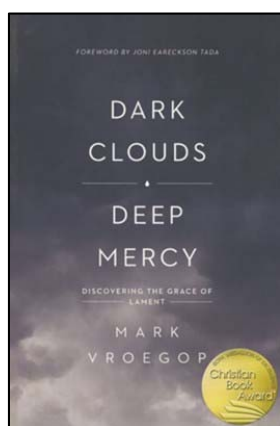




Live Out Faith 🛎️ Serve with Love 🛎️ Change Our World



"Dark Clouds Deep Mercy"
"Discovering the Grace of Lament"

In our review sessions we have learned the four basics of *how* to Lament:

- Turn to God
- Bring Your Complaints
- Ask Boldly
- Choose to Trust

We have talked about our broken world, rehearsing the truth of God, unearthing idols and finding Grace.

Members of our class had this to say:

Nadine: This study made me stop and think about myself. It made me think about

my perceptions of myself and other people's perceptions of me.

Bonnie: I'm finding this class very interesting. You can get a lot out of it especially if you've been through things or will go through things. It also brings you closer to God.

We are also learning *what* Lament is:

- A language for loss
- A solution for silence
- A category for complaints
- A framework for feelings
- A process for our pain

And surprisingly, a way to worship

As we finish this series and put aside the book, let us NOT put aside the practice of lament. While we might think that lament is only for times of earth shattering loss, it is just as appropriate for life's daily struggles. If we practice lament for the daily struggles we will not only be comforted, we will find it easier to lament at times of large sorrows.



Worship Committee

"Home for the Holidays"

The Worship Committee is working hard to bring you an Advent Season filled with Hope: The Hope that comes with the birth of the Christ Child.

Although we will be facing the challenges that 2020 has brought, we are planning Advent and Christmas Eve services that will have many familiar elements.

While we lament the holiday seasons of the past, we can use this time to return with simplicity to the heart of the season – CHRIST IS BORN!!



A gift in memory of

– A donation was given from Arlene Cartwright in memory of Wendy Hutchings.



The Administrative Council continues to work on making BUMC a safe facility where its members and guests can meet and worship together once again. The Council recently approved changes to the sanctuary that will enable more worshipers to gather safely at the same time. The Trustees began the renovations within the past few weeks.

The Council has also been working with various committees and BUMC ministries to evaluate and continue to meet the requirements of the Book of Discipline in the execution of their duties. This will continue to fortify our efforts to share Christ with others.

The current council members and incoming members need your prayers and understanding as we push forward towards the New Year and new hope.

"The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace."

Numbers 6:24-26 (NIV)

Church Trustees

UPDATE



From the Trustees with Ed Long

We are currently working on the demolition of the choir loft in a move to redesign the altar area. It will be a complete redo; rewiring the lights, moving the organ and reorganizing the area.

Work is progressing on removing pews although there will be one section of pews left in place. The chairs have been delivered. They were purchased through an anonymous donation.

The intent is to make the sanctuary more functional for a variety of uses. With movable chairs we can set up tables for group activities, have seminars and more. There can be a center aisle for wedding processions and it will be easier to clean.

We can fit more people in the sanctuary with social distancing by using chairs instead of pews. Once we can progress to full capacity we will be able to seat more people than we were able to with pews before COVID.

Pews are available to church members for free. Please contact Ed Long, Rick Matheny or David Gibbs if you would like one.

Our target date for completing the remodel is the end of December although that is a hope and prayer. Many hands make quick work. If you would like to help, please contact Rick Matheny.

Prayer & Witness



Ministry

We meet every Thursday at 10 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall to pray for our church and the concerns of the people.

A Christmas Prayer

By Robert Louis Stevenson

Loving Father,
 help us remember the birth of Jesus,
 that we may share in the song of the angels,
 the gladness of the shepherds,
 and worship of the wise men.
 Close the door of hate
 and open the door of love all over the world.
 Let kindness come with every gift
 and good desires with every greeting.
 Deliver us from evil by the blessing
 which Christ brings,
 and teach us to be merry with clear hearts.
 May the Christmas morning
 make us happy to be thy children,
 and Christmas evening bring us to our beds
 with grateful thoughts,
 forgiving and forgiven,
 for Jesus' sake.
 Amen.

Chrismon Tree



The United Methodist Church recognizes Chrismons as meaning "Christ monograms", designs made from Christian symbols that signify Christ.

Chrismons ornaments came to be in 1957 when Frances Spencer at Ascension Lutheran Church in Danville, Virginia began thinking about a more suitable way to decorate the Christmas tree in her church Sanctuary. Traditional, bright ornaments seemed inappropriate for a worship setting. What would reflect the Christian faith?

Symbols of His life such as stars, crosses, fish, crowns, and the alpha and omega that remind us of Christ's identity came to mind. She used the traditional white and gold colors of the liturgical season that represent the purity and majesty of Jesus.

They are hung on an evergreen tree which symbolizes the eternal life Jesus Christ provides. Clear, white lights beckon us closer.

Frances and the women of the church continued the tradition, adding new designs every year. The practice spread to other churches and has become a tradition for many churches of many denominations.

<http://www.chrismon.org/chrismons-ministry.html>

<https://www.umc.org/en/content/ask-the-umc-what-are-chrismons>



What is your passion?

Members of BUMC were asked the question – What is your passion? Here's what Ron Sutliff said:

The thrift shop has turned into a passion. I like to buy something that's broken, fix it up and donate it to the thrift store. I've fixed everything from hot plates to bicycles. I enjoy restoration.

I've been involved in renovating the buildings here at the thrift shop too. I really like doing that kind of thing, whatever is involved.

I guess anything I focus on becomes my passion at that time. I have a passion for the Lord. To be able to do this. Without Him...





What is Blessing and a Verse on Zoom?

It is a time to get together and talk about your blessings for the week and or your favorite verse of the week.

It is a time we can share our joys and concerns and take prayer requests.

It is a fun time we laugh and have the joy of Jesus' presence.

We would love to have you join us on Zoom and if you need help to get on Zoom we can do that to.

The times are:

Monday at 9:00 am with Barbara Bowers.

Thursday at 4:00 pm with Sharon Leino.

Email us so that we can send you an invitation to this blessed time.

Barbara Bowers: bowersis@aol.com

Sharon Leino: honnestfinn@gmail.com

Breathe

BREATHE by Janet Conner

May you find strength

May you find courage

May your skin crackle with the kiss
of a blessing wind.

Before you, hope

Behind you, sorrow

Beside you, sacred companions
in this life and all lives.

Above you, moonlight

Below you, earthdark

And in your womb, the seed
of the One Mother.

May your hands caress and be
caressed

May your feet dance once more
a dance of joy

Always and forever may your
prayers rise in the smoke.

And may you breathe.

One breath for yourself

One breath for another

Devotional

BY MARY NORTHRUP



Christmas

I've been thinking a lot about Christmas lately. I didn't worry about Thanksgiving because it wouldn't look much different for us than the last few years had. We order a holiday dinner from a local restaurant or grocery store and watch Christmas shows. Hopefully, we will put the Christmas tree up. Christmas... will look different.

It's just the three of us for the holidays. We usually go to various events and venues around the area. Many of those will be canceled this year. Last year we had the neighbors over for dinner. That might not happen either, depending on how both parties are feeling about COVID.

Seasonal depression will have been in full bloom for about two months at that point. I will have battled mood swings as I try to work my way through the ups and downs of having lost family members this time of year as well as feeling the loss of a family gathering since we aren't near any of them. This is the loneliest time of year for me.

I'm not going to let depression, anxiety, loneliness and COVID win. We will

decorate the tree with handmade ornaments, thinking of the loved ones who made them. I'm going to blast Christmas songs while I make cookies with my mother's cookie cutters, remembering making them with her through the years. I'm going to get out the goofy glasses that make lights look like stars or reindeer. I'm going to look for silly stocking stuffers to make my grown son grin and ask "WHAT am I going to do with THAT?"

Even if you are alone there are things you can do. On the days that are my lowest I try to call people. I gave up on Christmas cards. I find a phone call much more satisfying and well received. Other people have loneliness and depression this time of year too. You could deliver groceries, shop for a needy family, look for treats for workers and in general try to make other people's days more pleasant. Looking outside oneself brings the rest of the world into focus.

There isn't a cure-all for these times. Sometimes, all we can do is move forward.

Proverbs 4:25 Let your eyes look directly forward, and your gaze be straight before you.

Psalms 31:24 Be brave. Be strong. Don't give up. Expect God to get here soon.

Proverbs 23:18 There is surely a future hope for you, and your hope will not be cut off.



Members of BUMC were asked the question – What are your favorite gifts?

Ila House: My mother and dad were married in 1911 and I have a picture of the wedding celebration in the yard of the house where she lived with her mother; and the same house where I and my siblings grew up.

After Mother died her engagement ring went to my sister-in-law. She and my brother lived next door in what once was “the barn” and had watched over Mother and Dad with such loving care.

Many years later my sister-in-law had passed away and I hadn’t seen her wear the ring in a long time. My brother said that his daughter and I should go through this box of jewelry he still had. My niece picked up this ring and immediately said “Grandma’s engagement ring!” And it was!

It was decided that I should have it next; and I wear it all the time.

It brings to mind memories of the kind of woman my mother was and the life we all had as a family.

To me it is my special gift.

Mary Northrup: The best Christmas gift I ever received was a torn brown bag full of used paperback books. It wasn’t the wrapping job or the contents that impressed me. It was my husband going way out of his way to find books that I had expressed an interest in.

Jason Brodie: My parents gave me my Dad’s old Bible when I was in middle school. It’s a favorite gift for me because I learned more about our Lord. I still have it.

FINANCE NEWS

From the Finance Committee – Our Record of Faithfulness

Scripture Thought to Ponder –

Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God. ~ Philippians 4:6 (NKJV)...Every prayer should be one of thanksgiving. The verse above is between two verses that help us understand its context. The reason that we should not be anxious, worried, or fretful about anything is that: “The Lord is at hand!” ~ Philippians 4:5b (NKJV) When we pray with Thanksgiving we experience the blessings of God’s presence and His goodness toward us.

God is always with us. He has promised to never leave us. Rather than being anxious, we should pray, and we should pray with a thankful attitude. We should thank God not only for what He is going to do, but we should thank Him for what He already is doing. He has saved us. He provides all our needs. He strengthens us when we are weak. He has promised not to give us anything that we cannot bear.

“I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.” ~ John 16:33

Peace is the opposite of anxiety. Wouldn’t it be better to face the trials of our lives in peace, knowing that God has a plan and He will work it out for His purpose and our good? Now that is really something for which to thank God. Isn’t it amazing that the key to peace is thankfulness? There is something about giving thanks to God that washes the anxieties out of our hearts and fills us with peace.

We should even thank Him for the trials that we are going through because they are for our growth as a Christian, and that brings glory to God. We can be thankful for God’s love and His mercy. We should be thankful for His sovereignty and His power.

Praise and Thanksgiving

Father, We praise you today with our hearts and songs, we praise you for your faithfulness, we praise you for your great power and love. We confess our need for you, our lives don’t go so well when we just spin around on our own. We struggle and worry, get weary and worn. Yet you never leave us. Thank you for your presence. Thank you for your care over us, thank you that you breathe renewal right into our souls. We ask for your spirit to fill us, to draw us close to yourself, and to work your purposes through us, as we set our eyes on you. Amen.

Finance continued on next page.

Finance continued from page 8.

October 2020 – 8,891 Online – 114 in-person

October 2019 – 396

Giving and Operational Expenses		
	October 2020	Year-to-Date
Giving	\$ 10,214.18	\$ 131,142.51
Operational Expenses	\$ 15,845.54	\$ 177,568.56
+/-	\$ 5,631.36-	\$ 46,426.05-

Year-to-date our giving has totaled \$131,142.51 while our operational expenses totaled \$177,568.56 leaving us a year-to-date deficit of \$46,426.05.

We also received a gift of \$18,500.00 that was designated to pay for chairs for the Sanctuary and the balance of our apportionments for 2020.



We will serve drive-thru dinner on Christmas Day from 11:45 am to 1 pm. The menu will be ham, hash brown casserole, vegetable, and bread pudding. Please contact Juanita Applegate if you will donate a ham and if you are available to help prepare/serve this meal. Merry Christmas.



Dinners are free and available for pickup each Wednesday from 5pm to 6pm.

Thanksgiving Dinner Math

- 7 turkeys (111 lbs)
- + 67 cups veggies
- + 106 cups potatoes
- + 12 loaves of bread
- + 12 lbs cranberry sauce
- + 12 12" pies
- + 1 gal gravy
- + 108 dinner rolls
- + 11 volunteers
- = 100 dinners served

Thank you to all who donated food and volunteered for our drive-thru Thanksgiving Dinner.



The Thrift Shop

Hours:

Monday 9am – 12pm
 Thursday 9am – 3pm
 Friday 9am – 12pm
 Saturday 9am -12pm

located behind the church

Let's Celebrate!

December Anniversaries

Ron & Barbara Bowers	12/19
Rick & Sandy Matheny	12/27
John & Diane Drake	12/28



December Birthdays

Gloria Ufkes	12/03	Jim Applegate	12/21
Kay Smith	12/04	Julia Reid	12/21
Sharon Nichols	12/13	Susan Dixon	12/25
Nina Shuler	12/19	Sara Boyles	12/26

Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.

James 1:17



From the Editor:

Please submit your articles for the January 2021 BelleRinger newsletter to bellevuebelleringer@gmail.com or leave them in my mailbox outside the church office. All articles must be submitted by Sunday, December 20th.

Thank you,
Mary Davis



I wanted to thank everyone who filled Christmas stockings or donated stuffed animals for the needy children of Marion County. The stockings and stuffed animals will be delivered to the children at Belleview Elementary & Ocala Preparatory School. I'm sure the gifts will bring many smiles.

Cindy Polcyn



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2 5pm – 6pm Open Table Drive-Thru meal	3 9am-3pm thrift shop 10am prayer group	4 9am-12pm thrift shop	5 9am-12pm thrift shop 4pm-8pm Light Up Lake Lillian
6 <i>Communion Sunday</i> 10:30am Worship	7 9am-12pm thrift shop	8	9 9-11:30am Food Pantry 5pm – 6pm Open Table Drive-Thru meal	10 9am-3pm thrift shop	11 9am-12pm thrift shop	12 9am-12pm thrift shop
13 10:30am Worship 2pm Belleview Christmas Parade	14 9am-12pm thrift shop	15	16 5pm – 6pm Open Table Drive-Thru meal	17 9am-3pm thrift shop	18 9am-12pm thrift shop	19 9am-12pm thrift shop
20 <i>BelleRinger Deadline for January 2021</i> 10:30am Worship	21 Winter Begins 9am-12pm thrift shop	22	23 9-11:30am Food Pantry 5pm – 6pm Open Table Drive-Thru meal	24 Christmas Eve 9am-3pm thrift shop Christmas Eve Service	25 Christmas Day Church Office Closed 11:45am – 1pm Christmas Drive-Thru Dinner	26 9am-12pm thrift shop
27 10:30am Worship	28 9am-12pm thrift shop	29	30 5pm – 6pm Open Table Drive-Thru meal	31 New Year's Eve 9am-3pm thrift shop		

Bellevue United Methodist Church
PO Box 567
Bellevue, FL 34421

Current Resident

Bellevue United Methodist Church
Live Out Faith 🛎 Serve with Love 🛎 Change Our World

Rev. Shawn O'Trimble

Phone (352) 245-2100
Fax (352) 245-2130

Website: www.bellevuemc.net



December Worship Schedule

Worship 10:30 am (Fellowship Hall,
reservations required)

Christmas Eve Outdoor Service TBA

Open Table Drive-Thru Meal
Wednesday 5pm – 6pm (outside
Fellowship Hall)