

# CONNECTIONS

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



## Message from the Pastor



***You will know the truth, and the truth will make you free* John 8:32**

Boy, what a loaded-with-controversy-chapter John 8 is. It starts with the scene where Jesus writes with his finger in the sand and says, "Let anyone among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her." John 8:7 (NRSV) and ends with, "So they picked up stones to throw at him, but Jesus hid himself and went out of the temple." John 8:59 (NRSV)

It makes me realize that controversy and "them"ing and "us"ing has been around for a really long time. The approach of General Conference (GC), currently scheduled Aug. 29-Sept. 6, 2022, in Minneapolis, and the possible split of the UMC as well as discussions surrounding inclusion of LGBTQIA+, are as one article put it...heating up. Sometimes when we are so drawn into the debate, we can't actually discern truth from fact. There is much confusion. This confusion was expressed during the second town hall meeting for the Covenant of New Beginnings back in January from concerned members who had been hearing some "not quite truths" on the grapevine. So this article is designed to "clear things up a bit." I also want to give you the most recent article that has come through the MIConnect and the Heritage District newsletter on the subject in case you need a deeper dive.<sup>1</sup>

Holding GC in August is still a possibility.

The Commission on the General Conference, which organizes the international assembly, expects to decide by the end of March whether the big meeting can go forward as scheduled [Aug. 29-Sept. 6 in Minneapolis](#). The commission is looking at not just delegates' access to vaccines but also the availability of visas. While visas are an issue for every General Conference, the pandemic has caused more difficulties. The commission has been clear [that this coming assembly must have a reasonable level of global participation](#).<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> [https://michiganumc.org/debate-over-church-future-heats-up/?utm\\_source=%2AMichigan+Conference+Communication+List&utm\\_campaign=06c5357a64-EMAIL\\_CAMPAIGN\\_2018\\_08\\_01\\_02\\_55\\_COPY\\_01&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_98bd0b5296-06c5357a64-411923292](https://michiganumc.org/debate-over-church-future-heats-up/?utm_source=%2AMichigan+Conference+Communication+List&utm_campaign=06c5357a64-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2018_08_01_02_55_COPY_01&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_98bd0b5296-06c5357a64-411923292)

<sup>2</sup>ibid.

### UPCOMING EVENTS

#### March

3/13

Daylight Savings  
Time Spring  
Forward

3/13

Communion  
Served @ Both  
Services

3/19

Worship Retreat  
10am-2pm

3/27

UMCOR Sunday

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

## 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



Betty	Hughey	3
Kelley	Anderson	3
Bryce	Girbach	3
Jaelyn	Decker	3
Marj	Priest	4
Marlayna	Keelan	4
Bobby	Goike	5
Rachel	Murray	6
Joann	Hoover-Begley	9
Diane	Dzierbicki	10
Yetta	Reges	10
Mike	McCrary	10
Micky	Keelan	12
Rhonda	Cerone	13
Brooklynn	Clark	13

Sharon	Richardson	16
Laura	Kirchoff	17
Sue	Altobello	18
Craig	Lechlitner	21
Steven	Altobello	21
Karen	Carlson	23
Scott	Shephard	23
Donna	Sienko	24
Joy	Dubin	25
Gabriel	Baynesan	27
Eunice	Kause	28
Leonard	Armstrong	29
Cheryl	Wagner	29
Ed	Paris	29
Cindy	Hayes	30



Bob & Joannie	Payne	5
Bob & Carol	Schank	17
David & Minette	Brownlee	26

## Message from the Pastor

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If GC does go forward in August,

the coming legislative assembly faces multiple proposals for division along theological lines. The most endorsed of these is the Protocol of Reconciliation & Grace Through Separation, [negotiated by a professional mediator with a theologically diverse group of United Methodists](#).

Under the proposal, churches and conferences that support restrictions on gay marriage and ordination can vote to leave with church property and \$25 million to form a new traditionalist denomination. The protocol also sets aside \$2 million for any other new Methodist denominations that form.

The Wesleyan Covenant Association, a theologically conservative advocacy group, has worked toward forming that traditionalist denomination — [now named the Global Methodist Church](#). However, General Conference delegates have the final say on whether the protocol takes effect as written.<sup>3</sup>

In the meantime, there has been much movement across the denomination.

In November, the Council of Bishops offered [a vision for the continuing United Methodist Church](#) as a big-tent denomination that is rooted in Scripture, centered in Christ, and welcoming to all churchgoers — whatever their sexual orientation or theological outlook.<sup>4</sup>

As the bishops were developing their narrative, [an ad hoc group of United Methodists urged bishops](#) not to wait for General Conference but allow congregations that want to do so to leave with property now. The group's open letter, [titled "A Call to Grace,"](#) garnered more than 2,030 signatures.<sup>5</sup>

[The special online session of the North Central Jurisdiction](#) (the North Central Jurisdiction is the jurisdiction that Belleville First resides under) — representing ten conferences in the U.S. Midwest — offered a statement that shares similarities with both the bishops' narrative and "A Call to Grace."

By a vote of 135-32, the delegates approved a ["Covenant to Build BeLoved Community"](#) that calls on the jurisdiction to work to end racism and to create a culture that welcomes and affirms LGBTQIA+ people. The covenant also encourages conferences to accommodate local congregations and clergy seeking disaffiliation.<sup>6</sup>

The Liberation Methodist Connexion a grass roots movement on the opposite side of the debate from the WCA, have decided to remain a movement and not a new denomination. There is much more going on, but I will leave that reading for those who are interest.

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<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid, <https://www.umnews.org/en/news/bishops-offer-framework-for-inclusive-church>, <https://www.unitedmethodistbishops.org/files/websites/www/a+narrative+for+the+continuing+united+methodist+church....pdf>

<sup>5</sup>Ibid, <https://www.umnews.org/en/news/group-seeks-bishops-grace-in-church-exits>, <https://www.acalltograce.com/>

<sup>6</sup>Ibid, <https://michiganumc.org/ncj-conference-defines-path-for-the-future/>, <http://www.ncjumc.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/NCJ-Covenant-to-Build-BeLoved-Community-2.pdf>

## Message from the Pastor

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So what does that mean for those attending Belleville First UMC. It means that nothing has been decided. If GC meets and the Protocol of Reconciliation & Grace Through Separation goes through as is, decisions by individual churches whether to go with the Global Methodist Church or to stay in the United Methodist Church will not occur for some time. The first decision will come from the Annual Conference (AC) level. Once the AC has decided the way forward, then it will come to the church level. The Ad Council will decide whether their needs to be a church-wide vote. If the GC meets as planned in August of 2022, the AC would likely make their decision in 2023 and the local churches will have until 2026 to finalize their decision.

So until any decision comes to fruition...Belleville First will continue to be a United Methodist Church working in mission with Jesus to transform the world. Yes, these decisions are important, but they are not imminent. What is important for us to focus on, as a community of faith, is how we can serve God and neighbor. Where is God calling us as God's people of faith in Belleville, MI.

So those are the facts as I know them today. They may change tomorrow, but we all know what never changes. Jesus showed us in John 8 and throughout all of his ministry. God is a God of love who is calling us to reflect and be love. May we set aside all our arguing and confusion. Let us focus on partnering with God to create God's kingdom here on earth as it is in heaven.

Truth freeing blessings,  
Pastor Mary

P.S. If you're still confused, please reach out to me directly pastor and I will be happy to do my best to clarify.



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

This series is based on a Lenten study by Ray Buckley. “In every culture and time, persons of faith, of all ages, have summoned trials and tribulations to find the endurance and strength to “dance.” They have danced with the weight of the world upon their shoulders, sustained by God and others dancing near them. (This study) looks at the transcendent struggle in the lives of believers, while helping us enter the continually crumbling world surrounding Jesus and the disciples in the days preceding Easter.<sup>[1]</sup>

### **Ash Wednesday: March 2, 2022**

**Scripture:** Psalm 51:1-17 NRSV

**Sermon Title:** *Readying to Dance*

**Synopsis:** *We begin our Lenten pilgrimage this day through repentance and the placement of ashes. We often give up something for Lent and that can be good, but what if this year we exchange our way of seeing ourselves and the world for the way God sees. I wonder if we might more easily join in the Dance.*

### **Lent 1: March 6, 2022**—(Joy Dubin preaching while Pastor Mary is on vacation)

**Scripture:** 2 Corinthians 4:8-9 NRSV

**Sermon Title:** *The Dance*

**Synopsis:** *Imagine hearing the hymn, “The Lord of the Dance” ([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8OA-G\\_abnv8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8OA-G_abnv8)) (UMH 261) when you haven’t been allowed to dance. Every culture and people have danced. Even if we can’t dance, we can envision the dance, our toes still tap, and we are drawn into the dance. This week we will explore The Dance and how God calls us to be God’s dancing partner.*



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

**Lent 2: March 13, 2022**

**Scripture:** *Matthew 18:2-5*

**Sermon Title:** ***Dancing with the least of these***

**Synopsis:** *It's hared to dance with the devil on our backs. Systems oppress and our culture says money is power. But Jesus says—"Let the little children come to me." This week we will contemplate what it means to join the Lord of the Dance dancing with the least of these.*

**Lent 3: March 20, 2022**

**Scripture:** *Isaiah 53:3-6—Liturgist read (John 13:34-35-I will bring this out in sermon without it being read) NRSV*

**Sermon Title:** ***We Have a Dance Partner in the Middle of the Pain***

**Synopsis:** *Dancing is not freedom from pain. We all are wounded in some way. This week we will discover how to stay in the Dance even and maybe because we are hurting.*

**Lent 4: March 27, 2022**

**Scripture:** *Matthew 9:9-13 NRSV*

**Sermon Title:** ***Dance as You are Able***

**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.*



OUR THOUGHTS *and* PRAYERS *are with* YOU

Carol Fitch  
Frank Fisher  
Roseanne Geigler  
Donna Gotts  
Pat Aimone  
The Skelton Family  
James Woods  
The Smallwood Family  
Sandy Wilson  
Darryl Raymond

**Sunday, March 13th**

DAYLIGHT  
SAVINGS  
**TIME  
BEGINS**



SPRING FORWARD



March is Women's History Month. The **2022 Women's History theme, "Providing Healing, Promoting Hope,"** is both a tribute to the ceaseless work of caregivers and frontline workers during this ongoing pandemic and also a recognition of the thousands of ways that women of all cultures have provided both healing and hope throughout history.

Esther Deering was a historian, D.A.R. member (Daughters of American Revolution), teacher, mother of four daughters who attended BFUMC. Esther enjoyed attending BFUMC. During the construction of the current church, she sent her husband Henry into the dump to retrieve the stain glass from the previous church, which now borders the door of the Lounge.



**Esther Deering**

Respectfully Submitted by:  
Martha Conley





## *WiHn*

Workouts in HIS name

Dee Groeneweg will be starting a new ministry during Lent. Beginning Saturday, March 5<sup>th</sup>, at 10:00am she will be offering a praise and worship cardio drumming class. The main focus of this class is to draw closer to God via focusing on Him during exercise. Exercises may include strength training, flexibility development, and aerobic exercise. This class is meant to be a vehicle for honoring God with our bodies while deepening our faith. Multiple fitness levels will be accommodated. This can even be done in a chair! There will be no fee for this experience and any donations will be forwarded to the church. If you don't have your own yoga ball, bucket, tub and drumsticks there will be some extras available on a first come basis. Registration required the first day so please come early! Contact Dee with questions: 734-635-1058





## Feb. 13th Worship Committee Notes

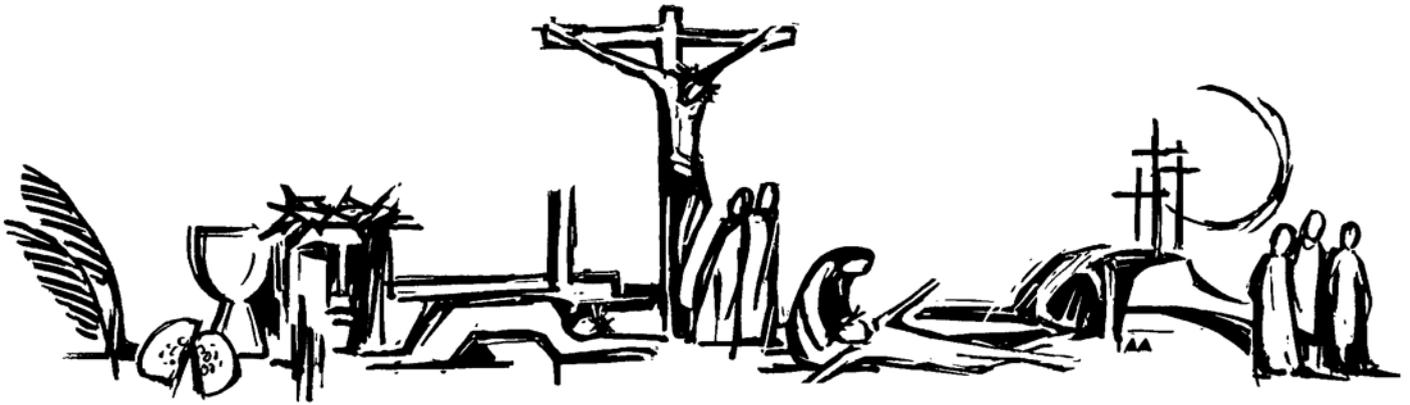
### Topic- Lent

- March 2      Ash Wednesday, Online message-no service, **NO ashes** will be distributed.
- March 6      First Sunday in Lent- Pastor Mary on vacation, **NO COMMUNION**, Connection Service only, 10:30am
- March 13     Second Sunday in Lent. **Communion** will be served at both services. Daylight Savings Time change.
- March 27     Fourth Sunday in Lent- UMCOR Sunday- special offering
- April 3       Fifth Sunday of Lent- one service, **Communion** will be served
- April 10      Palm Sunday-
- April 14      Maundy Thursday- no service
- April 15      Good Friday service 1230-1pm
- April 17      Easter Sunday, special offering will go to support the Nurse salary in Liberia.

### Worship Retreat

Saturday, March 19th. 10am-2pm. Lunch will be served. RSVP to the church office by March 17, 2022.

Respectfully submitted,  
Valerie Moore, Chair



Greetings Church,

We are now officially journeying through **Lent**, and it is a time. Like what we may have been experiencing for the past several years in the desert that is the pandemic. There can be feelings of desertion, loneliness, despair, drudgery, isolation, abandonment, grief, and hopelessness. We are ever Easter people though, with the deep and soulful knowledge that the Lord on high is with us in each and every moment, second, step, prayer, and thought. We are never alone. We are loved beyond compare, comprehension, and measure. So it is with that knowledge that we continue to trudge, as our steps become lighter and hearts fuller, to the point that we are aware of so much graceful presence that we can do nothing else but find our rhythm in this walk and share with others what we can no longer deny. No matter what may be getting in the way of your dance, the ability and desire to continue to find the rhythm and flow of the movements while enjoying the journey is a promise for our Christian reorientation to the world, as baptized believers in the body of Christ, each of us a body part. **For more information about the United Methodist Church expression of Lent, see here: [What is Lent and why does it last forty days? | The United Methodist Church \(umc.org\)](#).**

As you are journeying through Lent you may contemplate giving something up. Leaving behind what you feel holds you back. Setting at the foot of Jesus what you want the Holy Spirit to cleanse of your earthly vessel. Some sacrifice. Some offering to God. It is not necessarily a time for picking back up some devout New Year's resolution you made but did not quite have the time for. Leave perhaps the self-berating at the cross. The need for consistent criticism of you and those around you. Perhaps pick something up. A spiritual discipline. A step on the Spiritual Pathway. A kind word of encouragement. A daily olive branch for those who are dear or maybe even those who are the hardest to hold dear. **For more information on how to observe Lent, see here: [4 Ways to Observe Lent | The United Methodist Church \(umc.org\)](#).**



Whether it is Lent or any other season, *our mission is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. We cannot begin to do so without being disciples ourselves.* Discipleship is about much more than community and being active in church life. To learn more about the ways to truly walk in discipleship, see the following BFUMC Spiritual Pathway: [BFUMC SPIRITUAL PATHWAY](#). Just like Jesus and the Apostles were a small group of believers, we aim to also gather together in Growth Groupings to further our spirituality and lived out faith. If you haven't yet done so, sign up now so that you too are discipling. You can call the church office, contact me, or sign up on-line here: [Growth Groups | Belleville First UMC](#).

Throughout the year our *Belleville First Vision is before us: 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.*

**How might we keep Christ as our center? Definitely by engaging in daily time set aside to be with God. Grow in trust as you engage God in scripture and prayer further by exploring a daily devotional.** There are many ways to do this. Any of our Growth Groups will have material you will engage with every day to prepare for the weekly small group gathering. If you are looking for a book that you can read on your own, *Walking in the Wilderness* (see more here: [Walking in the Wilderness | Cokesbury](#)) is available now in the church office for purchase. Upper Room publications are also available just outside the sanctuary for a donation of \$1. Virtual devotional options may be a great way for you to ensure daily engagement. Picture Lent is a daily visual image offered by the Texas Rio Conference and the Michigan Conference of the UMC. One of the featured devotions was authored by yours truly. To subscribe to Picture Lent you can follow them on Facebook (posted in the BFUMC Facebook Group) or subscribe to a daily e-mail here: [Subscribe \(weebly.com\)](#) Additionally, there is a streaming service available free to you through BFUMC's subscription with Cokesbury. It is called Amplify, purchased by churches, where all Cokesbury's digital content is available for watching. You do need to create a free account, much like you would for any streaming service such as Netflix, Disney+, or Hulu. Feel free to contact me directly to learn how to do so. Start by going to <https://my.amplifymedia.com/bellevillefirstumcbelleville/welcome> and use the special BFUMC specific Congregation Access Code which I have for you.

There is much going on in the life of the church. So, what are you waiting for? What better time than such a holy season as this? What, if anything, is holding you back?

With God's blessings in Christ,

Jill



- ***Thanks to all who have brought back volunteering in the nursery and the ways we have continued to move forward providing services...***
- ***The nursery is always unlocked now for accessibility, with higher heat at peak times, so the doors do need to remain closed.***
- ***Any and all children in the nursery need to be supervised at all times by their parent(s)/guardian(s).***
- ***2022 nursery volunteer schedule is for opening/closing the nursery (see below), not for providing supervision.***
- ***THANKS AGAIN FOR ALL YOU DO FOR OUR BFUMC CHILDREN!!!***

As you are all likely aware, for several years the nursery has not had volunteers staffing it, primarily because there is very little to no demand for use. At the urging of congregation members, we faithfully tried to again offer the nursery to be open each Sunday last September through December, at which time, we said we would revisit the use and evaluate if having a weekly volunteer shift schedule made sense. I thank each of you again who stepped up to offer your prayers, presence, gifts, service, and witness in the nursery space with the hope of providing for what will be.

The nursery was used two times total between the first week of September and the last week of December. Accordingly, incredibly early on, several volunteers were pained, grief stricken, and frustrated that their time was being donated and no one seemed to need it, especially after they had already worked through the grief way back when, of no longer having many babies and young children present for these services. This seemed like yet another painful reminder, though hope remained and continues, that there is loss.



Folks had spent time volunteering some time ago and gone through the grief and loss of no longer being necessary, only to do so over again while the membership makes evident there are nearly no nursery age children present or active. **Yet.** When we revisited in late December whether we would continue in this capacity, we decided not to do so. Still there was a request to continue to make the nursery available and it was then decided that we could continue to offer the space for parents/guardians (minus any volunteer supervision staffing) to take their children at any time. Thanks to Pastor Mary for revisiting and helping to facilitate our new plan going forward.

I then partnered with Jack Keelan, as the Chair of Trustees to ensure the space is hospitable, including heat, and I reached out to our Custodial Ministry staff member Bruce Lewke, to make certain the doors remain unlocked. Several church announcements ran earlier this year sharing that the nursery is available for parents/guardians and their children any time. *The supervising of all children, is solely up to the child's parent/guardian.* I have curriculum options available from the I Wonder, Exploring God's Grand Story illustrated children's bible and our most recent volunteers have agreed to continue the schedule we had before, insofar as making sure the lights are on and the doors are cracked open each Sunday so that we are welcoming. Again, this does not include being in the nursery or providing any supervision.

*Please note that while the doors to the nursery are to remain always unlocked for accessibility, they do need to remain closed to keep the area heated and hospitable.* We will continue this conversation as the weather warms to see how hospitable we aim to be in the summer, as far as cooling the area goes.

Blessings and thanks again for your service Belleville First. As always, please do not hesitate to let me know should you need anything further here and especially if you feel anything included is off base in any way.



**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.



## Service Bingo

*#picturelent bingo card opportunities for the entire family*

#pictureLent

Cook a meal for a neighbor or a friend.	Write a letter of thanks to a teacher.	Wear purple clothing.	Get more sleep. Stick to a bedtime.	Help others. Like putting away loose carts at the grocery store.
Pray with your family every day.	Call a food bank and ask how you could help.	Pick a day and do not use any tablets, phones, tvs, or computers.	Read a Bible Verse and talk about it with your family.	Start a new hobby.
How can you eat healthier? Eat more fruits and veggies.	Say something nice to those around you.	FREE SPACE	What can you do to have a better day tomorrow?	Clean up litter in your neighborhood or local park.
Make time for a family member, or friend, who you do not see often.	Be nice to an animal.	Talk to a classmate, or neighbor, and ask if they would like help with their work or chores.	Begin a service project, or a tradition, in your housing community, school, or work.	Give a hug to those you love.
Donate items that are nice but you do not use to those in need. Like a toy, book, or clothing.	Go on a family walk in the park. Then, talk about what beautiful things you see.	Try a new food, or activity, with your family.	Answer: What brings you peace?	Volunteer at an organization serving a community in need.

Use this bingo card to inspire acts of generosity, kindness, and care for creation through lent

After reviewing the EFC's finances during the first week of February, some changes are taking place with our weekly bag menus, refrigerator, and personal care choices. Last year's Winter and Spring Simply Give Campaigns raised over \$43,000. We currently have \$12,000 of that left. Our Chase account has \$20,000 which is used to purchase food at Kroger, Walmart and toilet paper from Dollar Tree. We have been generous during the last two pandemic years when food was difficult to find and so many people were unemployed. In order to sustain our mission to feed the hungry, I feel we need to "tighten the belt". Food prices are soaring (up 7% overall since January, 2021 and meat prices are up 20%), more weekly bags are being distributed, and our budget is unknown. This January we passed out 171 bags of food and have 7 new clients. The number of weekly bags distributed has been steadily increasing – 40, 41, 42, and 48.

Therefore I am eliminating some weekly bag items that are not essential foods – saltine crackers, snack crackers, graham crackers, and popcorn. Peanut butter and jelly will be given only once a month instead of twice a month. Hamburger, in the one pound roll, has increased over a dollar a pound in the last 6 months. It will be a choice item only once a month. Turkey, ham, and roast beef lunch meats (which are limited in number for purchase and often not available) will be eliminated. Salami, bologna, and hot dogs will remain a weekly choice. Clients may still select one dairy: eggs, margarine, or cheese. Bread and a 4 roll package of toilet paper will still be given weekly.

Personal care items are provided from community donations. Clients have been able to select 2 a week, but will be reduced to 1 a week. Laundry soap and dish soap will be a choice only once a month. Other items will be a choice IF we have them. The Emergency Food Closet's first priority is to provide food.

Hopefully, our Winter Simply give Campaign will be a huge success but what will be raised is unknown. My goal is to continue our mission to feed the hungry in a sustainable and financially responsible manner.

Our first Meijer **SIMPLY GIVE DOUBLE DAY** is **Saturday, MARCH 5** at the Belleville Meijer located at 9701 Belleville Rd. On this day, if you purchase a Simply Give card for \$10, Meijer will match with \$20 for a total donation of \$30. One can load up to \$500 on a card. Cards are also available in our church narthex to take to the store. The second double day is **Saturday, MARCH 26**. If we can raise \$5,000 total from these two double days, Meijer will match with \$10,000 for a total donation of \$15,000. IF you would like to participate, the **BEST** day to purchase cards is on the two **DOUBLE DAYS** when your donation gets "more bang for the buck"!

On Saturday, February 5, while shopping at the Belleville Meijer store, I noticed that the Simply Give signs at the end of each check-out lane had the wrong food pantry listed. I immediately contacted the Simply Give office in Grand Rapids to make the program director aware. He checked with the store director who said the store never received the display cards with our pantry listed. New signs have been shipped to the store and should be up during the week of February 14-20. If you purchased a Simply Give card before this date, the card amount will still be credited to the EFC.

Save your cards/receipts and turn them in to Micky Keelan to get credit for your donation. Make sure your name is on the cards/receipts.

Thank you for your continued support to feed the hungry in our community.

Marilyn Wood – Coordinator

## The **meijer** Simply Give Campaign

**Runs**  
**January 2**  
**through April 2, 2022**



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, March 5** and **Saturday, March 26**, 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



## Administrative Council Highlights February 2022

The Administrative Council normally meets the first Tuesday of every month. However, in March we will be meeting in conjunction with the Worship Retreat on March 19th. All members of the congregation are invited to attend the Retreat. At that time, only official members of the Ad Council and Worship Committee will be eligible to vote.

Our actions in February:

- Evaluated the prayer vigil for Christian Unity. Recommended that evening hours be included in future vigils. A special thank you to Jill for her organization of this event and for all who participated.
- Approved investigation of Simple Accountability Structure to possibly replace the current church administrative council/committee format.
- Approved investigation of hosting an after school program for teenagers. This program would be in partnership with other community organizations.

If you would like to know more about the work of the Administrative Council, please contact Joy Dubin, 734-218-3634.

## Events & Activities



If you're looking for a devotional to use during Lent, Consider *Walking in the Wilderness: Seeking God During Lent* by Beth A. Richardson. "If you feel like you're living in the wilderness these days, you're not alone. People of faith are struggling as they witness chaotic events around the world... *Walking in the Wilderness* invites you to pause and connect with God in the midst of these challenging times.

Interested in this devotional book, you may purchase it in the office Tuesdays-Thursdays 9am-4pm or on Sundays from the table outside of the worship area.

### Did You Know???

Did you know that Michael Gross went from being BFUMCs music director to the Creative Arts Director. Michael still works with the choir, but he also created our online presence during the height of the pandemic and transitioned it to Sunday Snippets when we were able to come in person. He created the Belleville News and Prayer Concern videos as well. He also currently creates the Sunday bulletin and has added the videos before and after Pastor Mary's sermon and the Focus Moment in the Faith Formation worship service when asked and without hesitation. There are no limits to Michael's creativity and love for this congregation. Please take a moment to send him a "Thank You" for how he has kept BFUMC worship alive over the last two years.

Did you know that Evan Basnaw is the "Wizzard of Oz" standing up in the sound booth each week making sure that all the videos, lyrics, and visuals run as well as making sure you all can hear. Please take a moment to send him a "Thank You" for his dedication and love for BFUMC.



## United Methodist Clinic in John Dean Town



### Providing Healthcare...one way to show love this Easter

As most of you know, we have a long running relationship with some United Methodist brothers and sisters in Liberia. One area of work has been supporting the children who attend Gretta Moffat School in John Dean Town. The United Methodist Health Clinic in John Dean Town serves the same kids and parents as the Gretta Moffat School. This rural clinic is staffed by one Registered Nurse. Her name is Comfort Flomo. The clinic is the only healthcare facility available to the people of John Dean Town and the surrounding villages – there is no hospital, and there are no doctors.

The funding for Comfort Flomo's salary has run out. Her patients at the clinic are mostly subsistence farmers with little or no ability to pay. Without someone to sponsor Comfort's salary, the people of John Dean Town will risk losing their only healthcare professional. It is somewhat sobering to know that the annual salary for Comfort is only \$4200.00 per year. This year our Easter offering at Belleville First will go towards paying Comfort's salary for the coming year, ensuring that her skills continue to be available to the people of John Dean Town.



## Comfort at work in John Dean Town Clinic



We realize that during this time of pandemic and high inflation, many of us have experienced financial hardship. Still, the impact that we can make with our small individual contributions to the healthcare of the people in John Dean Town is amazingly large. For instance; Sponsor a day of Comfort's time for only \$16.00; Sponsor a week of Comfort's salary for \$80.00; or sponsor a month of Comfort's salary for \$350.00. As we journey through the season of Lent and anticipate Easter, look for the special display in the narthex to learn more about Comfort's work. This is one way of showing Jesus' love for people across the ocean in one of the poorest countries on earth.

You can give by:

mailing a check to the church:

Belleville First UMC  
417 Charles Street  
Belleville MI 48111 (write Nurse Salary in the memo)

Or through the Pushpay App: select the Fund dropdown box - 'Missions' with Nurse Liberia in the note.

Or by using the Easter offering envelope that will come in your mail.

Thank you for making a difference in the lives of our sisters and brothers in Liberia.



# UMCOR Sunday is Coming

**UMCOR**

**SUNDAY**

MAKE A BIGGER DIFFERENCE TOGETHER.

"Our faith in Jesus allows us to look beyond ourselves and help others. We connect with those who are in the midst of a disaster, and our response is to support them in any way possible. It's not just recovery. It's also meeting emotional, spiritual and basic needs.

THE GOAL IS TO MAKE EVERYBODY WHOLE."

- Esmeralda "Missy" Gordillo, UMCOR Case Manager



United Methodist Committee on Relief





 Hear them. See them. Love them.  
 The people of The United Methodist Church

[www.umc.org/UMCOR](http://www.umc.org/UMCOR)

## UMCOR Sunday is March 27, 2022.

Mark your calendar and plan to worship with us and support this important ministry of our church. Day after day UMCOR supports disaster relief near and far. Working through United Methodist response teams and other like-minded partners, UMCOR has been committed to alleviating suffering and giving hope continuously since 1940.

Your gifts to UMCOR Sunday offering support UMCOR's cost of doing business. This helps UMCOR keep the promise that 100 percent of any gift to a specific UMCOR project will go toward that project, not administrative costs. UMCOR has no source of income for sustaining administration except through gifts to UMCOR Sunday offering.

Thank you for giving to the United Methodist Committee on Relief through the UMCOR Sunday offering.

Blessings,  
 Belleville First Missions Team



# 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 10am Food Closet (N) 11am Tai-Chi (FH)	2 <i>Ash Wednesday</i> 10am Food Closet (N) 10am Ladies Bible Study (L/FH) 12pm The Bible Year (Z) 12:30pm Can /Bottle	3 10am AA (FH) 1:30pm Lenten Study (Joy's House) 7pm Al-Anon (FH)	4	5 Meijer Double Match Day 10:00am Drumming w/Dee (FH)
6 10:30 Worship SS Worship	7 7pm Belleville Comm Chorus (S) 7pm What If Jesus was Serious (Z)	8 10am Food Closet (N) 11am Tai-Chi (FH)	9 10am Food Closet (N) 10am Ladies Bible Study (L) 12pm The Bible Year (Z) 12:30pm Can /Bottle	10 10am AA (FH) 1:30pm Lenten Study (Joy's House) 7pm Al-Anon (FH)	11	12 10:00am Drumming w/Dee (FH)
13 <i>Daylight Savings Time Begins</i> 9:00am Worship 10:30 Worship SS Worship 11:45a Worship Comm (L)	14 7pm Belleville Comm Chorus (S) 7pm What If Jesus was Serious (Z)	15 10am Food Closet (N) 11am Tai-Chi (FH)	16 10am Food Closet (N) 10am Ladies Bible Study (L/FH) 12pm The Bible Year (Z) 12:30pm Can /Bottle	17 10am AA (FH) 1:30pm Lenten Study (Joy's House) 7pm Al-Anon (FH)	18	19 Church Retreat 10am-2pm
20 9:00am Worship 10:30 Worship SS Worship	21 7pm Garden Club (FH) 7pm Belleville Comm (S) Chorus 7pm What If Jesus was Serious (Z)	22 10am Food Closet (N) 11am Tai-Chi (FH) 7pm Missions	23 10am Food Closet (N) 10am Ladies Bible Study (L/FH) 12pm The Bible Year (Z) 12:30pm Can /Bottle	24 10am AA (FH) 1:30pm Lenten Study (Joy's House) 7pm Al-Anon (FH)	25	26 Meijer Double Match Day 10:00am Drumming w/Dee (FH)
27 9:00am Worship 10:30 Worship SS Worship	28 7pm Belleville Comm Chorus (S) 7pm What If Jesus was Serious (Z)	29 10am Food Closet (N) 11am Tai-Chi (FH)	30 10am Food Closet (N) 10am Ladies Bible Study (L/FH) 12pm The Bible Year (Z) 12:30pm Can /Bottle	31 10am AA (FH) 1:30pm Lenten Study (Joy's House) 7pm Al-Anon (FH)		