

CONNECTIONS

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



 **Message from the Pastor** 

2021 December



This is no time for a child to be born,
With the earth betrayed by war & hate
And a comet slashing the sky to warn
That time runs out & the sun burns late.

That was no time for a child to be born,
In a land in the crushing grip of Rome;
Honor & truth were trampled to scorn—
Yet here did the Savior make His home.

When is the time for love to be born?
The inn is full on the planet earth,
And by a comet the sky is torn—
Yet Love still takes the risk of birth.
— Madeleine L'Engle, *The Risk of Birth*

Love came down at Christmas,
Love all lovely, love divine;
Love was born at Christmas,
Star and angels gave the sign.

Worship we the Godhead,
Love incarnate, love divine;
Worship we our Jesus:
But wherewith for sacred sign?

Love shall be our token,
Love shall be yours and love be mine,
Love to God and to all men,
Love for plea and gift and sign.

--Christina Georgina Rossetti UMH 242

**UPCOMING
EVENTS**

December

12/4
The Living
Nativity

12/10
Come Doubles
Caroling

12/12
Cookie Walk

12/24
Christmas Eve

12/25
Christmas Day

12/31
New Year's Eve

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

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	Wagner	1
Susan	Lewke	2
Chase	Reeves	2
Joyce	Banks	5
Nicole	Altobello	6
Bob	Goike	6
Carolyn	Hyde	12
Eric	Shuryan	13
Jamie	Moore	14
Paul	Smith	18
Mike	Aimone	20
C. Genevieve	Riggs	25
Martha	Conley	26
Carol	Fitch	27
Beth	Sampson	27
Marlene	Gamble	28
Eleanore	Hendrickson	28
Jack	Keelan	28
Robert	Nurnberger	28



David & Rachel	Murray	3
Ed & Michelle	Johns	10
Mike & Lynda	Aimone	13
Mark & Dee	Groeneweg	17
Leonard & Doreitha	Armstrong	27
Jim & Pam	Boughton	29

Message from the Pastor

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⁷ And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn. Luke 2:7 NRSV

What a year this has been. Didn't I say that last year too? Aren't the past years feeling this heaviness of suffering and grief of loss. We feel like that poem by Madeleine L'Engle. This is no time for a child to be born. And yet, in the midst of a pandemic, the divisions in a country where we say, but maybe don't really believe "in God we trust, and the decline in the big "C" church as well as here at Belleville First, God calls us to new birth. And what is born in us and through us is the "*Love that Came at Christmas.*"

There is more hustle and bustle this year as our pandemic restrictions are lifted. There is the chance that the love that is born in us and through us will be lost in the consumerism of Christmas. There's also the chance that the love that is born in and through us will not appear this year because we find ourselves in a state of despair, lost in our grieving, lost in our memories of what once was.

"Yet love still takes the risk of birth." Christ comes, love comes anyway. Into the oppression of Roman rule then and into the oppression of broken systems and wabbling churches now. Christ comes and brings the news of great joy that shall be to all people. Today, tomorrow, and always, love comes down and lives in us and through us. Love comes down and shatters the broken systems as we help to dismantle them. Love comes down and brings fruit even in the driest of seasons.

So celebrate with me, with the faithful around the world. Love still takes the risk of birth and love comes to us and in us and through us. Love is the joy of Christmas and of every day of the year. Do you believe? Let us be the plea and gift and sign. Amen.

Loving blessings,
Pastor Mary

Did you know???

The Connection Card that you find in your bulletin each week helps us to track your attendance. We are using the new Connection Card instead of the friendship pads for safety during the pandemic. Each week as you come to worship you have the opportunity to let us know you're with us. You can use the Connection Card or you can use the MyChurch app to show your attendance. Either way, this is important as we register your attendance in our database. If you're attending and not filling out the card or the app, it is possible a year from now you will receive a letter asking if you still wish to continue as a member of BFUMC. Accurate attendance helps us in our record keeping. If you're a member it's as simple as signing your name and marking member. Please make sure to fill out the Connection Card or MyChurch app next Sunday.

Thanks,
The Worship Committee



The Christmas season is upon us.
Please note the service dates and
times.

Advent Sundays:

Nov. 28th, 2 services, 9:00 am & 10:30 am

Dec. 5th. Communion Sunday,
1 service @ 10:30 am

Dec. 12th, 2 services, 9am & 10:30 am

Dec. 19th, Music Sunday, 2 services
9:00 am & 10:30 am

Christmas Eve Dec 24th service. 6:00 pm

Dec. 26th, 1 service, 10:30am

Jan. 2nd, Communion Sunday, 1 service,
10:30 am

Worship Committee





Sermon Series: Tell me the Story (Continues)

During VBS this year, we discovered that our children did not have a good grasp of the story leading to the manger. This advent, we're going old school and exploring the old, old story. Let us all be like little children as we discover this amazing world changing story once more. (I will be utilizing pieces of Adam Hamilton's *The Journey: Walking the Road to Bethlehem*).

December 5, 2021- Second Week of Advent

Scripture: Matthew 1:18 (NRSV)

Sermon Title: Joseph's Part

Synopsis: Let us walk in the shoes of this man betrothed to Mary when she tells him she is pregnant with God's child.

December 12, 2021- Third Week of Advent

Scripture: Luke 1: 39-45 (NRSV)

Sermon Title: *Elizabeth, the only one who truly understood*

Synopsis: Let's us walk in the shoes of this older woman who has had her own roller coaster pregnancy how she recognized mother of the Savior of the world.

December 19, 2021- Fourth Week of Advent

Scripture: Luke 2: 1-7 (NRSV)

Sermon Title: What a Trip!

Synopsis: Let's us walk in the shoes of this young couple as they travel to Bethlehem and await the birth of the Savior of the world.



Friday, December 24, 2021- Christmas

Scripture: Luke 2:8-20 (NRSV)

Sermon Title: *Emmanuel, God with us, is Born!*

Synopsis: Let us walk to Bethlehem and discover the Savior of the world.

December 26,2021 – Pastor Mary on vacation

(Blessing of the gifts and carol sing???)



Events & Activities



DID YOU KNOW???

Did you know...that BFUMC is on a ***new worship schedule starting September 19?***

9:00am Praise Worship
10:30am Faith Foundation Worship

10:30am Combined Worship once a month on Communion Sunday (usually the first Sunday of the month—we'll let you know about those rare second Sundays) with no children's or youth Sunday School Growth Groups so that everyone can participate in a full worship experience including communion...when we say combined we really mean it ☺

Did you know...that all ***announcements*** need to be **in to the church office by noon on Tuesdays** in order to be included in Sunday worship? Live/in person/spur of the moment announcements will no longer occur so that Belleville First becomes a place and worship that visitors want to explore.

Did you know...that all ***prayer requests*** can be found on the tear off in the new bulletin? (***Announcements*** can be found there too!) Please feel free to take the tear off home with you. All the prayer concerns that come into the office are shared through the CCB church email and on the Church App. If you are not tech savvy and don't have an email, feel free to call the church office @ 734-697-9288 from 9am-12pm Tuesday-Thursday to check in. Prayers within the worship service will be of a general nature as we are protecting the privacy of our worshippers and creating a place and worship that visitors want to explore.

Thank you for worshipping with us!
BFUMC Worship Committee



OUR THOUGHTS *and* PRAYERS *are with* YOU

Pat Aimone

Elizabeth Cole

Lois Long (Friend of Everett Meggett)

Ray Mitchell & Family

The Sweeney Family

Betty Parmelee & Family

Suanne (The Ferguson's Friend)

Featheringill & Carey Families

John Posegay (Nephew of Mary Posegay)

Nick Martin (Grandson of Mary Posegay)



Gatherings with Pastor Mary

Can you believe it's been over a year since Pastor Mary joined us at Belleville First UMC! What a year! We've experienced new ways to worship online, in our parking lot, around a giant Advent wreath, and now with two services in the sanctuary starting September 19th. We've been grateful to receive Advent boxes and Lenten bags that connected us even when we couldn't gather in person. We also have explored a spiritual pathway as we connected in Growth Groups through online, hybrid, and in person formats helping us grow in our faith. Yet, even with all these creative ways of connecting, due to covid-19 restrictions, this year has been challenging when it comes to knowing our new pastor.

To facilitate this, the Staff Parish Relations Committee (SPRC) and Pastor Mary will be hosting gatherings in the church Lounge starting in October on the first and third Sundays of the month at 11:50am. This will be a time for you to get to know Pastor Mary a bit better and for you to share some history of your involvement at Belleville First. These intimate gatherings of five active church participants, an SPRC member, and Pastor Mary will last approximately 45 minutes. The SPRC and Pastor Mary hope these gatherings will be a time of connection and deepening relationship.

A member from SPRC will contact active church participants in the coming weeks, to schedule your visit. Even if you are well acquainted with Pastor Mary, we hope you will still attend and encourage the conversation. All are welcome and because we are limiting the number who gather, a reservation is required. We will follow the Covid guideline policy approved by the Administrative Council and found on the website on the day of your gathering. Please utilize this opportunity to get to know Pastor Mary and one another better.



Christmas is coming Church!!!

Here we are, Adventing together as church family on our lifelong journey of discipleship. Let us continue in gratitude as we await celebrating the birth of our savior. Don't forget to follow along with the daily Advent Devotional that has been made available in church the last several weeks or through the 'Twas the Season of Advent Devotional book that is being delivered to regularly attending church families with children. You might also find the attached Advent Calendar useful for your family in faith practice, provided by the Michigan Conference of the United Methodist Church. This is just one way that we all walk the BFUMC Spiritual Pathway together daily in prayer and time with God.

Brave Church family conversations continue this month following the Bishop's visit in October. *Express your faith by sharing your story as it relates to growing into a Brave Church by showing up on Thursday, December 16th in the Artley Room (we will relocate to the sanctuary for overflow) from 6 – 7 p.m..* Consider continuing to engage God in prayer and small grouping this December here and again the week of February 20th when traditional small groups will begin. Further details to follow in January.



Between now and then I am looking forward to experiencing more of the holiday traditions that mean so much to BFUMC. The children will have their traditional celebration of Jesus' birthday during their Sunday School Growth Grouping on December 12th and be back to help with the Symbols of Christmas worship December 19th. Christmas Eve promises to be more along the lines of what we might all remember here than what has been previously possible as well. Yay for comfort and joy!!!

Think about taking on a prayer partner or sharing a ride to church through this Advent season, which started Sunday, November 28th and goes through to Christmas day. Just let me know how you might be of or receive service. Continued blessings to you and yours especially during this holiday season...

In Christ – Jill

COME DOUBLES CAROLING

Friday December 10th



We will meet at 6:15pm at the church. Please bring cookies and a dish to pass out when we finish caroling. If you have any questions, contact Martha Conley at 734-697-7772.

COOKIE WALK

Sunday, December 12th

For everyone's safety, this year the UMW will be calling some of you to make cookies. Please do not bring cookies to the church December 12th unless you have been contacted. Cookie boxes will be made up ahead of time to sell between services as usual.

If you have any questions or allergies contact Martha Conley at 734-697-7772.

News from the Emergency Food Closet

I would like to welcome three new volunteers: Yvonne Pierce, Milton Cleveland, and Joanne Ciaverella!

Our weekly numbers for both bags distributed and new clients continues to grow. With food, gas, and heating bills rising, we expect to see the numbers continue to increase. Our clients are very appreciative!

I would like to thank everyone who has contributed to the Emergency Food Closet this year. This includes packing and distributing bags, shopping, donating cans/bottles, donating food and home grown vegetables, personal care items, and money. Without your continued support we could not help those in our community who are hungry. Your support is a blessing!

Wishing everyone a happy, healthy and blessed holiday season!

Marilyn Wood - Coordinator





2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			<i>1</i> 10am Food Closet (N) 10am Ladies Bible Study (L/FH) 12:30pm Can /Bottle 6:30pm Praise Band	2 10am AA (FH) 7pm Al-Anon (FH)	3	4
5 10:30 Worship SS Worship	6 7pm Belleville Community Chorus (S)	7 10am Food Closet (N) 11am Tai-Chi (FH) 7pm Ad Council (Z)	8 10am Food Closet (N) 10am Ladies Bible Study (L/FH) 12:30pm Can /Bottle 6:30pm Praise Band	9 10am AA (FH) 7pm Al-Anon (FH)	10 Come Doubles 6pm	11
12 9am Worship 10am Cookie Walk 10:30 Worship 11:00 Cookie Walk SS Worship	13 3pm Concert Prep 6pm Community	14 10am Food Closet (N) 11am Tai-Chi (FH)	15 10am Food Closet (N) 10am Ladies Bible Study (L/FH) 12:30pm Can /Bottle 6:30pm Praise Band	16 10am AA (FH) 6pm Bishop Bard F/U Mtg (AR/S) 7pm Al-Anon (FH)	17	18
19 9am Worship 10:30 Worship SS Worship	20 7pm Garden Club (FH)	21 10am Food Closet (N) 11am Tai-Chi (FH)	22 10am Food Closet (N) 10am Ladies Bible Study (L/FH) 12:30pm Can /Bottle 6:30pm Praise Band	23 10am AA (FH) 7pm Al-Anon (FH)	24	25
26 9am Worship 10:30 Worship SS Worship	27 Office Closed	28 10am Food Closet (N) 11am Tai-Chi (FH) 7pm Missions (FH)	29 10am Food Closet (N) 10am Ladies Bible Study (L/FH) 12:30pm Can /Bottle 6:30pm Praise Band	30 10am AA (FH) 7pm Al-Anon (FH)	31	