



Poinsettias Given in Memory of Loved Ones

Thanks to everyone who donated poinsettias for the altar in memory of their loved ones. The church was beautiful.



Dave & Sheryl Brisel

*In Memory of Charlie & Berniece Brisel
In Memory of John & Margaret Schmidt
In Memory of Betty Brisel Koppin*

Annette & Tim Caffisch

In Memory of Richard & Zona Karsten

Hjordi Churchill

In Memory of Claire & Beverly Churchill

Chuck & Linda Danks

In Honor of all family

Jerry & Patti Ellingson

In Honor of Our Church Family

Don and Char Frankenberry

Brian & Carolyn Kanne

*In Memory of Harold & Faye Kanne
In Memory of Ray & Ruth Lemke*

Dave & Jenny Kanne

In Memory of Harold & Faye Kanne

Deanna & Michael Kanne

*In Memory of Harold & Faye Kanne
In Memory of Ray & Ruth Lemke*

LeAnn Kanne

In Memory of Harold & Faye Kanne

Carol Karsten

*In Memory of Don Karsten
In Memory of Cindy Karsten
In Memory of Kenny Karsten*

Jerry & Kathy King

In Memory of Faye Kanne

Justin, Kristin, Leah, Kaylee & Emery Krell

In Memory of Bob & Joyce Krell

Bonnie Lima

*In Memory of Mario Lima
In Memory of Jess & Nora Saufferer*

Keith & Shelley McColley

*In Memory of Clayton & Marlene McColley
In Memory of Glenn & June McColley*

Deb Miller

In Memory of Bill Miller

Amanda Rollins

In Memory of Mary Henry

Brad & Cindy Saufferer

*In Memory of Dan & Marge Cartmill
In Memory of Eleanor & Harold Saufferer*

Jim & Chery Southworth

*In Memory of Roger & Glorene Southworth
In Memory of LaVern & Vida Wendt*

Brad & Tracie Spinler & Family

*In Memory of Harold & Leona Minske
In Memory of Harold & Eleanor Saufferer
In Memory of Marissa Spinler*

Nicole Wacek

In Memory of Grandparents



January 2025

Blooming Grove
Morning Worship.10:45 am
Sunday School...9:45 am **

Janesville
Afternoon Worship.....4:00 pm

Waterville Evangelical
Morning Worship...9:30 am

Parment Colors January 5 White January 12 White January 19 Green January 26 Green			1 	2 7 pm WV Jail Ministry/Rice County Jail	3 <div style="background-color: yellow; border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; width: fit-content; margin: auto;">Pastor's Day Off</div>	4
5	6	7	8 7 pm Ad Board at BG	9 7 pm WV Jail Ministry/Rice County Jail	10 <div style="background-color: yellow; border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; width: fit-content; margin: auto;">Pastor's Day Off</div>	11
12	13	14 4-6 pm Free Diaper Give-away at WV	15 11:30 am Prayer Brunch At Fresh Café in Owatonna 5-6:30 pm Spaghetti Supper at WV	16 7 pm WV Jail Ministry/Rice County Jail	17 <div style="background-color: yellow; border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; width: fit-content; margin: auto;">Pastor's Day Off</div>	18
19 9:30—10:30 am Christmas Undecorating at BG	20 	21 6:00 pm Bible Conversations at Half Pint Brewery	22	23 7 pm WV Jail Ministry/Rice County Jail	24 <div style="background-color: yellow; border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; width: fit-content; margin: auto;">Pastor's Day Off</div>	25 10 am to noon Free Diaper Giveaway at WV
26	27	28	29	30	31	

**** Sunday School will be held on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of each month.**

JANUARY CALENDAR

Sunday Worship 10:45 a.m.
Sunday School 9:45 a.m.

8	Wed	7:00 pm	Ad Board
15	Wed	11:30 am	Prayer Brunch at Fresh Café
15	Wed	5-6:30 pm	Spaghetti Supper at WV
19	Sun	9:30 am	Christmas Undecoration
21	Tues	6:00 pm	Bible Conversations at Half Pint

HAPPY Birthday!		19	Bonnie Lima
4	Charlie Brecht	20	Gunner Rollins
10	Burch Buchholz	22	Linda Kosel
10	Jerry Mahler	23	Haley Nagel
13	Jennifer (Danks) Beck	25	Callie DeLeon
17	Derek Bartosch	25	Jim Nagel
19	Chris Fyvie	28	Brad Spinler
		30	Annette Sharp
		31	Erin Nelson

Men's Breakfast

February 9th

Details to follow

Contact Brad Spinler if you can help.



Prayer Brunch

At Fresh Café

130 E. Vine St, Owatonna

Wednesday, January 15 - 11:30 am

All are Welcome

Thank You!

Support for our Adopt-A-Family project was overwhelming! Not only did we fill all the needs on their lists – we also filled all the wants! Nearly all of the cash went for a large grocery gift card, a large gas gift card, and a Buffalo Wild Wings gift card for a night out. When we delivered our gifts to the school, it filled the entire box and back seat of the pickup. The National Honor Society students who arrived at the school office to transport the items off to another area got very large eyes and breathed, “Wow!” Thank you to everyone for their contributions.

Carolyn and Hjordi



Treasurer's Report

November 25—December 30, 2024



General Budget Income	\$ 6,280.49
Cemetery	200.00
Poinsettia	508.00
Prayer Shawl Ministry	20.00
Visitor	44.00

Total Income **7,052.49**

Expenses

Pastor's Salary	2,223.64
Telephone	57.72
Excel Energy	79.23
Poinsettias	742.00
Cokesbury	395.33
Plunkett's Pest Control	509.25

Total Paid Out **\$ 4,007.17**

(Net Income: + \$3,045.32)

Building Addition

Income

Restoration \$ 17,115.00

Total Income **\$ 17,115.00**

Expenses

Loan Payment \$ 5,965.20

Total Paid Out **\$ 5,965.20**

(Net Income: + \$11,149.80)

Restoration Fund Balance \$67,245.97

Building Addition Loan \$206,189.54



Christmas Decorating Thank-Yous!

Thank you to the 19 people who, over the course of a week's time, were involved in all that it takes to decorate our church for Christmas...removing all “furnishings” from the chancel, hauling tubs and boxes from the attic, hanging the backdrop, assembling and decorating the Christmas Tree, hanging decorations throughout the sanctuary, and arranging poinsettias. Your work always transports us to a place of wonder and beauty! Thanks, in advance, to all who will be involved in putting it all away for another year.



A New Thing



This is what God says, the God who builds a road right through the ocean, who carves a path through pounding waves, the God who summons horses and chariots and armies—they lie down and then can't get up; they're snuffed out like so many candles: "Forget about what's happened; don't keep going over old history. Be alert, be present. I'm about to do something brand-new. It's bursting out! Don't you see it? Isaiah 43: 16-20 The Message

I would like to take a moment to be grateful to those who did the work of leading in our parish churches in 2024: the board chairs, the leadership who faithfully attended meetings, the worship team, our musicians, and those who weekly produced our PowerPoints and bulletins—Thank You! To our Bible Study groups and to each member who came to worship as the Body of Christ, you brought His presence to our gatherings—Thank You!

As we enter this year of 2025, I find myself thinking about my life and what's to come. There is something that has made me more thoughtful as I approach a new decade in my living—this year that I will move into birthdays that begin with a 7. We all remember being children who looked at people in their 70's as REALLY old. But I can't help but be incredibly grateful that I have lived God's blessing of 69-1/2 years.

Where do you find your thoughts in these early days of January 2025? Are you looking forward to a New Year of possibilities or are you apprehensive about what this year will bring? I think it's in our DNA to be a little dualistic as we think about the future. If we enter a new year without regard to the One who gifted us with the days we live, we can't help but be apprehensive; but if we open our hearts and praise God for the gift of each day, we can't help but be excited about the possibilities 2025 promises.

Isaiah reminds us today that the same God who orchestrated a way free for the Israelites through the ocean's waters is orchestrating something new for us. Peterson's translation of Isaiah's words reminds us that we won't find this new thing if we "keep going over old history." We are called to "be alert and be present" so that we realize the brand-new that God is creating in these days. Let us take a deep breath, forget past shortcomings and disappointments, and stand in God's amazing creativity as we wonder what's to come in this year of 2025. Let us put our complete trust in the God who wants us to see that new things are exactly what God provides when we open our hearts to share God's love with everyone and everything.

One final thank you to those who remembered Jerry and I with Christmas cards and gifts, you touched our hearts with your thoughtfulness!

The old year is past—Happy New Year, dear ones!

Pastor Kathy

At Right—Pastor reading the book "The Christmas Miracle of Jonathan Toomey" at our Christmas Eve Service.



Youth Christmas Program

Every year a small cluster of us start thinking about the kids' Christmas program, scratching our heads as we offer little snippets of ideas. Every year it "magically" evolves; yet we're all aware it's not a magician's touch. Small crew of youth, Sunday School abbreviated to only twice monthly for some, minimal rehearsal time, yet, again it becomes more than our imaginings. Using The Friendly Beasts (and some creative additional verses to fit) and the fact that each one's (animal, inanimate star and hay, or person) gift, great or seemingly insignificant, is integrally valued, the story unfolded. Younger youth created the scene with symbolic props, older youth read the Luke and Matthew Christmas account (in kid-friendly lingo) and/or sang a solo, helped from the sidelines and helped the "littles" with props, our teachers and substitute teachers read the "gift" statements, and even the congregation got involved, symbolically bringing their own gifts to the stable.



The kids were cute, of course, that's part of the deal. But beyond that, they added touches to the enactment that had not been suggested by the planners: the donkey gazing directly into the manger at the baby (likely he expected to find his supper); our 3 sheep clustered and huddled together (as flocks of sheep are wont to do) not 'artistically arranged and spaced' for the viewer's pleasure – and even on the "sheep hillside" side of our backdrop, angel halos placed everywhere (doubtless we've all sensed the angels in our sanctuary at one time or another) – and even one halo on a little sheep's rump... a couple of the sheep were our dear Faye's, just sayin'; more experienced (and taller!) "shepherds" assisted the little's with the unwieldy shepherd staffs, as was most likely the case back then; stars filled the "sky" high and low - again some taller star-hangers aided the littles; eager enthusiastic kids hustled to participate (an example to us to get to it and do our part), sometimes overcome by an urge to take the donkey for one last spin before bedding down in the stable.



Those things can't be written into the script, but oh how they carried the story forward more insightfully than was planned by the mere human writers. Our pre-school through K kids were kept happily busy and quiet right up front where they'd be ready for their next part, while the 3rd grade through Confirmation kids did their readings. Happy, busy, and quiet? Teacher Kristin had brought a plastic kids' nativity set up front which kept them engaged and even reinforcing, to the little kids, what was also happening on a bigger scale beside them.

As the final statements were made, the youth brought forward lanterns and candles and surrounded the stable scene (symbolizing the shining light of their own gifts offered forward). They then went out amongst the congregation with baskets of our Christmas Eve tea lights to disperse. In the same vein, all the adults seemed as if also eager to share their light – their gifts – coming forward with "lit" tea-lights. No, not just *coming* forward, but seeming to *press* forward. More, and more, and more people coming up with their light to share. This writer couldn't believe how they seemed to keep coming; and coming! Was the church that full? And yet, just like with the

(Continued on back)



loaves and fishes, there were a few tea lights left in several of the baskets. Again, unwritten, unplanned, unprompted – our youth knew what to do. Bringing the left-over lights up front, they plopped down on the floor, “lit” each one, and added it to those already surrounding the stable. ALL our gifts, our light, offered for the Child, for the world. In that moment, this writer felt the amazing power of the youth’s Christmas program. But really, were we attending a program? Or was it actually a shared spiritual experience?

(By Patti Ellingson)



Snowman Gift

In early December all watched as Pastor Kathy opened a gift given - anonymously - to our congregation. A youth among us with creativity, quiet thoughtful generosity, and some amazing insights of symbolism, can often be found expressing that creativity in their family’s home workshop. Some wood, metal, paint, an extra string of grandma’s rosary beads, and skill - and this [snowman] is the result. Telling Mom and Dad of the wish to gift this to our congregation came spontaneously from this young person - no prompting from parents. The cross – Jesus – can be seen within the snowman’s heart. A communion chalice in one hand, and the communion bread loaf the other. Offering warmth is a Christmas-green scarf of rosary beads. **Wow!** This is truly incredible! Can you see the light of this gift shining out?



January House-Cleaning Mission Opportunity in Support of Emma Norton Services

Did you overstock on cleaning supplies for the holidays? Do you have a surplus of Christmas cards that you either purchased or that found their way to you from non-profit organizations?



We have an outlet to help with your January house-cleaning! Emma Norton Services will take these items off your hands and get them to people who can use them. During January, we will have a collection spot in the back of the sanctuary for unused, non-personalized greeting cards, notepads, unused journals, paper towels, other household cleaning supplies, and new or gently used winter gear (coats, gloves/mittens, hats, warm socks, etc.). All donations will be delivered to Emma Norton Services at the end of January. Enjoy cleaning out, and thanks for your help!

Emma Norton Services, a United Methodist related organization in St. Paul, MN, is a trauma-informed organization that promotes healing and recovery, bringing a full array of resources to women, individuals, and families who have experienced homelessness. They provide safe, secure, affordable housing for people in transition while connecting people to a comprehensive array of community services to help stabilize their lives, build confidence, and enable self-sufficiency.

Gift of Hand-Made BGUMC Church

On Christmas Eve, all watched again as Pastor Kathy opened a second gift given to our congregation. It, too, had been left on the pulpit as a surprise. In it, she found a lovely hand-painted wooden replica of a “historical BGUMC”, from the days prior to the completion of the south addition. We learned that Michael Kanne had found the un-painted wooden art piece on his Grandpa Harold’s workbench – made by Harold sometime before his death in 2016. Michael brought it upstairs to his Grandma Faye, in the months before she passed away, and requested that she add her phenomenal artistic skills to provide painted details. Faye did so! Now, in memory of both Harold and Faye, Michael has gifted their loving work to BGUMC. Thank you!



Pastoral Care



Note from Pastor Kathy King:
Please call or text me if you would like me to visit or if there is a prayer concern that you prefer to keep private.

- Baby Louise, who is recovering well after her time in the PICU in November!
- Deb Miller's friend who is recovering from surgery.
- Nicole Wacek's friend who is recovering from major foot surgery.
- Sherry, who is recovering from heart surgery.
- Luke and Bobbi Mathern's son and partner, as they are expecting their first baby.
- Dave Brisel's brother, Bob, who has moved to a care center after a stay in the hospital.
- Alicyn, a friend of Marlis Mahler, as she begins her new job as program coordinator at Rachel's Light, a loving home for women and children experiencing homelessness, allowing them the opportunity to live out their unique purpose, and empowering them to become self-sufficient through a strength-based approach..
- Marlene, a friend of Dave and Sheryl Brisel, as she recovers after a stay in the hospital.
- Dennis, a friend of BGUMC, as he recovers from recent stays in the hospital.
- Will Mullenbach's teacher, who has been diagnosed with cancer.
- Chuck, as he recovers from a recent stay in the hospital and undergoes follow-up tests in the weeks ahead.
- Don, as he recovers from a fall.
- For others in our BGUMC family journeying through many weeks and months of ongoing health concerns.
- All in our faith community who privately hold heavy concerns in their hearts and lives. Help us to reflect God's love and care through our words and deeds that they may know BGUMC as a place of solace, comfort, trust, and support.



REQUESTS
— FOR —
PRAYER

with deepest
sympathy

Shirley Burdick, age 88 of Waseca, died December 7th at Foxdale Assisted Living Facility in Waseca, MN.



She was born on June 28, 1936, in Morristown, MN to Christian and Mabel (Dartt) Gasner. On December 15, 1957, she married Claude LeRoy Burdick at the Owatonna United Methodist Church. She became a proud U.S. Army military wife, and moved the family 21 times before Claude was honorably discharged in 1976. The family settled in Waseca, but two months later, Shirley unexpectedly became a widow and a single mother of five children, ranging from age 10 to 18.

Shirley took a job at the Waseca Public Library as a circulation clerk. Soon after, she was asked to lead the library's 4-year-old weekly story time. This expanded to eight story times a week, each with 15-20 kids. While employed at the library, Shirley earned her associate's degree in early Childcare Development from the University of Minnesota-Waseca. She used her degree and her love of children to develop, from the ground up, an extended day program for school-aged children at elementary schools in Waseca. Her program grew incrementally over the next 13 years.

She then retired and filled the volunteer District Officer position with the Minnesota United Methodist SE District, traveling to attend meetings in the SE MN region.

Shirley was an active member of Faith United Methodist Church, choir member, Solo's club member and officer, honorary member of the VFW, tourist, photographer, crafter, painter, author, and poet. She was a free spirit, fearlessly trying new things, undaunted by worries that her results may be less than perfect. Sometimes collaborating with friends, she published several books overflowing with photos, poems, and witty banter.

Celebrating New Members of BGUMC!

We join in celebration with the Mullenbach family who became members of Blooming Grove UMC on Sunday, December 8th: Matt & Val, along with their children Gabe, Will, and Peter!



Waterville EUMC
Wednesday, January 15
5:00—6:30 PM

**Minutes from Prairie
Lakes Parish 2024
Charge Conference**



Date/Time: November 24, 2024 at 2:00 P.M.

Location: Waterville Evangelical United Methodist Church

Churches of the Prairie Lakes Parish: Blooming Grove, Janesville, and Waterville Evangelical UMCs

Pastor: Kathy King

Presiding Elder: Dean Wolf, pastor at Elysian UMC

Attendees:

- Blooming Grove UMC: Hjordi Churchill, Judy Mahler, Deb Miller, Cindy Saufferer
- Janesville UMC: Jerry King, Vanette Pope, Darla Zell, Lonny Zell
- Waterville EUMC: Al Baker, Bill Olson, Karen Olson

Meeting Topics

Worker's Compensation going Forward - FYI

In 2025, Worker's Compensation will no longer be coordinated through the MN UMC conference – with billings received from the conference. Our parish is working with Church Mutual to make plans for moving forward with Worker's Compensation coverage through them, on a parish-wide basis, rather than each of our three churches needing to set up their own coverage. One rep from each of our churches is working on this together as a committee: BGUMC – Brad Saufferer, JVUMC – David Pope, WVEUMC – Bill Olson.

Nominations for 2025 – FYI

Officer/Committee nominations for each of the three churches is a work in progress. Primary officer roles have been filled. Committee members/chairs are still being finalized. Each church council will care for the final approval of its Officer/Committee list.

Form 4 – Inactive/Unresponsive Membership Report

Blooming Grove UMC – None listed

Janesville UMC – None listed

Waterville EUMC – One person listed. Motion to approve was made and seconded. Approved by vote.

Form 5 - Pastor's Compensation Package for 2025

The pastor's compensation is shared equally between the three churches of the Prairie Lakes Parish with BGUMC @ 34% and JVUMC and WVEUMC each @ 33%. We are following conference guidelines for all components of the compensation package, including those set for housing compensation. The Compensation Package for 2025 was approved unanimously.

2025 Budgets

The 2024 Charge Conference Packet for each of the three churches contains a preliminary budget – to be approved at each church's January council meeting

2024 Trustees Report

The 2024 Charge Conference Packet for each of the three churches contains their 2024 Trustees Report, with all required fields completed, as pertain to each church.

From 11 – 2024 Checklist for Church Finances

The 2024 Charge Conference Packets for each of the three churches contains their 2024 Checklists for Church Finances. Janesville UMC also included a copy of their 10/23/24 Fund Balance/Audit Report, covering January 1, 2023 – December 31, 2023.

Form 13 – 2024 Mission Report

Blooming Grove UMC and Waterville EUMC shared highlights from their 2024 Mission/Outreach Reports as included in their 2024 Charge Conference Packets. Janesville UMC shared the following mission highlights as a verbal report: working with the local Red Cross and their blood drive, quarterly help with delivering Meals on Wheels to the Janesville community.

Pastor Kathy's Parish Highlights

Pastor Kathy expressed her joy and thanksgiving for the way in which the three churches of our Parish share together in ministry as the body of Christ – each in their own unique community settings, and also in joint gathering opportunities throughout the year: during Holy Week, once a month in the summer, on World Communion Sunday, and at Thanksgiving. As a reminder, the annual 6-month "Winter/Spring" change in Sunday worship times begins in December, with WVEUMC at 9:30, BGUMC at 10:45, and JVUMC at 4:00.

Group Thank-you to Pastor Kathy and Jerry King

Our gathered group recognized Pastor Kathy and Jerry for all that they do throughout each year in terms of ministry and presence with the three churches of our Prairie Lakes Parish. No small feat, from many aspects (time, energy, heart, mind) with a 52 mile round trip between the three churches and the unique ministries and programs of each!

Motion to Adjourn

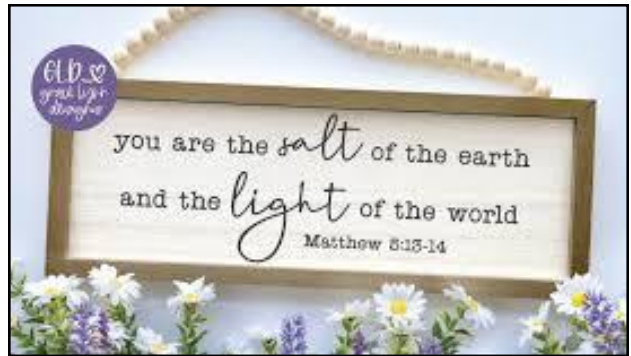
A motion was made to adjourn and seconded. All approved.

Respectfully submitted by Judy Mahler, Blooming Grove UMC

The Stretch

You are the salt of the earth. (Mt 5:13)

Have you ever taken that first bite of a meal then reached for the saltshaker? Maybe you have taken that first bite, and the food was too salty, making it difficult to enjoy the meal. Salt isn't the main attraction when we sit down to enjoy a meal, but it can make or break a dish.



Salt, through out history, has played an important role. It was an expensive commodity in ancient times as it was used for trading, medicinal purposes, preserving food, curing hides and believed to ward off evil spirits. For all these reasons, when Jesus calls his listeners “the salt of the earth,” he is saying something profound, something easy for us to miss in our context today. It is not about us enjoying our food.

In a recent devotion, the author, Debie Thomas, shared that Jesus is telling us who we are. She writes of Jesus’ words: “We *are* salt. We are not ‘supposed to be’ salt, or ‘encouraged to become’ salt, or promised that ‘if we become’ salt, God will love us more.” We are the salt of the earth. It is our identity, who we are as disciples. Thomas goes on to say: “We are that which enhances or embitters, soothes or irritates, melts or stings, preserves or ruins. For better or for worse, we are the salt of the earth, and *what we do with our saltiness matters.*”

Salt impacts all it touches. Salt can be used to dominate, it will ruin more than a meal, it can over-power and destroy life. This is not what Jesus wants for us. Salt exists to preserve, enhance, heal, and purify. We are salt. What we do with this matters, *a lot*. Whether we mean to or not, we impact everything around us. Jesus is calling us to sustain and enrich all life that touches ours.

In ancient Rome, soldiers were often paid in salt. This is where the question “Am I worth my salt” originated. It feels a bit ironic, yet as I journey into 2025, I think it is a question I will ponder.

How am I salt in this world?

Opportunities!

- MN Conference Church & Society committee granted us \$300 to purchase books for a *book study*. We are reading **The Seed Keeper** and will gather in February to discuss with a field trip to follow in the spring. If you do not have the book, please contact me at 507-363-9380 to get one. *It's never too late to join us!*
- **Bible Conversations** is happening! Join us at The Half Pint on January 21st at 6:00 pm for dinner and conversation. Hint: *It might get a little salty!*
- **Lenten Bible Study**: Information will be coming.

Much Peace,
Cindy Saufferer, Deaconess
Love through Justice Coordinator

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED to:
Box 171, Medford, MN 55049

January 2025

The Blooming Grove Visitor

Since 1936

Blooming Grove United Methodist Church

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 171

Medford, MN 55049-0171

Physical Location:

43089 180th Street, Morristown, MN 55052

(NE corner of Waseca County)

Website: www.bloominggroveumc.org

Email: bloominggroveumc@gmail.com

Check us out on Facebook!

**Pastoral Care and Emergency
and General Pastoral Questions:**

Pastor Kathy King

kking5@hickorytech.net

507-382-2483

Join Us

If you are interested in
becoming a member of
Blooming Grove UMC,
see Pastor Kathy.



Requests for Prayer Chain Email:

Pastor Kathy King at:

kking5@hickorytech.net

Visitor Staff:

Chery Southworth, Visitor Coordinator

26651 Elmore Avenue

Morristown, MN 55052

(507) 339-3534

CherySouth@gmail.com

Judy Mahler, Editor

Carolyn Kanne, Writer

Brad Saufferer, Writer

Patti Ellingson, Writer

Cindy Saufferer, Writer

If you would rather read your
copy of the Visitor online, (and
in color) check us out at
www.bloominggroveumc.org

To unsubscribe or to be added
to our email distribution list,
contact cherysouth@gmail.com

