

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH NEWSLETTER

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

JANUARY 2020

Dear Beloved,

I'm thinking that you will get this newsletter just before the end of the year or shortly after the first of the year. Either way, we will still be finishing the Christmas season that runs from Christmas Day through the sixth of January (Epiphany Day). I always think it so strange that once Christmas Day is done most people would say Christmas is over. But the gift of Jesus Christ to the world is a gift that we need to be reminded of every day. Without his life, death and resurrection, you and I would live meaningless lives.

I read an excerpt from a book today (“The Very Best, Hands-on, Kinda Dangerous Family Devotions” by Tim Shoemaker) in which a dad took his three sons to watch the races at a local race track. The boys had great fun but on the way home they noted that it was just a bunch of men going around in circles and most of them ended about where they started and so they gained nothing. The point of the story was that living by the world standards we simply keep going around in circles and gain nothing. Matthew 16:26 states “What good will it be for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul? Or what can anyone give in exchange for their soul?”

As Christians, Disciples of Jesus Christ, we live in and by the power of the Holy Spirit. We have both a purpose and a destination. This leads me to share with you three opportunities for you to clarify your purpose in Christ's Kingdom in this world and to look forward to the Heavenly Kingdom that is yet to come.

First, I will be facilitating a class Sunday mornings. The class is on “Soul Keeping.” How do we go about taking care of our soul as children of God? We will be watching a video, answering some group questions and then have time between sessions for reflection. The plan is to start at 10:30am and be done by 11:30am. I pray that you will be bold and sign up for the class. There will also be a study Thursday evenings on the Gospel of John.

Secondly, I will begin on January 12th a sermon series on the Book of Romans. We are going to roam through Romans and take a look at Paul's road to salvation. Why do we need a savior? How can we be saved? What does that mean in my life? What practical applications can we incorporate into our lives that will make a difference for us and for those around us? Why not invite a friend or two to come to church with you so they too can hear what Paul has to say to us.

OK! One last thing. Never forget the gift of LIFE that you have received through Jesus the Christ. Pass the gift on. Maybe you have heard the song ‘The Gift Goes On’ by Sandi Patty. Here are the lyrics:

*The Father gave the Son, the Son gave the Spirit
The Spirit gives us life, so we can give the Gift of love
And the Gift goes on
And the Gift goes on
And the Gift goes on
And the Gift goes on
Don't you love to get a present, wrapped up in a Christmas bow
God gave each of us a present, on that night so long ago
It's a Gift that keeps on giving, if our spirits can receive
It's the secret joy of living, if our hearts can just believe
And the Gift goes on....*

In Jesus' love and grace,

Pastor Wendell





JAN 1	Liz Lund
JAN 2	Jordan Hill
JAN 4	Renea Stoker
JAN 6	Dorothy Gearing Jim Kaphengst
JAN 8	Krystle Goldsmith
JAN 9	Pam Bue Tim McCann Abby Ross
JAN 10	Joel Pennekamp Norm Stoker Mary Van Gorden
JAN 11	Alex Hoffman Jennifer Leisgang
JAN 16	Bob Nesbitt
JAN 17	Jeff Hagenbrock
JAN 18	Dawn Arndt
JAN 19	Jim Hostrawser
JAN 20	Rhonda Ammann
JAN 22	Allan Hostrawser
JAN 25	Theresa Paul
JAN 26	Megan Harelson
JAN 27	Patrick Coville Sally Laubach
JAN 28	John Lindahl Gary Potter
JAN 30	Dylan Hill Ed Nemec



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



LOVE GIFTS FOR JESUS

Thank you to everyone who gave to one or more of the three ministries that were selected to be the recipients of our Christmas Eve offering this year. A total of \$4,159.50 was given to the ministries as follows:

- Senegal - \$2,278.00
- UMCOR - \$844.50
- Sleep in Heavenly Peace - \$1,037.00

Your generous response to the needs of others is greatly 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 2020.

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 – Faith, Hope, Love in Action

UMW just completed its 150th anniversary in 2019. A new year has begun. What lies ahead for BRF UMW?

With a strong focus on missions, we will continue to be involved in projects and services that outreach to children, youth and women in need. We will do this through our monetary giving, working with our hands and hearts, and through prayer. We extend an invitation to all women who are interested in finding out more about UMW to visit with one of our members or attend our February “Get To Know BRF UMW” on Sunday, February 2nd in the church Fellowship Hall. We are also exploring ways to welcome young women into UMW. Their passion and ideas on supporting communities near and far will add an energy to the work of BRF UMW.

The work of UMW globally reaches into our local communities and it is important that as members, we put the mission focus in perspective. Taken from the November/December 2019 response is a statement from Harriett Jane Olson, General Secretary of UMW, “United Methodist Women members are often called on to be “doers,” and we can be “distracted by many things” as Martha was (Luke 10:41). But we are also called to breathe, to reflect and to remember that all that we have, including our call to mission, is a gift from God.

Dates to remember:

February 2: 10:30 a.m. - “Get to Know BRF UMW” – join us for a light lunch in the Fellowship Hall and learn how UMW is at work



NEW BIBLE STUDIES STARTING IN JANUARY

The study of “**The Gospel of John**” by Max Lucado will be starting on Thursday, January 9, at 5:30 p.m. This is a twelve-week study in which we will be able to witness Jesus’ ministry through John’s eyes and pen.

Pastor Wendell will also be starting a video-based study on “**Soul Keeping**” by John Ortberg on Sundays after worship beginning on Sunday, January 12. The author will take you on an exploration of the soul from the perspective of someone who has struggled to understand and care for his own soul.

Sign-up sheets are available on the Information Station. Please sign up so we will know how many books to order for each class.



THANKS FOR THE GIFTS!

Many, many thanks to everyone who took ornaments and envelopes off of the Family Christmas Tree in the Gathering Area and helped to make Christmas more special for two families this year!

Each ornament on the tree was marked with a specific gift item, a food item or a gift card suggestion. As the ornaments on the tree disappeared, the wrapped gifts and food items started to mount up underneath the tree. What a joy it was to watch as the amount of gifts grew!

As a result of your generosity and giving spirit, you have helped in making a difference in the lives of two families in our local community!

ALTAR FLOWERS

Poinsettias were given in memory of . . .

- **William Hostrawser** from Jim & Roxie Hostrawser
- **Donna Smikrud** from Jim & Roxie Hostrawser
- **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 Dave, Sherry & Erica Olson
- **John Hoffman** from Peter & Jone Hoffman
- **Our Parents** from Wayne & Beth Bue
- **Jayden Gjerseeth, Penny Elmore, and Richard Carrier** from the Gjerseeth family
- **Kelsey Olson** from the Allen's
- **Lyle Hart** from Ruth, Jane, Sally & Gail
- **Joyce & Clarence Paul** from John & Theresa Paul
- **Elwin & Juanita Buchholz and Michael Buchholz** from John & Theresa Paul
- **Gladys, Mary & Vicki Bailey** from Betty Dobson and Patty Iverson
- **Duane & Lavina Hoffman** from Gene & Janet Krohn
- **Robert & Mary Krohn** from Gene & Janet Krohn
- **Roger Hansen** from Judy Hansen & family
- **Alice Homstad** from Gil Homstad
- **Larry Anderson** from Jean Anderson
- **Kathleen Bruce Van Gorden** from Mary Van Gorden
- **Lewis & Lucille Hagenbrock** from Barb & Jeff Hagenbrock
- **James Know** from Elaine Know
- **Christopher Know** from Karen Pennekamp
- **Ralph Clements** from Christine Schultz
- **Lavern & Cecilia Hemmersbach** from Christine Schultz
- **Ed & Emma Brauner and Oscar & Edna Anderson** from Dan Brauner
- **Dorothy & Francis Harmer and Nicole Stetzer** from their family
- **Warren Loveland** from Nancy Iuliano and Mary Loveland
- **Russell Sheppard** from Mary Loveland



ALTAR FLOWERS (Continued)

Poinsettias were given in memory of . . .

- **Our Parents** from Grant & Geri Allen
- **Carl & Muriel Lind** from Mike & Betty Lind
- **Kelsey Olson** from Rich & Judy Lee

Poinsettias were given in honor of . . .

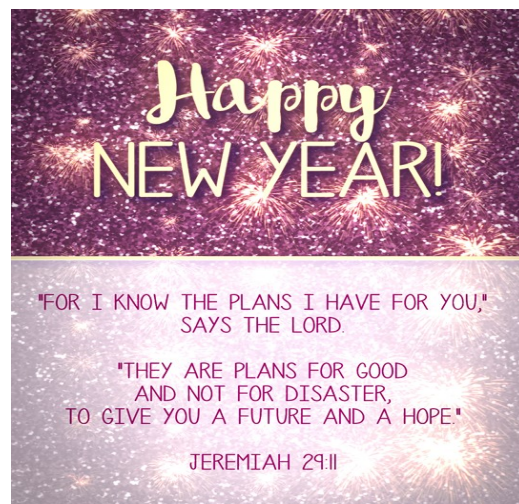
- **My Family** from Joan Zenz



Special thanks to Bill & Clarice Salsbery for their donation of three Christmas wreaths that are decorating the outside of our church this year. Also thanks to Dick Hilliker for donating the beautiful Fraser fir Christmas tree which stands outside the main entrance of the church.

This year we added two new beautiful artificial Christmas trees for the Sanctuary. Thank you to those who donated money to help purchase the new trees. Thank you also to Bob Uhrig for donating the artificial tree which decorated the Fellowship Hall this year.

As always, many thanks go to Roxie Hostrawser and all who so beautifully decorated the trees and church for Christmas this year. Also, many thanks to all who provided the beautiful poinsettias, and to Sue Lindahl who came to water and care for the plants each week.



BULLETINS

- DEC 15 In honor Lucas McNulty's birthday which is on December 16
- DEC 29 In memory of Jennifer Hermanson, whose birthday was December 29, sponsored by her family.



Sincere sympathy is extended to the family and friends of the following people who passed away recently:

Betty Simplot
December 4, 2019

Marian Millis
December 26, 2019



PRAYER GROUP FUND

In Memory Of:

Harold & Doris Hermanson from Rosalie Hermanson



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!

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.





Our newly formed UMC Youth Ringtones Handbell Choir played 2 songs on December 15 at the 9:00 a.m. Worship. What an amazing opportunity for our Sunday School Program! Money from the Church's Music Fund was used to purchase 32 additional handbells, color coded cards, and CDs so everyone can be involved in this music adventure! Watch for the choir in the next few months!

We started practicing for the Christmas program, "The Inn Crowd" in October. What a program it was! I am so proud of all of the children. aWhat an amazing performance! Our Sunday School Program is growing and it showed that evening. 47 children participated in the program! Thank you to all of the children and their families, the Sunday School Team, Megan Finch, Rod and Katrina McGillivray, and my husband for stepping in that night.

FAMILY SUNDAY: The next Family Sunday is scheduled for January 19. 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 16 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. Watch for more info on SUMMER CAMPS!!!

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

JAN 2	Elizabeth Arndt
	Alice Christianson
JAN 3	Nolan Boehm
JAN 5	Ryan Nandory
JAN 6	Ruth Ann Christianson
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!!**



Happy New Year, families. We hope you had a blessed and happy holiday season. We look forward to getting back into routine. Our schedule is as follows for January:

January 1: No Youth

January 8: Youth Group 6-7 p.m.

January 15: Youth Group 5-7 p.m. Come early for pizza and fellowship

January 22: Youth Group 6-7 p.m.

January 29: Youth Group 6-7 p.m.

All youth girls in 6th-12th grades, watch the mail for an invite to our first UMYW (United Methodist Young Women) meeting. We are excited for this newly formed group and all the wonderful opportunities the young women of our church will have.

We are working with Pastor Wendell in planning an amazing mission trip. Watch for details to follow.

Suzanne Goldsmith

715-896-0224

suziegoldsmith@hotmail.com

Facebook: Black River Falls UMC Youth Group



PRAYER FAMILIES FOR JANUARY

JAN 5	Mark, Amy, Alex & Kristian Hoffman Tyler Bue Mike & Leanne Kappen Dave & Luane Meyer
JAN 12	Dan & Lisa McCullough family Elaine Ott Erica Olson Mark & Kay Simonson
JAN 19	Rod & Thyra Zirk Paul Brauner Darrell & Cathy Armbruster Elaine Know
JAN 26	Grant & Geri Allen Nancy Burchard Tom & Lois Epps Sun Gorski

Scrip Cards



Be sure to see Rhoda, Rhonda, Joan or Lois on Sunday mornings to purchase your Scrip Gift Cards! Now is a perfect time to get ready for second semester school expenses, something new to wear for winter, groceries, gas for your car, or a date night dinner! Scrip Cards are also great to give as gifts. And, with the proceeds the church gets from the sale of each card, you are helping your church, too. What could be better than that?!





Van Etta Library

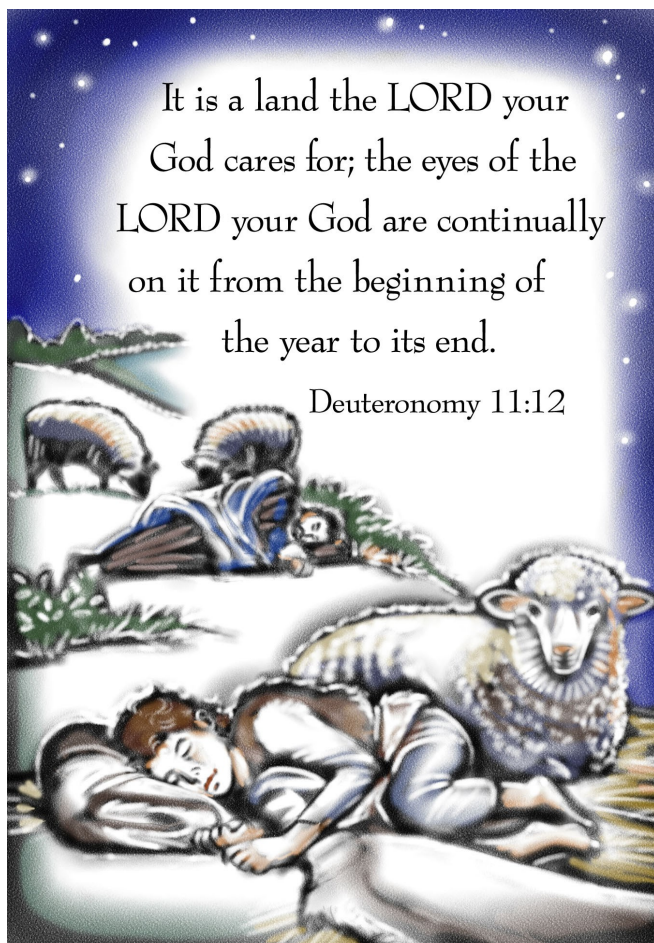
BOOK REVIEW

The Road Home
by Richard Paul Evans

This is the third installment of the series that began with The Broken Road and continued in The Forgotten Road. Chicago celebrity Charles James is supposed to be dead. Everyone believes he was killed in a fiery plane crash—a flight he narrowly missed. Escaping death has brought him some clarity about the money, fame, and expensive cars, which now bring him no true joy or peace. He starts on a pilgrimage across America on the iconic Route 66, leaving from Amarillo, Texas to Santa Monica, California. He still has lessons to learn on the way before he discovers his true destination.

The Van Etta Library has all three of the books in this series.

Rhoda Gulso, Librarian



amazonsmile
You shop. Amazon gives.

Our church is now enrolled in **Amazon Smile**, a program where Amazon donates 0.5% of the price of eligible **smile.Amazon.com** purchases to charitable organizations of your choice.

To set up an account, use our unique charity link : <https://smile.amazon.com/ch39-1077829>, and you will automatically be asked if you want to support **Methodist Church of Black River Falls Inc.** After that, all you have to do is use **smile.amazon.com** instead of the usual **amazon.com** when placing an order. Log into your account, and start shopping! It is that easy!

If you have questions or concerns, please feel free to call the church office and we would be glad to help you with setting up your account.

BRF UMC Calendar of Events—January 2020



WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 1

CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED

THURSDAY, JANUARY 2

6:00 p.m.—Bell Choir Practice

7:00 p.m.—Choir Practice

9:00 a.m.—Worship Service

9:05 a.m.—Sunday School

10:30 a.m.—Mission Outreach Meeting

MONDAY, JANUARY 6

CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 8

9:00 a.m.—Prayer Group

5:15 p.m.—PreCon

6:00 p.m.—Youth Group

THURSDAY, JANUARY 9

6:00 p.m.—Bell Choir Practice

7:00 p.m.—Choir Practice

SATURDAY, JANUARY 11

8:30 a.m.—UM Men's Group Meeting
at Skyline

SUNDAY, JANUARY 12

9:00 a.m.—Worship Service

9:05 a.m.—Sunday School

MONDAY, JANUARY 13

CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED

TUESDAY, JANUARY 14

5:30 p.m.—Board of Trustees Meeting

5:30 p.m.—Finance Committee Meeting

6:15 p.m.—Administrative Council Meeting

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 15

9:00 a.m.—Prayer Group

5:00 p.m.—Spirit! Practice

5:15 p.m.—PreCon

6:00 p.m.—Youth Group

THURSDAY, JANUARY 16

6:00 p.m.—Bell Choir Practice

7:00 p.m.—Choir Practice

SUNDAY, JANUARY 19

9:00 a.m.—Worship Service

FAMILY SUNDAY

COMMUNION

MONDAY, JANUARY 20

CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 22

9:00 a.m.—Prayer Group

5:15 p.m.—PreCon

6:00 p.m.—Youth Group

THURSDAY, JANUARY 23

6:00 p.m.—Bell Choir Practice

7:00 p.m.—Choir Practice

SUNDAY, JANUARY 26

9:00 a.m.—Worship Service

9:05 a.m.—Sunday School

MONDAY, JANUARY 27

CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED

TUESDAY, JANUARY 28

5:30 p.m.—Worship Committee Meeting

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 29

9:00 a.m.—Prayer Group

5:15 p.m.—PreCon

6:00 p.m.—Youth Group

THURSDAY, JANUARY 30

6:00 p.m.—Bell Choir Practice

7:00 p.m.—Choir Practice



January