

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH NEWSLETTER

“Serve, Teach, and Love As We Grow In Faith”

FEBRUARY 2019



In my September, 2018 article I wrote about "A Way Forward", the outcome of the Commission that was formed by the 2016 General Conference of the United Methodist Church to develop a plan or plans to help the church move forward in light of the debate over how the church ministers to/with the LGBTQ community. The Commission on "The Way Forward" met throughout the last two years and will be presenting three plans for the Feb. 23-26 special session of the General Conference to vote on. An understanding of the scope of each of these three plans can be found at www.um-insight.net/the-way-forward or at www.umnews.org/the-way-forward.

The following letter written by our Bishop, Hee-Soo Jung, was printed in the Conference newsletter this month. I am including it here as I believe Bishop Jung addresses the division in the church with clarity and grace. ~ Pastor Kathy

Why Our Church Needs Unity

by Bishop Hee-Soo Jung

"For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.

Indeed, the body does not consist of one member but of many. If the foot were to say, 'Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body', that would not make it any less a part of the body. And if the ear were to say, 'Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body', that would not make it any less a part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole body were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. If all were a single member, where would the body be? As it is, there are many members, yet one body. The eye cannot say to the hand, 'I have no need of you', nor again the head to the feet, 'I have no need of you.' On the contrary, the members of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, and those members of the body that we think less honorable we clothe with greater honor, and our less respectable members are treated with greater respect; whereas our more respectable members do not need this. But God has so arranged the body, giving the greater honor to the inferior member, that there may be no dissension within the body, but the members may have the same care for one another. If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it."

I Corinthians 12:12-26 (NRSV)

One of the greatest challenges to our United Methodist Church is currently under global consideration. We will gather as a worldwide denomination in February in St. Louis to truly determine our collective future. Our ability to fulfill our mission of disciple-making for the transformation of the world, and our witness to the world of the saving grace and loving compassion of God is at stake.

Spiritual leaders throughout our church are calling United Methodists everywhere to make a commitment to the unity of faith in Jesus Christ and the continued positive impact of our theological and missional work in the world. To the consternation of many, our "unity" has become a topic of debate and division. This indicates a deep misunderstanding of "unity" as used in our Christian scriptures. The Greek word *ἐνότης* (enotēta) is more rich and complex than the English translation unity. By applying simplistic modern definitions to the word unity, we can deny the scriptural intention, which has great power to help us through our current challenges.

(Continued on next page)



Many opponents to the idea of unity in The United Methodist Church incorrectly say it implies full agreement, lack of disagreement, regimented acceptance of a narrow set of moral standards, or homogenized sameness for all believers and members. Interestingly, this is almost the opposite of what Paul and Jesus taught in our New Testament.

While Paul calls those who claim Christ as Lord and Savior to be of one heart and mind, and to proclaim the faith with one accord, his intention is that Christ followers would choose to unite around those things most important, and to set aside those things over which they disagreed. Repeatedly, Paul acknowledges that there will be disagreements. It is not disagreement that is the problem, but how we address our disagreements that is most important. No matter how vehemently we disagree, our baptism, our belief in the risen Christ, and our proclamation of the love and grace of God is more powerful. We do not choose unity; we are already made one with Christ, one with each other, and one in service by God's redeeming act through Christ. We do not unite to honor God; we honor God by recognizing the unifying work of God in our lives through our faith. Once again, we do not choose God; God chooses us! What we choose is how we will live this unity together.

This is the elegant and beautiful intention in Paul's teaching in I Corinthians 12. We ARE ONE BODY – the body of Christ. Many parts, many functions, many differences, but still all one. No part of the body may judge and reject any other part of the body. And it is not our task to merely tolerate the other parts of the body, but to come to recognize their value and to honor those we struggle to accept.

Some say that Jesus said he did not come to bring peace, but to bring a sword of division and dissolution. This is a skewed interpretation. The division that Jesus brought was from one paradigm to another – a fundamental and defining faith different and separate from that which was the accepted norm. People were forced to choose to remain in the old paradigm or to bravely and boldly risk entering a new paradigm. The reality was that this would divide families, tribes, communities, and cultures. It was not a justification of splitting over disagreement, but an honest acknowledgment that an "either/or" decision was demanded.

In our context, we are trying to decide which Christian brothers and sisters are acceptable and which we will not accept. This is not our decision to make; it belongs to God and God alone. Our decision is how we can live faithfully with those who are different; how we can honor the sacrament of baptism and what God has done for all of us, not just some of us; and, how we can witness to the world that when Christ is truly in our hearts, we navigate disagreement and division in ways very different from our dominant culture.

Our unity is a gift and grace to us from God. God makes us one. We can always choose to separate and go our way, rejecting what God has done for us, but we do not have the right to tell someone else they do not belong. John Wesley offered the simplest and most helpful wisdom when he wrote, schism is *"...evil in itself. To separate ourselves from a body of living Christians with whom we were before united is a grievous breach of the law of love. It is the nature of love to unite us together, and the greater the love the stricter the union...It is only when our love grows cold that we can think of separating from our brethren. And this is certainly the case with any who willingly separate from their Christian brethren. The pretenses for separation may be innumerable, but want of love is always the real cause."* (On Catholic Spirit, John Wesley)

"Let us pray that our General Conference delegates might discern and embrace the sacred gift of unity that is the core characteristic of our identity as the Christian church, and that we might honor God by being the body of Christ for the transformation of our world.

Grace and Peace,

Bishop Hee-Soo Jung



FEB 9 Pastors Kathy & Lon Jury
 FEB 17 Paul & Robin Hoffman

- FEB 1 Sun Gorski
- FEB 3 Jim Bible
- FEB 6 Jessica Whitegull
- FEB 7 Kim Gjerseth
- FEB 8 Jana Nandory
Renata Olson
- FEB 9 Kay Finch
- FEB 10 Elaine Ott
- FEB 11 Don Holcomb
- FEB 12 Mary Gjerseth
Freda Goldsmith
- FEB 13 Derek Peterson
Judy Sheppard
- FEB 15 Rosemary Dvorak
- FEB 16 Roy Hefty
- FEB 17 Don Gilbertson
- FEB 18 Jim Hoffman
- FEB 22 Dorothy Hefty
- FEB 23 Jeremy Nandory
- FEB 24 Robert Elmore
Jerry Overman
- FEB 25 Madelyn Calderon
Jacob Woods
- FEB 26 Paul Brauner
Linda Heller
Karma Leffingwell
- FEB 27 Marian Millis
- FEB 28 Danielle Dougherty



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.

SAVE THE DATE!!

Annual Women's Retreat

Saturday, March 2
9:00 a.m.- 4:00 p.m.

Brochures with registration information are now available in the Gathering Area and in the Church Office.

This year's theme:
"Everyday Miracles"
Keynote Speaker: Lori Chown

Psalm 26:7
"I raise my voice in praise and tell of all the miracles You have done."

Break-Out Sessions:
 Tree of Life
 Monarch Butterflies

Get your registrations in soon and reserve your spot for this fun day!!

United Methodist Women Sisterhood of Grace 2019

Celebrating 150 Years!

In 1869 a few Methodist women friends began collecting pennies to support a female doctor and a female teacher for women and youth in India. That action began what became over 100 United Methodist Women supported mission projects worldwide.

In 2018 Black River Falls UMW sent \$3500 to support these worldwide mission projects. This is something to celebrate indeed! Thanks to all who contributed through UMW pledges, No-Bake Bake Sale contributions, baking or participating in the annual Cookie Walk. You made this possible!



YOUTH GROUP

Upcoming Youth Meetings:

(We meet from 6-7 p.m. each night)

- February 6
- February 13
- February 20
- February 27

Thank you to all who continue to support the youth for our YOUTH 2019 trip to Kansas City this July.

We will be selling Braid Bread soon as one of our fundraisers. Delivery for the bread will be mid-April. Watch soon for our youth in the Gathering Area to place your order.

**You are invited
to a Birthday Tea.
UMW is turning 150!
Come and help us celebrate**

**Sunday, March 3
10:15 AM
Fellowship Hall**

**All women and all school-aged girls
in the church welcome.**



Women's Fellowship



It's time to start thinking about SUMMER CAMP!!

We will be having CAMP SUNDAY on February 17. Please join us in worship to hear campers share their camp experience, information on scholarships and our Wisconsin United Methodist camps. Look for the Summer Camp poster on the Kiosk!

If you are interested in camp and would like a book, you can pick one up in the Gathering Area or contact Beth 715-284-7494 or Suzanne 715-896-0224. Camps fill fast, so if there is one you are interested in, we suggest registering as soon as possible.





Radio Broadcast

JAN 20 In memory of Roger Simonson, whose birthday was January 22, sponsored by his parents, LeRoy & Fran Simonson

JAN 27 In honor of Gary Potter's Birthday on January 28 sponsored by Gil Homstad.



Bulletins

JAN 20 In memory of Roger Simonson, whose birthday was January 22, sponsored by his parents, LeRoy & Fran Simonson

JAN 27 In honor of Gary Potter's Birthday on January 28 sponsored by Gil Homstad.



Please keep the church informed if you change your **email address**. Also, please let us know if you discontinue your land line and only use **cell phones**. This will help us to be able to stay in touch with you. Thank you so much for your help!!!



HOLY BAPTISM

January 20, 2019

Ember Anny Kapfer
daughter of Tyler & Michelle Kapfer



Camp Fundraiser

When: Sunday February 17
10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

Where: BRF United Methodist Church
Fellowship Hall

Menu: Pancakes, Sausages, Applesauce,
Juice, Milk, and Coffee

A Free-Will Offering will be taken for the Camp Scholarship Fund, which provides scholarships for people of all ages to attend camp.



Purse Drive

Ladies, if you have any old purses that you are no longer using, please consider bringing them to the church as we are collecting purses for homeless people. Purses have many pockets and will hold valuable possessions. They also have handles and straps so that valuables can be held close to the body. Clean out your closets and help those in need. Another need for homeless people is bug spray that will come in handy when the weather finally warms up and bugs come back to life. If you have any questions, please call Terrie Stevens at 715-257-0097. Thank you so much for your generosity!!





FAMILY SUNDAY:

The next Family Sunday is scheduled for February 17. All Sunday School children will sing at the 9:00 a.m. Worship Service. **Families and children are encouraged to attend this special Sunday and remain in church for the full service.** What a great opportunity to involve our younger youth in worship!

ROTATION MODEL:

In February the Rotation Model will be "Lost and Found." This unit will teach the children the parables of the lost sheep, the lost coin, and the forgiving father. Jesus teaches us that God's love is always there for us, no matter where we go or what we do.

IMPORTANT CALENDAR DATES:

Mark your calendars for a **PANCAKE BREAKFAST on February 17 from 10:00-11:00 a.m.** to support the camp scholarship program. The scholarship program allows our church to financially support members of our congregation who want to attend camp.

* **NO Sunday School on Easter Sunday—April 21**

* **Year-End Sunday School Program—May 19 at 9:00 a.m.**

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

- FEB 8 Corbin Kapfer
- FEB 10 Dra Mayne Sanders

PRAYER FAMILIES FOR FEBRUARY

- FEB 3 Marlene Meyer
Erica Olson
Leota Simonson
Joan Zenz
- FEB 10 Dan Brauner
Chuck & Marcia Devendorf
Don & Janet Gilbertson
Marsha Harmer
- FEB 17 Basil & Iris Holder
Lorraine Leffingwell
Marian Millis
John & Theresa Paul
- FEB 24 LeRoy & Fran Simonson
Ann Zillmer
Ed & Vione Brauner
Gustavo & Madelyn Calderon



Are you a prayer warrior or someone who would like a place to go on Wednesday mornings to join some fun Christians? Our Church started a Prayer Group in 1975 to pray for our Church family and others in

our community, nationally or internationally. We send cards to our Prayer Families who are listed in the bulletin each week, as well as our home-bound members for birthdays and holidays, and others who may need a card to brighten their day. If you would enjoy an hour of wonderful, heartfelt stories, read by some of our members, fellowship, music and lots of prayer, we invite you to join us on Wednesday mornings from 9:00 to 10:00 a.m. in the Keefe Room.





Finance Report

End of Year 2018

	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Difference</u>
<u>Income:</u>			
Pledges	\$ 219,246.00	220,000.00	(754.00)
Unpledged Giving	\$ 41,279.61	75,700.00	(14,420.39)
Other Income	<u>\$ 15,046.34</u>	<u>23,950.00</u>	<u>(8,903.66)</u>
Total	\$ 275,571.95	299,650.00	(24,078.05)
 <u>Expenses:</u>			
Apportionments	\$ 24,182.00	49,896.00	25,714.00
Pastoral Support	\$ 114,763.13	115,574.00	810.87
Program Staff	\$ 88,798.45	92,488.00	3,689.55
Programming	\$ 7,773.31	6,900.00	(873.30)
Operations	<u>\$ 42,023.81</u>	<u>51,400.00</u>	<u>9,376.19</u>
Total	\$ 277,540.70	316,258.00	38,717.30



Time To Take a Walk?

Are you looking for a stronger faith, answers, direction for your life? It may be time for you to go on a walk. Not a physical walk but a spiritual walk. The **Walk to Emmaus** is a three-day spiritual journey/retreat designed for Christians seeking a better understanding of God's activity in their life and faith. The 2019 Walk to Emmaus for men is April 25-28, and the women's walk is May 2-5, at Imago Dei Village in Clintonville. If you are interested in attending one of these weekends you can obtain a registration form and more information in the church office.





Van Etta Library Book Review

The Water is Wide by Pat Conroy

Considered a fiction book by many, this is the memoir of a teacher who gave a year of his life to give a people a new lifetime. Author Pat Conroy recounts in this book his time on Yamacraw (real name Daufuski) Island off the South Carolina coast. The island is nearly deserted, haunting and beautiful. It lies across a slip of ocean from South Carolina. For the few people on the island, America seems like a world away. For years they have lived proudly from the sea, but the waters become unsafe when waste from industry threatens their very existence. They are forced to learn new skills and make new lives. They have a school, but no teacher.

Here begins Pat Conroy's extraordinary human drama—based on the true story of a man who gave these people an awareness of themselves as well as the world around them.

Rhoda Gulso, Librarian



Valentine's Day Dinner

Sunday, February 10 - 5:30 p.m.
In the Fellowship Hall
Tickets: \$12.00

Tickets can be purchased and reservations made after the worship service
Each Sunday through February 10, or by calling the Church Office at 715-284-4114.

Menu:

Baked Lasagna, Garlic Bread
Mixed Greens Salad, Beverages
Sweetheart Cupcakes for Dessert

Proceeds go toward Walk To Emmaus Scholarships

BRF UMC Calendar of Events—February 2019



SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 2

8:30 a.m.—Men's Group Meeting

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 3

9:00 a.m.—Worship Service

9:05 a.m.—Sunday School

10:00 a.m.—Youth Chili Lunch

10:15 a.m.—Worship Committee Meeting

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 4

Pastor Kathy Day Off

CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED

1:30 p.m.—Circle of Hope Meeting

5:30 p.m.—Circle of Faith Mtg at Mocha Mouse

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 6

9:00 a.m.—Prayer Group

5:15 p.m.—Confirmation

5:30 p.m.—Companions in Christ Study

6:00 p.m.—Youth Group

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 7

6:00 p.m.—Bell Choir Practice

7:00 p.m.—Choir Practice

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 10

9:00 a.m.—Worship Service

9:05 a.m.—Sunday School

5:30 p.m.—Valentines Day Dinner

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 11

Pastor Kathy Day Off

CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 12

5:30 p.m.—Board of Trustees Meeting

5:30 p.m.—Finance Committee Meeting

6:15 p.m.—Administrative Council Meeting

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 13

9:00 a.m.—Prayer Group

10:00 a.m.—Book Club

5:15 p.m.—Confirmation

5:30 p.m.—Companions in Christ Study

6:00 p.m.—Youth Group

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 14

5:00 p.m.—Spirit! Practice

6:00 p.m.—Bell Choir Practice

7:00 p.m.—Choir Practice

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 17

9:00 a.m.—Worship Service

Communion Sunday

Family Sunday—No Sunday School

10:00-11:30 a.m.—Pancake Breakfast

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 18

Pastor Kathy Day Off

CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 20

9:00 a.m.—Prayer Group

5:15 p.m.—Confirmation

5:30 p.m.—Companions in Christ Study

6:00 p.m.—Youth Group

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 21

6:00 p.m.—Bell Choir Practice

7:00 p.m.—Choir Practice

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 24

9:00 a.m.—Worship Service

9:05 a.m.—Sunday School

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 25

Pastor Kathy Day Off

CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 27

9:00 a.m.—Prayer Group

5:15 p.m.—Confirmation

5:30 p.m.—Companions in Christ Study

6:00 p.m.—Youth Group

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 28

6:00 p.m.—Bell Choir Practice

7:00 p.m.—Choir Practice

