

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH NEWSLETTER

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

JANUARY 2018

“New Year, New Perspective”



It's official - 2017 is in the past. For some that includes disappointments, dreams unrealized, plans unfinished, and last year's New Year's resolutions long forgotten. The good news is, the moment we say goodbye to the old year and "Happy New Year" to 2018, we look forward to new opportunities for growth, for advancement, or for success in some area of our lives. And already some are resolving to lose weight (again) or make more money (again) or give up a bad habit or addiction (again?). But, if God were writing our resolutions, what do you think He would come up with?

Throughout the Bible, we see that God is a God of change. God is a change-agent that changes things, people, hearts and minds. But do we take the time to allow God to change what needs to be changed in our lives? Our calendars often have more control over our schedules and lives than we realize. We get caught trying to do more than is healthy for us, physically and spiritually, which leads to fatigue and frustration when we can't check off the items on our list.

How do you suppose God wants us to use our time? Personally, I think God is less concerned about time and more concerned about priority and perspective — a life of meaning, not efficiency. Instead of making a list of resolutions and trying to cram more into your day, why not consider the following resolutions:

1. Look for Jesus Interruptions. Be like Mary who stopped everything to sit at Jesus' feet to be with Him, instead of Martha who was wrapped up in doing (Luke 10:38-42). Being with Jesus changes your perspective on life but you have to recognize His interruptions and respond, instead of carrying on with your busy life.

- *Look for Jesus daily, and every other area of your life will benefit.*

2. Look for Opportunities to Love Others. I think we often lose touch with opportunities to love others while hurrying to scratch off our to-do list. Being busy is not a badge of honor. Looking back, what were the most significant moments of your life? Were they planned and executed? Perhaps a few. But the moments of true meaning are when we stopped the world to be present in a relationship.

- *Be available for those going through crisis, large or small, to create moments of meaning.*

3. Look for What is Unseen. “So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.” (2 Corinthians 4:18) Be aware of God's eternal plan and adjust your temporary plans to accommodate. The Living Bible translation of Proverbs 19:21 says that “Man proposes, but God disposes” referring our plans versus His.

- *Make time for a change in your vision and look to accomplish eternal purposes.*

4. Seek to Create Rich Relationships. We spend so much effort earning money, instead of investing in relationships with those right in front of us — our kids, spouse, family, neighbors and friends. I doubt your accountant will give your eulogy. There are no U-hauls in heaven. Relationships are eternal. Since relationships require communication, take time to see from the other's perspective, and listen. The old saying is true, “people don't care how much you know, until they know how much you care.”

It takes wisdom to make time for a change, and adjust your calendar to do what is really important. This year, when you look at your calendar, what will really shape your life?

May God Bless this year with an awareness of His Holy presence,

Pastor Kathy



JAN 1	Liz Lund
JAN 2	Jordan Hill
JAN 3	Rich Onstad
JAN 4	Renea Stoker
JAN 6	Bob Becker
	Dorothy Gearing
	Jim Kaphengst
JAN 8	Krystle Goldsmith
JAN 9	Pam Bue
	Tim McCann
JAN 10	Joel Pennekamp
	Norm Stoker
	Mary Van Gorden
JAN 11	Jennifer Leisgang
JAN 15	Alex Hoffman
	Jacob Onstad
JAN 16	Bob Nesbitt
JAN 17	Jeff Hagenbrock
JAN 18	Dawn Arndt
	Daniel Hefty
JAN 19	Tom Divver
	Jim Hostrawser
JAN 20	Rhonda Ammann
	Bernice Moldenhauer
JAN 22	Allan Hostrawser
JAN 25	Theresa Paul
JAN 26	Megan Harelson
JAN 27	Sally Laubach
JAN 28	John Lindahl
	Gary Potter
JAN 30	Dylan Hill
	Ed Nemece
JAN 31	Greta Bible

JAN 1	Jessica & Jonas Whitegull
JAN 18	Gary & Jackie Shankey
JAN 19	Elroy & Jann Dahl

New Member Class

There will be a membership class on **Sunday, January 21, from approximately 10:15 a.m. (following worship) to 2:00 p.m.**, in the Keefe Room. A lunch will be provided for those attending. The focus of the class will be 1) our faith, 2) the body of Christ (the Church), and 3) our call to be disciples and ambassadors for Jesus in the world.

The class is open to you if:

- 1) You are interested in becoming a professed member of BRF UMC,
- 2) You would like to learn more about BRF UMC, or
- 3) You would like a “refresher” course and perhaps renew your own membership vows.

To sign-up, call the church office at 715-284-4114 or let Pastor Kathy know by January 15th so we can plan enough food and materials.



GET YOUR UMC NEWSLETTER ONLINE!!

You can view it on our website at brfumc.org, or we can email it to you each month.

Call and let us know if you would prefer this way of reading your monthly newsletter.
715-284-4114.

United Methodist Women – A Call to Community

As I write this on Dec. 27, the rushing is over, the waiting is over. We are beginning to think about taking down the tree and packing away the decorations for another year. But we cannot pack away the message that God has sent, the gift that He has given to us. In the winter issue of the United Methodist Women's *news*, our general secretary Harriett Jane Olson wrote about the Christmas story and how all the witnesses to Christ's birth (shepherds, Simeon, Anna, the magi, even Herod) were partially correct in their interpretation of the meaning of His birth.

Then she brings the focus to us.

"What about us? How seriously do we take the birth of Jesus? Are we willing to look beyond our own expectations for how God will speak to us and how we might be called to live? Would we risk the upheaval of a powerful movement of the Holy Spirit and open our hearts to God's redemptive work not just for ourselves, but for all nations? Are we willing to look anew at how our lives, filled with good things, hinder or help the vision of the hungry, the outcast welcomed and new norms of mutual respect and well-being challenging the empires of our day?"

"I suspect that, for us, these are some of the things that would show that we are taking the birth of Jesus seriously, that we are responding to God's invitation to see Emmanuel, God with us. May Jesus be born in us again this season." (Taking Jesus' Birth Seriously, Harriett Jane Olson, *news*, Winter 2018, page 1.)

Thank you to all who supported our annual Cookie Walk with baking and/or shopping. \$1000 was raised for our mission pledge.

Remember Feb. 5 is our first meeting for 2018. Join us at 1:30 or 6:30 that day. Make 2018 the year that you become more involved.

Valentine's Day Dinner

Sunday, February 11, 5:30 p.m.

Fellowship Hall



Menu:
Lasagna
Garlic Toast
Mixed Green Salad
Sweetheart Cupcakes
Beverages



Roses and chocolates for your Valentine will be for sale!

Tickets cost \$10.00 per person and are available after Worship in the Gathering Area, or at the Church Office. For more information, call the Church Office at 715-284-4114.

ALTAR FLOWERS

Poinsettias were given in memory of . . .

- **Dorothy & Francis Harmer** and **Nicole Stetzer** from their family.
- **Roy & Gladys Rush** from Bob & Clarice Rush and family.
- **Gladys Bailey and Mary Bailey Norton** from Betty Dobson & Patty Iverson..
- **My father, Russ Cottrell**, from Pastor Kathy.
- **William Hostrawser** from the Hostrawser family.
- **Donna Smikrud** from the Hostrawser family.
- **Gary Lovlien** from Jean Lovlien & family.
- **Ken Peterson** from Jean Lovlien
- **Gene & Ione Dana** from Rich & Jill Prochaska.
- **John & Marie Prochaska** from Rich & Jill Prochaska.
- **Kelsey Olson** from Rich & Judy Lee.
- **John Hoffman** from Jone, Peter, Paul & Jim Hoffman.
- **Gerry Rudkin** from Mary Van Gorden.
- **My Granddaughter Alyssa Dawn Rave** from Nancy Hindes.
- **Our Parents** from Dave & Luane Meyer.
- **Family Members** from Wayne & Beth Bue.
- **Kelsey Olson** from Dave, Sherry & Erica Olson.
- **Harold & Lela Westerfield, Edna Simonson, and Elmer Simonson** from Leota Simonson.
- **Penny Elmore** from Barry, Karolyn & Mitchel Gjersesteth and Jessica & Jonas Whitegull.
- **Larry Anderson** from Jean Anderson.
- **Amber Rose Rave** from the Rave Family.
- **Pat Schuh** from Jim & Jill Kaphengst.

Poinsettias were given in honor of . . .

- **Amy Willette** from Sally Laubach.
- **My Confirmation mentor Rhonda Ammann** from Mallory Finch.
- **My Mom & Dad** from Dan Brauner.
- **My Neighbors Wayne & Beth Bue** from Joanne Capper.



THE GIVING TREE 2017

Thank you to everyone who selected one or more envelopes from the Giving Tree and made a donation to one of the charities or programs represented on our tree. A total of \$1,820.00 was given to the various organizations and projects as follows:

- Feed My Starving Children - \$920.00
- Heifer International (Bees) - \$290.00
- Heifer International (Chicks) - \$140.00
- Essential Needs - \$215.00
- Senegal - \$230.00
- Backpack Project - \$25.00

Your generous response to the needs of others is appreciated!. May we all continue to answer God's call and spread His love to those in need in our community and around the world in 2018.



Special thanks to Richard Hilliker and family for donating the beautiful Fraser fir Christmas in memory of Beth Hilliker.

Thanks also to Roxie Hostrawser and her crew who beautifully decorated the trees and church for Christmas, and all who provided the beautiful poinsettias this year.

Thank you so much to everyone for their generous donations for Staff Christmas Gifts. Your kindness is appreciated by all of us.

BRF UMC Staff Members

RADIO BROADCASTS

- DEC 10 Sponsored by the United Methodist Women
- DEC 24 In memory of Warren Loveland sponsored by Kim, Lee & Breanna Amborn.



BULLETINS

- DEC 17 In honor of Jim & Betty Dobson's 59th Wedding Anniversary on December 20 sponsored by their family
- DEC 24 In memory of Jennifer Hermanson, whose birthday was December 29, sponsored by her family.

MUSIC FUND

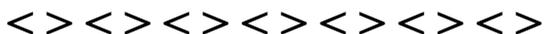
In Memory Of:
Gerry Rudkin from Judy Hansen and Marlene Taylor

RADIO BROADCAST FUND

In Memory Of:
Gerry Rudkin from Bob & Clarice Rush, and Family & Friends.

GENERAL FUND

In Memory Of:
Gerry Rudkin from Judy Sheppard



PRAYER FAMILIES FOR JANUARY

- JAN 7 Bob & Sally Laubach
Sharon Melichar
Keith, Chris & Ally Odeen
Gary Potter
- JAN 14 Vivian Simons, Lucas McNulty
Bob Uhrig
Leyah Bailey, Brody Staszak
Roger Bue
- JAN 21 Tom & Marly Divver
Larry & Sue Gaede
Howard & Kristie Gomer
Susanne Hefty
- JAN 28 Gil Homstad
Rich, Judy, Olivia & Maria Lee
Dave & Luane Meyer
Dave, Sherry & Erica Olson

E-GIVING - EASY AND CONVENIENT!

Electronic Giving (E-Giving) is a way for individual congregation members to direct gifts to the church with-out having to write out a check or fill out an envelope. In E-Giving money can be automatically transferred from your savings or checking account to the church's bank account.—and there is NO CHARGE for this service. A number of our members are already taking advantage of this easy way of giving contributions to the church..

If you would like to sign up for E-Giving, please call Jill in the Church Office. She will be glad to answer any questions you may have and help you fill out an easy authorization form. Now would be a great time to take advantage of this easy and convenient way of giving to your church!





We started practicing for the Christmas program, "The ABC Nativity" in November and what a program it was! I am so proud of all of the children. What an amazing performance! Our Sunday School Program is growing and it showed that evening! Thank you to all of the kiddos and their families, the Sunday School Team, Marcie Peterson and Mary Beck, Theresa Paul, Jill Prochaska, and my husband for sound and screens.

ROTATION MODEL: January 7 – 28 the Rotation Model will be "Follow the Star." The children will learn about the wise men who followed a sign in the sky and what other signs God gives to lead us to Jesus.

FAMILY SUNDAY: The next Family Sunday is scheduled for January 21. 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!

Mark your calendars for a PANCAKE BREAKFAST on February 18 from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. to support the camp scholarship program. The scholarship program allows our church to support members of our congregation financially who want to attend camp.

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.

REMINDER: Sunday School will begin at 9:20 a.m. and end at 10:15 a.m. (Children are encouraged to attend church with their families at 9:00 a.m. They will be dismissed to go to Sunday School following the Children's Message). The Sunday School classrooms are unsupervised until 9:20 a.m. please remain with your child until an adult arrives.

YOUTH BIRTHDAYS

JAN 2	Elizabeth Arndt
JAN 3	Nolan Boehm
JAN 5	Ryan Nandory
JAN 8	Abby Ross
JAN 16	Mason Schultz
JAN 21	Cooper Peterson
JAN 23	Olivia Caponigro
JAN 27	Karsten Hunter

SPONSORSHIP

OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE:

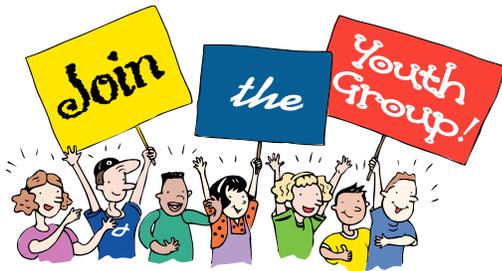
Did you know that you can sponsor the Bulletins or the Radio Broadcast on a Sunday in memory or in honor of loved ones? The cost is:

- 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.

DON'T FORGET!!

to let the Church Office know if you or your family members change your address, telephone number, email address, etc., so that we can keep in contact with you! Call us at 715-284-4114 or send us an email at brfumc@gmail.com. **THANK YOU!!**



The youth would like to thank everyone who helped with the Cookie Walk soup lunch, whether it was donating items, preparing food, serving, cleaning up, or coming to enjoy the soup.

The youth were given some beautiful handmade cards to sell at Christmas time. Thank you to this wonderful person. The money made from these cards will help with our youth program.

JANUARY YOUTH HAPPENINGS . . .

- January 10 - Youth meeting 6-7 pm
Celebrating the New Year
- January 17 - NOOMA video Bible study 6-7pm
- January 24 - Youth game night 6-7pm
- January 31 - Youth Bible study--boys/girls separate



CHURCH FAMILY NIGHT MEALS MENU

Wednesdays from 4:30-6:00 p.m.

JAN 10	Macaroni & Cheese Raw Veggies & Dip Rolls Desserts, Beverages
JAN 17	Tacos
JAN 24	Meatballs & Gravy Corn Desserts, Beverages
JAN 31	Pizza

Every week there will be hot dogs and peanut butter/jelly available. A free-will offering will be taken to cover the cost of food. Plan to join us on Wednesday evenings. Everyone Welcome!!



Have You Pledged?



Many thanks to everyone who has made a pledge (estimate of giving) to the General Fund for 2018. So far, we have received pledges from 84 households for a total of \$219,578.00.

If you haven't made a pledge yet, it is **not too late!** Your estimate of giving helps the church to plan the mission and ministries that we can support in this new year. Pledge cards for 2018 are available at the Information Station in the Gathering Area or in the Church Office. If you have any questions, please contact Jill in the Church Office (715-284-4114).

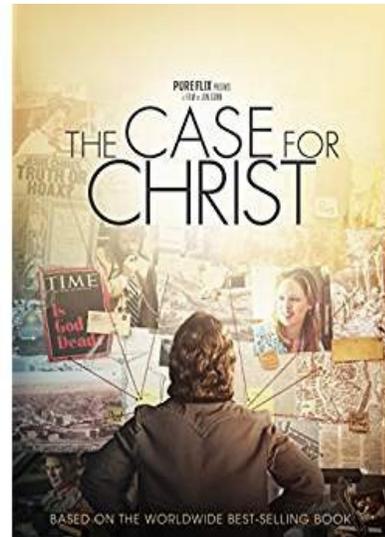
A final financial report for 2017 will be published in the February Newsletter.

Dinner and a Movie

Thursday, January 18, at 5:30 p.m.

"The Case for Christ"

Menu: Homemade Soup
Sandwiches
Dessert
Coffee or Milk



The True Story

A hard-driving journalist, Lee Strobel was exactly where he expected to be at work: on top. His award-winning investigative reporting recently earned him a promotion to legal editor at the Chicago Tribune. But things weren't going nearly as well at home where his wife Leslie's newfound faith in Christ went against everything Lee believed—or didn't believe—as an avowed atheist.

Utilizing his journalistic and legal training, Lee begins a quest to debunk the claims of Christianity in order to save his crumbling marriage. Chasing down the biggest story of his career, Lee comes face-to-face with unexpected results that could change everything he knows to be true.

Scrip Program

A big thank you to our congregation for supporting the Scrip program. Before the end of the year we were able to transfer another \$1,000 to the General Fund from the Scrip program, making the total contribution \$15,000 since the program began. Sales in December were wonderful! Your continued support for the Scrip program is much appreciated.



BRF UMC Calendar of Events—January 2018



MONDAY, JANUARY 1

CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 3

9:00 a.m.—Prayer Group
4:30-6:00 p.m.—Church Family Night Meal
5:00 p.m.—Confirmation
5:00 p.m.—PreCon
6:15 p.m.—Café Worship

THURSDAY, JANUARY 4

7:00 p.m.—Bell Choir Practice

SATURDAY, JANUARY 6

8:30 a.m.—UM Men's Group

SUNDAY, JANUARY 7

9:00 a.m.—Worship Service
9:20 a.m.—Sunday School
10:15 a.m.—UMC Choir Practice

MONDAY, JANUARY 8

CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED

Pastor Kathy Day Off

TUESDAY, JANUARY 9

5:30 p.m.—Board of Trustees Meeting
5:30 p.m.—Finance Committee Meeting
6:30 p.m.—Administrative Council Meeting

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 10

9:00 a.m.—Prayer Group
10:10 a.m.—Book Club
4:30-6:00 p.m.—Church Family Night Meal
5:00 p.m.—Confirmation
5:00 p.m.—PreCon
6:00 p.m.—Youth Program
6:15 p.m.—Café Worship

THURSDAY, JANUARY 11

7:00 p.m.—Bell Choir Practuce

SUNDAY, JANUARY 14

9:00 a.m.—Worship Service
9:20 a.m.—Sunday School
10:15 a.m.—UMC Choir Practice
10:15 a.m.—Worship Committee Meeting

MONDAY, JANUARY 15

CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED

Pastor Kathy Day Off

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 17

9:00 a.m.—Prayer Group
4:30-6:00 p.m.—Church Family Night Meal
5:00 p.m.—Confirmation
5:00 p.m.—PreCon
6:00 p.m.—Youth Program
6:15 p.m.—Café Worship

SUNDAY, JANUARY 21

9:00 a.m.—Worship Service
FAMILY SUNDAY
COMMUNION
10:15 a.m.—New Member Class
10:15 a.m.—UMC Choir Practice

MONDAY, JANUARY 22

CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED

Pastor Kathy Day Off

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 24

9:00 a.m.—Prayer Group
4:30-6:00 p.m.—Church Family Night Meal
5:00 p.m.—Confirmation
5:00 p.m.—PreCon
6:00 p.m.—Youth Program
6:15 p.m.—Café Worship

THURSDAY, JANUARY 25

7:00 p.m.—Bell Choir Practice

SUNDAY, JANUARY 28

9:00 a.m.—Worship Service
9:20 a.m.—Sunday School
10:15 a.m.—UMC Choir Practice

MONDAY, JANUARY 29

CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED

Pastor Kathy Day Off

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 31

9:00 a.m.—Prayer Group
4:30-6:00 p.m.—Church Family Night Meal
5:00 p.m.—Confirmation
5:00 p.m.—PreCon
6:00 p.m.—Youth Program
6:15 p.m.—Café Worship



January