

January 2024



THE BANNER

First United Methodist Church of Berthoud Monthly Newsletter

From Pastors Mark and Sandie Johnson

Dear Friends,

As I am writing this, Pastor Sandie and I are in the final days of the Advent season, preparing for Christmas. Soon, we will officially be in the Season of Christmas which, according to the Christian calendar, stretches for 12 days from Christmas Eve to January 6 (Day of Epiphany). During the "12 days of Christmas" we remember the miracle of God entering into humanity in the person of Jesus. Theologians call this "incarnation."

Christmas is immediately followed by the season of Epiphany which stretches until Ash Wednesday (Feb. 14), which marks the beginning of Lent. Epiphany celebrates God's self-revelation to humankind, and we again hear the stories of the Wise Men, Simeon and Anna, and Christ's baptism.

As we move from Christmas to Epiphany the focus of our discipleship shifts, also. Just as Christmas celebrates "Christ with us" so Epiphany celebrates "Christ through us." Jesus Christ has come to us, and we strive to make Christ real for others.

Howard Thurman continues to be celebrated as a deeply faithful academic, theologian, author, mystic and poet. His poem "The Work of Christmas" marvelously explains the task of discipleship for Christ followers at this time of the year.



When the song of the angels is stilled,
when the star in the sky is gone,
when the kings and princes are home,
when the shepherds are back with their
flocks, the work of Christmas begins:
to find the lost,
to heal the broken,
to feed the hungry,
to release the prisoner,
to rebuild the nations,
to bring peace among the people,
to make music in the heart.

This holiday season, may the meaning
and work of Christmas fill your heart, soul,
and mind.

See you in worship on Sunday.

Blessings,
Pastors Mark and Sandie

A Look Back At December



Left: Carol Keck and Barb Howell stand with a representative from House of Neighborly Services with the toys from a very successful toy drive by the United Women in Faith.

Right: Members of the Book Club enjoy their annual Christmas dinner.



Below: The UMW Early Birds enjoyed a Christmas gathering.



Above and Left: It was a packed house for the Don Elwood Big Band Christmas Concert on December 10th.



There were three services on December 24th. The first was our usual 10:00 AM service for the 4th Sunday of Advent. Next was the 7:00 PM Candlelight Christmas Eve service. Finally there was a midnight candlelight Christmas Eve service.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

MEMBERSHIP Classes



Pastors Sandie and Mark will be offering a series of classes on Exploring Membership for persons who wish to join the church and/or want to know more about United Methodism. We will be meeting after worship in the Builders' Room (11:15 AM-ish). Bring your cup of coffee, a goodie, and your questions. Topics will include:

- Feb. 11 "2,000 Years of Christian History in 45 Minutes"
- Mar. 10: "What UM's Believe. No, Really!"
- April 14: "UM's Do What?"

You Are Invited To Join Berthoud First UMC

Please talk to either Pastor Sandie or Pastor Mark if you would like to join Berthoud First United Methodist Church. Of course, you are welcome to participate in worship and other ministries of the church regardless of Church membership but for many, church membership is an important step in their spiritual journey. As one becomes a Professing Member (sometimes called a full member), one declares that the people of the church are the ones with whom one will journey, grow, serve, and live in Christ.



Beginning in February, worshippers will be given an opportunity to join the church at the conclusion of worship each Sunday. More information will be forthcoming and if you have questions, please talk to either of the Pastors.

Visitation



In many congregations, there is a tradition that the Pastor(s) meet with everyone in the congregation during the month of January and we, Pastors Sandie and Mark, would like to bring that tradition to our church. The problem is, when folks hear the Pastors want to visit it sometimes feels like there is an agenda: "Oh, dear. What do they want me to give? Do?" Others may think, "Oh, my. I'll have to spend a week cleaning house and another two days cooking a feast."

To which Pastors Sandie and Mark say, "Pish posh" (if anyone still says "Pish posh") We have no agenda but to get to know you better and to learn how we may be in prayer with you. If it is most convenient for you, we would love to meet at your house but meeting at the church or a coffee shop works just as well. Really it is all about your convenience and comfort level.

There is a sign-up sheet in Van Amburg Hall with available times to meet. Please find a time that works for you, sign up, and let us know where you would like to meet. If you have questions or concerns, please chat with either Pastor Sandie or Pastor Mark.

We look forward to getting to know you better.

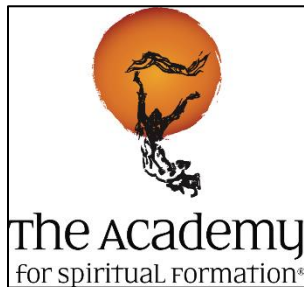
Lent begins On Ash Wednesday, February 14



Lent is the forty-day period leading to Easter and for many it is a time of reflection and repentance. Details on our Ash Wednesday observance and Lenten focus will be announced in mid-January.

During Lent, you are invited to read *Restored* by Bishop Tom Berlin and participate in a book study on Wednesdays at 1 PM beginning Feb. 14. A sign-up sheet will be in Van Amburg Hall. Please talk to either of the Pastors if you have questions.

Pastors at Spiritual retreat 1/22-28



Pastors Sandie and Mark are beginning their second year of participation in the "Two Year Academy of Spiritual Formation" through the Upper Room. As Academy participants, Pastors Mark and Sandie gather with others for a week-long retreat every quarter. Their next retreat will be Monday, January 22 through Saturday, January 27. Stu Boyd will preach on January 28. From Jan. 22-27, the Pastors will have limited availability to text, phone and email but will reply as they are able (and have Wi-Fi/cell access).

Berthoud First UMC Awarded Two Grants



Berthoud First UMC is excited and gratified to announce that we have received two matching grants, totaling \$4,250, to help defray the costs of several technological upgrades. These upgrades improve our Sunday morning worship experience for both our in-person and virtual congregations. We will be announcing some exciting ministry opportunities in the weeks to come that are being made possible by these grants.

Many thanks to the Mountain Sky Conference and to the Methodists Helping Methodists Foundation for their generous grants as well as to Rob Howell, the Wednesday Workers, and the Trustees who have designed and are installing the upgrades.

Reaffirmation of Baptism



Our worship theme on Sunday, January 7 is baptism, and we will again hear the story of Jesus' baptism in the Jordan River. As a way of commemorating this event, worshippers will be given the opportunity to be baptized or to re-affirm their baptism.

Baptism is the entry point into our spiritual journey. When we baptize infants both the family and the

congregation "choose Jesus" for a child with the understanding that the baptized child will take the vows of baptism for themselves later in life – perhaps at confirmation. Not only infants, but people of all ages are baptized as a sign of God's grace and a commitment to follow Jesus. In baptism, we are filled with the Holy Spirit, are given spiritual gifts for use in our journey with Christ, and are welcomed into Christ's universal church.

At different points in our spiritual lives, many people feel called to re-commit to their discipleship path with Jesus and it is not uncommon for folks to ask to be re-baptized. But remember, baptism is a gift of the Holy Spirit, and it is not necessary to be baptized again to re-commit to Jesus. The Holy Spirit has not taken the gift back even when we stray. Rather, we can re-affirm our baptism and again signal our desire to receive the blessings God is only too willing to shower upon us.

Now, to make this even more confusing, some people who grew up in a faith tradition that christened children rather than baptizing them may not know if they have been baptized or not. Baptism and christening, although the terms are often used interchangeably, are two very different things. Christening is essentially a naming ceremony while baptism invites the Holy Spirit into the one being baptized and signals their inclusion in the life of the universal church. If you are not sure if you have been baptized or christened, please talk to either of the pastors.

With all these things in mind, we will have a glorious celebration of Jan. 7 celebrating Christ's baptism and our own. If you or a family member would like to be baptized, or have any questions, please schedule a time to talk with the Pastors.

Who Is Interested in Dinner, Games, (and a smidgeon of training)?



If so, join Pastors Sandie and Mark on Saturday afternoon, January 20 at 3 PM. We will share a meal (Pastor Sandi will cook so you needn't worry about getting one of Pastor Mark's creations). There will be time for board games and perhaps some other shenanigans. Somewhere in there we will have some catch up training for liturgists, ushers, candle lighters and the introduction of our new, exalted, highly coveted position – "Sunday Slider." What's a Sunday Slider, you ask? Well, join us January 20 and find out. Hope to see you then.

SMALL GROUPS

United Methodist Men

United Methodist Men is a creative, supportive fellowship of men who seek to know Jesus Christ, to grow spiritually and to daily seek His will. Our primary purpose is to declare the centrality of Christ in the lives of men and in all their relationships. If you would like to be involved with the Berthoud United Methodist Men, please e-mail Ric Haskins at rghask@aol.com.



United Women In Faith (Formerly United Methodist Women)

UMW Executive Board Meeting: Every Second Wednesday – 8:00 AM in the Library

Hope Circle: Every 2nd Thursday – 1:30 PM in the Library

Early Bird Circle: Every 3rd Saturday – 8:00 AM in the Library



Wednesday Workers

The Wednesday Workers are a group of men and women who maintain the building and grounds, and prepare the sanctuary and Sunday School rooms for Sunday.



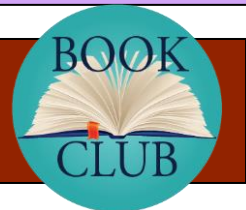
Craft
and
Chatter



Craft Group meets every Thursday at 9:30 a.m. in the library. Bring your favorite craft, sewing, crochet or embroidery project to work on while enjoying the company of other crafters and seamstresses!

Spanish Classes will meet in the Library on Tuesdays at 10:30AM.

The Book Club will meet on Thursday, January 25th. Contact the office or Barbara Boyd for more information.



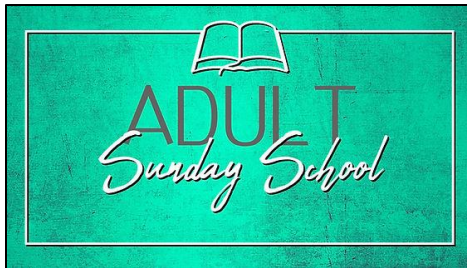
Caring Connections helps to care for the needs of our congregation. All are welcome to join us! Meetings are held in the Library at **9:00 AM on the first Wednesday every month.**

SUNDAY SCHOOL MINISTRY



Youth and Children Sunday School

Kindergarten through 5th grade will meet in the 3rd Floor classroom. Youth in middle school will also meet for fellowship, activities, and study.




Exploring the Bible, led by Keith Henderson meets Sundays at 8:30 AM in the Builder's Room; all are welcome to join us!

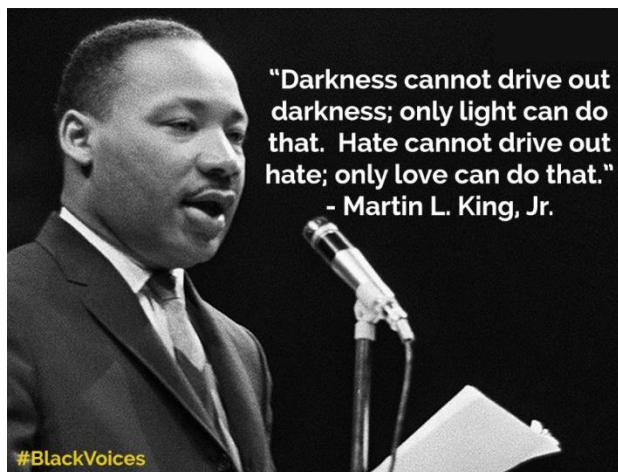
Faith and Fellowship, meets in the Library at 11:30 each Sunday.

JANUARY CALENDAR



Day	Date	Time – Event – Location
Monday	1	HAPPY NEW YEAR! <i>Happy New Year 2024</i>
Tuesday	2	OFFICE CLOSED 1:30 PM – A.B.C. Pastors' Meet-up, Kó-fē House
Wednesday	3	9:00 AM – Caring Connections, Library 6:30 PM – Choir Practice, Sanctuary
Thursday	4	9:30 AM – Craft Group, Library 10:00 AM – A.B.C. Pastors' Meet-up, Rise Bakery
Sunday	7	8:30 AM – Exploring the Bible Adult Sunday School, Builder's Room 10:00 AM – Worship, Children & Youth Sunday School 11:30 AM – Faith and Fellowship Adult Sunday School, Library 11:30 AM – Un-Decorating the Sanctuary
Tuesday	9	10:30 AM -- Spanish Class, Library 1:30 PM – A.B.C. Pastors' Meet-up, Kó-fē House 7:00 PM – Missions Meeting, Library
Wednesday	10	8:00 AM – UWIF (UMW) Executive Board Meeting, Library 6:30 PM – Choir Practice, Sanctuary

Thursday	11	9:30 AM – Craft Group, Library 10:00 AM – A.B.C. Pastors' Meet-up, Rise Bakery 1:30 PM – Hope Circle, Library
Sunday	14	8:30 AM – Exploring the Bible Adult Sunday School, Builder's Room 10:00 AM – Worship, Children & Youth Sunday School 11:30 AM – Faith and Fellowship, Library
Monday	15	Martin Luther King Day 
Tuesday	16	OFFICE CLOSED 10:30 AM -- Spanish Class, Library 1:30 PM – A.B.C. Pastors' Meet-up, Kó-fē House
Wednesday	17	6:30 PM – Choir Practice, Sanctuary
Thursday	18	9:30 AM – Craft Group, Library 10:00 AM – A.B.C. Pastors' Meet-up, Rise Bakery
Saturday	20	8:00 AM – UWIF (UMW) Early Birds, Library
Sunday	21	8:30 AM – Exploring the Bible Adult Sunday School, Builder's Room 10:00 AM – Worship, Children & Youth Sunday School 11:30 AM – Faith and Fellowship Adult Sunday School, Library
Tuesday	23	10:30 AM -- Spanish Class, Library 1:30 PM – A.B.C. Pastors' Meet-up, Kó-fē House 6:30 PM – UMM Fellowship and Dinner
Wednesday	24	6:30 PM – Choir Practice
Thursday	25	9:30 AM – Craft Group, Library 10:00 AM – A.B.C. Pastors' Meet-up, Rise Bakery 7:00 PM – Book Club
Sunday	28	8:30 AM – Exploring the Bible Adult Sunday School, Builder's Room 10:00 AM – Worship, Children & Youth Sunday School 11:30 AM – Faith and Fellowship Adult Sunday School, Library
Tuesday	30	10:30 AM – Spanish Class, Library 1:30 PM – A.B.C. Pastors' Meet-up, Kó-fē House
Wednesday	31	6:30 PM – Choir Practice



December Birthdays and Anniversaries

January 1	Nancy Weber	January 18	Justin Bauer
January 2	Bruce Bohall	January 19	Sherri Copple
January 6	Danielle Pickert	January 23	Kristen Caldwell
January 6	Sean Towles	January 23	Heather Reid
January 7	Kent Davis	January 24	Paige Bauer
January 8	Pati Bena	January 27	Hallie Cook
January 8	Steve Spaur	January 27	Jane Ellarby
January 10	Leanna Konechne	January 29	Skip DeVoe
January 12	Mark Neitenbach	January 30	Louise Bercaw
January 13	Tim Ettleman	January 30	Trent Rees
January 14	Joyce Patterson	January 31	David French
January 15	Patrick Konechne		



Please keep us informed about your joys and sorrows. Many are in need of prayer (both in public and in private). Call the office and we will notify the appropriate contact and add your name to the Prayer Corner of the Sunday bulletin. We are here to serve God, and we want to share your burdens and joys. Phone: 970-532-2142. Email: secretary@berthoudumc.org, pastormark@berthoudumc.org or pastorsandie@berthoudumc.org.

First United Methodist Church of Berthoud

820 9th Street (9th and Lake) Berthoud, CO 80513

Phone: 970-532-2142

Website: www.BerthoudUMC.org

Church email: secretary@berthoudumc.org

Pastor email: PastorMark@berthoudumc.org

PastorSandie@berthoudumc.org

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCJqSxMBHmcpSPv5SldcyAg>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/berthoudmethodistchurchon9th>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/berthoudumc/>