

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH NEWSLETTER

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

NOVEMBER 2020

As the deer longs for streams of water, so I long for you, O God. – Psalm 42:1 (NLT)

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ Jesus at BRF,

Peace be with you. These are uncertain and difficult times. We have never been in the situation in which we now find ourselves. It is not necessary to report current statistics on the death rate and positive cases of the virus. As you might notice, our world seems turned upside down. It is true that anxiety and fear concerning how this pandemic will affect us are consuming us. We are currently overwhelmed by the flood of information about both COVID-19 and presidential election this November that ceaselessly comes to us on social media. We seem to be confused and paralyzed by not knowing what to do. Despite these troubles, I pray for all of you to be healthy, safe, and comfortable in faith in God.



When I visited one of our church members recently, I was asked what my vision as pastor is and what I want to do at our church. Without hesitation, I answered that my dream is to help our congregants spiritually grow as our Lord Jesus Christ wants us to grow. I hope our members become like Jesus Christ, our example of life.

Last week, we celebrated the 503rd anniversary of the Reformation, which began in 1517. Because of the pandemic our celebration of the Reformation this year is different from what we have done in the past. Thinking of the Reformation, I delve into the reason why has God allowed us to go through unprecedented suffering even in the modern era.

I don't want to figure out the scientific causes of the pandemic. Rather, I want theologically to reflect on why this has happened to us now. So I would like to look into the Bible to figure out reasons why God allowed the Israelites to be forced into exile in Babylon in the Old Testament. The Bible answers, *"For my people have done two evil things: They have abandoned me—the fountain of living water. And they have dug for themselves cracked cisterns that can hold no water at all!"* (Jeremiah 2:13). In other words, the Israelites abandoned their God who delivered them from the Egypt where they had suffered and worshipped idols. They had gone too far astray.

I recall a rallying cry of the Reformation, which is *"ad fontes."* It's a Latin expression meaning "back to the sources" or "back to the fount." When the Reformers used it, they were talking about a return to the Scriptures and to Christ, the primary sources of the Christian faith. It is true that our Lord Jesus Christ is the source of our life and the Word of God is the foundation of our life.

Going back to the sources is not a retrograde movement, but restoration, rebirth, and renewal—looking backwards to find wisdom and life so that one can go forward with strength, so to speak. Os Guinness writes, "The Church always goes forward best by going backwards. The surest way to go forwards is always to look back to the thing that gave you your life in the first place." It is interesting to find a similar expression in a Chinese maxim, (온고지신, 溫故知新), meaning review the old and learn the new, try to find a guide into tomorrow by taking lessons from the past, take a leaf out of a wise man's book.

The phrase *ad fontes* is interestingly found in Psalm 42:1: *"As a deer pants for flowing streams (is drawn unto the sources), so pants my soul for you, O God."* (ESV). The author here expresses a deep longing to return to God as the source of his life. He deeply grieved life apart from God who is our source of life.

(Continued on Page 2)

(Continued from Page 1)

What is the fountain? The fountain is the Living God. Jesus says, *"I am the way, the truth, and life,"* (John 14:6) and *"whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life."* (John 4:14). The true fountain is "Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God; it is the Gospel, the power of God for salvation; and it is the Scriptures, the Word of God which abides forever." These are the springs that gave us our life.

I also recall the words that the Lord uses to reproach the church in Ephesus, *"You have forsaken the love you had at first. Consider how far you have fallen! Repent and do the things you did at first."* (Revelation 2:4-5). I believe it is time to ask ourselves the fundamental questions: Where am I from? When and how have I encountered Jesus Christ personally?

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, I encourage you to remember where you came from. Let us return to the source of our life, our living God. Amen.

Pastor Rev. Inwha Shon



November Birthdays and Anniversaries

NOV 1	Judy Hansen	NOV 1	Dave & Ann Smetana
	Joan Zenz	NOV 3	John & Shirlie Nimmo
NOV 4	Larry Whaley	NOV 4	LeRoy & Kim Amborn
NOV 5	Erica Gentry	NOV 6	Bob & Kathy Lind
	Barry Gjersest	NOV 8	Roy & Dorothy Hefty
	Jill Kaphengst	NOV 11	Rich & Suzanne Goldsmith
NOV 6	Gene Maurer	NOV 28	Joe & Margery Collins
NOV 8	Sam Lund		
NOV 9	Carrie Farnsworth		
NOV 10	Grant Allen		
NOV 12	Beth Amborn		
	David Hoffman		
NOV 15	Linda McCullough		
NOV 17	Ryan Dobson		
	Tia Maurer		
NOV 18	Dana Rave		
	Sarah Wiersma		
NOV 20	Dan Jelinek		
NOV 21	Michael Rave		
NOV 28	Pat Brauner		
	Karen Pennekamp		
NOV 29	Jackie Shankey		

YOUR CHURCH NEWSLETTER IS AVAILABLE ONLINE at brfumc.org or it will be sent to you by email. Only a limited number of newsletters are being sent by mail.

Call the church office for more information (715-284-4114).



Ahh the chill of fall in the air and apple cider under your nose. Don't forget the aroma of homemade cookies wafting through the air around the holiday hustle and bustle of it all. The laughter is among us and memories are full forward in the works of sharing stories and snuggling with our family close at hand.

Well yes, it is only November, but both Thanksgiving and Christmas are fast approaching as we speak. Holidays are the time when we should SLOW DOWN not go, go, go faster until we can't get enough sleep and crash completely on weekends.



Unfortunately, this year UMW or United Methodist Women will not be able to help with your holiday baking needs with our annual Cookie Walk, usually held in December. Like most of 2020, this year is a little different and things aren't quite the same. The UMW ladies have decided to be smart and safe and close our kitchens to the baking this year for others. We highly encourage you bakers...men, women, grandmas, grandpas, and any relatives to SLOW DOWN this holiday time this year and bake some memories, I mean cookies, with your loved ones and make it a little more fun.

Please understand, we didn't come to this decision lightly. I think we talked about it for three months straight. We want to keep everyone safe, so please understand we will be thinking of you in YOUR KITCHENS this year. We hope to return in 2021 with our annual Cookie Walk. Until then, be blessed and enjoy YOUR baking memories in your kitchens.

Happy Thanksgiving and Merry Christmas,

The UMW Ladies

Please let us know . . .

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.



Due to the increased spread of the COVID-19 virus in the State of Wisconsin and Jackson County, and in keeping with the recommendation of our United Methodist Conference, it has been decided that our live in-person worship services should be discontinued until further notice. It is hoped that we can resume having our live worship services again in December. We will keep everyone informed of any updates.

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-



The financial report through the month of September 2020 is as follows:

Income:

Offerings	\$ 176,899.59
Other Income	\$ 5,574.62
Total	\$ 182,474.21
Budgeted Income	\$ 224,737.50

Expenses

Apportionments	\$ 22,350.00
Programming	\$ 3,738.01
Pastoral Support	\$ 58,918.94
Program Staff	\$ 52,290.62
Operations	\$ 27,824.49
Total	\$ 165,122.06
Budgeted Expenses	\$ 215,824.50

Our financial situation has been holding steady. We have been able to keep all of our bills paid in full. We have paid six of our apportionments to the conference so far. The Paycheck Protection Program Loan we received in May was a great help in paying full-time salaries for an 8-week period this summer. We have applied for forgiveness of the loan so that we will not have to paid it back.

At our Finance Committee Meeting in October it was decided that we should do a more formal stewardship campaign this fall, giving our members a chance to make a pledge to the General Fund. Letters and pledge cards were sent out last week.

As always, the Finance Committee would like to thank all who continue to give generously to the church, its mission, and ministries.

Wayne Bue, Finance Committee Chairperson



Our Annual Charge Conference will be held on Thursday, December 3, at 6:30 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. All members of the church are encouraged to come to this important annual meeting of the church. Our District Superintendent, Rev. Tsuker Yang, will be here to conduct the meeting. In order to keep everyone safe, we will be observing social distancing, and masks will be required to be worn.



Dear Friends in Mission,

Thank you for supporting the Senegal Wellness Project! The dear people you helped with your monetary gifts may never have the opportunity to meet you, but if they did, I am certain their response would be — *Thank you!*

Through your financial support you are partnering with others to engage globally in direct ministry to people in need. Together may we continue to reveal the love of God for men, women, and children of all ethnic, racial, cultural, and national backgrounds and to demonstrate the healing power of the gospel with those who suffer.

Grace and Peace,

Roland Fernandes, General Secretary

Global Ministries of the United Methodist Church

<> <> <> <> <> <> <>

BRF UMC Members and Staff,

I want to thank you for making the **Coldtober Collection** a success! Ann Smetana and I took 15 trash bags of various winter items and dropped them off at the homeless Westside Roots Outreach site in St. Paul, MN, on Saturday, October 24. They were amazed there was so much and asked me to say “thank you very much!”

The cold weather event date is November 1. They plan to take pictures to forward which I will share. Please remember the homeless in your prayers. It’s getting cold!

God Bless you all. We couldn’t make it possible without working together.

Terrie Stevens

<> <> <> <> <> <> <>

Continued thanks to Dave Dettinger who takes care of recycling all the aluminum cans that are left in the can recycling bin in the back parking lot of the church. Dave makes many trips to recycling centers mostly out of town and keeps the area in the back parking lot neat and clean. Any funds that are received from the can recycling are deposited in the UM Men’s Group account where they will go toward various improvement projects that the Men’s Group does around the church. Thank you, Dave! Your efforts are appreciated!



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."

In October the Sunday School team has been using the Rotation Model within their classroom. The children have enjoyed music, playing games, art, and edible projects as they learned about the book of Genesis and Creation. The Rotation Model for November is "Building Our Lives on God."

The Sunday School classes have been creating art for the veterans at the Tomah VA, the first package went out on October 21, we will continue this as long as they ask for artwork. The classes will also be making Christmas cards for soldiers overseas, this will be the 3rd year we have participated in Operation Christmas Cards for Troops. It is important to have even the youngest children participate in a Mission project. It teaches them how to care for others, gives them an opportunity to serve and feel like they are being helpful within our church, and finally it helps them develop in their faith.

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.

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.

YOUTH BIRTHDAYS

NOV 3	Xavier Olson
NOV 5	Julia Smetana
NOV 7	Amelia Crocker
NOV 10	Ella Hatleli
NOV 22	Ella Goldsmith
	Madyson Schultz
NOV 23	Daniel Goldsmith

PRAYER FAMILIES FOR NOVEMBER

Nov. 1	Pat & Diane Moe Don & Vangie Stender Terrie Stevens Grant & Geri Allen
Nov. 8	Pat & Judy Brauner Sylvia, Rachel & Amelia Crocker Megan & Mallory Finch Sun Gorski
Nov. 15	Amelia Hoffman, Aldo Hagar Nancy Iuliano Bob & Kathy Lind Jeremy, Jana & Ryan Nandory
Nov. 22	Derek & Marcie Peterson Cooper, Briar, Tucker & Ella Leota Simonson Larry & Cathy Whaley LeRoy & Kim Amborn
Nov. 29	Jason, Kristin & Benjamin Breining Elroy & Jann Dahl Mike & LuAnn Gaede Dick & Vonnie Greene



Celebrate
WITH ALL THE BOUNTY
THAT THE LORD YOUR GOD
HAS GIVEN TO YOU.

DEUTERONOMY 26:11, NRSV





YOUTH GROUP NEWS . . .



I particularly love the fall season. Every day I am able to soak in all the colors. I am reminded and amazed at the creation God has blessed us with. Take the time for a walk, take time to slow down and rest and be refreshed in the goodness that we need during these trying times in our lives.

Last week, the decision was made after careful discussion, thought and prayer, that we would meet as a group virtually for the time being because of the increase in Covid cases in Wisconsin. Remember, this can change from week to week. We will contact everyone via Facebook messenger and on our Facebook page of any updates, so please check before each weekly meeting. If you would prefer to be contacted another way besides messenger, please let Suzanne know.

I continue to pray each day for students and their families, whether attending class in person or virtually, that God is with all of you, keeping everyone safe and healthy. Prayers that each of us finds joy in each day..

Suzanne Goldsmith

715-896-0224

suziegoldsmith@hotmail.com

Facebook: Black River Falls UMC Youth Group



Free Annual Community Thanksgiving Dinner

Thanksgiving Day, Thursday, November 26
St. John's Lutheran Church
351 Jefferson St., Black River Falls

**NO SEATED MEAL
CURBSIDE PICK-UP OR DELIVERY* ONLY**

***Deliveries for home bound and elderly people only.
Please call 715-284-4657 for deliveries. No delivery
requests taken after 6:00 p.m. on Wed., November 25.**

Curbside Pick-up: No need to call ahead. Enter church parking lot from Forrest Street, follow signs. Curbside pickup starts at 11:30 a.m. and ends at 2:30 p.m.

Donations may be made at time of pick-up or through Go Fund Me: ***GoFundMe Thanksgiving Dinner Black River Falls WI.***

Sponsored by St. John's Lutheran Church

E-GIVING EASY AND CONVENIENT!

It will soon be time to renew the automatic contributions to the church for 2021. Those who already have their contributions set up for 2020 will be contacted to renew or make changes to their contributions for next year.

If you would like to have information about how this program works, please contact 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!



What Happened On This Day in the History of Christianity?

High Noon, October 31

In 1517 Pope Leo X, empty-pocketed and needing funds to rebuild St. Peter's basilica, issued a special "sale" of indulgences. The very word "indulgence" tends to convey dubious moral connotations, but these indulgences were particularly questionable. What was an "indulgence"? It was a special sort of forgiveness for sins issued by the pope in consideration of various acts of merit, in this case donations to Leo's treasury. Indulgences could even be "purchased" on behalf of loved ones in purgatory.

Dominican friar Johann Tetzel became the pontiff's peddler, a P. T. Barnum traveling around with a brass-bound chest, a bag of printed receipts, and an enormous cross draped with a papal banner. Whenever Tetzel came to a town, church bells pealed, crowds gathered, and street performers kicked up their heels. Tetzel would set up shop in the nave of the local church, open his bags, and shout, "I have here the passports to lead the human soul to the celestial joys of Paradise. As soon as the coin rings in the bowl, the soul for whom it is paid will fly from purgatory and straight to heaven."

He usually exceeded his quota.

But many were troubled, and when the hard eyes of Martin Luther fell on the indulgences purchased by fellow villagers in Wittenberg, he studied them carefully and pronounced them frauds. At high noon on October 31, 1517, Luther, a 33-year-old university professor, walked to the door of Castle Church in Wittenberg, Germany, and tacked to it a document. The door served as the town bulletin board, and Martin Luther had an announcement to post. He called for a "disputation on the power and efficacy of indulgences."

A few curious passersby drew near and scanned the words: "Out of love for the faith and the desire to bring it to light, the following propositions will be discussed at Wittenberg under the chairmanship of the Reverend Father Martin Luther, Master of Arts and Sacred Theology...." There followed a list of 95 items.

Luther did not yet know what mighty blows he had struck.

God is our mighty fortress, always ready to help in times of trouble. Nations rage! Kingdoms fall! But at the voice of God the earth itself melts. The Lord All-Powerful is with us. The God of Jacob is our fortress. Psalm 46:1,6,7

- *On This Day* by Robert Morgan.



BRF UMC Calendar of Events November 2020



WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 4

5:00 p.m.—Spirit! Practice
6:00 p.m.—Virtual Youth Group
7:00 p.m.—Bell Choir Practice

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 5

5:30 p.m.—Worship Committee Meeting

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 8

9:00 a.m.—Worship Service (Facebook Live and Radio Broadcast—WWIS 99.7 FM)
9:15 a.m.—Virtual 6/7th Grade Sunday School
10:15 a.m.—Virtual PreConfirmation

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 9

5:30 p.m.—UMW Officer's Meeting

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 10

6:00 p.m.—Ad Council ZOOM Meeting

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 11

5:00 p.m.—Spirit! Practice
6:00 p.m.—Virtual Youth Group
7:00 p.m.—Bell Choir Practice

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 15

9:00 a.m.—Worship Service (Facebook Live and Radio Broadcast—WWIS 99.7 FM)
9:15 a.m.—Virtual 6/7th Grade Sunday School
10:15 a.m.—Virtual PreConfirmation

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 17

5:30 p.m.—Finance Committee Meeting

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 18

5:00 p.m.—Spirit! Practice
5:30 p.m.—Nominations Committee Meeting
6:00 p.m.—Virtual Youth Group
7:00 p.m.—Bell Choir Practice

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 19

4:30 p.m.—Mission Outreach ZOOM Meeting

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 22

9:00 a.m.—Worship Service (Facebook Live and Radio Broadcast—WWIS 99.7 FM)
9:15 a.m.—Virtual 6/7th Grade Sunday School
10:15 a.m.—Virtual PreConfirmation

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 25

NO ACTIVITIES / THANKSGIVING EVE

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 29

9:00 a.m.—Worship Service (Facebook Live and Radio Broadcast—WWIS 99.7 FM)
NO SUNDAY SCHOOL OR PRECON

