

# CONNECTIONS

Our purpose is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world



## Message from the Pastor



### Psalm 149 <sup>1-4</sup> Hallelujah!

Sing to GOD a brand-new song,  
praise him in the company of all who love him.  
Let all Israel celebrate their Sovereign Creator,  
Zion's children exult in their King.  
Let them praise his name in dance;  
strike up the band and make great music!  
And why? Because GOD delights in his people,  
adorns plain folk with salvation garlands! (MSG)

### UPCOMING EVENTS

#### April

4/10  
Palm Sunday

4/14  
Maundy  
Thursday

4/15  
Good Friday

4/17  
Easter Sunday

4/18  
Church Closed



June is bustin' out all over  
All over the meadow and the hill!  
(Lyrics from a song from Rogers and Hammerstein's *Carousel*)

The words of this psalm and the lyrics of this song sprang forth in my head as I was walking Daisy this morning. You have to understand, this isn't an uncommon occurrence in my brain. I have had a private soundtrack going on in my mind since I was really little. Someone says something and my mind immediately is playing the background soundtrack in our conversation. Let's just say, I don't get bored often.

With Christ as our center, we are His extended family, compassionately sharing Jesus' love with all people.  
Our congregation is on a lifelong journey of discipleship to become more like Christ.

# Prayers and Praise



## PRAYER requests

### In the Hospital

Please remember those in  
Continuing Care Facilities



Joyce	Forest	1
Yvonne	Pierce	1
Dan	Fancher	2
Mike	Antic	6
Diane	Ferguson	9
Richard	Gamble	11
David	Fleming	13
Conner	Sampson	13
Hannah	Baynesan	14
Wyn Ann	Marosi	17
Tom	Taylor	18
Doris	Crocker	18
Abbigail	Thomas	18
Bruce	Lewke	21
Nancy	Boltrick	21
Elizabeth	Knieper	24
David	Brownlee	27
Lynda	Aimone	28
Lauren	Cook	29

## PRAY FOR OUR MILITARY

Christopher Stone  
Son of Mike & Dawn Stone

Michael Stone  
Son of Mike & Dawn Stone

Blake  
Grandson of Betty Hughey

Jared Stabnau  
Grandson of Elaine Stabnau

Cody Ford-Aimone  
Grandson of Mike & Lynda Aimone

Justin Renton  
Grandson of Donna Sweeney

Chad Koenne  
Grandson of Dick & Lila Timm



Cliff & Debie	Gurkin	6
Chris & Kelley	Anderson	8
Doug & Pat	Cook	30

## Message from the Pastor

Continued from Page 1



Anyway, I am walking Daisy and I am noticing crocuses and daffodils bursting up through the grown...maybe for the first time. And the robins, did I tell you that the robins were everywhere and singing a new song to God and thanking God for the "Oh what a beautiful morning." (See what I mean...a soundtrack in my head.) And do you know what happened within me. I began to have spring in my step and a smile on my face and Daisy and I practically danced the whole way.

God wants us to notice that *June is bustin' out all over* even when it's only the beginning of April. In our noticing we begin to celebrate and dance and sing a hymn to our Creator...we just can't help ourselves. This, my dearly beloved, is what it means to worship. Yes, worship is that time when we come together on a Sunday morning, but it is my hope and prayer that these moments of worship, that happen organically throughout your week, bring you into the presence of God. Worship draws us into thanks and praise. Worship can be petition and lament too. Worship is really anything that connects us to our God the Loving Creator, Loving Redeemer, and Loving Sustainer.

So go on, get out there and seek and find that *June is bustin' out all over* even if it's only the beginning of April.

Bustin' out dancing and singing Blessings,  
Pastor Mary





## **Lenten Series: *Hard to Dance with the Devil on Your Back*** (Continues)

### **Lent 5: April 3, 2022**

**Scripture:** John 13:21-30 NRSV

**Sermon Title:** *Dance with the One You Love*

**Synopsis:** From Gomer and Hosea, to Judas and Jesus, God is “L’amour de Dieu est folie,” “The love of God is folly.” God loves us even when we are unlovable and loves us back to God’s self. As we share the bread and the cup, let us discover how great God’s love truly is for us.

### **Lent 6: April 10, 2022—Palm/Passion Sunday**

**Scripture:** Luke 19:28-40 with Palms and Jeremiah 18:1-6 for sermon NRSV

**Sermon Title:** *Dancing in the Hands of the Potter*

**Synopsis:** Boy are the disciples in for a week. The triumphal entry to the betrayal to the trial and denial to Jesus’ death on the cross. It will be like none they have experienced before. How broken and unrepairable they must have felt during the week we call Holy. Sometimes, we feel that way too. Today, we will learn how to dance in the hands of the Potter.

**April 14** Maundy Thursday- online conference service will be offered

**April 15** Good Friday service 12:30-1pm



## **Lenten Series: *Hard to Dance with the Devil on Your Back*** (Continues)

**Easter: April 17, 2022**

**Scripture:** John 20:1-18

**Sermon Title:** *The Lord of the Dance*

**Synopsis:** The story of the Lord of the Dance points us always to God. And Jesus came in flesh and dwelled with us and suffered for and died for us all to each us to Dance. So today, we pull out all the stops and we Dance! We will celebrate the Lord of the Dance!

Sermon Series: We Are Witnesses

This Easter season series dips into the Acts of the Apostles as a way of examining the witness of the one who first experienced the Resurrection. Their story, as they struggled to find a way to live out the implications of this amazing news, this gospel event, becomes our story as we too seek to bear witness to the Risen Christ and to live that witness daily. <sup>1</sup>

**April 24, 2022**

**Scripture:** Acts 5:27-32 NRSV

**Sermon Title:** We Are Witnesses

**Synopsis:** Today, we hear a slice of the story of Peter on trial for teaching about Jesus. Wonder if any of us could ever be put on trial for that? Anyway, when asked why Peter continued to preach Jesus his answer was simple, "We are witnesses." We will explore what that statement means here and now in the 21st century.

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<sup>1</sup><https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/worship-planning/we-are-witnesses/easter-sunday-year-c-lectionary-planning-notes>



OUR THOUGHTS *and* PRAYERS *are with* YOU

Pat Aimone  
The Gurkin Family  
Bruce Lewke  
Donna Sweeney  
Ray Mitchell, Jr.

**Friday, 4/15**  
**12:30pm**

**GOOD FRIDAY**  
**WORSHIP**



## **Feb. 13th Worship Committee Notes**

### **Topic- Lent**

April 10	Palm Sunday
April 14	Maundy Thursday- no service
April 15	Good Friday service 12:30-1pm
April 17	Easter Sunday, special offering will go to support the Nurse salary in Liberia.

Respectfully submitted,  
Valerie Moore, Chair





Happy Easter Church!!! It is a glorious day and month indeed when we journey out of the desert and into the new day of resurrection, celebrating the savior we know who conquered death like no else can, to build the bridge to God like only Jesus the Christ is able. This desert journeying is not fully realized (and at Belleville First United Methodist Church we as a congregation are on a lifelong journey together as a church family) until the third Sunday this April, and according to the Julian calendar our Church follows as we seek to be actively engaged in our mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Hopefully throughout this Lenten experience you have been attending worship as Pastor Mary has lead us through understanding more about how difficult it can be to Dance With The Devil On Your Back, even as we know who leads as the Lord of the dance!!! Further, I hope you have also been engaging in a small group experience ([Growth Groups | Belleville First UMC](#)) and daily scripture as you walk the [BFUMC SPIRITUAL PATHWAY](#). If for whatever reason you have not been able to be active in this way, it's not too late!!! **For some ideas on how you may devote yourself through Holy Week, see more information about the United Methodist Church's devotional walk from last year here: [Devotions for Holy Week \(umc.org\)](#).** Holy week and Easter are the focus for this month of ministry so plan on participating in Palm Sunday worship April 10th, virtually for Maundy Thursday the 14<sup>th</sup>, in person or virtually Good Friday the 15<sup>th</sup>, and on the 17<sup>th</sup> for Easter Sunday. May you find ways to connect and continue the spiritual disciplines you have been honing during this holy season throughout the rest of the year. If you would like any help in doing so, please don't hesitate to let me know.

To round the month out as we live forward reminded we are resurrection Easter people, we have a chance to celebrate praise and thanksgiving for all of creation on April 22<sup>nd</sup> which is Earth Day. Further information as to why this is important to United Methodists can be found here: [Discipleship Ministries | Earth Day 2022: Resources for Creation Care \(umcdiscipleship.org\)](#). The accompanying Festival of God's Creation ([To Be United Methodist: Festival of God's Creation \(resourceumc.org\)](#)) is noted in the UMC Worship calendar for Sunday, April 24<sup>th</sup>. Monday, April 25<sup>th</sup> is noted as World Malaria Day and Wednesday, April 27<sup>th</sup> is set aside for both Holocaust Remembrance Day and





Administrative Professional's Day. A perfect time to let Darlene in our church office know how much you appreciate her.

**Regardless, whether it is Lent, Easter, or any other season, when we are actively living out *our mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world*, we see ourselves as Easter peoples, living our church vision and find *Christ as our center, we His extended family, compassionately sharing Jesus' love with all people*.**

That's how we know we're on the right track. If you are not experiencing your church life as the vision we have collectively identified, ask yourself why and look to see how you might be more engaged with the mission. I'm always available to explore and discern further.

With God's blessings in Christ,

Jill



**Jill Sestok**

**Director of Spiritual Formation**

From birth to the final ascension, I focus on the available spiritual pathway offered through the church. God is calling me in my position to be of service in new and creative ways to share the light of Christ, especially with those who are struggling and have yet to find a church "home". I am very excited to be working at Belleville First and within this great community. As I pursue the Deacon track through the Michigan Area of the United Methodist Church I am so pleased to have found a faith community where there is much tradition, a good volunteer base, and great potential for growth.



**CHRIST THE LORD IS RISEN TODAY!!! HE IS RISEN INDEED!!!**



- **MAY: Asian Pacific Heritage Month** [Celebrating Asian/Pacific American heritage \(umnews.org\)](http://umnews.org)
- **UMC Camping Sunday Celebration and Scholarship Fundraiser**
- **Sunday, May 1<sup>st</sup> – Native American Ministries Sunday** [Native American Ministries Sunday \(umc.org\)](http://umc.org)
- **Thursday, May 5<sup>th</sup> –National Day of Prayer and new Prayer Partner Program launch**
- **Sunday, May 8<sup>th</sup> – Mother's Day and Festival of the Christian Home** [Discipleship Ministries | 2021 Christian Home Month: Planning... \(umcdiscipleship.org\)](http://umcdiscipleship.org)
- **Sunday, May 22<sup>nd</sup> – Children and Youth Program Year End Celebration during regularly scheduled Sunday School Growth Grouping time**
- **Thursday, May 26<sup>th</sup> – Ascension Day** [Why Ascension Day matters to United Methodists \(umc.org\)](http://umc.org) celebrated Sunday, May 29th
- **Monday, May 30<sup>th</sup> – Memorial Day**



- **JUNE: BFUMC Summer Tour of Fellowship** – let's explore Belleville together and practice getting out of the habit of being a host in the church building and instead be a guest in this community. There is fellowship, food, fun, live music, movies, and plenty of neighbors to get to know better.



## **DO YOU HAVE A GRADUATE YOU'D LIKE TO CELEBRATE WITH THIS CHURCH FAMILY?**

We'd love to lift up and honor all of our high school and beyond graduating folks. Please send the graduate's bio including: name, photograph, school attended, major, future plans, and best lesson learned to Jill by June 1st. This way we will have what is needed to share this great and blessed achievement with all.

JILL B. SESTOK, DIRECTOR,  
SPIRITUAL FORMATION  
[JBSESTOK@GMAIL.COM](mailto:JBSESTOK@GMAIL.COM) 313/948-  
7050

## ***Food Price Increases for February***

As we have all seen, food and gas prices have sky-rocketed. From March 2<sup>nd</sup> – March 9<sup>th</sup>, a loaf of Meijer white bread rose 20 cents. In the March 11<sup>th</sup> **Detroit Free Press** it ran an article that stated “Grocery prices not seen this high since ‘81”. Costs to buy food in stores are up nearly 8% for the year.

	February Increase	12-month Increase
bacon	0.8%	18.8%
beef roasts	1.6%	18.6%
cereal and bakery products	1.1%	7.8%
chicken	1.8%	13.2%
eggs	2.2%	11.2%
frozen fish and seafood	2.4%	12.1%
fruits and vegetables	2.3%	7.6%
butter and margarine	3.2%	7.3%
ham	3.0%	7.1%
lunchmeat	2.0%	11.0%
milk	3.5%	11.2%
salad dressing	1.0%	9.4%
soups	3.9%	10.0%

SOURCE: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

Thanks to **everyone** who has continued to support the mission of the Emergency Food Closet through his/her donations of money, food, and personal care items to feed and care for the hungry in our community. Our clients are very thankful!





## ***Save the Date! – Saturday, May 14***

According to the Letter Carriers' website, their **"Stamp Out Hunger"** food drive is a go for 2022! In the past, **all** food collected by the Belleville Post Office is donated to the Emergency Food Closet. This food fundraiser will need many hands! Volunteers will be needed to transport, check dates, sort, box, and shelve donated items. The last food drive was held in May of 2019 and over 11,000 pounds of food was donated by our community.

All collected food returns to the Belleville Post Office to be weighed. Volunteers will be needed to transport it from the Post Office to the church. This will happen in waves as the carriers continue to drop off food all day. Once it arrives at the church, the food needs to be brought downstairs to the fellowship hall to be sorted either as food for the weekly bags, cart food, or for migrant workers/homeless shelters. At each of these stations, expiration dates will be checked. Food for the weekly bags will be sorted according to food type, placed in trays/boxes, and stored in the food closet. The rest of the food will be boxed and labelled as either cart food or migrant/homeless.

On the 14<sup>th</sup> volunteers should meet at the church at 11:15 for a short meeting. If you are a transporter, you will then be sent to the Post Office. We will work at the church until 6 p.m. We will try to finish before and after services on Sunday, May 15. If there is still food to be checked, sorted and stored, we will finish on Monday, May 16 and if needed, Tuesday, May 17.

Whatever help and time you can give will be greatly appreciated!

Marilyn Wood,  
Coordinator





## Summary and Results of the March 19 Worship Retreat

Hallelujah!

Praise God in his holy house of worship,  
praise him under the open skies;  
Praise him for his acts of power,  
praise him for his magnificent greatness;  
Praise with a blast on the trumpet,  
praise by strumming soft strings;  
Praise him with castanets and dance,  
praise him with banjo and flute;  
Praise him with cymbals and a big bass drum,  
praise him with fiddles and mandolin.  
Let every living, breathing creature praise God!

Hallelujah!

Psalm 150 (MSG)

The Worship Retreat planning team (Pastor Mary, Joy Dubin, Michael Gross, Susan Featheringill, Val Moore, and Jill Sestok) would again like to thank all of you who participated in this vital retreat. The morning was filled with centering us in God's presence and then hearing information about the reality of where BFUMC is concerning attendance, target audience using demographic information, and opening our minds to non-dual thinking by using the process of the matrix. (If any of this makes you curious and you were not able to attend, please contact me and I will be glad to share.)

The afternoon found us in seven small groups around tables discussing the following seven questions:

1. PURPOSE: Why does worship exist?
2. How do you experience worship here @ BFUMC?
3. Where are we in worshipping @ Belleville First?
4. EVALUATION: How does BFUMC's worship align with God's purpose?
5. Where are we (BFUMC) trying to go with worship?
6. How do we get there? How might we need to transform BFUMC's worship?
7. How do we know if worshipping is on track...  
... or if we need to adjust if we're not?

The discussion does not have to stop with March 19<sup>th</sup> as I told those in attendance. These are ongoing questions, so feel free to discuss them within your own groups and report back any revelations that might emerge.

At the conclusion of the discussion, the retreat team put together a ballot with six items. The first five were topics that need further investigation and priority. The sixth question was a choice about the vehicle we would take to get there. When the ballots were gathered and counted by Susan Featheringill and Joy Dubin, the results were as follows:



## Summary and Results of the March 19 Worship Retreat (Continued)

Topics in order of priority:

1. Praise...creating a worship service that is alive, vibrant, exciting, and welcoming as we offer praise to God from whom all blessings flow
2. Communication...creating a communications team and possibly hiring a communications team leader to market and get BFUMCs name and activities to the wider public in a more intentional and strategic way
3. Outreach...creating opportunities for the community to come into BFUMC while also reaching out and getting out into the community of Belleville.
4. Community...creating deeper and stronger community within our faith congregation through worship & sacraments, the common table, and growth (small) groups while also creating partnerships with those within the community of Belleville to be in service with the community (the response to our worship)
5. Change...(I laughed out loud when I saw this as the last priority.) In reality, each of the top four priorities will result in change. Change is inevitable and what I understand is that by having change as one of our priorities, we are in essence saying we know change is coming and we are ready to participate in and rejoice in the change 😊 I also understand that there will be grief and we need to feel the feelings so that our grief doesn't hold us hostage in bygone moments of time.

We will be tackling one priority at a time, and we will be asking for your help as volunteers to be on a special task force to implement these priorities into the life of BFUMC. Once we have proceeded through each of these priorities, we may retreat again to discover where God is calling us to go next. Please continue to pray for and with the teams working on the priorities and for your own willingness to say, "Yes," when asked to serve.

In the group of 15 from Ad Council and Worship Committee, the decision on the vehicle of worship question is as follows:

Two services—3 votes  
One service—7 votes  
New service—5 votes

The work done by all of you on Saturday was just a beginning. The worship committee is already meeting to begin creating an alive, vibrant, exciting, and welcoming worship service that allows us to offer praise to God from whom all blessings flow. The implementation of one service that blends elements that we all know and love with additions of some elements we haven't experienced before will not be immediate. It will take time to create, and it may mean that what we start with will continue to change and develop as the weeks go on. Keep an eye on CCB, the Belleville News, and the newsletter for future news on implementation.

Also, especially to those who have been so faithful to choir and to praise band, we thank you and we want you to know that none of what you have done in your musical areas is going away, it may just look different in one worship service.



### Summary and Results of the March 19 Worship Retreat (Continued)

As your pastor, what I observed on Saturday was a church passionate about worship. Do you know how that warms God's heart? Also, I recognized how music is very important to some of you. Music is God's gift for us, but I want to remind us as we create one service, that we are worshipping God: Loving Creator, Loving Friend, Loving Spirit. We do not worship music. (Go check out the book of Exodus for how worshipping an idol worked out for the Israelites!) So as you await the inevitable changes ahead, I challenge you to pray to God daily asking God to keep your mind, heart, and soul open to the future of worship at BFUMC.

Again, thank you for your passion for worship. There's more work to be done, but God is with us and guiding us every step of the way.

Worship-filled Gratitude and Blessings,  
Pastor Mary

### **Newsletter Update:**

*The newsletter will be discontinued for the months of July and August. The final newsletter is to be submitted May 15<sup>th</sup>. And the September newsletter is to be submitted August 15<sup>th</sup>. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact the church office 734-697-9288. Thank-you!*





John 13:15

For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.

# APRIL

# 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2 9:00 Men's Breakfast (L) 10:00am Drum w/Dee (FH)
3 10:30 Worship SS Worship 11:30a Noah Sandwichmaking	4 7pm Belleville Comm Chorus (S) 7pm What If Jesus was Serious (Z)	5 10am Food Closet (N) 11am Tai-Chi (FH) 7pm Ad Council	6 10am Food Closet (N) 10am Ladies Bible Study (L/FH) 12pm The Bible Year (Z) 12:30pm Can /Bottle	7 10am AA (FH) 1:30pm Lenten Study (Joy's House) 7pm Al-Anon (FH) 7:45 Chancel Choir Rehearsal	8	9 9:00 Men's Breakfast (L) 10:00am Drumming w/Dee (FH)
10 Palm Sunday 9:00am Worship 10:30 Worship SS Worship 11:45a Worship Comm (L)	11 7pm What If Jesus was Serious (Z)	12 10am Food Closet (N) 11am Tai-Chi (FH)	13 10am Food Closet (N) 10am Ladies Bible Study (L/FH) 12pm The Bible Year (Z) 12:30pm Can /Bottle	14 Maundy Thursday 10am AA (FH) 1:30pm Lenten Study (Joy's House) 7pm Al-Anon (FH) 7:45 Chancel Choir Rehearsal	15 Good Friday 12:30pm Ecumenical Service	16 9:00 Men's Breakfast (L)
17 Easter Sunday 9:00am Worship 10:30 Worship SS Worship	18 7pm Garden Club (FH) 7pm What If Jesus was Serious (Z)  Church Closed	19 10am Food Closet (N) 11am Tai-Chi (FH)	20 10am Food Closet (N) 10am Ladies Bible Study (L/FH) 12pm The Bible Year (Z) 12:30pm Can /Bottle	21 10am AA (FH) 7pm Al-Anon (FH) 7:45 Chancel Choir Rehearsal	22	23
24 9:00am Worship 10:30 Worship SS Worship	25 7pm Belleville Comm Chorus 7pm What If Jesus was Serious (Z)	26 10am Food Closet (N) 11am Tai-Chi (FH) 7pm Missions	27 10am Food Closet (N) 10am Ladies Bible Study (L/FH) 12pm The Bible Year (Z) 12:30pm Can /Bottle	28 10am AA (FH) 7pm Al-Anon (FH) 7:45 Chancel Choir Rehearsal	29 6:30p Belleville Community Chorus Concert Rehearsal	30