

May 2024



THE BANNER

First United Methodist Church of Berthoud Monthly Newsletter

From Pastors Mark and Sandie Johnson

Dear Friends,

With General Conference being held in Charlotte, NC from the end of April into the beginning of May perhaps our attention is drawn more than usual to the workings of the institutional church. We believe that Christ is the head of the Church and through the power of the Holy Spirit, Christ's Church continues the mission Jesus himself started to teach, heal, and bring all God's people together in peace, justice, grace, mercy and hope now and into eternity. Even so we do not have to look too hard to see the missteps, failings, and mistakes of the larger Church. But then, what else should we expect from an institution that balances God's holy mission and humankind's bent toward sin.

And sometimes a distrust of large institutions of any kind makes us a bit leery of fully trusting local organizations. Or, at the very least, questioning their value. While we could talk endlessly about how we feel about this organization or that, I'd invite us to focus our attention for a bit on our local church – First United Methodist Church of Berthoud and why we choose to get involved.

A generation ago, getting involved with the church was a no brainer. You attended the church your parents, and their parents before, attended and when you reached a certain age, you joined. If you moved to a new community, you went to the church that was the same flavor as the one you grew up in, attended a new member class and then joined the church. Besides an issue of personal faith, church membership and participation was a social expectation. In those days, sermons were



published in the local newspaper and church activities were discussion topics around the water cooler at work.

Need I say that is no longer the case? Many folks look for a church that meets their needs and feeds them spiritually. And sometimes, if the church they are attending no longer meets those needs, they find another church. Other folks say "I don't trust organized religion" to which I tend to answer "You'd love us then. We're not very organized." (Of course, we are really organized but it's a great joke.) Still others explain "I'm spiritual but not religious." I am not making judgments here, just stating the way it is for some folks.

And so, when Pastor Sandie and I invite folks to consider joining the church we sometimes get an interesting look and, while I don't know for sure, I suspect some folks are thinking to themselves, "Are you kidding? That's not for me." In fact, once a person asked me "What do I get for joining the church that I don't already get?"

The problem is, that question really can't be answered. Becoming a Professing Member of the church is more about who we are rather than what do we get. Joining a church signifies that we are connecting with likeminded individuals who will both support us on our faith journey and hold us accountable to live a life that follows Jesus to the glory of God. And yes, you can do those things without joining but can't we all agree that the commitment level is different? Further, a covenant commitment of becoming a Professing Member of the church is necessary for anyone to be considered to serve in a leadership capacity within the church or to vote on church issues.

Sometimes people shy away from joining the church because they don't agree with the public statements of a Bishop, District Superintendent or Pastor. (And sometimes it isn't what a person said, but what someone else reported than they said.) While United Methodist theology is guided by the "Articles of Religion" and "Confession of Faith" found in our Book of Discipline, our church has members with very diverse theological perspectives. As John Wesley said, "But as to all opinions which do not strike at the root of Christianity, we think and let think." (John Wesley's sermon "The Character of A Methodist") He shared a popular phrase of the day "In essentials, unity; in non-essentials, liberty; and in all things, charity." Rather than thinking the same exact things, United Methodists respect each other's convictions, listen to each other faithfully, and commit to serving in love together.

I also hear folks say that they don't want to join the church until General Conference figures out what to do about the inclusion of the LGBTQIA+ community into the life of the church. That's an issue that the church has been struggling with since 1972 and, while I hope this General Conference will figure things out, I don't hold out a great deal of hope. Of course, a previous generation of church leaders were deadlocked about ordaining women and the generation before

that were opposed to racially integrating the church. My point is that if we wait until the General Church gets it all together, well, we're going to be waiting a while. And that is being generous.

In my mind, the church cannot wait to fulfill Christ's mission in the world until the church is ideologically or theologically pure. As Jesus ascended into heaven he commanded his disciples – a command that is directed to us present day disciples also – "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age." (Matthew 28: 19-20 NRSV) I've studied that passage real hard and I don't see Jesus telling us that it is okay to wait until all the good ole' boys and girls get their act together.

For me, when we say that God loves all people, all means all. Our job is not to figure out who to exclude – blacks, women, gays -- so the rest of us sinners can look good (Salvation isn't graded on a curve, by the way.) Rather Jesus has called us to reach all people in love, grace, and compassion.

So, all of this to say if First UMC in Berthoud is your church home but you have not yet joined, Pastor Sandie and I would love to chat with you. Is there a problem? Has no one ever invited you to join? Are you new to United Methodism and no one ever brought membership up? Whatever the reason, we'd love to chat. Of course, we always love to have a chance to chat with you.

Over the next several weeks, Pastor Sandie and I will be calling folks to set a time to get together. Or, if you wish, call us. This church has a proud history and in the (almost) year that we have been with you, we have come to love you.

So let's talk.

See you in worship.

Blessings,
Pastors Mark and Sandie

A Look Back At April

4 TONS OF FOOD!!

On April 13th, members of our church joined the “Scouting For Food” effort put on by the Boy Scouts. House of Neighborly Service reported a whopping 8,275 pounds of food gathered during this event!



We lost longtime member Shirley French on March 24th. Her reception was held on April 6th. At the age of 15 Shirley became a member of The United Brethren Church, on 4th and Mountain, on March 24th, 1940 – 84 years to the day before her passing. To our knowledge, she holds the distinction of being the longest member in the history of this church. She would see the United Brethren Church become the Evangelical United Brethren church in 1946, and the Evangelical United Brethren Church become the United Methodist Church in 1968. She was 31 when services were first held at our current location. We extend our best wishes and prayers to the French family during this time.



ANNOUNCEMENTS



UWIF Annual Luncheon

This year's United Women In Faith luncheon will be on May 11th at 11:30 AM. The theme will be Hawaiian, and we will enjoy a performance by the "Ka Wai Ola O Ke Akua" Hawaiian Praise Dance Ministry dancers. From their web page, "Our group focuses on ministry of praise and worship through the Hawaiian Hula." Please join us for an afternoon of fellowship and entertainment.

General Conference April 23- May 3, 2024

Eight hundred sixty-two United Methodist delegates from across the world have gathered in Charlotte, NC for the (postponed) 2020 Conference. (Due to COVID and then problems getting Visas, the conference had to be postponed several times.) At General Conference delegates worship, pray, and work together to discern how God is calling the Church forward for the next four years. There were over 1,000 petitions and resolutions from UM groups, churches, and individuals for conference delegates to work through.



As the work of the General Conference comes to a close (and all the dust settles), Pastors Mark and Sandie will let you know the important decisions that were made. Further, information from the General Conference will go to our Mountain Sky Conference meeting on June 20-23 and again, the Pastors will keep you informed.

If you wish to view the livestream of General Conference, [CLICK HERE](#) or go to Resourceumc.org. If you have any questions, please contact either Pastor Sandie or Mark.

Noodle Making - 2024

Are you ready to make noodles for the fall craft fair? This year we'll start making noodles in May. Please join us from 9:00 AM to noon on May 28-31 (Tuesday through Friday) and June 3rd (Monday).



Graduation Sunday

On Graduation Sunday, May 19th, the United Methodist Men will present a Bible to our High School Graduate, Mason Smith. Be sure to come and offer your congratulations to Mason.



Reorganization Update

As has been shared in previous newsletters, the leadership of our church has been exploring a new organization plan that would bring the work of the Church Council, Staff Parish Relations committee, Trustees, Endowment committee, and Finance committee into one nine-person board. This new model of church governance is approved by the UM Book of Discipline and has been recommended by our District Superintendent, the Rev. Mark Calhoun.

After worship on Sunday, May 19th you are invited to an information session in the Fellowship Hall to give folks an overview of the new plan and an opportunity to ask questions. Finalizing the reorganization will require an All-Church Conference at which Professing Members (Full Members) of our Church will vote on the issue. This conference will be scheduled later.

Berthoud Faith Coalition Community Prayer Gathering



The Berthoud Faith Coalition, chaired by Betsy Haskins, is a group of community and faith leaders who gather monthly for prayer, information sharing, and planning to do God's compassionate work in our community.

You are invited to join with your Pastors and other members of the Berthoud faith community for an evening of scripture, prayer, and music on **Thursday, May 9 at Pioneer Park at 6:30 PM**. Bring a lawn chair and prepare for a powerful evening.

Cookout Rescheduled to June 30th

The United Methodist men had to reschedule the end-of-school cookout, which usually takes place on the Sunday of Memorial Day weekend. We will now have a mid-summer cookout on **Sunday, June 30th**. The UMM will grill hot dogs, hamburgers, and brats, and everyone else is invited to bring their favorite salad, vegetable, or dessert.

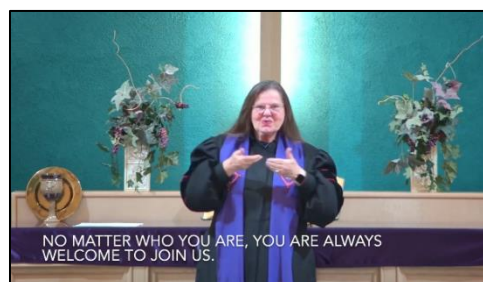


Tomato Plant Sale

This year's tomato plant sale will take place on Saturday, May 18th. This year there won't be any pre-sales. You can come to the church from 9AM to 1PM to select and purchase your tomato plants. See Carol Keck for a list of the plants that will be available.

Bible Study for the Deaf

Pastor Sandie holds Bible Study for the Deaf on Wednesday afternoons at 2:30 PM over Zoom. Be sure to spread the word, so that other members of the Deaf community might find this ministry.



Where In The World Are Pastors Sandie and Mark?



Pastors Mark and Sandie will be away Thursday, May 23 through June 3 for a variety of family and church related events. They will begin their journey with family in Albuquerque for soccer tournaments and dance recitals. Then they will go on to Baltimore, Maryland for the Baltimore Washington UMC Annual Conference. (Their denominational connection is through the Baltimore Washington Conference.) Then they will go to Sioux City, Iowa to help celebrate Pastor Mark's Mother's 100th Birthday. Prayers for safe travel are appreciated. The Rev. Freda Latham-Durrant will be preaching on May 26, and Rev. Judy Taylor will be preaching June 2. If you have pastoral care needs during this time, please call the church office.

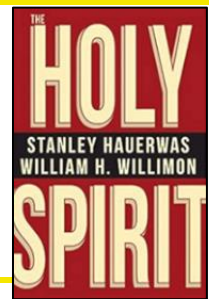


Blood Drive

Mark your calendars for **Sunday, June 9th**, when we'll have our next blood drive. More information and a sign-up link will appear in next month's newsletter.

You're Invited To A 4-Week Book Study

Pastors Sandie and Mark will lead a study of *Holy Spirit* on Wednesday afternoons at 1 PM beginning May 1. This book was written by eminent United Methodist theologians, Bishop Will Willimon and Rev. Stanley Hauerwas. Please chat with the Pastors if you have questions. Hope you can join in.



Garage Sale – Saturday, June 29th



The church will be having a garage sale on Saturday, June 29th from 8AM to 2PM. Please start setting aside items that you can bring to be sold. If you need to get them out of your house right away, you can bring them to church and store them upstairs in the classroom at the south end of the hall. Please mark it for the garage sale. Mattresses, televisions, computers, and computer equipment cannot be accepted. If you are able to help organize this event or have questions, please contact Kris-Ellen Corzine or Barb Howell.

Friendly Reminder

We have reserved pews in the back of our sanctuary for those who are practicing masking and social distancing, for health concerns that affect themselves or a loved one. If you or a loved one has health concerns, please consider these pews reserved for you, and keep your distance from others in these pews. If you are *not* masked or practicing social distancing, please select a different pew. Thanks!



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)

The mission of the United Women In Faith is to connect and nurture women through Christian spiritual formation, leadership development, creative fellowship, and education so that they can inspire, influence and impact local and global communities.

- UWIF 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

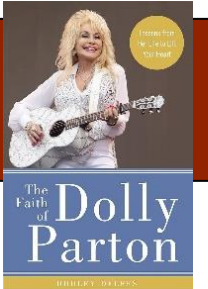
The Wednesday Workers are a group of men and women who maintain the building and grounds, and prepare the sanctuary and Sunday School rooms for Sunday.



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

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

The Book Club will meet on May 23rd to discuss *The Faith Of Dolly Parton: Lessons From Her Life To Lift Your Heart*. See Barbara Boyd for a copy of the book.



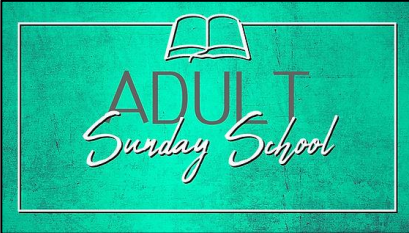
Caring Connections helps to care for the needs of our congregation. All are welcome to join us! Meetings are held in the Library at 9:00 AM on the first Wednesday every month.

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 AM each Sunday.

MAY CALENDAR



Day	Date	Time – Event – Location
Wednesday	1	9:00 AM – Caring Connections, Library 10:00 AM – Pastor Chat, Pastors' Office 1:00 PM – Book Study, Van Amburg Hall 2:30 PM – Deaf Bible Study 6:30 PM – Choir Practice, Sanctuary
Thursday	2	9:30 AM – Craft Group, Library
Sunday	5	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
Tuesday	7	10:30 AM – Spanish Class, Library 5:30 PM – Handbell Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary



Day	Date	Time – Event – Location
Wednesday	8	9:00 AM – UWIF Executive Board Meeting, Library 10:00 AM – Pastor Chat, Pastors’ Office 1:00 PM – Book Study, Van Amburg Hall 2:30 PM – Deaf Bible Study 6:30 PM – Choir Practice, Sanctuary
Thursday	9	9:30 AM – Craft Group, Library 1:30 PM – Hope Circle, Library 6:30 PM – Community Prayer Gathering, Pioneer Park
Saturday	11	11:30 AM – UWIF Women’s Luncheon
Sunday	12	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
Tuesday	14	10:30 AM – Spanish Class, Library 5:30 PM – Handbell Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary 7:00 PM – Missions Meeting, Library
Wednesday	15	10:00 AM – Pastor Chat, Pastors’ Office 1:00 PM – Book Study, Van Amburg Hall 2:30 PM – Deaf Bible Study 6:30 PM – Choir Practice
Thursday	16	9:30 AM – Craft Group, Library
Saturday	18	8:00 AM – UWIF Early Birds, Library 8:00 AM – UMM Fellowship Breakfast, Fellowship Hall 10:00 AM – Tomato Plant Sale, Parking Lot
Graduation Sunday	19	8:30 AM – Exploring the Bible Adult Sunday School, Builder’s Room 10:00 AM – Worship, Children & Youth Sunday School 10:50 AM – Congregational Information Meeting 11:30 AM – Faith and Fellowship Adult Sunday School, Library
Tuesday	21	10:30 AM – Spanish Class, Library 5:30 PM – Handbell Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary
Wednesday	22	10:00 AM – Pastor Chat, Pastors’ Office 1:00 PM – Book Study, Van Amburg Hall 2:30 PM – Deaf Bible Study 6:30 PM – Choir Practice
Thursday	23	9:30 AM – Craft Group, Library 7:00 PM – Book Club Meeting, Van Amburg Hall
Sunday	26	8:30 AM – Exploring the Bible, Builder’s Room 10:00 AM – Worship, Children & Youth Sunday School 11:30 AM – Faith and Fellowship, Library
Monday	27	MEMORIAL DAY
Tuesday	28	OFFICE CLOSED IN OBSERVANCE OF MEMORIAL DAY 9:00 AM – Noodle Making, Fellowship Hall 10:30 AM – Spanish Class, Library 5:30 PM – Handbell Choir Rehearsal, Sanctuary
Wednesday	29	9:00 AM – Noodle Making, Fellowship Hall 6:30 PM – Choir Practice
Thursday	30	9:00 AM – Noodle Making, Fellowship Hall 9:30 AM – Craft Group, Library
Friday	31	9:00 AM – Noodle Making, Fellowship Hall



May Birthdays and Anniversaries

May 1	Doug and Annie Arnstad (A)	May 21	Hawley Vining
May 2	Joshua Doyle	May 23	Ric and Betsy Haskins (A)
May 6	Kelden Cook	May 23	Alison Miller
May 11	Ryan Dueker	May 27	Mark French
May 14	Phoebe Hollander	May 27	Bertie Smith
May 18	Robert Towles	May 31	Miles Vining
May 21	Ruby Spaur		



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

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