

Buffalo United Methodist Church

December 2021

1000 30th Street NE
Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52402



Pastor Carol's Desk

I am sitting in my computer room, looking out the window, and seeing snow flakes. My first thought is, "Oh no, I am not ready for this yet. I wish it wouldn't snow at least for another month." But that is wishful thinking. When it comes to winter weather, we have no control over what is going to happen.

I remind myself that God created the world, we have the four seasons, and we are now entering the fourth season. Are we ready? Maybe not, but we know the time has come for the snow, the icy sidewalks, the cold north winds. But we also know that God walks with us each and every day. We remember that God is in charge and is always with us.

I wonder how many people are stumbling around in the world, not knowing where they are going. As Christians, we have our faith, a faith that keeps us strong. It is sad to think that some have not yet found God. I hope and pray that those who are struggling will find the One who will help them find the peace they are searching for. We can help by reaching out and letting them know they are not alone.

I encourage everyone to find a scripture in the Bible, write it down, and put the passage where you know you can quickly find it. Whatever scripture you choose, there will be a moment in your life when it will bring you comfort.

The snow has stopped and so will I. I wish each and everyone a Merry Christmas.

~Blessings, Pastor Carol

Deck the Halls

Everyone is welcome to help decorate the church for the Christmas Season on Monday, December 1, beginning at 8:00 a.m.

"Let All Who Are Thirsty, Come"

A Taizé-style prayer service will be held at Buffalo at 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, December 2. This candlelight service is full of beautiful music, beginning with the glorious song "Let All Who Are Thirsty, Come." For this service we will be joined by clergy and members of St. Paul's UMC. The 50-minute service will be followed an social gathering in the Fellowship Hall with refreshments provided by the UMW. This ecumenical event is an ideal opportunity to invite friends and neighbors to join us for this special Advent experience.

Another Election Day Bake Sale

Our next bake sale is Tuesday, November 30 to elect a new Cedar Rapids mayor. Please put prices on your donated items. The polls open at 7 a.m. so you may want to bring your goodies (with price labels) to the church on Monday. At the November 2 bake sale, we collected \$75 and not a crumb was left on the sale table.

Neighborhood Potluck

Join us on Thursday, December 9, at 11:30 a.m. for a potluck meal. While we will be serving Chili, other potluck donations will be much appreciated. Beverages and tableware provided. Please bring one or two wrapped gifts for an informal gift exchange—and be prepared to play a little Bingo.

Church Cleaning

In preparation for our Christmas Eve and Christmas Day church services, an end-of-the-year church cleaning is scheduled for Friday, December 17, beginning at 9:00 a.m. Experienced church cleaners are invaluable, but newcomers are always welcome. Thanks to everyone who helps keep Buffalo clean.

A Narrative for the Continuing United Methodist Church

[As Mary Fredericksen reported during a recent Sunday Morning Worship Service, Bishop Haller posted a document written by the UMC's Council of Bishops asserting their intention for Methodists to remain united and not splinter into two or more smaller denominations. Copied below is the text of the Bishops' letter. A link to Bishop Haller's blog posting "#BeUMC!" with her comments on the document can be found on the UMC Connections page of Buffalo's website, <http://buffalounitedmethodist.weebly.com/>.]

United Methodists all over the globe are liturgical, contemporary, charismatic, social activists, urban, suburban, small town, rural and much more. We are children, youth, young adults, senior adults, new Christians, and mature Christians. We are present on four continents, in more than 45 countries, and we comprise an unknown number of cultures and languages. We are a holy communion of different races, ethnicities, cultures, and perspectives united by the Holy Spirit, driven by the mission of Christ, and bearing the good news of an unmerited grace that changes lives and transforms communities.

Christ's prayer for our unity and command to gather all to the table, to make space for one another, appreciate one another, and look for Christ in each other, prohibit us from creating individual tables only for those who think, act, look, and perceive the world like we do. We cannot be a church that fractures its identity and commitment to Christ by aligning itself with political parties. We cannot be a traditional church or a progressive church or a centrist church. We cannot be a gay or straight church. Our churches must be more than echo chambers made in our own image arguing with each other while neglecting our central purpose. This is the way of the world.

Instead, we must be one people, rooted in scripture, centered in Christ, serving in love and united in the essentials. It is hard work. It is sacred work. It is the ministry of reconciliation that Christ gave to each of us. Our best witness is to love each other as Christ loves us, to show the world the supernatural power of the Holy Spirit to bind us together despite our differences. This is living out the gospel.

We are a church:

- Confident in what God has done in Christ Jesus for all humankind
- Committed to personal and social salvation/transformation
- Courageous in dismantling the powers of racism, tribalism, and colonialism

All of our members, clergy, local churches, and annual conferences will continue to have a home in the future United Methodist Church, whether they consider themselves liberal, evangelical, progressive, traditionalist, middle of the road, conservative, centrist, or something else. We hold on to our Wesleyan heritage that "the living core of the Christian faith is revealed in Scripture, illuminated by tradition, vivified in personal experience, and confirmed by reason".

We are longing for a United Methodist Church that will move towards new forms of being a connectional church, a General Conference focused on global essentials, and an empowerment of regions for contextually relevant forms of living our common mission mandate. Deeply rooted in the Doctrinal Standards of the UMC, we pledge to exercise our episcopal role in ways that enable as many United Methodists, lay and clergy, as are willing to remain in the UMC and – together – to continue in making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. And, because we are part of the Church Universal, we seek to be united visibly and in ministries with other parts of the Body of Christ in God's mission for the human family and creation.

We are committed to strengthening every local church, where the word is preached and Christ is offered, and where the table is set before all who hunger and thirst for righteousness, confident in the prayer we have learned to say and share:

- Make us one with Christ—this is faithfulness.
- Make us one with each other—this is unity.
- Make us one in ministry to all the world—this is fruitfulness.

This is the United Methodist Church we love and serve!

December 2021

<i>Sunday</i>	<i>Monday</i>	<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>Thursday</i>	<i>Friday</i>	<i>Saturday</i>
November 28 <i>1st Sunday in Advent</i>	29	30 Election Day Bake Sale at Buffalo	1	2 Taize Service (7:00 pm)	3	4
5 8:45 am Worship Service <i>Communion Sunday</i>	6	7	8	9 Neighborhood Potluck (11:30 am)	10	11
12 8:45 am Worship Service <i>3rd Sunday in Advent</i>	13	14	15 Administrative Board Meeting (10:00 am)	16	17 Church Cleaning (9:00 am)	18
19 8:45 am Worship Service <i>4th Sunday in Advent</i>	20	21	22	23	24 Christmas Eve Service (4:00 pm)	25
26 8:45 am Worship Service	27	28	29	30	31	New Year's Day - 2022

December Birthdays: 7 – Pastor Carol Mart 9 – Eileen Kaplan
11 – Gary Hackney 18 – Faye Reynolds 24 – Jim McKibbin

Wedding Anniversaries: No wedding anniversaries this month.

SERRV Items for Sale

Looking for Christmas gifts? The SERRV (Sales Exchange for Refugee Rehabilitation and Vocation) store located in the Ecumenical Center, 601 2nd Ave. SE # 6 in Cedar Rapids has many handmade gifts for sale including baskets, candles, musical instruments, nativities, jewelry, wooden items, games, and much more. SERRV is a nonprofit alternative trade organization that promotes social and economic justice for people in developing regions of the world. SERRV strives to insure that the people who produce these goods receive a fair return for their work. Contact Judy Hackney (phone: 319-393-0188) if you would like to visit the store.

Planting Spring Bulbs

In November month we planted over 750 daffodil and crocus bulbs, including triple rows of daffodils along the south side of the church and at the front of the parking lot. The crocus were planted in the lawn bordering the 30th street sidewalk. Assuming we have a few days of warm weather in December, we should be able to finish planting bulbs, wildflower seeds, and ornamental grasses in and around the Labyrinth. And then we can enjoy winter's snow and patiently wait for spring.

Hy-Vee Receipts: Don't forget: we are still collecting Hy-Vee receipts, which help support the purchase of educational materials at Garfield Elementary.

Buffalo Calendar

December

- 1: Church Christmas Decorating (8:00 a.m.)
- 2: Taizé Prayer Service (7:00 p.m.)
- 5: First in a three-session Bible Study on the birth of Jesus in the Gospels of Matthew & Luke (following Sunday Morning Worship Services)
- 9: Neighborhood Potluck (11:30 a.m.)
- 15: Administrative Board Meeting (10:00 a.m.)
- 17: Church Cleaning (9:00 a.m.)
- 24: Christmas Eve Service (4:00 p.m.)
- 25: Christmas

Accolades and Applause

- Gary Hackney: trimming tall trees, moving heavy cement slabs, dragging tall utility poles, and updating the church's electrical outlets and security lights.
- Hep Hentrich: improving our sound system and making sure the heating/cooling systems and thermostats are working properly.

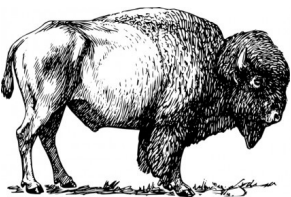
Holiday Dinner

Buffalo's annual Holiday Dinner is scheduled for Sunday, January 9 at 12:00 noon in the Fellowship Hall. The catered meal menu will include Swiss steak, fried chicken, green beans almondine, red potatoes, tossed salad, dinner roll, a dessert, and beverages. The cost of the meal is \$11.75 per person. A sign-up sheet will be available during Worship Services; sign-up deadline is December 26. Please don't hesitate to invite guests for this luncheon.

December Bible Study

Following our Worship Services on December 5, 12, & 19), a Bible Study group will be discussing the first two chapters of the Gospels of Matthew and Luke. Each Gospel provides a distinctly different version of the Birth of Jesus: one Gospel focuses on a peaceful stable in Bethlehem with humble shepherds, the other portrays the appearance of magi from a foreign land and a flight to Egypt so the baby Jesus will not be killed. In our conversations we will consider the primary messages being conveyed by each Gospel. No preparation is required for attending any of these sessions.

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Since 1876