

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH NEWSLETTER

"Serve, Teach, and Love As We Grow In Faith"

APRIL 2020



Dear Beloved,

Wow! What a social upheaval in a month. Who would have thought a month ago that we would not be having regular worship services and that we would be "hunkered down" trying to avoid the coronavirus? Life does throw us some crazy curves. The challenge is "What are we going to do in the meantime?"

As your pastor, your spiritual mentor, I would ask you to stay focused on the fact that we are in the Lenten season. In last month's letter I had included the following paragraph:

"This season of Lent is a time to slow down, to breathe deep and to humble ourselves before the Lord. I think King David said it the best in Psalm 51:16-17, "You do not delight in sacrifice, or I would bring it; you do not take pleasure in burnt offerings. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise."

We are definitely forced to "slow down, to breathe deep and to humble ourselves before the Lord." In the craziness that we are in, many people are getting stressed out and living in fear. What about you? Where are you spiritually? Are you resting in the Lord or is your spirit in a panic?

My suggestion would be for you to take time to get into the Psalms for there is great comfort there. Maybe read the Gospel of John and refresh/renew your relationship with Jesus. We might not have a chance to gather during Holy Week or to celebrate Easter but we can stay grounded in the living Word.

At this time, plans are in the works to broadcast live Sunday services (without congregational presence) on radio and to do Facebook live so that we may worship together in spirit if not in body. May the peace of Christ sustain you and may the love of Christ fill you as we face this uncertain future together. And, when we look at our present reality and our uncertain future remember that they all are a blink of an eye as compared to an eternity of dwelling in God's Kingdom which is a present reality and a future hope.

In Jesus' love and grace,

Pastor Wendell





APR 1 Vernon Gjersest
 APR 2 Mary Jelinek
 APR 4 Basil Holder
 APR 5 Leanne Kappen
 APR 6 Stephanie Brauner
 Bob Rush
 APR 8 Breanne Caponigro
 APR 9 Dick Hilliker
 APR 13 Sam Rogstad
 APR 19 Steve Hansen
 APR 20 Donna Dolesy
 Jim Ward
 APR 21 Cathy Armbruster
 APR 23 Danielle Dolsey
 APR 25 Anita Berry
 Katrina McGillivray
 APR 28 Zack Olson

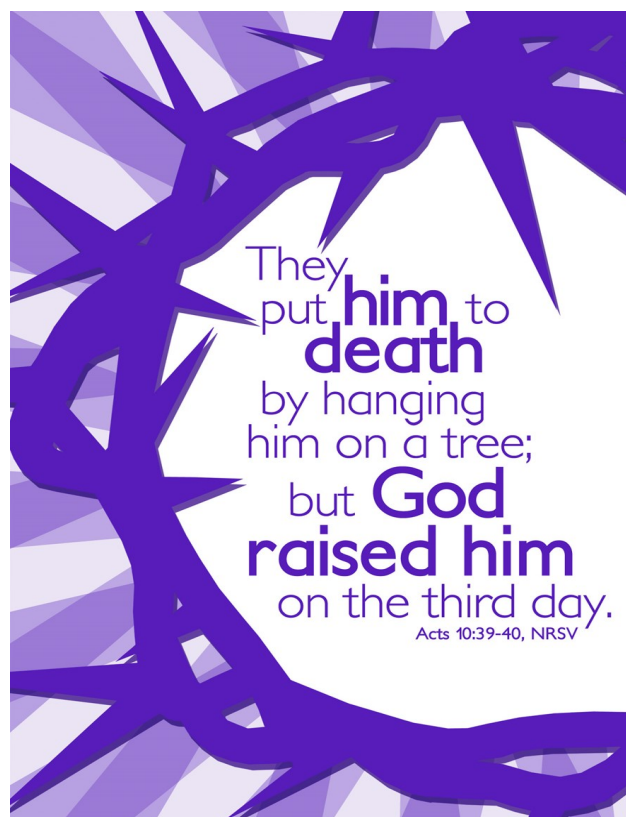


APR 13 Tim & Kay Finch
 APR 17 Mike & Leanne Kappen
 APR 24 Patrick & Lea Coville
 APR 26 Steve & Dina Hansen
 APR 27 Howard & Kristie Gomer



Our new pastor, Inwha Shon, will be moving to Black River Falls in June. His first Sunday with our congregation will be July 12.

Pastor Shon and his family are looking for a 3 bedroom apartment or home to rent. They would appreciate any contacts you may have that could help them find their new home here in Black River Falls. Please call Jill in the church office if you have any information that would be of help to them in their search. Thank you!!



YOUR UMC NEWSLETTER IS AVAILABLE ONLINE.

You can view it on our website at brfumc.org, or we can email it to you each month. Let us know if you would prefer this way of reading your monthly newsletter.

To UMW Members and Friends,

How quickly the focus of our daily or weekly schedules has changed as we all deal with the ever changing health crisis affecting us. We have received thoughtful and comforting words from our Bishop and Pastor. I do not have words to add to what our faith leaders are sharing with us.



I do have a simple message I would like to send out to you in this newsletter. We are in a place to continue to support women, children, youth, families, and our communities. As this health crisis evolves, we readily see that to move forward, we must do it together.

The closing of so many places where we greet and meet with our friends and neighbors is increasing. Let's not let that stop us from reaching out to our family, friends, neighbors, and church family. Do you know someone who would enjoy a phone call, an e-mail, a letter, a visit over Skype or Facetime on the computer? That kind of touch keeps us grounded as we can share our time with others.

Our county school districts have each coordinated great plans for breakfast and lunch meals for their students during these uncertain times. Another resource for student meals is the Wright Place restaurant, downtown Black River Falls, that has collected donations from the community. They are packing free sack lunches for any family who could benefit from receiving these meals for their children, no questions asked. **Call the pick-up site of the Wright Place, 44 Main St., at 715-670-0004 to let them know how many meals are needed.**



Van Etta Library Book Review

Thunder and Rain
by Charles Martin

Third generation Texas Ranger Tyler Steele had trouble seeing his greatest weakness. Although he has a strong moral compass, his hard outer shell that is essential to his work, made him incapable of forging the emotional connection to his wife, Andie. Now he is retired, raising their son Brodie on his own and at risk of losing his ranch. He has no idea on how to rebuild from the rubble of his life. He befriends Samantha Dyson and her daughter Hope and learns they have left an abusive relationship. They are in danger, desperate, alone and being hunted by the resourceful and determined abusive ex. Ty finally realizes he must confront his weakness to protect them and get his life where he wants it to be

Charles Martin is the author of nine novels, including the bestsellers, Unwritten and The Mountain Between Us.

Rhoda Gulso, Librarian

RADIO BROADCAST

MAR 22

In memory of Dorothy Harmer, whose birthday was March 12, and Francis Harmer, whose birthday was March 23, sponsored by their family.



Sincere sympathy is extended to the family and friends of **Larry Gaede** who passed away on March 11 in Arizona.



PRAYER FAMILIES FOR APRIL

APR 5	Liz, Sam & Lauren Lund Larry & Sharon Nemec John Piotrowski Jim Talley
APR 12	Jean Anderson Wayne & Beth Bue Karen Dolsey Krystle & Channing Goldsmith, Avery & Esmee Brooks
APR 19	Ellen Hieb Patty Iverson Gene & Mary Maurer Bob Nesbitt
APR 26	Gary Potter Marlene Taylor Gene & Linda Atkinson



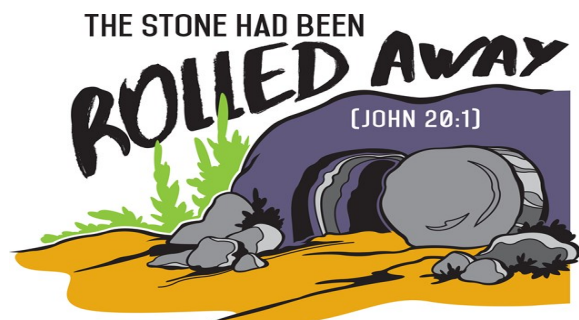
Spring has sprung, the robins are back. I hope you all are able to get some fresh air and enjoy the smells of the new season.

We miss meeting with everyone each week and are anxiously awaiting the time we can gather together again. Watch our Facebook page, Black River Falls UMC Youth Group, for some great links to devotions and readings. If any of you need anything during this unsure time, please do not hesitate to contact one of us. Please join worship service on Facebook each Sunday morning so we can continue to worship together as a church family.

If you know of someone who is in the hospital or who is working through medical issues at home, please call the church office so that the Pastor is aware of the need and can respond accordingly.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

If you know of an individual or family that is working through health issues, hospitalization, or some other crisis and could benefit from the gift of a meal, please call the church office and Jill will pass the information to our Caring Meal Crew.





You can continue learning the Easter story at home as a family by reading the story in the Bible. Look up "Resurrection Eggs" online. This is a way to re-tell the story of Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection. Youtube "Easter Story". There are so many options to continue learning with no Sunday School.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!!!!!!

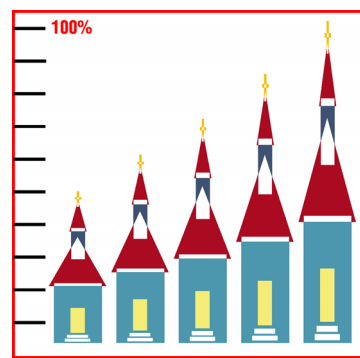
- ◆ **No Sunday School Easter Sunday, April 12**
- ◆ **SUNDAY SCHOOL YEAR END PROGRAM, "I've Got Joy", will be held May 17 at 9:00 a.m.** Watch for more info in the May newsletter. An email will also be sent.
- ◆ **VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL will be held August 3-6, "VBS Olympics, Team Jesus".** A meal will be served from 5:15 p.m. to 5:45 p.m. with a VBS start time of 6:00 p.m. We are in need of substitutes, teachers, and helpers for VBS, contact Beth Bue if you are able to help us out.

RECYCLING: Thank you to everyone who has brought in ink cartridges and cell phones for recycling. This fundraiser is used to purchase Vacation Bible School supplies. Please continue bringing in your ink cartridges and old cell phones. There are boxes in the front entryway, by the Church Office, and by the Youth Rooms for the ink cartridges and cell phones.

Like our Facebook page Black River Falls Sunday School to see photos of our activities. You can also go to the church's website, www.brfumc.org for photos and other information.

YOUTH BIRTHDAYS

APR 5	Dreyden Sanders
APR 10	Rachel Crocker
APR 12	Annaliese Rave
APR 30	Lauren Lund



CAPITAL CAMPAIGN UPDATE

A number of the projects that were included in the Capital Campaign have already been completed and we are already enjoying the benefits of these upgrades: new entrance doors with handicap features, new blacktop parking lot, microphone and technology upgrades, and eaves troughs.

Progress is continuing on other projects that were included in the campaign. Sampson Heating and Air Conditioning from Hixton has been working to replace the furnaces and air conditioning units with new units that have a higher efficiency rating and will use less energy. They will soon start work to replace the wiring and electrical panels that control the boilers.

Five dying trees have been removed from the church yard by Prairie View Ranch LLC. They will return when the snow is gone, grind the stumps, fill in with black dirt, and seed down the areas.

Flooring is one project that is yet to be done. With the uncertain times we are going through right now, we are holding off on starting this project. Hopefully we will be able to start replacing the carpets sometime this summer.

Contributions to the Capital Campaign Fund are still accepted and appreciated. As the final cost of a few of the projects ended up costing more than anticipated, your contributions are welcome. Please mark any contributions with "Capital Campaign" so that they can be recorded properly. ***Many, many thanks to everyone for their continued support!!***





A Word from Bishop Jung About the Coronavirus Pandemic

*And after he had dismissed the crowds, he went up the mountain by himself to pray.
When evening came, he was there alone. Matthew 14:23*

My beloved family in Christ across Wisconsin, know that I am praying for you. We are going through an extraordinary time. It is a time of anxiety and worry, a time of fear and uncertainty, and a time of testing for our faith. But our God is good, our God is with us, and our God loves us.

In the best of times, we are stronger together. It is right and good that we worship together that we pray together, study together, work together, and minister together. But there are times such as these where we are most faithful when we care for each other from a distance. Following the example of Jesus, this Lenten time may be one where we must withdraw and be by ourselves more. We are in a time when it is inadvisable to get together for worship. In fact, we are strongly suggesting that we refrain from publicly open worship services minimally until April 5, Palm Sunday. It may mean we need to suspend worship this year through Easter. While this is difficult and painful, it is also a glorious opportunity to show our creativity and commitment. The White House, the Center for Disease Control, our state government and health care officials are asking that we not gather in groups larger than ten members for at least the next two weeks. Some reports are saying we shouldn't gather in groups of 50 or more for at least eight weeks. Regardless the parameters of the advice, we are in a time of necessary voluntary separation and face-to-face isolation.

But this in no way means we cannot be in ministry with each other. We are blessed with phones, email, computers, tablets, and multiple technologies to allow communication across distance. We can form prayer chains. We can create online devotion and worship circles. We can keep in contact with the most vulnerable in our faith communities and develop healthy and faithful ways to meet their needs and offer them care. We can join streaming worship services broadcast without congregations physically present, and we can engage in family devotions and worship. This is indeed a challenging time, but God is with us right where we are. This is a critical time for us to care as much about as many as we possibly can! We are in ministry through our prayers, our phone calls, our emails, and our video chats. Congregational leaders can still connect for ministry meetings in a variety of ways. It is too easy to be swept away by all we cannot do; let us make a faith commitment to focus on what we CAN do. Please continue to support the ministry of your congregation in whatever possible ways you can.

The Wisconsin Conference is cancelling or postponing all in person meetings, gatherings, and events for a minimum of the next four weeks. We will announce further cancellations and postponements, if needed. We will regularly post updates and resources on our website to help local congregations navigate this difficult time, and to support you in your ministry. Conference and district staff can help you set up Zoom video meetings if that would be helpful. We will do all in our power to help you do effective ministry in the weeks to come.

I want you all to know how much I appreciate your leadership and your faithfulness in this pandemic time. It is scary, especially for the most vulnerable among us. There are no clear or easy answers. We do not know how long we must take exceptional precautions. We do not know when the dangers will pass. What we do know is that we have God, we have each other, and we have a faith that will keep us strong through even the greatest challenges.

Grace and Peace,
Bishop Hee-Soo Jung



Mission Outreach Notes:

The **Patricia Project** completed 22 reusable sanitary napkins during their sewing day on March 4. Another sewing day will be held in June. Watch for details. Donations of dark colored thread and 100 per cent cotton fabric would be appreciated. Questions? Contact Charlene Galston.

Mission Outreach is exploring a **Spring Clean-up Day** for our church members. Projects will include yard clean-up, flower bed clean-up, and first story window washing -- one project per household. Church members who would like some spring clean-up assistance can self-refer by calling the church office (715-284-4114). The first 10 requests will be honored. Clean-up teams and work dates will be set depending on the congregation's response. April's **Mission Minute** will feature Marcia Hagen and her mission trip to Guatemala. Don't miss Marcia's report on Sunday, April 26.

The **Knit for Kids** project, initiated by your Mission Outreach Committee and fulfilled by many knitters, has reached its goal. **Your donations of hats, mittens, scarves, sweaters and blankets (knitted or crocheted) will be blessed on Sunday May 3.** All those who participated will be asked to stand to be recognized on that Sunday morning. Please plan to attend – to be recognized and to witness the blessing of these gifts before they are sent on their way.



THEY KILLED HIM BY HANGING
HIM ON A CROSS,
BUT GOD RAISED HIM FROM
THE DEAD ON THE THIRD DAY.

ACTS 10:39-40, NIV

BRF UMC Calendar of Events APRIL 2020

Due to the current
Coronavirus crisis,
all BRF UMC worship
services and activities are
cancelled until further
notice!!



I pray that ... Christ may dwell in
your hearts through faith.



as you are being
rooted and grounded in love.

Ephesians 3:16-17, NRSV