

The Tower News

May 2023

From Our Pastor

²⁸ *The sons of Abraham: Isaac and Ishmael.* ²⁹ *These are their genealogies: the firstborn of Ishmael, Nebaioth; and Kedar, Adbeel, Mibsam,* ³⁰ *Mishma, Dumah, Massa, Hadad, Tema,* ³¹ *Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah. These are the sons of Ishmael.* 1 Chronicles 1:28-31 (NRSV)

If you have been reading along with me in the daily bible reading plan for this year, you may have skimmed to genealogies listed. You may be wondering why they are listed there at all. The author of Chronicles as a specific purpose for it. Their audience was a group of people who were returning from being held captive in Assyria and Babylonia. Since God got his land to the people of Israel, their claim to the land once they have returned might be an important thing to prove to reclaim their inheritance around 400 BC. While they had a claim to their historical inheritance, they were not free to live as independent people as in the days of King David's rule. However, I think there is more to this list than just to claim the family's inheritance.

I believe that genealogies help us understand where we have come from. They help to forge an identity, culturally, historically and in some ways economically. That last one might surprise you. My father's family were migrant workers on a vineyard in Northeast Italy. The opportunity to come to States and live the American Dream is a source of great pride for the pioneering families that were able to better their living conditions by taking such a bold risk.

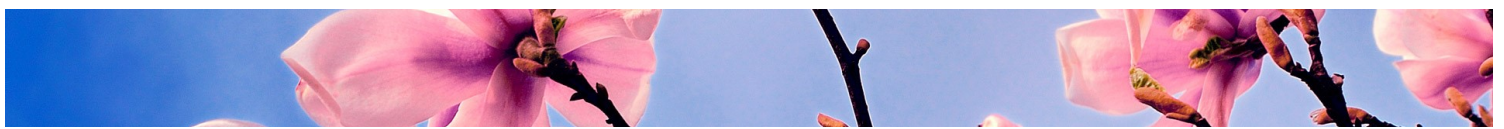
Genealogies help us to understand in some ways the trials and triumphs that helped get us to where we are at. In difficult times they can provide us hope that things will get better. This may have been the motivation for listing them in the official record of Isra-

el, through their sacred book. In this way, they are a witness that God has not forgotten our suffering and plight. God still has plans for our future both individually and corporately. When we are experiencing difficult times as a community (ie, the Covid pandemic) we share common hopes and dreams that bind us to each other. The past has much to teach us about what the future looks like.

Consider what Ishmael's family experienced after being exiled from Abraham's family. God promised to Hagar, Ishmael's mother that they like, Isaac would become a great nation. And they did. The names that Ishmael gives to his children describe a wide range of emotions. Ishmael means God that hears; Kedar means blackness or sorrow, etc. Have you taken the time to understand what your name means? Does the journey that you ancestors took give you hope for what may come ahead? Where do you see God working in the past? Are there lessons still to be relearned from the past?

God is still in the creation business. The hope that we found the moment we accepted Christ made is a new creation. Through God's continued work on and in us, we discover God's plan for our future. I hope and pray that what the past has to teach us inspires us to live God honoring lives in the future.

Joe



United Methodist Men

Matt. 22: 37-39 “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 great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. “

When you read these verses, do we take the time to understand how deep of meaning we should apply these commandments to each of our lives. Do we really love the Lord our God with all our heart, and with all our soul, and with all our mind, or do we rely on our own sense of knowledge and wisdom to cope with our daily lives? And do we really love our neighbors as ourselves?

It is easy to live our daily lives and take God for granted, only talking to him when we have a crisis arise instead of discussing our plans first with him. It is also easy to ignore our neighbors and their needs.

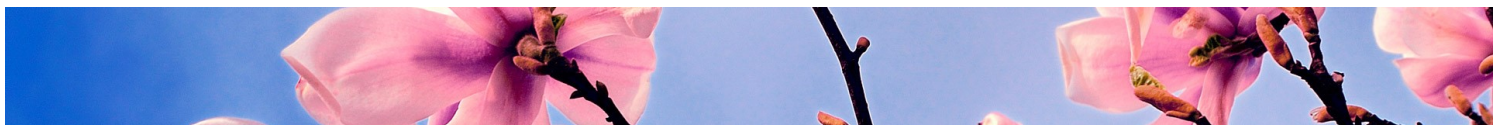
We need to talk to God in the morning when we wake up, thanking him for another day. We need to ask him to lead us through each day that we may receive his blessings and strength to face whatever happens. He is eager to hear from us and to shower his promises on us as his children. All of us who have accepted Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior are truly his beloved children. God wants the best for each of us. All we have to do is ask and we will receive as we honor God and give him the glory for what he is doing in our lives.

What about our neighbors? Are we like the ones who asked who is my neighbor? Do we know who lives next to us or about their families and needs? What about our fellow Christians that we worship beside? Do we know their families or needs? Do we take the time to fellowship with God or our neighbors?

My prayer is that you consider my original question. We can look back over the choices we have made throughout our lives to see if we really have loved God with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength. And have we loved my neighbor as myself. Our past choices cannot be changed; but we can shape our future and begin to make better choices to allow God control of our lives.

Future Events:

Saturday April 15 – Men’s Fellowship Breakfast – 8:30 am in Church Fellowship Hall
All men are welcome!



FUMC Congregation-

With the lifting of COVID restrictions, we are excited to add more activities to our church calendar. With these activities, we have a greater use of our kitchen facilities. Here are a few reminders for anyone using the kitchen.

1. Please reserve the kitchen with Tyra and include the day and time needed.
2. Please take any used towels home to wash and return them as soon as possible.
3. All dishes and utensils used should be placed in the small dishwasher.
4. Pots and pans should be washed and returned to the lower cabinets.
5. All cupboard doors and drawers should be completely closed.
6. Counters need to be washed with Clorox and water using the white buckets.
7. The floor should be swept.
8. The double-door commercial refrigerator has a seal to it. Please wait 30 seconds after closing it before you open it again.
9. If you notice something is running low, such as dishwasher detergent or coffee, please let Janice or Sharon know immediately.
10. Please do not leave any leftovers, grocery bags or pizza boxes in the refrigerators or on the counters.
11. The date should be on anything placed in the freezer.

There is a checklist by the hall door to follow before you leave.

We are both excited and pleased to have members and guests using our facility again and want it to remain functional and safe for all. Please call either of us if you have any questions.

Sharon and Janice



- | | |
|----------------------|---------------------|
| 2 Louann Kelley | 12 Jason Overly |
| 2 Patricia Molton | 15 Elizabeth Hadley |
| 5 Katherine Allen | 17 Dane Daring |
| 5 Ellen Hammond | 19 Douglas Pugh |
| 5 Douglas Kildow | 21 Kayce Shaeffer |
| 5 Debbie Shellhaas | 22 Catherine Wiley |
| 7 Amy Ball | 23 Carol Troth |
| 7 Angie Pemberton | 25 Rebecca Turner |
| 8 William Buchenroth | 27 Tonya Perry |
| 9 Judith Verbsky | 28 Katie Kuhn |
| 10 Sakura Kawakami | 30 Florence Whisman |
| 10 David Lyons | |
| 11 Sherry Arnett | |
| 11 Jeremy Karg | |
| 11 Linda Knight | |

May

Turkey and noodles
Veggie
Roll
Dessert

Last Thursday Meal

June

Pulled Prok Sandwich
Baked Beans
Veggies
Desert

July

No meal is being
served.



Bellefontaine First UMC
201 N Main St
Bellefontaine, OH 43311
www.bellefontainefirstumc.org

April 24, 2023

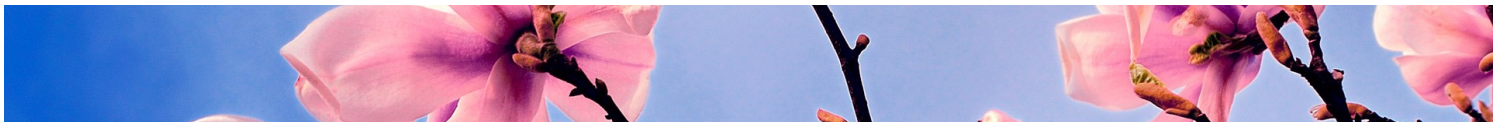
Greetings from your Administrative Council,

We are writing to update you on recent conversations we have been having. According to The United Methodist Church Book of Discipline, our annual Charge Conference empowers your Ad Council to establish a vision and set a church direction on your behalf. We take this responsibility very seriously and work to represent the congregation's interests.

As you are probably aware, there are discussions taking place in The United Methodist Church around many issues, including human sexuality. As a result of these debates paragraph 2553 (which expires on December 31, 2023) was added to The Book of Discipline in 2019 that provides a process for congregations to leave and keep their property and assets. Churches choosing to leave will be required to pay their current Conference commitments for apportionments and clergy pension(s). Some churches, including a few in Logan County, have chosen to leave The United Methodist church through a process known as disaffiliation.

Concerned congregations begin the process of disaffiliating with a Discernment Process. The first step requires an email from the Administrative Council chairperson to the District Superintendent indicating the congregation's desire to explore disaffiliation. The District Superintendent then works with the Administrative Council to arrange the required meetings and a date for the official vote if the discernment process results in a church vote by the membership. Only official members who are present are able to vote. A 2/3 majority is required to disaffiliate from the United Methodist Church.

We have had two town hall meetings to discuss this issue among ourselves. In addition, Pastor Joe and members of the Ad Council have had individual conversations with members of the congregation. Excellent questions have been raised and heartfelt conversations have been shared. Your Administrative Council has been praying for guidance and listening for the congregation's feedback for many months so that we may decide how this process may apply to our congregation. Some members of the congregation have emphatically said they want to remain United Methodist.



It is our understanding that even though there are people who have concerns, they hesitate to risk damage to our church family by asking for a vote to disaffiliate.

The Ad Council has taken action in response to conversations within our church family. At the March meeting we reviewed the Statements of Faith (titled Articles of Religion) in our Discipline. The Ad Council unanimously agreed that we stand behind these tenets, and we will make them available in print and on our website for your review. At that meeting we passed the following resolution: "We have listened to the members of the congregation, reviewed the Statements of Faith in our United Methodist Book of Discipline and believe in them, and at this time we do not recommend entering into the process of disaffiliating from The United Methodist Church." This resolution reflects what we know and have heard from you at this current time. We continue to listen and make decisions based on the information we hear from you and glean from God's direction for our church family.

The Ad Council is taking further steps toward defining our congregation's parameters regarding clergy selection and our wedding policy for the future. We have charged the SPPRC to establish a clergy profile that will define our expectations for future clergy appointments. And we have directed the Trustees to review our wedding policy to clarify our position on the performance of same-sex unions. When these two documents are adopted, they will be made available for your review.

Please continue to pray for the discernment of the path God wants us to take. We are listening and hope to hear from you as you have insights to share with us.

Yours in Christ,

Nancy Evans-Donley
Administrative Council Chair



VBS IS COMING! Join us this year in a joint VBS with the downtown churches. It will be held July 16-20 at the First Christian Church so mark your calendars. We still need volunteers. Check the bulletin in the future for opportunities to register. If you need more info, please contact Ashley Reser or the office.



UMCOR Kits, Supplies to be Collected at Annual Conference

On Thursday, June 1, during this year's in-person West Ohio Annual Conference, a truck will be on-site to collect items for Midwest Mission Distribution Center, our North Central Jurisdiction UMCOR Depot. Midwest Mission distributes supplies to people in need across the U.S., especially in the wake of a disaster. This year's collection will focus on three items:

- Completed UMCOR Hygiene Kits (
- Laundry Detergent (100-150 oz. size)
- Shampoo (12-19 oz. bottles)

There will be a place to collect these items in the lobby.

Our collection will end on May 28th



UMCOR HYGIENE KIT ASSEMBLY & SHIPPING INSTRUCTIONS (KIT AP- PROXIMATE COST: \$12 PER KIT)

One hand towel (15 x 25 –17 x 27 inches)

- No kitchen, cleaning, or microfiber towels

One washcloth

- No kitchen, cleaning, or microfiber towels

One comb

- Must be sturdy with at least 6 inches of teeth
- No pocket combs or picks
- Rattail and combs without handles are acceptable but must have at least 6 inches of teeth

One toenail or fingernail clipper

- No emery boards or metal nail files

Bath-size soap (3 oz. bar or larger)

- No Ivory or Jergen's soap
- Do not remove from packaging

One adult toothbrush

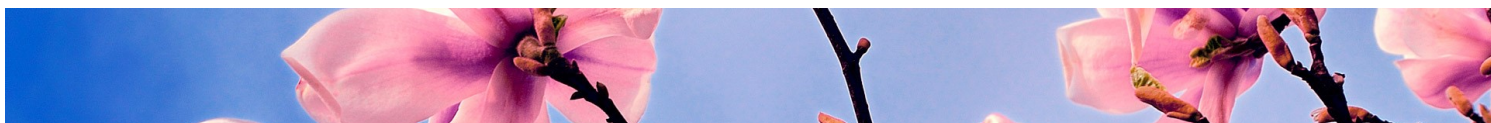
- Do not remove from packaging
- Personal advertising not acceptable

10 adhesive bandages ($\frac{3}{4}$ by 3 inches)

- Common household bandages acceptable

Assembly Directions

- Lay hand towel flat on a table.
- Lay the washcloth in the center of the hand towel.
- Place all remaining items on top of the washcloth (except the plastic bag).
- Fold the sides of the hand towel to cover the items.
- Grasp the bundle tightly and roll over the remainder of the towel.
- Place the tightly rolled bundle in the plastic bag, remove air, and seal.



A Seat at The Table

Updates from your ministry leaders

Finance—

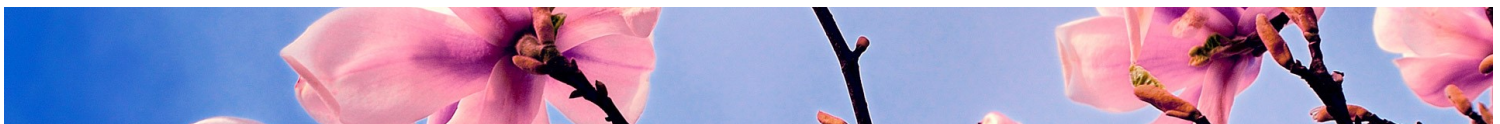
- Revenues continue to remain ahead of the past five year levels. We thank you for your generosity in supporting the church financial needs.

Family Ministry—

- This year VBS will be a coordinated effort with the four downtown churches (FUMC, First Presbyterian, First Lutheran and First Christian). Our theme will be Babylon. Join Daniel who is torn from his home and is forced into the king's service. Imagine the pressure of learning a new language and culture and then discover that your friends have been tossed into a furnace!
- The dates for VBS will run from July 16th to July 20th at the First Christian Church. Children between the ages of 3 years old to exiting 5th graders are welcome to participate.

United Women In Faith (formally UMW)—

- On Friday May 5th, we will hold our annual Mother/Child banquet. The meal will be provided by Fazolis and the UMM will help serve. Entertainment will be provided by LesFons from the Bellefontaine High School.
- Our World Thank Offering has been moved to May and we will collect donations on the first Sunday of the month. Donations will go to needs locally, nationally and internationally.
- A Prayer Breakfast will be offered on June 10th at 10:00 am. All are invited to attend.



Worship and Music—

- Much of our last meeting involved making final preparations for Holy Week. We want to thank all who helped to make our Maundy Thursday Passover meal a huge success.
- Special thanks go to Christina Moran for her work on the Easter Flowers

Trustees—

- We continue to work on the push bars on the two center doors to improve the functionality of the latching mechanism.
- We are repairing the heat sensor in the elevator control room as well as the downspout on the south side of the building.
- We are working on upgrading the fire alarm monitoring system.

SPPRC—

- We recently completed the Pastors annual review.
- We have started the discussion of establishing an annual Pastor Profile which will set our requests to resident bishop when we are notified of a pastor change.

Faith in Action (Missions)—

- Our Last Thursday meals have returned to in house service. This has allowed us to bring the Justice Mobile back to offer free legal services. These services will be offered on June 22nd, September 28th and November 23rd.
- Due to a staff change we have not been able to offer any activities at Bellefontaine Manor
- We continue to share needs identified by Raising Arrows. You can request to be added to the BFUMC Prayer Group to receive notices of ways that we can continue to support them.
- The Blessing Bucket collections for May and June will be VBS and Doors of Encouragement respectively.

HELLO May 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 Ad Council Business meeting	2 NA 7pm Pastor's Bi- ble Study 6:30pm	3	4	5 Prayer Group 11am Mother/Child Banquet 6:30pm	6 NA 7pm
7 World Thank Offering	8 Trustees Meeting 6pm	9 NA 7pm Pastor's Bi- ble Study 6:30pm	10	11	12 Prayer Group 11am	13 NA 7pm Men's Prayer Breakfast
14	15 Red Cross 12 -6 pm	16 NA 7pm Pastor's Bi- ble Study 6:30pm	17	18	19 Prayer Group 11am	20 NA 7pm
21	22 Martha Circle 1:30 pm	23 NA 7pm Pastor's Bi- ble Study 6:30pm Priscilla Cir- cle 1:30 pm	24	25 Last Thurs- day Meal Hannah Ruth Circle 6:30 pm	26 Prayer Group 11am	27 NA 7pm
28	29	30	31			



BELLEFONTAINEFIRST

BELLEFONTAINE FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

www.bellefontainefirstumc.org; 937-592-9651

Office Hours: Mon-Thurs; 10 am – 2 pm

201 N. Main St.
Bellefontaine, OH 43311

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,
iziraldo@bellefontainefirstumc.org; 937-651-6227

Tyra Bell, Office Secretary
office@bellefontainefirstumc.org; 937-592-9651

Greg Knight, Treasurer & Bruce Norris, Financial Secretary
Finance@bellefontainefirstumc.org; 937-651-6226

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