

CONNECTIONS

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



Message from the Pastor



Relax, Release, Recognize, and Restore

***Blessed are those who trust in the Lord,
whose trust is the Lord.
They shall be like a tree planted by water,
sending out its roots by the stream.
It shall not fear when heat comes,
and its leaves shall stay green;
in the year of drought it is not anxious,
and it does not cease to bear fruit. (Jeremiah 17:7-8 NRSV)***

***“But blessed is the man who trusts me, God,
the woman who sticks with God.
They’re like trees replanted in Eden,
putting down roots near the rivers—
Never a worry through the hottest of summers,
never dropping a leaf,
Serene and calm through droughts,
bearing fresh fruit every season. (Jeremiah 17:7-8 MSG)***

The verses above are my life verse. I return to these words of encouragement and perseverance over and over again when times are hard, dry, and hot. They remind me to stay rooted, to drink deeply, to be calm, and to continue to grow and to bear fruit. In fact, a clergy colleague and I often text each other parts of our daily devotionals that seem to help us move into the resilience this scripture encourages. The other day, I received a part of this colleague’s devotional and I pared it down to the four Rs. No, I do not mean reading, writing, and arithmetic. The mantra that we are both claiming is this: **Relax, Release, Recognize, and Restore.**

UPCOMING EVENTS

June/July

- 6/6-8/8
Growth Group
Classes
- 6/19
Meijer Double
Match Day
- 6/20
Father’s Day
- 6/26 & 27
Dragon Boat
Fundraiser
- 7/4
4th of July
- 7/24
Luanne Genga
Memorial Svce
(Private)

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

Bobbie Winters
Superior Woods

PRAY FOR OUR MILITARY

Stephanie Boltrick
Daughter of Nancy Boltrick

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



Jim	Moore	1
Lawrence	Brooks	2
Antonia	Brooks	2
Michelle	Johns	5
Donna	Sweeney	8
Danielle	Damon	11
Bob	Payne	12
Stephen	Lee	13
Eston	Keller	16
Toni	Hunt	18
Brian	Shephard	18
Julie	Skelton	21
Betty	Parmelee	22
Wesley	Crocker	26
Natalie	Damon	28
Mark	Groeneweg	28



John	MacDermid	1
Janelle	Wofford	2
Bobbie	Winters	3
Jake	McCrary	7
Lynette	Jordan	11
Derek	Reeves	13
Dulce	Jacobson	14
Roger	Ferguson	15
Jim	Fitch	15
Nicholas	Knieper	17
Marilyn	McKenna	18
David	Daigneau	20
Debbie	Yokley	20
Doreitha	Armstrong	21
Jonathan	Damon	23
Karen	Johnston	23
Sara	Shuryan	27
Nkechi	Ikpeama	30
Kristen	West	30
Bethany	Jacobson	31



Roger & Diane	Ferguson	4
Chris & Crystal	Strickland	6
Paul & Rebecca	Brooks	7
Jerry & Kathleen	Caldwell	7
Natalie & David	Damon	10
Gabe & Marlayna	Keelan	10
Don & Marj	Priest	15
Don & Cindy	Schloesser	16
Scott & Megan	Skelton	21
Jim & Cheryl	Wagner	22
Robert & Marilyn	McKenna	28
Mark & Lisa	Thetford	28
Marilyn & James	Wood	28



Vincent & Sharon	Richardson	1
Mike & Cristal	Moyer	4
Daniel & Diane	Dzierbicki	8
David & Abby	Fleming	8
Mark & Rebecca	Caldwell	14
Roy & Yetta	Reges	17
Richard & Marlene	Gamble	25
Greg & Gina	Struble	28

Message from the Pastor

Continued from Page 1

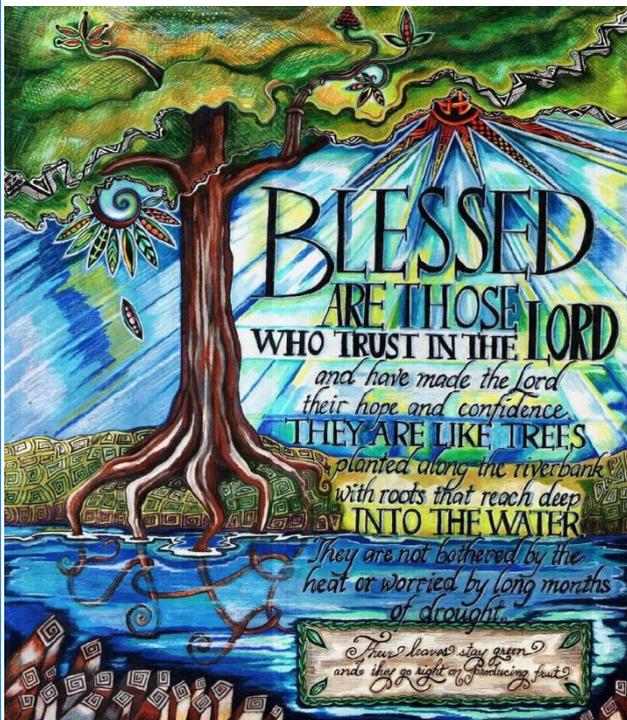
This past year, with Covid 19, transferring to a new church and the difficulties of getting to know one another deeply from a distance, the kids and I living through a divorce, the ups and downs with my health, and yes, even losing one puppy I loved and getting a new puppy I love, have been a refining fire. The heat has been intense, not just personally, but in ministry as well.

There have been times I have felt like, and if I admit it to myself, I have been a failure. Yet, these verses pay no mind to that. Failure, struggle, hardship is par for the course. It's how we respond to those obstacles that define who we are and whose we are. Yes, there have been moments when I wanted to walk away, to give up, to tell God, this challenge is just too difficult. Yet, somehow, some way, God would turn my eyes back to these words.

God says, "Relax, I've got this. Just keep yourself rooted." God says, "Release your cares to me and allow me to work in you and in others to allow my will to be done." God says, "Recognize that my love and care surrounds you and linger there." God says, "Come to me, and I will Restore your brokenness, your sorrow, your pain, your frustration, your everything." (Matthew 11:28-30)

So Church, as we ease into summer and new Covid protocols, let us Relax, Release, Recognize, and Restore. Let us be those trees that sway in the breeze and reclaim each morning who we are and whose we are. Let us put our feet rooted in Christ in the cool clear waters of God's love. Let us learn to look past the obstacles to the light of God's presence with us in the Holy Spirit. Let us be those who though we travel through brittlely dry times always remain serene and calm, always growing and bearing fruit.

Summer blessings,
Pastor Mary





Thank you to everyone who filled out our first survey. We had approximately 60 responses. (And it's not too late ... if you didn't participate and would like to, please contact Abby Fleming or the church office.) Much of the insight we gained was from the comments included within the survey but we did want to share some of the key takeaways with you.

- More than 85% of respondents indicated they serve the church in at least one capacity (something in addition to attending worship).
- Approximately 45% of respondents said they would be willing to do something additional for the church if they could find the right fit. However, less than 40% of people said they'd been personally asked to serve in a new way. We know this means we need to provide better visibility into our open needs but also personally invite people to serve.
- Approximately 40% of respondents indicated they were involved in a growth group currently (or at least pre-COVID). Approximately 12% of respondents said they'd never been part of a growth group. Jill Sestok, Director of Spiritual Formation, will continue to develop our growth group program to make sure that everyone has a way to feel connected to the church through a growth group.
- Almost 50% of the respondents indicated they were retired. Many of the comments around ways to be involved in our community included comments about reaching out to younger families. We know that this is an area we'll need to work on (and it might mean some changes!) in order to maintain our current congregation and also to grow in the future.

There were lots of comments and ideas presented. This was a helpful tool for us to gather information and ideas. However, please remember that if we don't immediately implement your idea, it's not that we didn't listen. Sometimes we had conflicting ideas and we have to look for which initiatives help us best fulfill our mission and vision. Considering all of the ideas and comments within the survey will be an ongoing project that will take months/years but it's all part of moving forward to best help us make disciples. If you have any questions about the survey results, please contact Abby Fleming.

We are now looking at our second survey related primarily to worship. As we look ahead to a time where we aren't limited by the COVID-19 pandemic for worship, we'd like to get some feedback on worship in the past and ideas going forward. The survey will be sent out electronically. Hard copies will also be available in the church office.



June 6, 2021-- Pastor Mary at Annual Conference—Guest Preacher

June 13, 2021

<u>Scripture:</u>	Luke 12:15, 29-32 MSG
<u>Title:</u>	See Where All that Spending Got You!
<u>Synopsis:</u>	Debt is expected and unavoidable, at least that's what our culture tells us we're to believe. Yet where has this immediate gratification system gotten us and what does discipline and contentment have to do with it?

Sermon Series: Three Simple Rules: A Wesleyan Way of Living

As United Methodist we have been given three rules to follow to help us walk in our faith. They are called simple, but are they? What does it mean to do no harm, to do good, and to stay in love with God? These are the questions we will explore during this simple sermon series while learning what each rule means and how to apply it to our daily lives. Based on the book by Bishop Rueben P. Job and John Wesley's general rules for Methodist.

June 20, 2021

<u>Scripture:</u>	Galatians 5:15
<u>Title:</u>	Simply Do No Harm
<u>Synopsis:</u>	What does it mean to do no harm and how might it transform our daily lives if we put this simple rule in play?



June 27, 2021

Scripture: 3 John 11b; Acts 10:38

Title: Simply Do Good

Synopsis: What does it mean to do good and how might it transform our daily lives if we put this simple rule in play?

July 4, 2021

Scripture: Psalm 105:4; Colossians 2:6-7

Title: Simply Stay in Love with God

Synopsis: What does it mean to stay in love with God and how might it transform our daily lives if we put this simple rule in play?

For updated additional details, check the website: www.bellevillefirstumc.org



Greetings Church!!!

We have faithfully made it to the season of summer. What a blessing to be enjoying God's creation here in Belleville, such a lovely lake community. We only have to look out the church's front door to see how the Lord loves us through the beautiful land created for our care and enjoyment. Gracious appreciation can easily bring us closer to the Lord. Let's pray together: Almighty, Holy, Heavenly Host, we thank you for all the ways you

have blessed us this day and always. We long to know you well, in ever deeper and more meaningful ways. We are so happy and grateful to be invited into relationship with you and yours, as saints on a lifelong journey of discipleship together walking in your ways to become more like Christ. With your son, Jesus the Christ, as our center, we pray we embody what would be the best of family, gathering together in our Savior's name and compassionately sharing his love with all people. Let us embrace and enjoy the season before us, taking in your sunshine and warm summer hugs felt by all we are surrounded with. We pray Lord, for your passion, justice, mercy, and grace to be felt holistically throughout our lives and those we are blessed to be with. Your will be done Lord, on earth as it is in heaven. It's in your son's name we pray, Amen.

As a blessed Easter people, we look forward to June and July, having celebrated Pentecost this past month. The United Methodist Church helps us understand Pentecost by sharing throughout its web article "It is the time when the disciples received the Holy Spirit in a special way. The Holy Spirit was poured out on people from all over the world. The Christian festival of Pentecost falls on the fiftieth day after the resurrection of Jesus. The season after Pentecost is the time of the church year to support new disciples and the whole congregation in living out the gifts we have been given in the name of Jesus and the power of the Holy Spirit." At Belleville First, we claim for our congregation that we "are on a lifelong journey of discipleship to become more like Christ". Let us continue living in that by embracing and enjoying our walk as Easter people. We have received the Holy Spirit poured out upon us anew, with Christ as our center, all of us His extended family, compassionately sharing Jesus' love with all people. For more information on Pentecost, commemorated Sunday, May 23rd, see the following information: [What is Pentecost? | The United Methodist Church \(umc.org\)](#)

So, how will you support new disciples and the whole congregation in living out the gifts we have been given in the name of Jesus and the power of the Holy Spirit? What are your gifts? Take the time to explore them with the tool provided through the UMC and included in our BFUMC Spiritual Pathway: [Spiritual Gifts | The United Methodist Church \(umc.org\)](#). Express Gratitude and Faith through Service here. Prepare ye the way by getting to know yourself better and committing to serve based on how you are gifted on an ongoing basis. Live out your calling daily by being a servant leader. I thank all of you who have demonstrated your ability to do so already, for instance by participating in our Camp Sunday bake sale fundraiser May 2nd. Your prayers, presence, gifts, service, and witness raised \$475 helping to fund camp scholarships. You are so very inspiring!!!

With continued blessings and thanks,



Sign up today by calling the church office at 734/697-9288, via the church website, church Facebook page, or the My Church app!!! Small group gatherings start the first full week of June and end the second week of August.

Each group has its own focus so jump in and explore. Choose whatever speaks to you and commit to walking the BFUMC spiritual pathway through this season as well, completing our year of discipleship journeying together in small groups.

SUMMER GROWTH GROUP OFFERINGS!!!

Sunday mornings @ 11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. with Pastor Mary in person at the BFUMC lakeside entrance. Questions??? We all have them!!! Take this opportunity to ask an ordained pastor anything... nothing is off limits.

Sunday nights @ 6:30 p.m. with Abby Fleming in person or via Zoom. When Christians Get It Wrong by Adam Hamilton. Explore Hamilton's interview with an atheist which helps to understand what keeps young adults from wanting to be part of Church...could it be the Christians found there???

Wednesday nights @ 7 p.m. with Jill Sestok, Director of Spiritual Formation via Zoom. Saving Grace, A Guide To Financial Well-Being "is based on Wesleyan Values and helps you reach personal financial goals as well as address life concerns."

Thursday mornings @ 10 a.m. with Joy Dubin in the BFUMC lounge. All Creation Sings, The Voice of God in Nature by J. Ellsworth Kalas "encourages readers to open their ears and listen for God's messages in the world around them."

Materials for each study that has curriculum will be available in the church office starting June 1st. As always, scholarships are available. Children (Kindergarten- 5th graders) will have a VBS small group experience the first week of August and youth (6th - 12 graders) are encouraged to bring any and all questions - no holds barred - to Pastor Mary's group or get their financial planning started early with Jill's group. Especially if youth are interested in education or vocational training beyond high school, this will help them prepare and plan intentionally to reduce associated costs. As is Belleville First's tradition, children and youth do not have to purchase any materials to participate.



Thank
you 

A big thank you to Donna Collins for the cleaning and pricing of the many items left behind in the church's rental property garage. These items had to be removed before new renters moved in. So Donna had a Men's Garage Sale. Money earned goes into the fund helping to fix up, repair, replace and the painting of the rental property. Thanks to those who worked the three days of the sale.



Thank you for your kindness that you've shown to me & my husband during our illness over the last few weeks. All your overwhelming love and support really thrilled our hearts, especially knowing that we were in your prayers. We are so blessed to have you in our lives!

Anthony & Darlene Crawford



New Ministry Opportunity: Hugs of Love

Do you knit, crochet, or quilt? Would you like to spend time with others who do? Would you like to offer your creations as gifts to those who are recovering from illness, have lost a loved one, or are new parents in the community? Would you love to pass on your craft to the next generation? Then imagine your creation being prayed over by the faith community at BFUMC prior to being offered as caring hugs to those in need.

In the midst of planning a ministry for those who are grieving, this idea of having a group make lap quilts, afghans, or crocheted throws for those in need bubbled up. This is a ministry for those within the BFUMC family but also for those the BFUMC family know and love who are in need. As the discussion deepened, the idea of offering either blankets or booties to new parents arose as well as this being an opportunity for a multi-generational gathering where veteran crafters mentored the next generation.

We are just starting this ministry, so right now we need to know who of the creatives out there would be interested in creating these gifts of love. If you would be interesting in the Hugs of Love team, please call the church office.

This ministry works during COVID because each creation is made by individuals. If you're not comfortable in person, you can still work on your creations at home and then deliver them to church. If you'd love to have the social interaction with others, the team could meet in the fellowship hall, socially distanced and masked.

Once the team is in place, we'll need the rest of BFUMC to offer names of those who could benefit from Hugs of Love. You can also call the church office to offer names of those in need. This would also be the time for those interested in learning how to knit, crochet or quilt to join in on the fun. Call the church office if you'd like to be mentored in Hugs of Love.

Finally, as the creations are finished, they will be prayed over on communion Sundays as the Hugs of Love become blanketed in prayer.

So don't wait, do not hesitate, call the church office (734-697-9288) or Yvonne Pierce (734-645-5800) today and become part of Hugs of Love.





The Missions Team has reserved a Dragon Boat and is looking for participants to race this boat during the Belleville Lake Fest June 26 and 27, 2021. We are selling seats on the Dragon Boat for \$65 to raise funds for our upcoming mission projects. We hope to do some work for Cass Community Social services this summer - opportunities are developing with 5 new tiny houses being built and also at the new building that Cass has purchased to turn into a family shelter. If you would like to donate to missions but are not interested in racing, you can sponsor a seat for someone else or just make a donation to this worthy cause. We need 15 rowers to be able to race but the boat can take up to 21. We are hoping to sell the first 15 seats at the minimum (or more) donation of \$65 but we will auction off the remaining 6 seats to anyone interested who makes a donation of any kind. Sign up early so we don't have to open this up beyond our church!

To participate you will need to have Saturday June 26 clear between 9am and 5pm as there will be a practice time and the exact time is not known yet. You will also need to have Sunday June 27 clear from 8am to 5pm as the races are during this time. We are guaranteed to be in at least 3 races - more if we find out we are good at this!!

Come Paddle or Cheer us on as we compete against other Belleville non-profits and businesses and raise money for missions. Racing and practices are in front of Horizon Park just across from our church.

Contact Micky Keelan or Dee Groeneweg to sign up or look for our table at church .



Food Closet



Thank You Volunteers!

Thank you Gary Held and Rowena Zimmerman for providing home deliveries on a weekly basis for two of our clients. I would also like to thank Debbie Smith and Joyce Forest for being here faithfully every Wednesday to distribute bags. We have two new volunteers this month - Lisa and Kelley Young! Donna Collins and Mark Groeneweg continue to help with shopping. Thank you! Donna has also been taking food that our clients don't select that we receive from the VB township senior center to a homeless shelter in Monroe. I would like to thank all of our volunteers who donate their time to help feed the hungry in our community! We couldn't function without you! Additionally, we are keeping Doug Cook in our prayers and wishing him a speedy recovery from a broken collar bone after being hit by a car while riding his bicycle in early April. Doug has been helping with unloading and shelving large food deliveries.

Food Closet Banners!

If you haven't been by the church recently, we now have two 4x8 foot banners out to advertise the Emergency Food Closet. One is at the entrance to the parking lot and the other is on the corner of Roys and Church street. A BIG thank you goes out to Mark and Dee Groeneweg for installing them. The one at Roys and Church street has a solar floodlight that lights up at night for all to see. Since their installation, it has brought us a few more clients!

Our volunteers have placed Emergency Food Closet brochures at 11 different establishments throughout the area to notify anyone who may be in need of food. Within Van Buren and Sumpter Townships and the City of Belleville, there are 15 different locations that distribute food with all days and times of day included except Monday. For those that need food on Monday, our Little Free Food Pantry located on Charles and the Community Cupboard on Main St. are available and are replenished regularly.

January-April Numbers

467 bags of food have been distributed with 26 new clients. Easter week we distributed regular bags, refrigerator, personal care items and a \$20 Food Only Meijer gift card to be used as needed. Since April 13, due to the generosity of our church family and the community, we are distributing a \$20 Food Only Meijer gift card on a weekly basis to clients so that they may purchase fresh fruits, vegetables and additional food.

Bottle/Can Drive

Steve Dolot is continuing to pick up bottles and cans on Wednesdays. To date he has submitted over \$800 to the EFC and has another \$500 to \$1,000 coming by June. Recycling the containers slowed for awhile for the stores have been overwhelmed with recycling but things are improving!

Winter Simply Give Campaign A HUGE Success!

\$11,210 was raised locally and \$10,000 was donated by Meijer for a total of \$21,210! The Spring Simply Give Campaign runs through July 3. June 19th is the only double match day. If we can raise \$5,000 on this date, Meijer will match with \$10,000

Food Closet



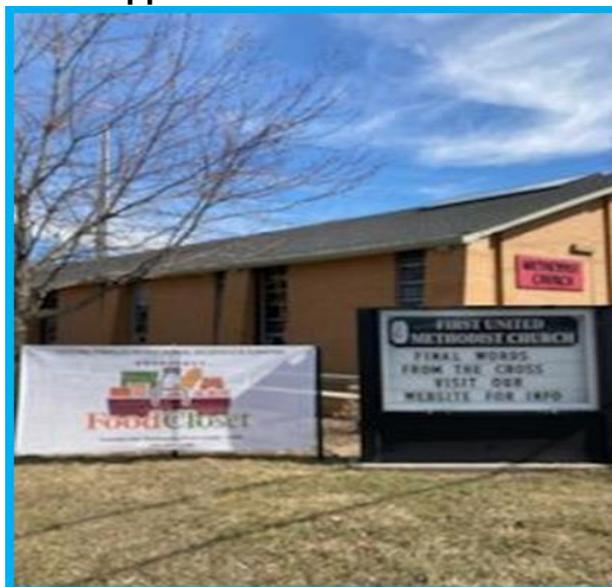
God's Closet

If you have been cleaning out closets during the pandemic you are not alone. It has been difficult to donate items to the Salvation Army and the Goodwill stores for they have been receiving more than they can handle. I recently saw on the Belleville Community page that there is a God's Closet at the Belleville Seventh-day Adventist Church at 89 S. Edgemont St. that accepts clothing and furniture. If you have donations, you may wish to call 734-672-1271 to see if they will accept yours!

Simply Give

The successful Winter Meijer Simply Give campaign ended on Saturday, April 10th. I was notified in early April that we have been selected to be a part of their Spring Simply Give Campaign which began Sunday, April 11 and runs through Saturday, July 3rd. There are new Simply Give cards located in the narthex and at the end of the check out lines at the Belleville Meijer store. During this campaign there will be **only one double day on Saturday, June 19. Meijer will double match your donation on that day. A \$10 purchase on that day will result in \$30 of food cards for the Emergency Food Closet. Thank you for your continued support!**

Marilyn Wood,
Emergency Food Closet Coordinator



The **meijer** Simply Give Campaign

Runs
April 11
through **July 3**



The Belleville Meijer store is partnering with the Emergency Food Closet housed at the First United Methodist Church to provide food for area families. You can be part of this effort by purchasing food cards at the store check outs. For each \$10 you donate, Meijer will issue a \$10 food card to the food closet. **Double Match Days** – On **Saturday, June 19**, Meijer will **double match** your donation. A \$10 purchase on those days results in \$30 of food cards for the Emergency Food Closet.



Please help
feed the hungry
in
Van Buren and
Sumpter Townships
and
the City of Belleville





Sunday, July 4th, 2021





2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<i>Men's Health Month</i>		1 11am Tai-Chi (FH) 10am Food Closet (N) 7pm Ad Council (Z)	2 10am Food Closet (N) 12:30pm Can /Bottle 6:30 Praise Band	3 10am Bagpipes (Bell) 10am AA (FH)	4	5
6 10am Worship SS Growth Group Ends	7 10am Bagpipes (Bell)	8 11am Tai-Chi (FH) 10am Food Closet (N) 	9 10am Food Closet (N) 12:30pm Can /Bottle 6:30 Praise Band	10 10 Growth Group (L) 10am Bagpipes (Bell) 10am AA (FH)	11	12
13 10am Worship	14 <i>Flag Day</i> 10am Bagpipes (Bell)	15 11am Tai-Chi (FH) 10am Food Closet (N)	16 10am Food Closet (N) 12:30pm Can /Bottle 6:30 Praise Band	17 10 Growth Group (L) 10am Bagpipes (Bell) 10am AA (FH)	18	19 <i>Food Closet Meijer Double Match Day</i>
20 <i>Father's Day</i> 10am Worship	21 10am Bagpipes (Bell)	22 11am Tai-Chi (FH) 10am Food Closet (N)	23 10am Food Closet (N) 12:30pm Can /Bottle 6:30 Praise Band	24 10 Growth Group (L) 10am Bagpipes (Bell) 10am AA (FH)	25	26 <i>Mission Dragon Boat Fundraiser @ Belleville Lake Fest</i>
27 10am Worship <i>Mission Dragon Boat Fundraiser @ Belleville Lake Fest</i>	28 10am Bagpipes (Bell)	29 11am Tai-Chi (FH) 10am Food Closet (N)	30 10am Food Closet (N) 12:30pm Can /Bottle 6:30 Praise Band			



2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<i>National Ice Cream Month</i> <i>National Culinary Arts Month</i> <i>National Grilling Month</i>				1 10 Growth Group (L) 10am Bagpipes (Bell) 10am AA (FH) 7 p.m. Music in the Park (S)	2	3
4 <i>Independence Day</i> 10am Worship	5 10am Bagpipes (Bell)	6 10am Food Closet (N) 11am Tai-Chi (FH) 7pm Ad Council (Z)	7 10am Food Closet (N) 12:30pm Can /Bottle 6:30 Praise Band	8 10 Growth Group (L) 10am Bagpipes (Bell) 10am AA (FH) 7 p.m. Music in the Park (S)	9	10
11 10am Worship	12 10am Bagpipes (Bell)	13 10am Food Closet (N) 11am Tai-Chi (FH)	14 10am Food Closet (N) 12:30pm Can /Bottle 6:30 Praise Band	15 10 Growth Group (L) 10am Bagpipes (Bell) 10am AA (FH) 7 p.m. Music in the Park (S)	16	17
18 10am Worship	19 10am Bagpipes (Bell)	20 10am Food Closet (N) 11am Tai-Chi (FH)	21 10am Food Closet (N) 12:30pm Can /Bottle 6:30 Praise Band	22 10 Growth Group (L) 10am Bagpipes (Bell) 10am AA (FH) 7 p.m. Music in the Park (S)	23 Genga Funeral Prep (FH) 8am-12pm	24 Luanne Genga Funeral (S/FH)
25 10am Worship	26 10am Bagpipes (Bell)	27 10am Food Closet (N) 11am Tai-Chi (FH)	28 10am Food Closet (N) 12:30pm Can /Bottle 6:30 Praise Band	29 10 Growth Group (L) 10am Bagpipes (Bell) 10am AA (FH) 7 p.m. Music in the Park (S)	30	31