



February 2023



The United Methodist Church of Berea

THE CALLER

For weekly updates on events and activities,
please subscribe to our weekly e-mail newsletter at www.umcb.org.

Find us on Facebook www.facebook.com/UMCBEREA



Before the Covid pandemic hit, we had a new vision for Fellowship Hour, which was really starting to build momentum. The vision was that each week different people, families, committees and groups within the church were going to share a celebration with our church family. This celebration would be shared through some sort of treats or snacks and coffee or tea.

The idea was to draw people in to the Gathering Place to share time with each other, share news and updates on life, check in on those for whom we've been praying, etc.

Especially now, more so than during that pre-pandemic time, we need to get back to that sharing, that fellowship with our church family. We need to find a little time for peace amidst a broken, troubling world. We need to find that excuse to celebrate something.

Fellowship Hour kicked off again this school year. While we have had a few people and groups sign up so far, would really want to get everyone involved.

What you or your family/group provide for Fellowship Hour is completely up to you. There is no rule written about what it has to be or how many it should serve. If you want to bake a batch of cookies...if you want to provide a fresh fruit bar...if you want to really go over the top for an anniversary celebration. There are no right or wrong decisions and no judgment from anyone in our family. We are honored that you want to share with us all!

Let's all find our reason to share fellowship!

Peace,
Fellowship Hour Committee

Contact **Jason Antczak** at
jasonantczak78@gmail.com or 440-759-7805,
to sign up to host a Fellowship Hour.

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SHARING OUR JOYS & CONCERNS

MEMBERS

Betty Atherton
 Barbara Beihl
 Heidi Blue
 Carol Bodle
 Hugh Burtner
 Wilda Donegan
 Molly Force
 Carol & Bruce Forster
 Debby Haas
 Jan Heter (Arden Courts)
 Elenore Long
 Christine McMillin
 Betty Miller (Renaissance)
 Rev. Cal Myers
 Donald Powers (Renaissance)
 Lou Russell (Westlake Villages)
 Russ Sanderson
 Mary Lynn Swartz
 Carol Thompson
 Ginny Thompson
 Kathleen Wargelin

MEMBERS AT HEALTH CARE FACILITIES

Shirley Bedford (Independence Village)
 Ann Benson (Western Reserve-Medina)
 June Demmerle (Generations)
 Janice Kavander
 Mary Lou McKissock (Kemper House, Strongsville)
 Pat Sarka (Wesleyan Village, Elyria)
 Barbara Scoon (Vista Springs, Parma)
 Von & Marilyn Smith (Renaissance)
 Ruth Vrana (Generations, Strongsville)

MILITARY

J.D. Ferut (grandson of Gerry & Jo Boggs)
 Ryan Hopkins
 Bill Lambert (son-in-law of Corky Cline)
 Josh Lambert (grandson of Corky Cline)
 Ben Lebrun
 Zachary New (grandson of Bob & Jackie King)

FAMILY AND FRIENDS

Wanda Baulin (sister of Wilda Donegan)
 Dave & Jane Breakey (friends of the Brenneisons)
 Marc Bittinger **
 Cheryl Cheff (mother of Corey Reams)
 AmyMarie Dziak (daughter of Marlynda Dziak)
 Spencer Gehring
 Sylvie Isgro-Schicker
 Isaac Kowicki & Oliver Lawrence (great nephews
 of Cindy Osborn)
 Lillian and Lucas (family friends of the Howes)
 Paul & Kathryn and children (family of Christine
 and Andy McMillin)
 Joann Mraz (friend of Nancy Schillace)
 Gregory Smith (son of Marilyn K. Smith)
 Jeanne Sowder (sister of Buck & Karen Caldwell)
 Laura Swartz Steele
 Chet Talarczyk (husband of Judy Talarczyk,
 Renaissance)

CONNECTING, INVITING, & WELCOMING



PASTORAL CARE & PRAYER REQUESTS

Please contact **Pastor Nathan** at
440-234-3525 x101 or nhowe@umcb.org
 if you would like to schedule an individual time
 to talk or if you have a specific prayer request.

You can also submit prayer requests
 at umcb.org/worshipresources
 or by emailing the church office
 at info@umcb.org.

To receive Prayer Concerns by email,
 scan the QR code to the right or
 visit our website at
umcb.org/contact
 and subscribe in the
 lower right column.





CHURCH LEADERSHIP AS DISCIPLESHIP

Through the waters of our baptism, God calls each of us to be faithful disciples, to grow to maturity in faith, and to engage actively in the mission of making and maturing disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. As we do this, servant leaders among us are called, equipped, and entrusted with the vital task of exercising God's gifts through our congregation.

The Church Council is one of those teams we entrust with this ministry of servant leadership among us. Its ministry includes setting goals and implementing and evaluating the total life of the congregation in fulfilling our mission and purpose. The Church Council acts as the administrative body of the charge conference, meets every other month, and consists of chairpersons from other committees in addition to at-large members.

For 2023, these are those servant leaders entrusted with the ministry of our Church Council:

Chairperson: Margaret Proctor

UMW President: Betsy Meikle

Lay Leader: Nancy Buehler

Discipleship Collaborative representative:
Rebecca Zeiter

SPRC chairperson: Barbara Peterson

Stephen Ministry representative: Orley Aten

Finance chairperson: Carol Anne McCleery

Church and Society chairperson: Wendy Jelinek

Trustees chairperson:
to be named by the Board of Trustees

Missions Committee chairperson: Laura Rushton

Treasurer: Cindy McCowen

At-large members:

Finance Secretary: Maryann Herron

Bill Pierce, Chuck Dixon,
Greg Rentsch, Judy Warnsman

CONNECTING . . . WELCOMING



UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH



SAVE THE DATE:
BIKING CROSS COUNTRY WITH RON ISGRO
SATURDAY , MARCH 25, NOON, FELLOWSHIP HALL
\$10 PER PERSON

Luncheon & Program sponsored by
United Methodist Women
(now United Women in Faith)



ASH WEDNESDAY WORSHIP SERVICES

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 22

NOON, SANCTUARY

OR

7 PM, SANCTUARY AND ONLINE (WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/UMCBEREA/LIVE)

The season of Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, this year on February 22. Join us in worship in the Sanctuary at Noon for an abbreviated worship service or in the Sanctuary or online at 7 PM for a worship service including music and Holy Communion. Both worship services will include the imposition of ashes as a sign of our mortality and intent for our hearts and lives to be changed through God's grace.

WELCOME TO LENT FORMATION!

Ash Wednesday begins our spiritual journey towards Holy Week and Easter. During these reflective weeks, we invite you to join us for faith formation for all ages.

CHILDREN'S SUNDAY SCHOOL

SUNDAYS, 10 AM, 2ND FLOOR

Children aged preschool - 8th grade are invited to join Sunday School for lessons about Jesus this upcoming season. If you haven't been in awhile, this is a great time to jump back in. Age-appropriate lessons exploring the life and ministry, and death and new life of Jesus, will bring hope to the lives of our young disciples. For more information, contact Pastor Carrie

ADULTS & YOUTH: FINDING JESUS IN THE PSALMS

SUNDAYS, 10 AM, PARLOR

LED BY REV. LINDA MCCOWEN (LSMCCOWEN@GMAIL.COM)

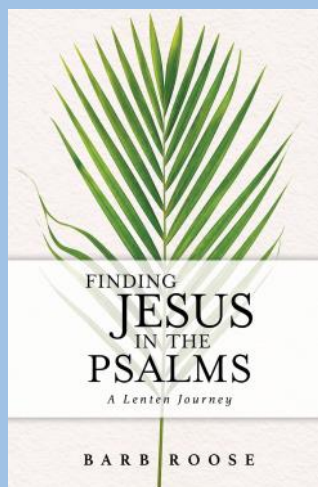
TUESDAYS (MARCH 7-APRIL 11), 9:30 AM, ROOM 13

OR MONDAYS (MARCH 6-APRIL 10), 7 PM, ROOM 13

LED BY PASTOR NATHAN (NHOWE@UMCB.ORG, 440-234-3525 x101)

Adults and youth are welcome to search for
Jesus in the Psalms this season.

"Barb Roose guides the reader through a meaningful encounter with the Psalms through the season of Lent. Combining an interpretation of the psalms with real life stories, the study moves through the familiar words of Psalm 23 toward the painful cries of Psalm 22 uttered by Jesus on the cross. The study includes reflections on the life of King David and the original context of the writings, along with connections between the psalms and the life and death of Jesus the Messiah."



Books are \$14 and available in Room 12.
Youth and College students need not pay for books.



ESCAPE ROOM



ECUMENICAL YOUTH GROUP - ESCAPE THE CHURCH!

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 5 PM, WESLEY HALL

Pastor Janis Montgomery (butcheje@gmail.com) from Christ United Church leads this month as Pastor Carrie is on Spiritual Renewal. Join us February 22 at 5 PM for an escape room game - Escape the Church! Using Bible clues and more teams will compete to get out first!

Bring a snack to share! EYG is open to 4th-12th graders.

EXPLORING THE UMC SOCIAL PRINCIPLES

SUNDAY MORNINGS, 10AM, FELLOWSHIP HALL

All are welcome to join a hope filled group who strive to build God's beloved community through active learning. We are exploring the UMC Social Principles to understand what the Bible says, what the UMC says, what the facts are, and how we can take action. We celebrate our faith in action.

Please join the conversation Sunday mornings at 10AM in the Fellowship Hall.

Watch the e-newsletter and bulletins for upcoming topics.

READ & GROW BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 13
6:30-8 PM, ROOM 13 & ON ZOOM

On February 13, we will discuss **The Orphan House** by Ann Bennett. On March 13, we discussion will be on **A Stranger in the Lifeboat** by Mitch Albom.

For more information, please contact **Betsy Meikle** at meiklebetsyj@gmail.com or 440-243-5767.

THURSDAY NIGHT BIBLE STUDY

THURSDAYS, 6:30 PM, VIA ZOOM

We have started a new study about social issues, the book, **Women Rise Up** and it deals with women from the Bible how they were mistreated. Come join us and get a lot of information about a lot of injustices done to the women of olden times, which is still happening now in our times!

For more information and Zoom details, please contact **Mary Lynn Swartz** at marylynn482@gmail.com or 440-409-5931.

GRIEFSHARE

WEDNESDAYS , 6:30 PM, VIA ZOOM OR FRIDAYS, 1:30 PM, ROOM 13

We have started a new season of Griefshare and it is going great, new friends, new challenges. Plus, it was decided because of the interest, we are also starting back to meet in person on Fridays!! Our schedule will allow for snow days. There is still time to join either session.

For more information and/or Zoom details, please contact **Mary Lynn Swartz** at marylynn482@gmail.com or 440-409-5931.



DINNER CHURCH

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 1
6 PM, WESLEY HALL

What is Dinner Church? It's the original way Jesus connected with his disciples! When we come together over food and fellowship, we can share our faith and invite others to grow in faith too. Check out this testimonial "The love of a shared meal": <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5hGYaIMqVdg>.

So bring a dish - but more valuably, bring a friend or neighbor! We are ready to fully launch this new ministry and now need your help by inviting new folks, or folks we haven't seen in awhile, to join us for dinner and faith conversations.

A sign-up sheet for food and help with set-up and clean-up is available on the Outreach board (by Room 13).



AROUND THE WORLD



SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 19
4 - 6 PM, WESLEY HALL

God is present - everywhere! Come learn about God's wonderful world, explore different countries and cultures with hands-on activities, and get your Messy Church passport stamped!

Could you share about another country or world? Contact **Carolyn Williams** at weaseltv@msn.com or **440-570-2913** to let her know you'd like to host a world station!

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT, COMPASSION, & JUSTICE



HELP BUILD HOPE

Last summer, with your generous support and hard work, we were able to complete a frame for a Habitat for Humanity home that now awaits ground breaking this spring. Ask someone who was a part of this mission and you'll hear wonderful stories of coming together to make a real difference.

We are excited to announce, with the support of Church Council, we look forward to building MORE hope this upcoming year. Fundraising will begin shortly and our wall build will be September 22-23. If you'd like to make a donation now, you are welcome to do so. Also please start thinking of local businesses you'd like to invite to support this mission.

If you would be interested in helping us as a part of the core leadership team, please reach out to **Pastor Carrie** at **440-234-3525 x105** or cantczak@umcb.org.

SUPPORT OUR FOOD-INSECURE NEIGHBORS

LOOSE CHANGE OFFERING

This month's loose change benefits SCAN Hunger Center. SCAN serves our surrounding southwest suburb. They are located at 398 W. Bagley Rd., unit #7. If you are in need of food assistance, you can check the website to see if you qualify: <https://scanhunger.weebly.com/qualify.html>.

SCAN's Hours of Operation:

The second Friday of each month, 10AM - 3PM

The fourth Friday, of each month 4 - 7PM.

You can support this mission by either mailing in an offering, or donating electronically at www.umcb.org/donate using the "other" box and marking it "loose change offering".

FOOD DONATIONS

Our collections of food continue. Please place donations of non-perishable food in the cupboard between the narthex and the library anytime you are in the building. (If you need help finding the right location, talk to one of the pastors or other staff.)

If you are not planning already to make a trip to the grocery store, please feel free to participate with a monetary donation instead, either by mailing a check to the church office or online at www.umcb.org/donate. Please note "food pantry" on the description line.

METANOIA MISSIONS

VOLUNTEERS & FOOD DONATIONS NEEDED FOR
SUNDAYS, FEBRUARY 12 & 26

Our guest speaker at the United Women in Faith's October Circle meeting was a dynamic young woman named Morgan Smith who helps lead the Metanoia Project. She explained to the group how this seasonal program was created to serve 15-20 shelter-resistant individuals on Cleveland's near West Side. The Metanoia staff works with Northeast Ohio Coalition for the Homeless and other local agencies to identify and meet the needs of people who risk exposure to harsh conditions on the street during the winter months. Their hospitality centers at Franklin Circle Church and Bethany Presbyterian (both in Ohio City) provide temporary shelter and an evening meal for 15-20 unhoused men and women.

Since 2021, one of our missions at UMCB has been to deliver meals to these overnight guests. Starting this year in November, two or three times a month, volunteers donate food, beverages and supplies, and a small team from our church goes to the shelter to serve the meal. It has been a truly rewarding and eye-opening experience to share Christian fellowship and hear the witness of people who face so many hardships. In January we sent pizza to both shelters on New Year's Day, hosted a "taco night" on Martin Luther King Day, and served a hearty homemade potato leek soup the following Sunday. Thanks to our December "Loving Our Neighbors" collection, we were also able to give them much-needed winter gear like hats, gloves, thermal underwear, and coats.

We are signed up to serve again on **Sundays, February 12 and 26**. Volunteers, food donations, and meal suggestions are welcome!

Please contact **Laura Rushton** at jlaurush@gmail.com or **567-303-1954** for details.

Thank you to all who are able to support all of our various food ministries that serve our food insecure neighbors. When we pray for "our daily bread", we take upon ourselves the call to help provide that bread. Your loose change, and food donations (always accepted) help fulfill that call.

Thank you for your generosity!

CHURCH AND SOCIETY COMMITTEE IS OFF AND RUNNING IN 2023.



We are promoting Creation Justice through investigating and implementing ideas that were identified during the Wake Up World classes last summer. Some of the projects include further developing our relationship with Brookdale Orchard, enhancing our landscaping by addressing invasive plants, revitalizing recycling at our church, and hosting various speakers. Most of these are extensive and will be developed and implemented in phases. Various team members are leading individual projects.

As we strive to be better stewards of the resources God has given to us, one idea has already been implemented. As you may have noticed the Sunday bulletins have been streamlined. Since most of the order of worship details - liturgy, lyrics, etc. - are displayed on the screen at each worship service, these items have been removed from the bulletins. The morning and evening prayers, weekly announcements, and calendar are still included in print so you can take them home and reference them throughout the week. This small change has greatly reduced our weekly paper usage. In fact, the 9 AM worship service usage was cut in half.

Another activity that will start soon is the first in our speaker series. We hope to have a speaker in March that will come in and teach us about advocacy - how our state government works and what are best practices in advocating our values to our representatives.

HERE IS AN OPPORTUNITY TO USE YOUR VOICE (ADVOCATE) TO PROTECT PUBLIC HEALTH FOR EVERYONE. MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD BY FEBRUARY 13!

Methane is a chemical compound that is emitted by the oil and gas industry as well as from livestock and decay of organic material in solid waste landfills. It accounts for approximately 11% of US greenhouse gas emissions. It absorbs **84 times more heat** than carbon dioxide thus having a very harmful effect on Earth's temperature. (Sources: US EPA and Wake Up World curriculum.) **What can each of us do to help?** On November 11, "the US EPA released an updated rule (<https://www.epa.gov/newsreleases/biden-harris-administration-strengthens-proposal-cut-methane-pollution-protect?eType=EmailBlastContent&eld=825600c4-f645-437e-89c6-239da685c50f>) to cut methane and other harmful pollutants from oil and gas operations." According to the Ohio Environmental Council (OEC), cutting methane pollution from the oil and gas industry is the quickest, most cost effective way to slow the rate of climate change and protect our health." In 2021 a draft rule was released by the EPA and the 2023 new proposal builds on it by requiring producers to closely monitor operations, identify methane leaks and complete routine checks at well sites and aims to reduce flaring or burning of methane at well sites.

The **EPA will take public comments** on the supplemental proposal until **February 13**. Interfaith Power and Light (<https://www.interfaithpowerandlight.org/epa-new-methane-rule-helping-to-protect-our-common-home/>) supports the EPA in acting on a moral opportunity to address the climate crisis and better **protect the millions of people** living on the frontlines of oil and gas development.

Submit your comments through the OEC's at <https://theoec.salsalabs.org/1222epamethanerules/index.html?eType=EmailBlastContent&eld=dd17876f-29c9-440f-9be1-8aeddf591207&eType=EmailBlastContent&eld=0b33ae66-799f-4b50-910f-9bb172f845ca>.

Barb Dawson and Wendy Jelinek for Church and Society



EQUAL EXCHANGE ITEMS

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 5
10-11 AM, BY THE PARLOR

Thank you for your continued support of farmers around the world who are paid a fair wage for their hard work in producing these items in a sustainable manner.

Learn more at equalexchange.coop.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT . . .

TUTORS NEEDED FOR HOMEWORK HELPERS 2.0!

Location: Grindstone Elementary School

Students: K-4, needing help in possibly both math and reading

Day/Time: Wednesdays, March 15-May 10, choose between a morning or afternoon 1 hour slot. You will meet with two students, one at a time, for half an hour each.

Background Checks: Stay tuned - we're working out what will need to be done.

Why we're optimistic about this: The school is partnering with us! Which means we don't have to search for kids, they are selected by teachers as the ones needing some help. Teachers will be providing the materials. And we don't need to worry about transportation for the kids - they'll already be there!

Grindstone is hopeful that this spring session will be a "beta test" for an even larger program next year, which we'll get to help build. So very exciting!

If you're available to serve as a daytime tutor, please let us know as soon as possible so we can start matching tutors to students. To learn more about serving, contact Laura Rushton at jlaurush@gmail.com or 567-303-1954



Thank you to everyone who adopted a staff member of Grindstone Elementary in January!

A reminder to please bring in your note of encouragement **ASAP!** Pastor Nathan will be delivering the first week of February.

PASTOR CARRIE IS ON SPIRITUAL RENEWAL LEAVE

Pastor Carrie is on Spiritual Renewal leave from January 31-March 5. She will start her journey with a trip to Israel! Please pray for her and her family while she is away. The rest of the month she plans on resting and renewing spiritual practices.

She will not be checking email or voicemails while she is on leave. If you need assistance during her leave, contact the church office at info@umcb.org or 440-234-3525 x100.

Thank you for supporting our pastors in their self-care!

SHARING GOD'S LOVE



2022 MINISTRY REPORT

Throughout 2022, we have continued to exhibit extraordinary faithfulness, connectedness, and generosity in living together our mission to make and mature disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. With deep gratitude for the opportunity to be in ministry with you and with our neighbors, the following data provides just a surface-level representation of the lives you have impacted, the love you have shared, and the beloved community you have been building. Thank you for your prayers, presence, gifts, service, and witness that make a real difference in the world in the direction of God's dream.

Together, we:

- ◆ **welcomed 9 individuals into the life of our congregation** through professing membership (an increase from 5 “new members” in 2021);
- ◆ **worshiped together on Sunday mornings with an average of 109 individuals on site and 155 households online** (an increase from 74 individuals on site and 135 households online in 2021);
- ◆ **expressed and deepened our commitment to care for the goodness of God's creation** through our first Creation Justice Fair (in partnership with more than a dozen regional organizations) and through the ongoing ministry of our creation justice ministry team;
- ◆ **celebrated God's love for all our neighbors** by participating in our first Pride in the CLE parade;
- ◆ **shared God's love with 45 children and their families** through our Vacation Bible School;
- ◆ **partnered with more than 150 of our neighbors to build the walls for a Habitat for Humanity house in our parking lot** with “Help Build Hope” while building relationships with each other;
- ◆ **distributed 113 bags of food, each bag providing three days of food for local children during the summer** through our community “Feed the Kids” ministry;
- ◆ **continued our Messy Church ministry**, connecting with a diverse section of our community, including more than 370 for our Trunk or Treat and Fill the Trunk event in October;
- ◆ **began a new Dinner Church ministry**, providing new opportunities for fellowship, food, and worship in an informal and inclusive setting;
- ◆ **continued multiple fellowship and study groups**, including weekday morning prayer, Tuesday morning Bible study, Wednesday morning “parking lot” fellowship, and Sunday morning “fellowship hour”; and
- ◆ **participating together in the larger body of Christ by giving more than \$67,000 in 2022** to support transformative ministry both locally and globally, meeting our United Methodist Shared Ministry goal for the sixth consecutive year.

God is doing great things in, among, and through us. Thank you for your partnership in Christ's ongoing ministry in and around Berea.

Shalom,
Pastor Nathan