @mwlocustgrove on YouTube.





Another Jim Johnson collage.

These pages reflect the mood of worship all year at Locust Grove. Participation by the congregation as individuals or members of the choir will remain the key to a great year of worship in 2024.



Special thanks to Jerry Wirth for these photos.



Twice Blessed Christmas Store another huge success



Once again the Twice Blessed Christmas Store drew a large crowd of shoppers who were given tickets with which to select items for their Christmas gifts. What began as very full tables of merchandise were picked clean within a few hours. Gift wrapping was included for those wishing it. A large team of volunteers tended to the needs of the shoppers.



Santa and his favorite elf returned to greet the children and hear of their gift wishes. We thank Steve and Hilary Baumann for escorting Santa and his elf to the store again this year.



Give Back Day creates a very Merry Christmas for thousands

Photos by Louise Stanley



For this season's Give Back Day our missionaries served December 5 for the Voluntary Action Center of Columbia as they collected gifts from sponsors for distribution to participant families during the holiday program.

The collection and distribution took place at the Broadway Christian Church. The photos illustrate the volume of gifts that were distributed.

Voluntary Action Center has been in service for 40 years. This year's Adopt a Family program served 1,008 families. Of that number of 3,763 people, 2,300 are children.

Christy Lowe was our contact person at VAC. Beth Luetjen, Rena Crane, Marsha Coleman, Cindy and Dan Meives,, Ben Lee, Amie Butler, and Louise Stanley attended this year's event.





The Kitchen Cabinet

Remembering
Mary Kaye's
Food Ministry

Happy New Year 2024...

Hope everyone has a blessed New Year. Here is an easy winter stew that will warm you up.

Enjoy,

Hope Burkart

Cabbage Patch Stew

1 1/2 lbs. ground beef
1/2 head cabbage, sliced thin
1 lg onion, chopped
1 c celery, chopped
1 can stewed tomatoes
1 can kidney beans
2 tsp salt
2 tblsp chili powder
Brown beef and drain. Add rest of ingredients and simmer till heated through.

Do for others what you want them to do for you. Matthew 7:12

**Join us for
Second Tuesday Lunch
January 9, Noon,
in Fellowship Hall.**



Gorgeous Girls did not meet in December. Our next lunch will be on Monday, January 22, 2024!

We are going to Murray's, one of our favorite places at 3107 Green Meadows in South Columbia.

Help us launch the new year.



mwlocustgrove.com

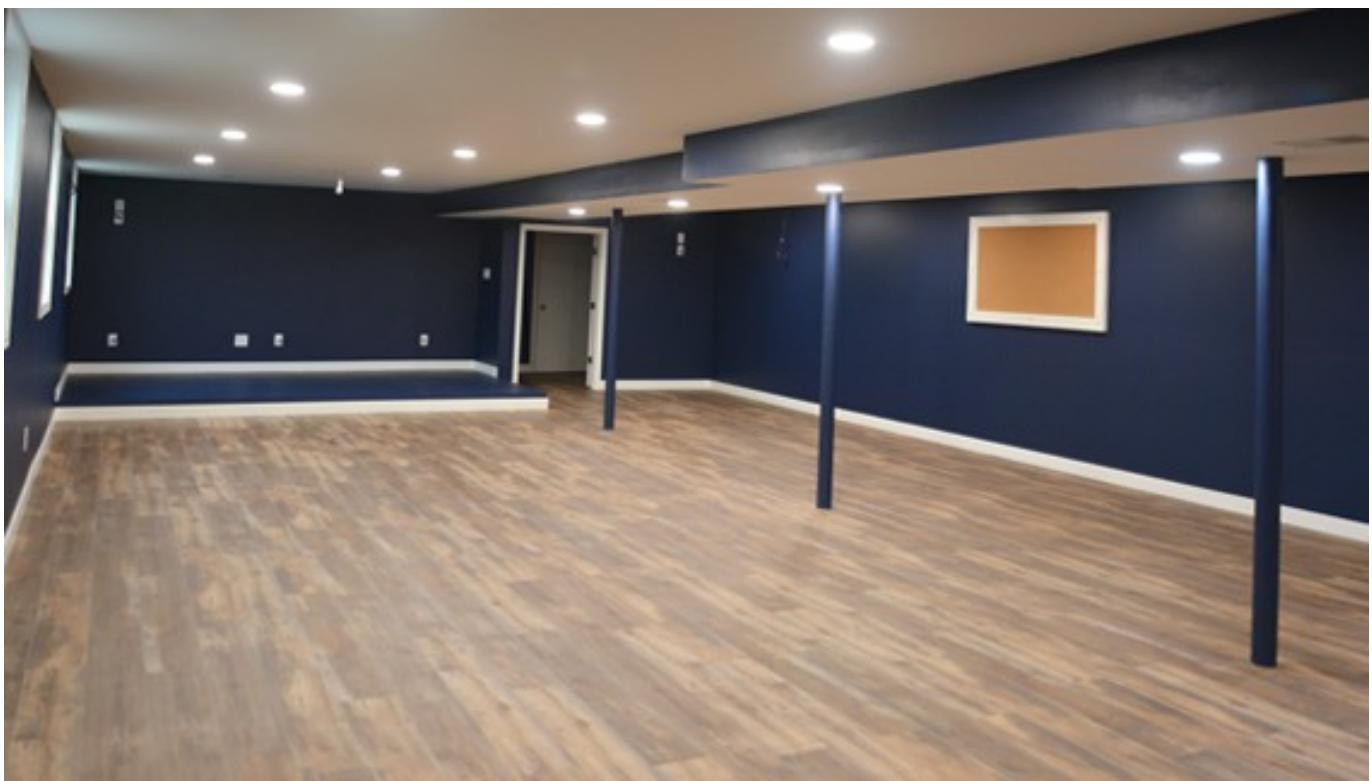
This bumper sticker is available on the welcome table at Sunday worship.



Endless prayers of gratitude and much love
from all your many friends at Twice Blessed!

*The remodeled basement is a beautiful sanctu-
ary for our Midway Students, as the Danny*

*Coleman construction team has completed the second
phase of the Firm Foundation remodeling project.*





MIDWAY LOCUST GROVE CHURCH

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***Our Mission:
We exist to
gather in grace,
grow in Christ,
and go share the Gospel.***

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The Back Row By Gene Baumann

By now you surely are aware of my interest in history, especially local history, and even more specifically, the long history of our church.

With the annual turn of the calendar page to a new year, I like to check to see if there are any anniversaries coming up. In 2024, while they may not warrant public celebrations, I did find a couple of two-century anniversaries coming up related to our church.

The first actually relates to our founder, Reuben Hatton personally rather than to his connection as founder of the church. On August 24, 1824, President James Monroe signed the land grant deed which was to become Hatton's farm just north of

Find the hidden Bible  in this issue.

Visit our Web Site: www.mwlocustgrove.com

Volume 37 Issue 1 January 2024

**If we had a
Message Board...**

**Tuesday Lunch will be
at noon on January 9
in our Fellowship Hall.**

where the church is located.

Hatton had lived in the neighborhood since arriving in 1817, when he founded the Methodist Society in his home. The congregation met in his home from that time until it outgrew the space. It then moved to the larger home of William Douglas, coincidentally in the year 1824.

The Douglas home served until 1830, when the Brick Chapel was built on the site of our present sanctuary. It served the community which adopted the name The Brick Chapel Community until the present sanctuary was built.

The Chapel needed replacing in the late 1850s, but the Civil War delayed its replacement until 1870. That new sanctuary, named Locust Grove in honor of the trees gracing its lawn, continues to serve us well, now with a brand new floor.