



February 2024 Newsletter

A Loving Church for a Living Lord!

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Our Mission: To Make Disciples for the Transformation of the World

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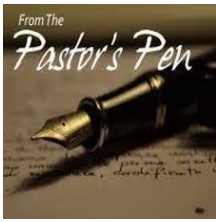
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Love. Grow. Serve.



From the Pastor's Pen

Discipleship is pouring into others training in The Word, in relationship and ministry so that they might develop into healthy believers who can walk by faith and multiply their faith. Discipleship is the work of the church both in The Great Commission, Matthew 28: 19-20:

¹⁹Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

(The New International Version. 2011. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.)

It is also a part of our vision as United Methodists:

To make disciples for the Transformation of the World.



Quitters' day was January 12 this year. Quitters' day is marked by the day when data shows people abandon the self-help and fitness apps, they downloaded to help fulfill New Year's resolutions. How about you, have you abandoned your resolutions? As we consider loving, learning, and leading in this season of the new year and in the season of quitting, I believe it is important to consider our relationship with God and community.

Some people have experienced quitter's day with the Church. The rhetoric spoken from political people, the divisions and polarity of secular society that have seeped into Church and the divisions within the Body of Christ have led people to believe that the Church no longer is relevant to society. Too much energy is being spent keeping the Church going rather than fulfilling the mission "to make disciples for the transformation of the world."

Why do people quit? Lack of support, anger, frustration, lack of vision, lack of direction, lack of unity... just plain tired and the list is longer. The Body of Christ needs all of us and I understand the feelings that lead to quitting; I also understand at a Kingdom level the importance of continuing.

This means we must find new ways of discipling people and it means we need to talk about what we value and why. It's not going to be easy, and God never said it would be. We must be faithful, and we must trust that God knows better than we do what our future needs to be. The Church is not a building, the Church is the people. What does it mean to you to be the Church? How are you going about discipleship, growing your relationship with God, and helping other people grow their relationship with God?

Pastor Brian

LENT, Coming with Valentines This Year!

Christmas is barely in the rearview mirror and Lent is on its way. Ash Wednesday is February 14 this year! HINT: *Celebrate with your loved ones on the weekend before so that you are ready spiritually to enter into the Lenten Season of Repentance and Introspection.*

There will be two Ash Wednesday Services this year: 12:00 Noon - Ecumenical Service at the Phelps United Church and 6PM Service at CSUMC, in the GRACE Center. This will be a similar format as the Breakfast with Jesus Service. A light supper will be provided as we sit together to eat and worship.

What Is the Meaning of Lent?

Lent is a 40-day period of devotion and preparation for Easter. It technically covers 46 days, but Sundays are considered feast days not included in the count. The number 40 reflects the 40 days Jesus spent fasting in the wilderness prior to his public ministry (Mark 1:12-13).

Lent is a time for repentance, reflection, and spiritual rededication in light of Jesus' sacrificial death for our salvation, and for many Christians this involves fasting, refraining from things or activities that one enjoys, and/or devoting time to spiritual activities like studying Scripture, praying, giving to charity, or reading devotional works.

What Do People Give up for Lent?

The tradition of fasting during Lent comes from the practice of the early church in which only one meal a day was eaten, and meat was forbidden. Fasting is not a widespread practice in our culture but has deep roots in Judaism and early Christianity. Pastor and author Jeffrey E. Miller writes, "Fasting reveals our physical needs and reminds us of our spiritual needs. When we give up something we depend on, we remember our dependence on God."

Today, one finds a multitude of different approaches toward Lenten fasting. Many Christians only fast on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday, which often involves eating a single meal without meat. Others choose a favored food or drink item to abstain from during the full 40 days of Lent, such as sweets, wine, or coffee.

In other instances, Christians strive to break bad habits during this period (gossiping, complaining, watching too much television, etc.). In addition to giving something up for the purpose of self-denial, many believers also seek to cultivate new spiritual attitudes and practices. This approach is reflected in the following advice from an Episcopal bishop, and I commend it to you as you observe the season:

- Fast from criticism, and feast on praise.
- Fast from self-pity, and feast on joy.
- Fast from ill-temper, and feast on peace.
- Fast from resentment, and feast on contentment.
- Fast from jealousy, and feast on love.
- Fast from pride, and feast on humility.
- Fast from selfishness, and feast on service.
- Fast from fear, and feast on faith.

Biblegateway.com, [Christopher Reese](#) (MDiv, ThM)





Food Ministry

Amazing the last 2 months with almost 240 families served.

This was only with the help of the following volunteers: Sharon , Betty , Steele , David , Dennis, Kim , Jane , Butch , Jim and Gail , Pat, Connie , Connie's sister Kathy , Nick , Paul, Eileen, Steve and Caleb.

Sorry if I have missed someone. Always a possibility with us old folks!

The following is a graph of those served by month in 2023.

	Children	Adults	Seniors	Homes
Jan	34	48	34	55
Feb	34	55	59	84
March	37	85	50	85
April	61	56	39	69
May	39	62	52	67
June	55	72	66	88
July	31	60	57	75
Aug	59	69	75	72
Sept	35	49	75	72
Oct	56	66	69	77
Nov	62	82	82	125
Dec	<u>102</u>	<u>88</u>	<u>76</u>	<u>105</u>
	605	792	734	974

Thanks to all,
Dan and Sandy

Mission of the Month: Our Children's Place

Items needed are:

Batteries AA, AAA, C, D's

Velcro

Command hooks

Contact paper

Swiffer Wetjet

Clear Package tape

Crib sheets

Storage bins (Shoebox size and Tote size)

Shaving cream

Girls and boys underwear size 3's and 4's

Sand timers (hour glass)

Broom and Dust Pan

Copy paper, Construction paper

Wash cloths

Finance Team Ministry



Well here we are in 2024! Even though 2023 was a trying year for our church, there was much to be thankful for. Our mission support continues to be a significant portion of our budget. Our Food Pantry provided much needed food to the community. Mission of the month provided support for local non-profit organizations. A government grant (Employee Retention Credit) provided funds to help support our expenses for 2023. We were able to fund 66% of the church apportioned ministry shares. Whereas past years ministry shares were only funded approximately 20%.

There will be challenges during 2024, although along with challenges there will be great opportunities. I am optimistic that with continued vision and focus....God will provide in abundance.

God Bless,
Tom Brickle

St. Pauly Clothing Shed Ministry

In 2023, 25,695 lbs. of clothing passed through the St. Pauly shed.

Enough to clothe 4,733 people.

It raised \$1,028 for our church.

This Ministry is too easy!!

Clean out your closets and drawers.

Bag them up and drop them in the St. Pauly Shed.

That's it!

God and those in need **THANK YOU!**





Trustees Ministry

Hello United Methodists,

Lucas Smith comes just at the right time. Over Christmas break, Lucas, his Dad Roman, my wife Sally and our guest from Germany, Jan Horstmann teamed up to take care of a bunch of projects in the church. They changed a bunch of the air filters, fixed faucets, replaced light fixtures and hung up the storm windows. Thank you very much to the new “second milers” team!

As far as snow shoveling goes, Lucas and Roman beat us to the punch again. We have had only one snow event so far and the Smiths were down there at 5am on Sunday morning clearing the snow away from the doors. Sally and I arrived at 7 only to be delighted that it had already been taken care of. Thank you boys. You came through again.

Every other week we have Joanna Dilmore cleaning the sanctuary, the narthex bathroom, the lounge and the conference room. I think she is doing a great job. If you see anything that is getting skipped or needs attention in those areas, let me know and we’ll get it on our list.

The parsonage went through an inspection last month and passed with a couple fix it items. The biggest priority will be to upgrade some electric service in a couple of rooms. We have signed up JMA electric to tackle that sometime in the near future. (hopefully)

As always, if there is anything you might need from the trustees, let us know and we’ll give it our best to get the issue resolved.

Thank you and God bless,
John B. Mueller