

# THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

## NEWSLETTER

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

FEBRUARY 2021

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ at Black River Falls,

Peace be with you all. How is it with your soul in the midst of uncertainty and unrest? Does this question sound strange and heavy? This is a question with which John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, would open up all small group meetings.

As far as I am concerned, my heart, mind, and spirit are in a whirl. As you know, so much has been going since early 2020: the pandemic, civil unrest, divisions in our country and our church over discrimination, the presidential election, and the inauguration. It is no surprise that most of us have felt unhappy, isolated, dispirited, and frustrated.

So, I would like to ask you, “How are you?” in light of current situations in our lives. The question requires an answer deeper and more meaningful than any cliché such as “good” or “fine.” Let us pause a little and ponder our current situations. I would like for you to consider some questions:

“How are you experiencing God in your life?” “How is your spiritual growth happening?” “Do you feel spiritually connected to God? and, if so, and in what ways are you pursuing a relationship with Jesus?” “How well are you sowing, harvesting, and spreading the fruits of the Spirit?” “How well are you using your spiritual gifts to spread scriptural holiness wherever you walk?” “How do you offer Christ to others through your words, actions, and intentions?” “Where have you consciously refrained from doing harm?” “Where have you done well as a faithful witness to Christ’s love and God’s grace?” These questions challenge us to share our struggles and testify to our faith.

So, I want to ask you again, “How really are you doing?” I don’t want to take just a convenient answer, such as “I am good.” For that reason, I encourage you all to figure out first who you are in God in order to answer that question appropriately. I believe we cannot help but repeat the same thing endlessly if we don’t know of our identity.

Who am I? Where did I come from? What am I created to be? Where would you like to find right answers to those questions? The Bible answers, “*You are all children of the light and children of the day. We do not belong to the night or to the darkness*” (1 Thessalonians 5:5).

Finally, I was inspired by the young poet who self-identified as a skinny Black girl descended from slaves and raised by a single mother; listening her poem resonated with the new vision for our country and the world at the inauguration ceremony of the 46<sup>th</sup> US president: “*There is always light, if only we're brave enough to see it, if only we're brave enough to be it.*”

“*For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light*” (Ephesians 5:8).

Peace,  
Pastor Inwha Shon





FEB 1	Sun Gorski
FEB 3	Jim Bible
FEB 6	Jessica Whitegull
FEB 7	Kim Gjersest
FEB 8	Jana Nandory
	Renata Caponigro
FEB 9	Kay Finch
FEB 10	Elaine Ott
FEB 11	Don Holcomb
FEB 12	Freda Goldsmith
FEB 13	Derek Peterson
	Judy Sheppard
FEB 15	Rosemary Dvorak
FEB 16	Roy Hefty
FEB 18	Jim Hoffman
FEB 20	Pastor Inwha Shon
FEB 22	Dorothy Hefty
FEB 23	Jeremy Nandory
FEB 24	Jerry Overman
FEB 25	Madelyn Calderon
FEB 26	Linda Heller
	Karma Leffingwell
FEB 28	Danielle Dougherty



FEB 17 Paul & Robin Hoffman

### YOUR UMC NEWSLETTER IS AVAILABLE ONLINE.

You can view it on our website at [brfumc.org](http://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.

## Forty Days OF LENT

The purpose of Lent is the preparation of the believer for Easter through prayer and repentance of sins. This event is observed in the Anglican, Eastern Orthodox, Lutheran, Methodist, Moravian, Oriental Orthodox, Reformed, and Roman Catholic Churches.

You are encouraged to make as a priority the preparation of your heart as we prepare to receive once again the mercy and grace of our Lord Jesus the Christ.

We begin our season of Lent this year on Ash Wednesday, February 17. We will have a virtual Ash Wednesday Worship Service at 6:00 p.m. via ZOOM. Details of that service and contact information will be sent out with your bulletins later.

On Wednesday evenings following Ash Wednesday, starting Wednesday, February 24, we will have a Bible Study beginning at 6:00 p.m. This will be available for everyone to participate via ZOOM. We will let everyone know the details of the study soon.

Lenten devotionals, "Return to the Lord", will be available for you to use during the 40 days of Lent. Please call the church office (715-284-4114) if you would like to have one of these devotionals. We can arrange a time for you to get your copy. A free-will offering will be accepted to cover the cost.



# MISSION REPORT



Our congregation continues to reach out and help others as Christ has taught us to do, though the pandemic has brought challenges as to how these things are accomplished. Even when each of helps in a small way, big things can happen. Here is a short summary of recent activities.

Donations were down slightly this year for our Christmas Giving tree but still 5 programs received additional and most likely much needed support from us.

Terrie Stevens had help from Ann and Terrie's daughter in the Twin Cities to get more items to the homeless shelters there.

Red Creek School reached out to us in need of 8 pairs of snow pants for children. We were able to help out with extra funds we had on hand. Thanks to Chuck and Ruth Buswell for being such savvy shoppers.

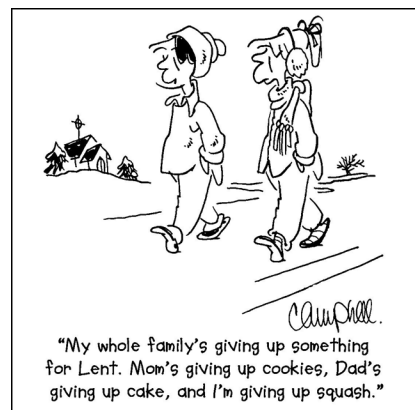
We received a lovely thank you from World Vision for the blankets, hats, sweaters and scarves we sent in November. We still are in need of donations of yarn (preferably not wool) to keep our knitters and those that crochet busy. Hopefully all of you that do knit or crochet are still busy with projects as we will be having another blessing of sweaters in April.

We are exploring getting a team together this spring for building beds for the Sleep in Heavenly Peace project that has been active in our area. Others that have participated in this before state how rewarding it has been to be a part of this. Be watching for more information on this.

Submitted by,  
Charlene Galston



On Wednesday, February 24, at 6:00 p.m. we will begin a weekly Bible Study for Lent via ZOOM. Details of the study and contact information for ZOOM will be sent with your bulletins and announcements as soon as they are available. Plan to join in the study which will continue through the weeks of Lent to Holy Week.





**Matthew 19:14: But Jesus said, "Let the children come to me. Don't stop them! For the Kingdom of Heaven belongs to those who are like these children."**

We are still uncertain of when we will be back in person for Sunday School. Our Administrative Council will meet on Tuesday, February 9, to discuss this. Watch for updates on the Sunday School Facebook page and the church webpage.

Lent Season begins on Wednesday, February 17, what is Lent? Here is an explanation you can use with your children when they ask questions about Lent. Lent Season is 40 days long, we take this time to prepare our hearts and minds for Easter. These 40 days reminds us of the 40 days Jesus was in the wilderness being tempted by the devil and preparing for His ministry. During Lent some people give something up to spend more time with God, to get closer to Him. Some examples may be, screen time, video games, soda, chocolate, and the list goes on. Talk about it as a family, maybe there is an item for the whole family to give up. Adding something is an option as well, for example reading the Bible as a family, choosing Bible scripture and discussing it. Whatever you add or give up that is meaningful in drawing you and your family closer to God.

**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](http://www.brfumc.org) for photos and other information.

### YOUTH BIRTHDAYS

FEB 8	Corbin Kapfer
FEB 10	DraMayne Sanders
FEB 29	Harper Ward



JAN 24

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



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### PRAYER FAMILIES FOR FEBRUARY

FEB 7	Paul, Robin, William & Isaac Hoffman Dave & Gail Jelinek Gene & Mary Maurer John, Shirlie, Keisha & Hunter Nimmo
FEB 14	Mike, Dana, Abigayle & Annaliese Rave Don & Vangie Stender Joan Zenz Carol Anderson
FEB 21	Wayne & Beth Bue Betty Dobson Dorothy Gearing Jay, Bethany, Jhett & Jakob Hale
FEB 28	Peter & Jone Hoffman Jim & Jill Kaphengst Mark, Tia & Jillian Maurer, Leah Kehr, & Xavier Olson Mary O'Brien







## YOUTH GROUP

Prayers and blessings for all the youth and their families. I hope everyone is staying safe and healthy.

There is still no new news on when we will be able to meet in person, but we are hoping there is an end in sight.

We will be sending a packet out in the mail soon. Please join us for our online check-ins each Wednesday night starting at 6:00 p.m. We will post a link on our Facebook Updates page.

Please contact me if you have any questions or ideas for our Wednesday night meetings.

Suzanne  
715-896-0224  
suziegoldsmith@hotmail.com  
Facebook: Black River Falls UMC Youth Group



### SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE:

Did you know that you can sponsor the Bulletins or the Radio Broadcast on a Sunday in memory or in honor of loved ones? The cost is:

- Bulletins—\$20.00 per Sunday
- Radio Broadcast—\$100.00 per Sunday

You can also provide Altar Flowers for a special Sunday. Please call Jill in the Church Office (715-284-4114) to schedule the Sunday of your choice.

## Scrip Cards



*Need a gift for your Valentine?  
How about a birthday gift or  
anniversary gift for someone special?*

Scrip cards are the perfect gift and you will be helping out the General Fund in our church at the same time. We have many cards on hand that would make excellent gifts, and we can order special cards for you, too. Contact Rhoda Gulso at 715-284-9393 to place an order for the cards of your choice. She will arrange for a convenient time for you to pick up your order.

Thank you to everyone for purchasing Scrip Cards at Christmas time this year. It had been a difficult year with the pandemic disrupting our lives since March. However, many orders for Christmas gift giving during December were greatly appreciated to help us keep the program going. It is hoped that we can return to worshiping in person soon and being able to return to a normal life once again.



We are sending out many communications (weekly bulletins, newsletters, and announcements) to our church family members via email rather than mail. Please let us know what your email address is so that you can be included in these communications. Also, if you change your email address, please let us know so we can update our contact information. Thank you so much for helping us keep the cost of postage to a minimum.





## End of Year 2020

	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget</u>
<b><u>Income:</u></b>		
Pledged & Unpledged Offerings	\$ 228,719.81	282,700.00
Other Income	<u>\$ 9,212.02</u>	<u>16,950.00</u>
Total	\$ 237,931.83	299,650.00
<b><u>Expenses:</u></b>		
Apportionments	\$ 33,525.00	44,700.00
Pastoral Support	\$ 87,287.84	92,100.00
Program Staff	\$ 73,709.86	93,266.00
Programming	\$ 6,179.59	6,600.00
Operations	<u>\$ 36,958.20</u>	<u>51,100.00</u>
Total	\$ 237,660.49	287,766.00

The total of our General Fund Expense Budget for 2021 is \$302,933.00. We have received 68 pledges to the General Fund of \$186,894.00. Thank you so much to everyone who has made a pledge so far. It is **NOT TOO LATE** to make a pledge. If you need a pledge card or have any questions, please call Jill in the Church Office (715-284-4114). As always, your faithfulness and generosity to your church is appreciated so much.

The Capital Campaign Fund began in February 2018 and will end in December 2021. 44 pledges were made for a total of \$221,275.00. As of January 15, we have received \$206,296.00 in pledges leaving an unpaid balance of \$14,979.00. Most of the improvements and upgrades included in the campaign have been completed with the exception of carpeting/flooring replacement and lighting upgrades, which are both planned for sometime this year. Please continue to make your contributions and fulfill your pledges so that all the projects that were a part of the campaign can be completed this year. Thank you so much to everyone for their contributions!

If you have an announcement or other information that you would like to have posted on the church's Facebook page or the church's website, please forward that information to the Church Office and we will get the information to our website and Facebook coordinator for publication.



### *Your Help Is Appreciated . . .*

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.

*What Happened on This Day in the history of Christianity?*

## Stubbornly Generous

### February 1



In the fifth century, according to Irish church tradition, a king impregnated a slave, and the baby, Brigid, was raised a servant who grew up grinding corn, washing feet, tending livestock, and giving the king's bacon to hungry dogs and his butter to working boys.

Losing patience, he took her nearby intending to sell her. He entered the castle to settle the arrangements. A leper passed by, and Brigid gave him her father's battle sword from the chariot. The king was enraged, and the prospective husband backed out, saying that he could not afford such a wife.

Brigid was beautiful and full of spunk, and since she loved music and conversation, her father arranged her marriage to a poet. But resolving to belong only to Christ, Brigid found the man another wife, then deserted the castle.

Her father thought it good riddance.

Brigid sought other women wanting to belong only to Christ, and with seven of them she organized a community of nuns like the communities of monks established by Patrick. The monastic settlement at Kildare became a buzzing compound within a great stone wall and peppered with thatched-roof buildings. Artists' studios, workshops, guest chambers, a library, and a church evolved. This and similar settlements became beehives of industry, producing some of the most beautiful craftsmanship in Europe. The slaves and the poor bettered their lot by becoming artisans.

Brigid herself traveled by chariot as an evangelist through the countryside, helping the poor, preaching the gospel, and organizing nunneries. By her death on **February 1, c. 453**, 13,000 women had escaped from slavery and poverty to Christian service and industry. Throughout ensuing centuries, Christians across Ireland have placed St. Brigid's crosses of woven straw over their doors on February 1, and housekeepers have repeated a rhyme bidding them give a portion of their butter to working boys.

*"If you forget to bring in a stack of harvested grain, don't go back in the field to get it. Leave it for the poor, including foreigners, orphans, and widows, and the Lord will make you successful in everything you do." - Deuteronomy 24:19*



Morgan, Robert J. *On This Day*.

*Love* the LORD your God...  
and hold fast to him.



DEUTERONOMY 30:20, NIV



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# BRF UMC Calendar of Events—February 2021



## **TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 2**

5:30 p.m.—Communications Committee Mtg.

## **WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 3**

11:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.—Prayer Vigil

4:00 p.m.—Confirmation (Virtual)

5:00 p.m.—Spirit! Rehearsal

6:00 p.m.—Youth Group (Virtual)

7:00 p.m.—Bell Choir Rehearsal

## **THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 4**

10:00 a.m.—Coffee with the Pastor

6:00 p.m.—Grand Sweep Bible Reading (Virtual)

## **SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 7**

9:00 a.m.—Worship Service

(Radio Broadcast and Facebook Live)

10:00 a.m.—Fellowship (Virtual)

## **TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 9**

5:30 p.m.—Board of Trustees Meeting

5:30 p.m.—Finance Committee Meeting

6:00 p.m.—Administrative Council Meeting

## **WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 10**

11:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.—Prayer Vigil

4:00 p.m.—Confirmation (Virtual)

5:00 p.m.—Spirit! Rehearsal

6:00 p.m.—Youth Group (Virtual)

7:00 p.m.—Bell Choir Rehearsal

## **THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 11**

10:00 a.m.—Coffee with the Pastor

1:00 p.m.—Mission Outreach Meeting

6:00 p.m.—Grand Sweep Bible Reading (Virtual)

## **SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 14**

9:00 a.m.—Worship Service

(Radio Broadcast and Facebook Live)

10:00 a.m.—Fellowship (Virtual)

## **WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 17**

11:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.—Prayer Vigil

4:00 p.m.—Confirmation (Virtual)

5:00 p.m.—Spirit! Rehearsal

6:00 p.m.—Ash Wednesday Worship Service  
via ZOOM

7:00 p.m.—Bell Choir Rehearsal

## **THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 18**

10:00 a.m.—Coffee with the Pastor

6:00 p.m.—Grand Sweep Bible Reading (Virtual)

## **SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 21**

9:00 a.m.—Worship Service

(Radio Broadcast and Facebook Live)

10:00 a.m.—Fellowship (Virtual)

## **WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 24**

11:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.—Prayer Vigil

4:00 p.m.—Confirmation (Virtual)

5:00 p.m.—Spirit! Rehearsal

6:00 p.m.—Lenten Bible Study (Virtual)

7:00 p.m.—Bell Choir Rehearsal

## **THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 25**

10:00 a.m.—Coffee with the Pastor

6:00 p.m.—Grand Sweep Bible Reading (Virtual)

## **SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 28**

9:00 a.m.—Worship Service

(Radio Broadcast and Facebook Live)

10:00 a.m.—Fellowship (Virtual)

