



BLOOMING GROVE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

# THE VISITOR

Volume 84, Issue 7

THE TWO STEEPLD CHURCH ON THE PRAIRIE

July 2020



## July 12<sup>th</sup> - 19<sup>th</sup> - Pastor Kathy Vacation

Pastor Kathy will be on vacation the week of July 12<sup>th</sup> -19<sup>th</sup>. Pastor Elden Ecklund, of Peace UMC in Morristown, will be on call and available if a pastoral need should arise. You may contact Elden directly @ 507-685-4466 or you may contact your Pastor Parish Relations Committee (PPRC) reps for assistance - Allison Janke, Judy Mahler, Cindy Saufferer.

Note: Pastor Elden will be unavailable the evening of Friday, July 17<sup>th</sup> and all day on Saturday the 18<sup>th</sup>. In event of emergency on those days, we will be able to reach out to Pastor Kathy. You may contact her directly or work through your PPRC reps.

## BGUMC Members in Ministries of Connection



In the midst of physical distancing, caring for our neighbors is taking on many forms right now, and persons from BGUMC have found new ways to “be the church” even when we cannot gather together. They are reaching out by sending creativity packets/ lessons to Sunday School students to do at home, sending notes of care or making phone calls to persons who are isolated from family/friends/ neighbors, and checking in on one another on a regular basis to ask “how is it going for you?”.

Three of our members have reached out in kindness to make COVID-19 face-masks and share them with our communities:

- Theresa Riecke has made between 30 and 40 face masks. The majority were donated to Viracon in Owatonna. Some also were given to Amanda’s friends and their families.
- Carolyn Kanne has made 18 masks. All were donated to Faribault’s District One Hospital Faribault via Tracie Spinler, RN.

- Faye Kanne has made, to-date, a total of 178 masks, donating 57 to Faribault’s District One Hospital via Tracie Spinler, RN, 81 to Public Health in Owatonna, 10 to family, and 30 at a destination TBD. She is still sewing, using up material from her stash!

## Excerpts from a June 10<sup>th</sup> message from our MN United Methodist Bishop Bruce Ough



Dear Friends in Christ,  
...I write this letter with the firm conviction that it is our responsibility as persons of faith, and particularly as followers of Jesus in the Methodist tradition, to address the pervasive pandemic of racism. Nelson Mandela declared, “No one is born hating another person because of the color of his skin, or his background, or his religion. People must learn to hate, and if they can learn to hate, they can be taught to love.” We stand at a critical intersection in history—called to be both students and teachers of love. Therefore, I make this appeal for “JUST LOVE.” When we’re fearful and fuming, depleted and damaged, may we respond by just loving God and neighbor. When we witness discrimination and division, callousness and cruelty, may we respond by loving justly. Just love allocates human and financial resources to assess and address crisis response, relief, recovery rebuilding, renewal, repentance and restitution, trauma therapy, and anti-racism. Just love addresses the food, Black home and business ownership, and health care deserts within our communities. I am inspired by the immediate, pastoral, and prophetic response of United Methodists across our state. We’ve protested with passion, fed the hungry, bound the injured, comforted the traumatized, coordinated volunteers, and spontaneously donated money and materials. Now we must maintain our momentum and broaden our participation...

(See our Bishop’s complete message and tangible options for carrying out “Just Love” at <https://www.minnesotauc.org/newsdetail/just-love-special-appeal-14021866>)



## The fruits of our spirit?



We pastors enjoy considering The Word in its various translations. I often compare my preferred NIV version with The Message. In a comparison of Galatians 5: 22-24, The Message provides a clear meaning about the fruits of the Spirit Paul shares with the Galatians:

*22-23 But what happens when we live God's way? He brings gifts into our lives, much the same way that fruit appears in an orchard—things like affection for others, exuberance about life, serenity. We develop a willingness to stick with things, a sense of compassion in the heart, and a conviction that a basic holiness permeates things and people. We find ourselves involved in loyal commitments, not needing to force our way in life, able to marshal and direct our energies wisely.*

*23-24 Legalism is helpless in bringing this about; it only gets in the way. Among those who belong to Christ, everything connected with getting our own way and mindlessly responding to what everyone else calls necessities is killed off for good—crucified.*

It's been difficult to feel connected with our church family these past few months. Many of us are frustrated and lonely. Poor Jerry bears the brunt of my ranting when I can't be with my friends for deep conversations that fix all my worries. And then, along comes Paul to remind me that I'm not living in God's way! Because it appears my orchard was frozen out like the peaches we were hoping for this summer.

God sends the Message, "Kathy, where is your heart these days? How are you showing others that you care? Where is your calm these days?" It would appear that Satan is pulling ahead of the calm and the serenity I desperately need. If I am feeling challenged, I'm wondering about you? How are you in these days? Have you found a soapbox to air your frustrations? Or, is your commitment to Christ keeping your heart in the right place?

I know we are feeling impatience at not being in our sanctuaries. When I walk into each sanctuary to record the week's service, I feel the peace I so often find there. I know you are missing that. Your leadership team and I have had many conversations regarding our return to community worship in our buildings. How we long for the "way it used to be!" But we know that there is no going back. Our worship will look different when we do gather. We are still trying to define how it will be.

We have a great Tech Team that is working hard to create a system that can travel between our three churches to enable outdoor worship. We will begin with drive-in worship. There will be guidelines and your leadership team asks for your understanding as we realize there will be hiccups. I am hopeful that we'll have a system in place by mid to late July. Pray about that?

In the meantime, please consider Paul's letter to the Galatians also to be a letter to the Prairie Lakes Parish people? Let us be orchards that are ripe with affection for others and life! Let us fill our hearts with compassion for one another. God calls us to be and live as the church—loving one another and thankful for one another as we continue to do the work of the church!

Be well dear ones and keep washing those hands!

*Pastor Kathy*



## Treasurer's Report



June 1—June 22, 2020

**General Budget Income 2,105.68**

Expenses	
Salary Expense	1,417.15
Pastor's Housing	380.00
Lawn Mowing	305.00
Post Office Box	56.00
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 2,158.15</b>

**(Net Income: – \$ 53.15)**

### Other Income Received

Restoration	5,500.00
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### Thank you for your continued financial support of Blooming Grove UMC

Thank you for your continuing financial support of BGUMC in these difficult days of the coronavirus and social distancing. Your gifts make our ongoing ministry in our church family and community possible, even while we cannot be together, and as we now reach out to people through the use of technology. Your contributions help pay our pastor, building expenses, utilities, insurance, our United Methodist apportionments, and all the other components of life in the church. During this time when we are unable to physically gather, please send your gifts/checks to Blooming Grove United Methodist, P.O. Box 171, Medford, MN 55049-0171. Again, thank you.

- |                    |                      |
|--------------------|----------------------|
| 1 Tena Harren      | 15 Lenore Poole      |
| 3 Gerald Morgan    | 16 Tess VanZuilen    |
| 5 Parker Nelson    | 18 Greg Poe          |
| 5 Lois Hamilton    | 20 Holly Nagel       |
| 6 Samuel Kanne     | 20 Sharon Nelson     |
| 7 Dawn Yule        | 26 Ben Fyvie         |
| 7 Alexys Lustig    | 27 Ashley Loken      |
| 9 Alexandra Martin | 28 Stephanie Neuhaus |
| 13 Linda Danks     | 28 Ryan Saufferer    |
| 14 Mason Nagel     | 30 Mikayla Spinler   |
| 14 Regan Poe       | 31 Robert Nelson     |

### Happy Anniversary



- 21 Mike & Allison Janke  
25 Doug & Mary Wilkowske



### “At Home Sunday School”

Tiny bits of nature transformed into a sun-catcher: another “at-home-Sunday-School” project. This one is Bass’ creation.

### Celebrating Graduation Milestones!

In addition to our two graduates that we celebrated in our June newsletter, we also celebrate **Madison Klein**, who graduated from Medford High School this year! We hold Madison in our prayers as she moves into her future to share her gifts with the wider world.



Thank you - via Caring Bridge - from the family of Emma, friend of Luke VanZuilen:

“As we hit the one-year milestone of Emma's accident, we celebrate the remarkable progress that Emma has made. At the turn of the year, Emma returned to her marketing position in Minneapolis. She was excited to get back to the cities and spend time with her friends. She is doing well. Emma's body is still healing in certain aspects, but what she has accomplished is truly remarkable. Our family expresses our unending thanks to all who have supported us during this year of uncertainty through thoughts, kindness, and prayers.”



Please pray for the following persons and situations shared publicly within our community of BGUMC in the past month.

**Note from Pastor Kathy King:**

*Please call or text me if you would like me to visit or if there is a prayer concern that you prefer to keep private. We are a community strengthened by the power of prayer. We are stronger when we intercede on the behalf of our brothers and sisters in the faith. Please know that does not mean your name needs to be on a public prayer list. It means that your Pastor can pray for you and help you in any way you define.*

- Thiel, neighbor of Marlis, as he works hard at his physical therapy regimen, and is getting stronger by the day.
- Melvin, friend of members of BGUMC, and father of church neighbors. In May, he suffered an aortic aneurism and underwent surgery in Rochester. He continues in the ICU at St. Mary's on a long journey to recovery.
- Cindy Saufferer's brother, Danny, who is hospitalized and sedated due to unrelenting pain. Cindy is now with Danny, her mom, her sister, and Danny's wife. Pray for God's comforting love and care to wrap around Danny & his family.
- Jim, father of Hjordi Churchill's sister-in-law Suzie, as he continues his recovery from recent strokes.
- Pastor Kathy's mom, Dee, during her time at the rehabilitation center at Whispering Creek, as she works on recovery from a recent fall.
- Del, as he awaits a newly developing treatment plan to help with his medical concerns. Pray that this treatment will be available soon and will help.
- Tracie Spinler's co-worker Dawn's son, Mitch, who has spina bifida and is recovering from a long and complex surgery.
- Char, as she battles a recent onset of double vision that is also affecting her balance, and as she works with doctors to find a remedy.
- Lacy and Alex, as they anticipate the birth of their baby in July.
- Marlis Mahler's brother, Harley, who is facing serious medical concerns and is working with doctors to determine next steps.
- All in our circle of family, friends, communities, and world, who are impacted by the coronavirus in the myriad of significant ways that it is playing out in our lives.
- All in our faith community who privately hold heavy concerns in their hearts. Help us to reflect God's love and care through our words and deeds that they may know BGUMC as a place of solace, comfort, and trust.

**6/2/2020 message from Lorraine Charinda of the Kamisamba Farm & Training Center Democratic Republic of the Congo "Hope in the Midst of a Pandemic"**

*Still in Mission!*

Seeing these words across many social media sites, has given me hope that the mission of God is still standing amid all



chaos and tough situations happening all over the world. When the COVID19 was announced as a pandemic, many thoughts and feelings rushed through my mind. I had read about pandemics before but never experienced one in my life. Fear and panic got hold of me. How were we going to survive especially in a place where proper health care is a big challenge? How was my mission going to be like? To which extent will it affect us? For how long will it bring destruction before a cure is found? Will I ever see my family again? Constant calls back home became a norm. I have never talked with my family this much within a short period ever before. With all this the thing that kept me busy was work. We had to let go of half of the staff and it was really a tough decision to make due to financial constraints. With shortage of staff we all ended up filling the gap in the positions which were left. You can imagine the amount of work! The first month was the hardest. In another way, it had a positive impact on my mental state as it kept me busy and exhausted at the end of each day. Production continued and actually increased. With our harvests we made a huge impact in the communities than ever before. Seeing this finally, my heart calmed! This was it! The hope I needed in the midst of all the chaos and uncertainty! Still in mission, was no longer just a phrase I saw on the media but I could also testify with others that 'we are together in mission'.

**MN Dept. of Health (DOH) Update**

Per a new 6/15/2020 document released by the MN DOH, all faith communities are encouraged to provide remote services and choose NOT to open or host large gatherings. For any in-person gatherings, churches are to follow DOH guidelines. Our Prairie Lakes Parish plan - included in this newsletter, meets these requirements. As of a statement released on 6/22/2020, our MN Conference of the UMC continues to urge churches to go slow, limit in-person gatherings to small groups, meet primarily outdoors, and continue the excellent work they have done in creatively being the church virtually.

## Annual Conference Love

### Offering

July 1st - August 16<sup>th</sup>



We invite you to partner with United Methodists from across Minnesota to “Be the Light - Live Hope” through your financial gifts for this year’s Annual Conference Love Offering, the focus of which is to help some of the most vulnerable among us in Minnesota in these turbulent times. All funds will be distributed among four service organizations, as listed below.

By August 16<sup>th</sup>, please mail your gifts to our BGUMC address, PO Box 171, Medford, MN 55049-0171. Please note “Love Offering” in the memo line of your check or on a note enclosed with your gift. We will then pool all BGUMC donations and mail them to the MN UMC Conference office in time for them to be added to gifts from around the state, with totals announced at the August 29<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference.

### Emma Norton Services St. Paul/Maplewood



Emma Norton Services (ENS) is a nonprofit organization actively combating poverty and positively impacting more than 250 people annually. ENS partners with women, children, and families who are homeless and experiencing the challenges of mental and/or chemical disabilities. Without having to worry about the basic need of a safe, secure place to live, women and children can utilize and focus on supportive programs, life skills, services and opportunities available to accomplish their goals. ENS fosters stability and encourages personal growth at two locations: Emma Norton Residence in the heart of downtown St. Paul is home to 50 individual women - Emma’s Place in Maplewood is home to 13 single parent families with three or more children. Housing is permanent - the women and families may reside with ENS as long as they desire.

**Emma Norton**  
The Journey Home Begins Here

### Simpson Housing Services Minneapolis



Simpson Housing Services began as an emergency overnight shelter in the basement of Simpson United

Methodist Church in 1982. Simpson has since become a leading nonprofit providing assistance to people experiencing homelessness. In response to unmet community needs, their programs have grown to include emergency shelter, single adult supportive housing, and family supportive housing. They work across the metro area, partnering with landlords and developers to find affordable housing for all families and individuals. At any given time, they provide supportive services to 100 individuals and 210 families with over 500 children.

### Joyce Uptown Foodshelf Minneapolis

The mission of the Joyce Uptown Food Shelf is to distribute food to those in need, with respect and dignity, as an expression of the love of God. In a message from their website: “We join our community in mourning Mr. Floyd's tragic death. We stand with everyone seeking to root out the injustices within our current systems and support full equity for all people. The collateral damage to small businesses has only further intensified the need to support our neighbors experiencing food insecurity. We are working with Hunger Solutions and other organizations in our community to coordinate efforts to support and distribute food to our community.”



### MN Conference Committee on Native American Ministry’s Diaper Drop

The casino and restaurant industry, a primary source of revenue in our Native American communities of Minnesota, has been severely impacted by the COVID-19 related closings and limited re-openings. Many of our native brothers and sisters have been without income for a number of months, and/or are now working with limited income. In an effort to share our care and our resources, the MN Conference Committee on Native American Ministry (CONAN), of which Cindy Saufferer is a member, is leading an effort called “Diaper Drops”. Funds raised by our Conference Love Offering will be used to purchase semi-loads of factory-direct diapers, which will be delivered to Health & Human Services groups in our MN native communities, to be given to persons in need of these important supplies for their children.



**Blooming Grove Church  
Council Meeting – June 16, 2020  
Carolyn Kanne, Council Secretary**

In attendance (socially distanced in Brian & Carolyn Kanne's garage): Hjordi Churchill, Pastor Kathy King, Chery Southworth, Brad & Cindy Saufferer, Tracie Spinler, Brian & Carolyn Kanne, Judy Mahler, Dave & Sheryl Brisel  
Pastor Kathy opened with prayer.

**Prior Meeting Minutes**

Reviewed the minutes of our April council meetings (4/3 – building project; 4/24 – COVID-19; 4/26 – Special Church Conference Meeting).

**Celebrating the Life of the Church  
Online Worship**

Online worship is going well. People are watching whenever it fits for them – some at their “normal” church time, some later in the day, some on other days.

**Outreach for COVID**

Several people have made masks for donation. Carolyn donated 18 to District One, via Tracie. Faye has made somewhere between 70 and 80.

**Finance**

We are up \$269 from March. We need to check into the 3-month pension/health holiday for all churches. Tracie is unsure of what she's supposed to be paying and what should be waived. Pastor Kathy will check with the Parish Treasurer and the Conference rep. The bill for the steeple repair is due – Brian called the bank this morning, and they will get on it. Financial Secretary's report: We are actually up \$300 from this time last year, so we are still maintaining even though we are away from in-person worship. The building fund has received \$7,500 since the first of the year, not including the fish fry proceeds. We do need to pursue our mission giving, however. The Love Offering was discussed, although we couldn't pin down where all it is being directed this year.

**Building Project Team/Trustees**

- The project is moving forward.
- The steeple portion is done, as the contractor had some room in his schedule, and we wanted the summer for the shingles to seal.

- Brian has been in contact with the bank about our line of credit/construction loan.
- The first grant application was mailed yesterday (6/15) to MN Builders East, for up to \$4,000. Carolyn is looking into more options.
- Communications Team: Judy & Marlis
- Insurance Review: Hjordi
- Possible fundraising: making available sponsorships of windows, restrooms, etc.?
- Kanne/Minske/Marzahn family reunion newsletter – Carolyn intends to reach out and have something included there. The church is a stop on the family tour during the reunion.
- Brad/Brad/Brian to review the Premier Lift contracts, which need to be signed and sent back.
- The plumber is still awaiting state approval of the plumbing plans.

**Trustees**

The trustees are planning on filling in the ruts left by the lift used in the steeple project. They have also contacted a basement guy for an estimate to waterproof the basement. They need to look at the building use policy (most of it is 10 years old). We currently charge \$300 for use of the building (which is the going rate). Rates for the social hall vary and need to be looked into.

**COVID-19**

- The Parish Leadership Team has been working on a plan for getting back to in-person worship.
- The Parish Tech Team is looking at use of the \$3,000 in grant money the parish has received for technical improvements. BG members are Judy, Gil Christesen, Kristin Krell, Mason Nagel, and Weston Janke.
- The Janesville tech expert is talking to Sheitel's Music in Mankato about equipment for the parish needs.
- We might be able to do drive-in services by the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> week of July.
- In addition to sound equipment, they are also looking at an FM transmitter, so sound could be received via a car radio.
- Discussion of various options for services.
- Cleaning and sanitizing supplies aren't readily available. Judy is looking into where to order. We should probably get on a list, so we may have something by the time we're ready to go back into the sanctuary.
- There is a wedding scheduled on August 28<sup>th</sup>. They know what the allowed capacity is, and that no food is allowed at this point.

**(Continued on next page)**

## Cemetery Board

The council discussed the offer by the cemetery board to purchase mowing equipment if the congregation could provide 12 volunteers to do the mowing during the summer. After discussion, the council decided to keep our mowing service, and thanked the cemetery board for all they do.

## Team Updates

No teams have met, except for the Worship Committee. They reviewed how the online worship has been working in conjunction with the worship teams from Janesville and Waterville. Everything is working fairly well. We decided to let people make hymn requests for the accompanist to play as a postlude each week, so they can hear favorite hymns.

## Updates to Conference Info

The Greater Church

- MN Annual Conference
  - ◊ Rescheduled for one-day virtual conference - August 29<sup>th</sup> with clergy session on August 28<sup>th</sup>. Cindy Saufferer will represent BGUMC.
- General Conference
  - ◊ Rescheduled for August 29-September 27 2021 at Minneapolis Convention Center. Cindy Saufferer will serve as MN Conference alternate delegate.
- Jurisdictional Conference
  - ◊ Rescheduled for November 10-12, 2021. Cindy Saufferer will serve as MN Conference delegate.
  - ◊ Business will include the election and assignment of Bishops.
  - ◊ 1/3 of all bishops worldwide were scheduled to retire August 31, 2020. All but two will have their retirement postponed until January 1, 2022.
  - ◊ The two, Bishop Bruce Ough, and Bishop Sally Dyck, will postpone their retirement only until January 1, 2021, at which time one year interim bishops will be appointed to their current assignments. Bishop Ough will then begin service as Executive Secretary of the Council of Bishops and Bishop Dyck will begin service as Ecumenical Officer of the Council of Bishops.

## Items on Hold due to COVID-19

- Summer Worship at the Pleasant Grove Pizza Farm
- BGUMC outreach gatherings at Half Pint Brewery

Next Meeting Dates for 2020 (7:00 P.M.): Wednesdays, September 2<sup>nd</sup>, December 2<sup>nd</sup>

Pastor Kathy closed with prayer.

## Next Meeting

Wednesday, September 2<sup>nd</sup> – 7:00 P.M.



**Minnesota**  
**Annual Conference**  
of the United Methodist Church

## Virtual Annual Conference August 29<sup>th</sup>

**“Be the Light - Live Hope!”**

The MN UMC Annual Conference, postponed due to COVID-19, has been rescheduled as a one-day virtual session on Saturday, August 29<sup>th</sup>, with a virtual clergy session held on Friday, August 28<sup>th</sup>. Cindy Saufferer will represent BGUMC at Saturday's session, which will also be live streamed to the MN UMC Conference [Facebook page](#) - where all non-voting visitors can watch as well.

- 9:30 - 11:30 A.M. - Session One. This session will open with worship, remembering of the saints, and the episcopal address. It will also include a time of looking at where we are headed as an annual conference and celebrating our people, including those who are to be licensed for ministry, those graduating from Course of Study, those being commissioned as lay ministers, deaconesses, and home missionaries, and ELI Project interns.
- 1:30 - 3:30 P.M. - Session Two. The focus of this session will be legislation, and will conclude the day with a worship service honoring our retiring clergy.

In preparation for 2020 Annual Conference, each district superintendent will host a virtual pre-conference event for delegates. Southern Prairie: Monday, August 3<sup>rd</sup>, 6:30 - 8:30 P.M.

We include a final note from Rev. Cindy Gregorson, director of ministries for the MN Annual Conference:

“These are unprecedented times, are they not? But the good news is that we are always the church, whether we can meet face-to-face or through the gift of technology. There is much to celebrate in terms of the ways we have been innovating and responding, and it will be important to come together to lament and grieve for all that we have endured. That old hymn that was the gathering song for the circuit riders as they came together for annual conference is particularly poignant this year: “And are we yet alive, and see each other's face?” We will gather. We may not see each other's faces in the same way, but we will rely on God's grace and trust it is enough.

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED to:  
Box 171, Medford, MN 55049

July 2020

**The Blooming Grove Visitor**

*Since 1936*

**Blooming Grove United Methodist Church**

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Check us out on Facebook!

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**[kking5@hickorytech.net](mailto:kking5@hickorytech.net)**  
**507-382-2483**



Requests for Prayer Chain Email:

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**Let There Be Peace On Earth**

Sy Miller and Jill Jackson

Let there be peace on earth  
And let it begin with me  
Let there be peace on earth  
The peace that was meant to be  
With God as our father  
Brothers all are we  
Let me walk with my brother  
In perfect harmony

Let peace begin with me  
Let this be the moment now  
With every step i take  
Let this be my solemn vow  
To take each moment  
And live each moment  
With peace eternally  
Let there be peace on earth  
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