

BELLEFONTAINE FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

www.bellefontainefirstumc.org; 937-592-9651

Office Hours: Mon-Thurs; 9 am — 12 and 1 - 4 pm

**Our Mission: To welcome all people through the love of Jesus Christ
and grow as disciples who transform the world.**

Our Vision: Every person in our church and community lives a life that will make Jesus smile and others smile on their journey of life and love. Jesus smiles when every person loves God, loves one another and is engaged in transforming the world.

Every member is a minister!

Joe Ziraldo, Senior Pastor,
jjziraldo@bellefontainefirstumc.org; 937-651-6227

Barbara Dancer, Office Manager
office@bellefontainefirstumc.org; 937-592-9651; 937-935-5648

Judy Verbsky, Treasurer & Bruce Norris, Financial Secretary
office@bellefontainefirstumc.org; 937-592-9651

Raph Guenther, Music Minister

Mike Suman, Choir Director

Joe Antram, Adult Handbell Director

Marianne Antram, Organist/Pianist

Brenda Thomas, Keyboard Staff

Carol Burton, Choir Accompanist

Wayne Fahnestock, Custodian



TOWER NEWS, 2021

JANUARY/FEBRUARY



¹⁵ *I am the LORD, your holy one, Israel's creator, your king!*

¹⁶ *The LORD says—who makes a way in the sea and a path in the mighty waters,*

¹⁷ *who brings out chariot and horse, army and battalion; they will lie down together and will not rise; they will be extinguished, extinguished like a wick.*

¹⁸ *Don't remember the prior things; don't ponder ancient history.*

¹⁹ *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 43:15-19*

If you have spent anytime reading the prophets, you may have come across this pivotal text from book of Isaiah. In fact, as you read through the prophet's message, the first forty-two chapters can be quite depressing. It seems that God is pretty mad at His creation and they are going to pay for it. This is not a message of deep hope. Maybe this is where we find ourselves today? The pandemic and political/ social unrest that surrounds us make us wonder what is instore for our future days. Some have described our current condition as being in the midst of a terrible storm. But, like Isaiah's message following the forty-second chapter, there is hope.

We thank God for Isaiah not ending on the forty-second chapter. It is as if the forty third should start with one word—BUT. But there is hope. But God does not remember the sins of His people forever. But things will be different. But we should not despair.

LOOK, I am making something new. Can you not perceive it? Those who have remained with God through these times of trial will be rewarded. Just as you are able to see the signs of the coming storm, are you not also able to see the clearing skies on the other side of the storm? We have just come through the season of Hope—Advent. God is making a way for us in future days. CONTINUED

PASTOR JOE'S PAGE CONTINUED

We will be back together again soon. Like to Israelites who returned after their exile, we can rebuild the ministries of our church with and among each other and to our community. What is your dream for our new future together? For me I look forward to seeing many of you gathered together as the beloved community. Some of you Jenny and I will have the pleasure to meet for the first time. I look forward to seeing what we can do together in ministry and fellowship together. I look forward to the new things that God is doing amongst us. I look forward to ministry that once again fills our pews and halls to overflowing. I look forward to being in community with you and with our neighbors. I look forward to the transformation that will take place in the hearts that are touched by our ministry and our God. I look forward to our halls being filled with the laughter of children. I look forward to community dinners where we can sit and talk and get to know each other.

While there is much that could occupy us in sad ways, I know a God who has a better plan for us in future days, wants us to embrace the vision of a new future together. I pray that God is keeping you and your family safe. Please know that you are in my prayers daily. I look forward with optimism over the future that God has for all of us.

Pastor Joe

MUSIC AND WORSHIP TEAM

The Music and Worship Team wants to wish you all well as we head into 2021. We hope you have all been able to watch our livestream church services through Advent including Christmas Eve. We know it has not been a “normal” year, but we still tried to bring the birth of Christ and his love for all of you through each and every service even if we weren't there in person. Pastor Joe's sermons were inspirational, the music was beautiful, the children's pageant was uplifting and the church sanctuary looked awesome! Did you see the virtual choir! Wow! Thanks Raph Guenther, Mike Suman, Marianne Antram and choir members! We want to thank everyone that has been involved in this Advent season who helped bring the word of God through their gifts and talents. We hope and pray that 2021 will be a good year for you and your families and we hope to see you all “in person” at worship services very soon. Happy New Year!

UMW

Thank you to our FUMC members for continuing to support our World Thank Offering. You have made it possible to give clean water, education, farm tools, and shelter to those in need. May God bless you in this holiday season and fill you lives with love, joy, and peace.

The Ladies of UMW

SERMON SCHEDULE - JANUARY & FEBRUARY

Jan 24th

Scripture: Psalm 62:5-12 **Sermon:** "When I Was Weak, You Were Strong"

Jan 31st

Scripture: Mark 1:21-28 **Sermon:** "Cleaning House and Home"

Feb 7th

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 9:16-23 **Sermon:** "Who Me, Evangelize?"

Feb 14th

Scripture: 2 Kings 2:1-12 **Sermon:** "When We Cross the River"

Feb 17th (Ash Wednesday)

Scripture: Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21 **Sermon:** "The Holy Life"

Feb 21st

Scripture: Matthew 26:47-56 **Sermon:** "Have You Seen This Runaway?"

Feb 28th

Scripture: Luke 23:32-43 **Sermon:** "Are You Crazy?"

FAITH IN ACTION TEAM

The Faith in Action team would like to extend to all, blessings and best wishes for the New Year. We want to thank everyone that participated in the Neighborhood Outreach Angel Tree program. Because of the generous BFUMC family 35 angels received a Christmas that they might not have had without your kindness. Our team is hoping to be back in action again soon and will be looking to find ways to spread the power of faith and the love of Jesus to our community and beyond in 2021.

ALTAR FLOWER CHART FOR 2021 IS NOW AVAILABLE!

JANUARY AND FEBRUARY CALENDARS

JANUARY 28	LAST THURSDAY DRIVE THRU MEAL
FEBRUARY 9	RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVE
FEBRUARY 17	ASH WEDNESDAY
FEBRUARY 21	1ST SUNDAY IN LENT
FEBRUARY 28	2ND SUNDAY IN LENT

FAMILY MINISTRY TEAM

The goal of the Family Ministry Team is to provide spirit-filled opportunities for the children, youth, and adults in Bellefontaine First United Methodist Church family. We pray that each person will find fullness of joy in the Lord as we grow in community and deepen our relationship with Jesus.

DIRECTOR OF YOUTH AND FAMILY MINISTRY

Bellefontaine First United Methodist Church is searching to hire a Director of Youth and Family Ministry. If you or someone you know someone has a spiritual gift of leadership, a heart for teenagers, energy, and enthusiasm, please contact the church office and request a job description/application.

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY @ BELLEFONTAINE FIRST UMC

We hope you enjoyed the Advent Bags filled with special items to enrich your family's Christmas worship experience. If you took any pictures of your Christmas Tree decorated week by week, or your family Advent wreath, please email them to the church office, Heidi Reser or Peggy Thompson.

Pastor Joe, and the Family Ministry Team are exploring new opportunities and activities for kids and families in the Bellefontaine First UMC family. As we enter 2021, we pray you're aware that Jesus is alive and working in your hearts. Look for resources and activities to encourage a deeper relationship with Jesus. Take advantage of the opportunities to experience the coming of Jesus in a deeper and more meaningful way in the coming year.

Day by day, day by day, Oh, dear Lord, three things I pray; To see you more clearly.

Love you more dearly. Follow you more nearly. Day by day.

UMM

Matt. 22: 36-40 *Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.*

As we enter a New Year, it seems that the first question a lot of people ask is did you make any New Year's Resolutions? I, myself, am not one that makes New Year resolutions; but, if you happen to be one that likes to make them, the above scriptures are the best two resolutions a person can make. If you aren't currently taking these scriptures seriously, you may want to. Just think what your family, your job, your church, your community, and your world would look like.

There would be no more divorces, no more layoffs or firings, the church would be full, there would be no more hunger or loneliness, there would be no more wars. God's will and kingdom would truly be on the earth as we pray in the Lord's Prayer. What a picture of utopia that would be.

Is this reality a possibility? In our present human form and behaviors, probably not. We humans basically have a self-preservation deeply rooted in our beings. We are fearful of the unknown. Will I be loved and accepted? Will I have enough to live comfortably? Will I have all that I want? Will someone try or take away what I have?

These attitudes and feelings keep us from trusting others and giving as God would have us to give. We are willing to give of our excess; but rarely giving our all such as abilities, talents, money, time, etc. unless it is convenient and doesn't interfere with our plans we have made.

I wonder how God feels when we put ourselves and plans above his will for our lives? Do we unintentionally take God's blessings for granted instead of recognizing his grace and be thankful for every day he allows us to wake up and serve others as we honor him?

I know that I fail him every day and pray that the Holy Spirit leads me to improve in my service to others as he gives strength and guidance.

May we all be aware of God in our lives and allow him to have his will and not ours.

God bless you all!

Ron

COMMUNITY MARKET RECEIPTS

Thank you to everyone who is donating your Community Market receipts. All the money that we receive goes to our church's Radio Ministry. Our Sunday morning Worship service is broadcast live and reaches out to many people in our community, especially for those who are homebound.

We do respectfully have a couple requests. Please don't cut your receipts, if they are cut too small, we can't use them. Also, please don't wad them up into a ball, it takes time to unroll them and it also blurs or erases the numbers, and then we can't use those receipts either.

For church members who are new to this project and wish to participate, the silver collection box for the receipts is in the church entryway on the shelf above the coatrack and is clearly labeled.



FAMILY MINISTRY TEAM CONTINUED -

2020 CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

Special thanks to Susan Givler for creating the BFUMC Christmas Pageant, shown on December 20. We are so blessed by her creativity and gifts. Thank you to each person that helped with the production of our Christmas Pageant. We are so grateful for all the talented actors, actresses who shared the special story of our Savior's birth.

SAFE SANCTUARIES

The wellbeing and safety of each individual is a priority at Bellefontaine First UMC. Protect My Ministry is a company hired by our church to provide background checks for all staff and volunteers. They are committed to helping faith-based organizations maintain a safe environment at our church. If you are interested in helping with children and youth ministries, a background check is required. Please contact the church or Family Ministry Team to start the process.

Submitted by Heidi Reser

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

LYNN MCLAUGHLIN	JANUARY 3
JULIA KINNEY	JANUARY 4
MIKE ANGLE	JANUARY 5
JOHNNIE COLLINGS	JANUARY 6
STEVE MARSHALL	JANUARY 6
CARMEN SCOTT	JANUARY 9
ARLENE BEATY	JANUARY 13
MARY WELLER	JANUARY 14
KRESS BARTON	JANUARY 16
KENNY LAMBERT	JANUARY 16
AUDRY OVERLY	JANUARY 18
MILDRED BUSH	JANUARY 23
CHERYL ERWIN	JANUARY 23
MARVIN CHISM	JANUARY 26



FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

TEANDA DOLAN	FEBRUARY 1
NATE KURTZ	FEBRUARY 4
JANICE CHIVINGTON	FEBRUARY 5
TAMMY STRAYER	FEBRUARY 5
GLORIA FOX	FEBRUARY 6
EVAN ALEXANDER	FEBRUARY 7
CLEVE WALDEN	FEBRUARY 8
JOYCE FURLONG	FEBRUARY 10
MYRA SUMAN	FEBRUARY 10
ABBY MILLER	FEBRUARY 11
BONNIE MUNN	FEBRUARY 12
BECKY MILLER	FEBRUARY 13
SCOTT SHELLHAAS	FEBRUARY 13
NORMA BEACH	FEBRUARY 14
JEANETTE LAMBERT	FEBRUARY 14
HAROLD MARKER	FEBRUARY 14
COURTNEY YODER	FEBRUARY 19
MARIANNE ANTRAM	FEBRUARY 20
WALTER WYSE	FEBRUARY 20
KELLY FRY	FEBRUARY 22
CONNOR MASON	FEBRUARY 25
LANEY MITCHELL	FEBRUARY 26
JAMI HIETT	FEBRUARY 27
JANICE MILLER	FEBRUARY 27

