

United Methodist Church
PO Box 94
804 St. John St.
Boyceville, WI 54725

Return Service Requested



Newsletter of Boyceville, Faith and Grace
United Methodist Churches
Pastor Shannon Mattison
Parsonage: 715-749-6351 Cell: 715-220-0081
Email: shannonmattison@yahoo.com

January 2021

The Gleaner

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

I was recently reminded of the Dr. Seuss book Green Eggs and Ham. If you remember, there are two main characters in the book, Sam I Am and an unnamed character. Sam I Am persistently tries to get the unnamed character to try a plate of green eggs and ham. No matter how Sam I Am tries to tempt the unnamed character into trying green eggs and ham, the unnamed character is just as persistent in declaring that it doesn't like green eggs and ham. Eventually the unnamed character says it will not like them but will try them if Sam I am will let it be. And of course, if you remember, the unnamed character is surprised because it finds it does like green eggs and ham.

As we move into a new year, many of us will make New Year's resolutions. Some of them will be about making changes in our lives; some of them will be about trying new things. Looking back over the year we are leaving, there were many changes in our lives. Many of them we have not been happy with and look forward to being able to leave behind in the hopefully near future. Yet there are others which have brought us into a new age and will probably not be left behind. Without the challenges we have been facing, we may not have tried many of these, or at least not as soon as we have. No matter what resolutions we make, as with the unnamed character, it is hard for us to make changes even when we choose them.

There is one for who does not shy away from new things. As we celebrate the incarnation of God through the birth of Jesus the Christ, we celebrate a new thing, actually many new things. In Isaiah we find God speaking through a prophet saying

Don't remember the prior things; don't ponder ancient history. Look! I'm doing a new thing; now it sprouts up; don't you recognize it? I'm making a way in the desert, paths in the wilderness. (Isaiah 43:18-19 CEB)

One of those new things, new paths is found in John. Jesus said, "I give you a new commandment: Love each other. Just as I have loved you, so you also must love each other." (John 13:34 CEB) It has been a challenge to fulfill this commandment as divided as our country has been and it will continue to be a challenge as we look at what needs to change to fulfill it. But if we set our mind to it perhaps, we will see new things God is doing, see it sprout up, recognize them. But we are not alone, God is with us.

Grace and peace,

Pastor Shannon



Thank you for all of the beautiful cards and well wishes throughout this Christmas season.

Pastor Shannon

Worship

At present, all in-person worship and activities are cancelled. Weekly worship videos are available on the boycevilleumc.org website and the United Methodist Church of Boyceville Facebook page.

Sermon by Phone

The Boyceville church is offering a new service, Sermon by Phone. Each week you can call into our Sermon by Phone telephone number and listen to the scripture reading and sermon. The phone number is 715-309-5114. This is a Menomonie number, and it is a local phone number for Boyceville and Wheeler. There is no charge to listen to the sermon. The first sermon will be available to call Sunday, December 6 after 8 am. Each service will be available till the following Saturday afternoon. If you have any questions call Marguerite at 715-643-2164.

Sermon by Phone - call 715-309-5114. The message will change each week, but the phone number stays the same.

Please continue to support your church during this time of uncertainty. Donations can be sent to:

Boyceville UMC
P.O. Box 94
Boyceville, WI 54725

Faith UMC
c/o Margie Wiseman
405 Bluff Ave. N
Prairie Farm, WI 54762

Grace UMC
P.O. Box 183
Wheeler, WI 54772



*O sing to the Lord a new song;
sing to the Lord, all the earth.
Sing to the Lord, bless his name;
tell of his salvation from day to day.
Declare his glory among the nations,
his marvelous works among all the peoples.
For great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised;
he is to be revered above all gods. (Psalm 96:1-4)*

I am ready for a new song! I am tired of the old songs we have been singing in our United Methodist fellowship for the past few years. Even before the pandemic struck us in early 2020, our songs had not been of praise and jubilation, but of argument and division, injustice and judgment. And the world has heard us singing these songs. Songs of disharmony, disunity, discord, and dissonance – not the glorious music of people praising God.

For Christmas this year, I invite us to change our tune. Music is a powerful medium, and it has incredible potential for bridging and healing and renewal of body, mind, and spirit. Think for a moment of your favorite hymns and the carols and music that fills and thrills you. Are these songs of despair and unhappiness? Even the protest songs that call us to social and interpersonal action cast a positive vision for what might be. The people of God use song to offer gratitude, adoration, thanks, and praise.

When our songs turn sour and negative it is because we have turned from the divine light and wisdom of God (a historically and theologically accurate definition of "sin"). People overwhelmed by and engaged in oppression, people filled with loathing and contempt for others, people doing violence to others, people who do not know or understand compassion, mercy, and grace, cannot sing songs of joy and hope. It is only in returning to God's divine light (a historically and theologically accurate definition of "repentance") that our hearts are lifted and able to rejoice.

This is why we need Christmas. This is where we are reminded of God's plan for all creation. This is where we are reunited as one people under God – we all need the light of redemption and peace. Our human brokenness causes us to focus on the things we don't like, the things we don't want, and the people we don't want to love. The redeeming love of God, born in human form in Jesus the Christ, is our wake-up call to care more about other's needs than our own desires, to stop judging and condemning the people we dislike or disagree with, and to begin to live in alignment with God's unconditional love and unmerited grace for all people.

I am not talking about cheap grace without accountability; this would not free us to sing a new song. I am talking about bedrock faith and love that has the power to transform lives, families, states, nations, countries, and the world. God so loves this world that Jesus came in human form and dwells with us continuously through the power of the Holy Spirit. When we deny this, we see the terrible results of racism, sexism, ableism, xenophobia, homophobia, economic injustice, prejudice, ageism, and violence against those we deem unworthy of dignity and respect. What kind of songs emerge from such blasphemous worldviews and positions?

But we are the people of God the creator, the disciples of Christ the redeemer, and the body of Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit the sustainer. There is no place for disunity and discord within this Holy Trinity. So, the songs we will sing will need to be new versions of the old, old music of

God. We will sing of joy. We will sing of hope. We will sing of justice. We will sing of healing. We will sing of love. Not solely because these are nice ideas we wish for, but because they are the truest expression of who we really are, who God created us to be.

I close this message with a word of thanks and a blessing. I thank you for your faithful actions during this pandemic year. I celebrate each one of you who faithfully wear masks. I celebrate each one of you who practice social distancing. I praise laity and clergy leaders who have protected God's precious people by not gathering in-person and creatively using resources and technology to worship, meet, and stay connected. I am grateful for the Christian concern and practice to do no harm, to do good, and to attend to the ordinances of God. It has been hard to be apart, but it has been right and proper and faithful to take these precautions. And now the blessing:

My beloved beautiful Wisconsin people, leave the past behind, forsake all thoughts and actions that cause harm, and clothe yourself in the blessed and divine light of Jesus the Christ. Sing a new song that God's glory may shine in and through you for all the world to see. Have a glorious Christmas and a bright and beautiful new year

Bishop Hee-Soo Jung

Gleaner Deadline

NewsLetter
DEADLINE

Gleaner news is due Tuesday, January 19th. Please contact Tammy Nelson at 715-505-2657 or rtsmnelson@hotmail.com with your news. 😊

IN OUR
Thoughts and Prayers

Angie Thomas
Chloe Howey
Jeanna Hollister
Jean McIntyre
Family & Friends of Les Tracy
Victims of Violence and Natural Disasters
Our shut-ins & those in nursing homes

Samantha Christian
Jackie Vos
Parker Knutson
Irene Schmidt

Pat Schoonover
Shirley Christopherson
Doris Herdahl
Virgil Schoonover
Pastor Shannon Mattison
Food Harvest Ministry
Honduras Mission

A reminder: Please remember our shut-ins with calls and cards.

Please keep our prayer list current by letting Pastor Shannon or Tammy know when names should be added or removed.

Parish Birthdays and Anniversaries in January

1 — James Harvey
2 — Mary Matthaei
4 — John & Angela Wyss (anniv) 17 — Lionel & Mary Kegen (anniv)
4 — Kevin & Sonya Zebro (anniv)
6 — Harry & Sandy Christian (anniv) 21— Teagan Matthaei
7 — Charlie Hall 21— Brian & Jessica Ford (anniv)
9 — Jessica Blodgett 22 — Roger & Anita Smith (anniv)
9 — Melissa Blodgett 24 — Sherry Smith
9 — Haiden Salisbury 26 — Jim Salisbury
10 — Sonya Zebro 29 — Eileen Klicko
12 — Nicole Hiben 31 — Chris Burke
13 — Matthew Blodgett



A God Moment

This year's Angel Tree was a huge success! I have to be honest; I was a bit nervous how things would go with us having virtual services this year. Would enough people volunteer to take tags? Would we get cash donations needed to cover tags not taken? How would we get gifts to the church? What about delivery to WestCap? I should know better; God took care of our mission project. Right away people responded to emails and took tags. Donations started arriving in the mail. More donations were received than ever before and there were some big donations! Then we received the last tags from WestCap. One of the children is a 3-year-old boy who is autistic. He needs an iPad for a speech aid. I double checked with WestCap to make sure this is a true need. Then I started adding up numbers. We have enough money that we can buy an iPad! I just kept thinking of LuAnn, who started the angel tree mission years ago. She would have smiled from ear to ear knowing that we could buy an iPad for an autistic child. As she would say, "It's a God moment!" Thank you to everyone who supported the angel tree!

Marguerite

Weekend Meal Bags

Boyceville is scheduled to deliver the weekend meal bags from WestCap to the school on Wednesday, January 20. No packing of bags, just delivering. Bags need to be picked up from WestCap and delivered to the middle school and elementary school between 1-2 pm. Contact Marguerite if you would like to help.

Food Harvest Ministry News

The next Food Harvest Ministry distribution will be from 8-10 a.m. on Saturday, January 16th at 1002 Main St., Boyceville, WI. Items will be boxed and ready for pick up. Volunteers are needed to unload the truck and pack boxes on Thursday, January 14th.

The Coat Closet

The Coat Closet is open by appointment only this year. Please contact Sonya Zebro at 715-308-8435 if you are in need of winter outerwear or would like to make a donation.

North West District Gathering 2021

January 23, 2021 9 a.m.-4 p.m.
Zoom Workshop via ZOOM

Objectives for the day:

1. Learn discipleship methods
2. Relaunch and revision church culture in 2021
3. Connect to available resources

Speakers: Rev. Rachel Gilmore and Rev. Bryan Tener

To register: [Eventbrite.com/e/north-west-district-gathering-radical-hospitality-in-2021-tickets-133598834711](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/north-west-district-gathering-radical-hospitality-in-2021-tickets-133598834711)

Faith United Methodist Church News for January



- To Eleanor Harstad for a monetary donation to the Memorial Fund in memory of Marcella Kahl.
- To Andi Capra for a monetary donation to the Memorial Fund in memory of Genevieve Durham.
- To Dennis and Janice Swanson for a monetary donation to the church.

Faith Administrative Council will meet on Thursday, January 7th at 7:00 p.m. at the church.





Giving Because Our Giving is Worship January 2021

You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God. This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of the Lord's people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God." (2 Corinthians 9:10-12)

God established a design for worshipping when God revealed to Moses the plan for the Tent of Meeting (aka Tabernacle). Central to that worship was sacrificial giving. God required gifts of animals and grain be brought to the Tabernacle to be sacrificed and offered to God because it was pleasing to God. These gifts were the first fruits of the agricultural work of the people representing a tithe (10%) of their production.

God knew that an institution like Temple worship would require resources to be sustained. We read in the Old Testament that the people's gifts of meat and bread, cooked in a way pleasing to God, directly provided food for the priests, guards, and caretakers of the temple and the spiritual leaders of the tribes. Sharing the fruits of the harvest became the large feasts we read about in Jesus' time.

In the modern Christian church, we maintain this pattern of giving designed by God. Now, people are called to give in a way pleasing to God: first fruits representing 10% of each family's productivity. Though, in modern times, it is money rather than agricultural produce.

These gifts to God, offered and dedicated in our worship services, are used to maintain the institution of the church by supporting its ministry and mission. This includes worship, congregational care, spiritual development, hospitality & outreach, and missions by way of support for clergy and staff, building maintenance and other budgetary items.

What we can conclude from this is that we give first because it is a gift pleasing to God. As a result of our giving to God in worship, we also support all aspects of the important work of the church.

Jim Wells,

Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation Helps for the Stewardship Chair
Visit the Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation at www.wumf.org or Facebook/wumf.org
or call 1-888-903-9863

