



## *Poinsettias Given in Memory of Loved Ones*

Thanks to everyone who donated poinsettias for the altar in memory of their loved ones. The altar was beautiful.



***Dave & Sheryl Brisel***

*In Memory of Charlie & Berniece Brisel  
In Memory of John & Margaret Schmidt  
In Memory of Betty Brisel Koppin*

***Chuck & Linda Danks***

*In Memory of Parents & Siblings*

***Don and Char Frankenberry***

*In Memory of Parents*

***Brian & Carolyn Kanne***

*In Memory of Ray & Ruth Lemke*

***Faye Kanne***

*In Memory of Harold Kanne*

***Carol Karsten***

*In Memory of Don Karsten  
In Memory of Cindy Karsten  
In Memory of Kenny Karsten  
In Memory of Zona Karsten*

***Jerry & Kathy King***

*In Memory of Dee Bruce  
In memory of Virginia King  
In Memory of Kathy's Brothers*

***Justin, Kristin, Leah, Kaylee & Emery Krell***

*In Memory of Bob & Joyce Krell*

***Bonnie Lima***

*In Memory of Mario Lima  
In Memory of Jess & Nora Saufferer*

***Keith & Shelley McColley***

*In Memory of Clayton & Marlene McColley  
In Memory of Glenn & June McColley*

***Brad & Cindy Saufferer***

*In Memory of Dan Marge Cartmill  
In Memory of Danny Cartmill  
In Memory of Eleanor & Harold Saufferer*

***Jim & Chery Southworth***

*In Memory of Roger & Glorene Southworth  
In Memory of LaVern & Vida Wendt*

***Brad & Tracie Spinler & Family***

*In Memory of Harold & Leona Minske  
In Memory of Harold & Eleanor Saufferer  
In Memory of Marissa Spinler*

***The Wacek's***


*In memory of Joe & Regina Wacek  
In Memory of Ed and Arloine Bluhm*

# January 2024

**Blooming Grove**  
**Morning Worship.10:45 am**  
**Sunday School.....9:45 am**

**Janesville**  
**Morning Worship.....4:00 pm**

**Waterville Evangelical**  
**Morning Worship...9:30 am**

	1 		3 6-7 pm in WV Acts 29	4 9:30 am Parish Bible Study at Cool Wave Coffee Shop, WV		6								
					Pastor's Day Off									
7	8	9 4-6 pm Free Diaper Give- away at WV	10 11:30 Prayer Brunch at Sheryl Brisel's  6-7 pm in WV Acts 29	11	12	13								
					Pastor's Day Off									
14	15	16 6 pm Bible Conversations at Pastor Kathy's	17 5-6:30 pm Spaghetti Supper at WV  7 pm BG Ad board Meeting	18 9:30 am Parish Bible Study at Cool Wave Coffee Shop, WV	19	20								
					Pastor's Day Off									
21	22 6 pm WV Ad Council Meeting	23	24 6-7 pm in WV Acts 29	25	26	27 10-Noon Free Diaper Give-away at WV								
					Pastor's Day Off									
28 2:30 pm Confirmation	29	30	31 6-7 pm in WV Acts 29	<p><b>Parment Colors</b></p> <table style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <tr><td>January 7</td><td>White</td></tr> <tr><td>January 14</td><td>Green</td></tr> <tr><td>January 21</td><td>Green</td></tr> <tr><td>January 28</td><td>Green</td></tr> </table>			January 7	White	January 14	Green	January 21	Green	January 28	Green
January 7	White													
January 14	Green													
January 21	Green													
January 28	Green													

THE BEST  
TIME FOR  
NEW  
BEGINNINGS  
IS NOW

## *Beginning Again*



*“So that changes how we think about people. We no longer use human ideas to think what they are like. At one time, we thought about Christ as humans think. But now we think about him very differently! When anyone belongs to Christ, they become a new person. Their old way of life has gone. Their new life has begun!” 2 Corinthians 5:16-17 Easy English Bible*

Another year begins and with it—an opportunity to begin again. I am not a resolution maker. It is a lesson long ago learned! And so, as I begin this year, my intent is to focus on 2 Corinthians 5 and work to change my thinking; endeavoring to being more Christlike in the way I think about people—to think of others with faith in Christ in mine—thinking of others with justice, compassion, and mercy. We have a responsibility as followers of Christ to change those things we recognize in ourselves as “not Christlike.” It is a challenge for some of us who have long lived with our privileges and biases. So I am relying more on beginning again as the new person who begins 2024 belonging to Christ. The old way of life belongs to 2023.

How do you intend to change your living in 2024? Or maybe you are happy with the you you are? If that is so, good for you—good for you if you think as Christ thinks. Not so good if your you is steeped in a human way of thinking. Perhaps 2024 offers a challenge to all of us? As we look forward to a new life in Christ, let’s encourage one another to be gentler in our thoughts of others. Let’s reach out with the justice, compassion, and mercy that Christ offers us. I invite you to consider coming to our every other Thursday morning Bible Study. We meet at Cool Wave Coffee Shop in Waterville. We base our discussions on the Upper Room Daily Disciplines Devotional readings, but you DO NOT need to have the book. Our discussions are often around the things that touch our hearts from the world or local news. Our gathering is a safe space where we rely on one another as we journey in our faith together.

Let 2024 be the year we realize a new way of thinking, leaving behind our old human ways of thinking. May we embrace the new life offered to those who belong to Christ!

Happy New Year dear ones!

*Pastor Kathy*

## JANUARY CALENDAR

Sunday Worship 10:45 a.m.  
 Sunday School 9:45 a.m.

4	Thur	9:30 am	Bible Study at Cool Wave
10	Wed	11:30 am	Prayer Brunch at Brisel's (1312 2nd St NW, Waseca)
16	Tues	6:00 pm	Bible Conversations at Kathy King's (704 W 2 <sup>nd</sup> St, Janesville)
17	Wed	7:00 pm	BG Ad Board at church
18	Thur	9:30 am	Bible Study at Cool Wave



	19	<b>Bonnie Lima (90!!)</b>
	22	Linda Kosel
	23	Haley Nagel
4	25	Charlie Brecht
10	25	Burch Buchholz
10	28	Jerry Mahler
13	30	Jennifer (Danks) Beck
17	30	Derek Bartosch
19	31	Chris Fyvie
		Erin Nelson

### Spaghetti Dinner Wednesday, January 17th Waterville EUMC



Thank you to all of you who came out for the first Spaghetti Supper in November! We had a great turn-out and greatly enjoyed the fellowship! We are looking forward to serving you all again this month! We will be serving some more delicious spaghetti and bread sticks and desserts on Wednesday, January 17th from 5:00-6:30pm! We hope to see you there!

### Blooming Grove United Methodist Church Board Council Meeting December 20, 2023



**Carolyn Kanne, Board Secretary**

In attendance (via Zoom): Brad Spinler, Brad & Cindy Saufferer, Brian & Carolyn Kanne, Pastor Kathy King, Judy Mahler, Chery Southworth

**Review of Budget as Revised by the Conference:** Cindy moved to approve, Brian seconded – motion carried.

**Special Offering:** \$3,420 has been collected for the Olson family. Chery will check with Harlean for the address. Brad and Cindy will make the delivery.

**Next Meeting Date: January 17<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 pm at BG**  
**NOTE: Ash Wednesday is February 14<sup>th</sup>.**

## Treasurer's Report

November 29, 2023—January 3, 2024



<b>General Budget Income</b>	<b>\$ 6,330.00</b>
<b>Other Income</b>	
Cemetery	700.00
Visitor	121.00
Poinsettias	267.00
Prayer Shawl Ministry	20.00
Olson Family	2,625.00
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$10,063.00</b>

<b>Expenses</b>	
Pastor's Salary	2,223.64
Apportionments	3,012.00
Poinsettias	482.00
Food Shelves	3,437.00
Lift License	100.00
Olson Family	3,420.00
Pest Control	546.81
Telephone	54.37
Excel Energy	127.40

**Total Paid Out \$ 13,403.22**

(Net Income: — \$3,340.22)

### Building Addition

<b>Income</b>	
Restoration	\$ 16,926.83
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$ 16,926.83</b>

<b>Expenses</b>	
Loan Payment	\$ 3,965.20
<b>Total Paid Out</b>	<b>\$ 3,965.20</b>

(Net Income: + \$12,961.63)

Restoration Fund Balance	\$81,320.55
Building Addition Loan	\$254,789.49

### New Babies

Welcome to Deb Miller's first great-nephew, born in December! There is much excitement in their family as this is her parent's first great-grandchild.

Welcome to Isla Josephine Morgan, born November 28<sup>th</sup> to Tyler and Alexandria Morgan. She will be wonderfully loved by her two big sisters: Penelope and Maisie!



Isla Josephine Morgan

**BGUMC S.S.**  
(Patti Ellingson)



Sun-catcher painting of Nativity (back) Mosaic (foreground)



Rudolph bells and handprint angels



Glitter-tile mosaic pictures (foreground) and painting suncatcher in background



Bailey, Val and Will crafting

Dec. 17 found all 3 Sunday School classes donning paint shirts, twisting pipe cleaners, sticking glittery mosaic tiles, and wiping glue off fingers as they crafted an assortment of Christmas ornaments and decorations. With 8 different craft projects at 6 different workstations, nimble fingers worked diligently. Students waited patiently at the paint station which could accommodate only 2 kids at a time. Everyone was able to complete at least 2 different projects, and then to take home 2 or 3 additional decorations to finish at home. It was especially precious to observe one of our older students assisting one of the 4-year-olds. Several adults and parents were available to help out as needed, also. Finished and unfinished projects were ziplocked into bags before saying our closing together.



Will helps little Ollie with his glitter



Then it was off to church, where, during Children's Time our young folks helped to get our "stable" ready. One white dove, two brown donkeys, three fluffy sheep... five – bundles – of – straw ----- Whoops! Wait! Wrong song! Sheep, donkeys, a rooster (and a carton of eggs?!), a pig and little piglet, dove, farm dogs, shepherd's staff to redirect any little critters that got the zoomies, straw bundles, and glittery gold stars were all assembled in and around our stable in the chancel area as the kids helped relate the Christmas story. Adding a bit more realism to the stuffed animals, the kids reminded us what a stable filled with animals might sound like – woof, woof, baa-aa-aa, baa-aa, hee-haw! Once our kids had all the props in place, they lined up on the bottom step and listened as Penelope Nicholson read a "kid friendly" Christmas story from Luke and Matthew. Where the manger would reside on Dec. 24<sup>th</sup>, today there was a child-height table on which Penelope had placed the small wooden stable of the creche given us by Eleanor Saufferer. One at a time each child carefully brought forward the corresponding figurine, placing it in or beside the stable as Penelope read.



Care was taken in bringing the figurines forward, but, a bit of youthful exuberance was displayed jumping over sheep and a farm dog when one child headed back down to get in line again. Younger cousin, of course, had to emulate big cousin's jump on his way back into line. (The wooden rooster survived the glancing blow of a not-quite-big-enough-jump without signs of damage.) As the Christmas story was read and the Nativity Scene filled, kids were, in fact, listening. The Christmas story never gets old; the telling and retelling of this miraculous event is important for our kids to hear. And to hear again. In hearing and participating, our hope is that our young ones will recognize the focus of Christmas, as God came to live with us in human form. While the congregation sang *Away in a Manger*, the youth then rejoined their families.



## Thank You for Your Children

(Patti Ellingson)

Today (Dec. 3<sup>rd</sup>) in church, Kathy spoke about hope, commenting, “Who doesn’t turn to mush when they see a new baby? That’s our hope – seeing that new life.” We had several examples right before us during today’s service. A few years ago, I wrote here about my own up-tightness when I was a young mom and my little munchkins made noises – happy noises, or hot-wheels-rolling-noisily-on-the-pew-noises, but noises, nonetheless. And I was embarrassed of that. Now, in my elder years, I cherish seeing – and hearing – families sitting together in our church; all together. Sure, I see parents quietly shushing a couple of sibs (or friends or cousins or classmates) – I get it. But I smile happily when I see and hear the younger ones interacting and sharing. (Full disclosure here – Kathy, I may not hang on every single word of your sermon.... some of “my sermon lesson” comes from those young packages of hope sitting in the pew.) Or, maybe not always sitting(??) in the pew! A sparkly, spunky little fella playing “catch me mom” demonstrated that he knows he’s in a comfortable, safe place amongst friends/family. Church, “God’s home” as some call it (though God’s home is everywhere) is “home” to us all – everyone’s welcome here. Fiesty little fellas, babbling babies, pre-schoolers turning pirouettes in the aisles – everyone’s welcome. We live love here and that’s held out for young and old. Enjoying the enthusiastic clicking of the overhead slides (or is it power point? I’m the elder generation, bear with me), the happy glint in our young “catch me” guy’s eyes, the willing reading of the day’s scripture by a grade schooler, and the joyful singing voices of our young folks which Kathy could discern from up front. Wow! WOW!! **That’s all hope embodied.** If you didn’t notice, there were many delighted smiles on the faces of the “older adults” during all of this. If anyone dares tell you young parents that kids should sit quietly, remind them that Jesus requested the little children come to him. This church body and church building is your home; it’s your children’s home. Please feel at home and continue to share your children with us. You are all our hope. How I wish, as a young self-conscious mom, that someone had told me this. So let me tell you here, now. You are all our hope.



## Christmas Eve 2023

(This Year's reflections by Patti Ellingson)

Driving to Christmas Eve service this year, my windshield wipers were on. Not, like last year, to brush away the blustery blown snow from my vision as I charged my 4-wheel drive through drifts of the day's heavy blizzard. No, this year it was to wipe away the RAINdrops falling in the 50+ degree weather.

Minnesota. Christmas Eve. Rain!  
50+ degrees for several sequential days!? Who'd o' think it?? But, as last year, the church was filled. Filled with people and filled with a buzzing palpable energy as folks eagerly greeted each other – college kids home for the holidays, adult kids back “home” to Mom's and Dad's for Christmas, other people returning after a time away from church. What a joy to hear the 4-part harmony of hymns sung by a full congregation.



As the lights went off and the tea-light candles were switched on, I could see, in the shadows and light of the candles, the love-filled faces of those crowded in the pews around me. As unison readings were recited, I could sense the deep, rich resonance of every voice. Yes, coming **home** – to our Blooming Grove Church home on Christmas Eve.

## The Story of Our Manger Scenes White Porcelain Nativity Scene



Thank you to Trudi Remund-Fisher for sharing her beautiful white porcelain nativity scene with our congregation this year. She hand-crafted these figurines during the time that she was teaching Home Economics and Biology in Sleepy Eye - right out of college.

## Painted Porcelain Nativity Scene & Wooden Stable



Our painted porcelain nativity scene, containing brightly colored characters, was given to us many years ago by Eleanor Saufferer, the great-super-grandma of our littles, Bradley, Eleanora, Leah, Kaylee, Emery, Bowen, and Andi Joan. Eleanor had someone make it just for our congregation when we were so small that we held Sunday Morning Worship in the back Fireside Room during the cold winter months! We believe that the wooden stable that accompanies this manger scene was handcrafted by Harold Kanne, husband of Faye – as it is an exact match of the stable that Harold made for Faye!



## *Sharing our Hearts with the Olson Family*

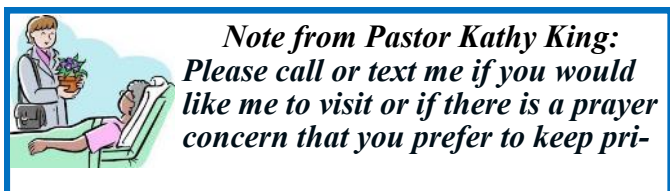
Thank you to all who shared their hearts and love in support of the Olson family through our special Advent & Christmas Offering here at BGUMC. Our congregation's gift of \$3,420 was delivered to Brittany Olson just before Christmas. Please continue to hold Brittany and her family in your hearts and prayers in the days and weeks ahead. On Wednesday, November 15<sup>th</sup>, Brittany's husband, Mitchell, age 31, lost his life in a tragic farming accident at the family farm just five miles NW of Blooming Grove UMC. (Mitchell farmed with his wife's uncle, Brian Bloomer. Brittany is the daughter of Diane Bloomer Hulstein and granddaughter of Harold & Harlean Bloomer.) In addition to his wife, Mitchell leaves behind three young children – Saige (4), Chase (3), and Sloan (1) - and their 4<sup>th</sup> is on the way.

## Blooming Grove Budget 2024

	2023 Budget	2023 Actual	2024 Budget
<b>Pastoral Support</b>			
Salary & Health Insurance	\$ 17,952.00	\$ 17,952.00	\$ 18,397.00
Housing Allowance	\$ 4,001.00	\$ 4,001.00	\$ 6,668.00
Health Insurance	\$ 0.00		
Workman's Comp			
Travel	\$ 1,167.00	\$ 1,167.00	\$ 1,167.00
Pension & Disability	\$ 1,559.00	\$ 1,559.00	\$ 1,618.00
Continuing Ed	\$ 599.00	\$ 599.00	\$ 267.00
Conference Reg.			\$ 83.00
Cell Phone	\$ 341.00	\$ 341.00	\$ 341.00
Other Professional Expense	\$ 167.00	\$ 167.00	\$ 167.00
<b>Pastoral Support Total</b>	<b>\$ 25,786.00</b>	<b>\$ 25,786.00</b>	<b>\$ 28,708.00</b>
<b>Apportionments &amp; Special</b>	<b>\$ 6,024.00</b>	<b>\$ 6,024.00</b>	<b>\$ 6,119.00</b>
<b>Local Church Ministries</b>			
Program			
Confirmation	\$ 150.00	\$ 118.00	\$ 150.00
Pulpit Supply	\$ 500.00	\$ 200.00	\$ 500.00
Misc.	\$ 50.00	\$ 429.00	\$ 500.00
Educational Materials	\$ 650.00	\$ 556.00	\$ 650.00
Administration			
Printing/Postage/Office/Copier	\$ 100.00	\$ 237.00	\$ 250.00
Phone	\$ 750.00	\$ 580.00	\$ 750.00
Maintenance/Other			
Furnace Fuel	\$ 3,980.00	\$ 2,615.00	\$ 3,000.00
Electric	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 1,298.00	\$ 1,500.00
Cleaning	\$ 750.00	\$ 726.00	\$ 750.00
Insurance	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 4,795.00	\$ 5,000.00
Software/License	\$ 246.00	\$ 814.00	\$ 1,000.00
Rodent Control			\$ 525.00
Repairs	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 495.00	\$ 1,000.00
Mowing	\$ 6,500.00	\$ 5,500.00	\$ 6,500.00
Building Project			
Payments	\$31,940.12	\$42,062.00	\$42,062.00
<b>Local Church Total</b>	<b>\$63,238.00</b>	<b>\$ 60,425.00</b>	<b>\$ 64,137.00</b>
<b>SUMMARY</b>			
Pastoral Support	\$25,786.00	\$ 25,786.00	\$ 28,708.00
Apportionments	\$ 6,024.00	\$ 6,024.00	\$ 6,119.00
Local Church Ministries	\$63,238.00	\$ 60,425.00	\$ 64,137.00
<b>TOTAL CHURCH BUDGET</b>	<b>\$95,048.00</b>	<b>\$92,235.00</b>	<b>\$ 98,964.00</b>



## Pastoral Care



- For Pastor Sharon Nelson, and her family, as they begin the long journey of recovery from a house fire that has displaced them into rental housing while repairs can be made. Hold them all in your hearts, and pray for courage and perseverance for the days ahead... including Pastor Sharon, her husband Robert, Sharon's mom, and their dog Oliver.
- Tracie Spinler's co-worker, and her husband, Ashley and Brady. Ashley is expecting their first baby, and Brady fell off the roof, sustaining injuries that required hip replacement surgery.
- A 51-year-old caller in Patti's square-dancing community who is experiencing a rapid onset of arthritis and is facing multiple surgeries.
- Prayers of thanks for Sherry, and for Tom, who have both recovered from late November and early December medical concerns that landed them each in the hospital.
- Rhonda, a good friend of Nicole Wacek, as Rhonda mourns the death of her cousin - and one of her good friends - who passed away unexpectedly.
- A co-worker of Marlis Mahler, who was taken to the ER with a blood clot in her leg.
- Traci Spinler's co-worker, Stacy, and her family. Stacy's little boy had his tonsils removed and then was hospitalized with influenza and strep. He is back home, but needs our ongoing prayers for healing.
- Prayers of thanks for the aunt of a friend of Marlis Mahler. Aunt Marguerite has been going through numerous rounds of chemotherapy and is receiving reports of positive results!
- For the Velzke family, neighbors of BGUMC, whose home was totally destroyed by fire early on Christmas Day. Thankfully, there were no people or pets inside at the time.
- Kristin Krell's good friend, and her husband - April and Zach - as they welcomed their first baby as a stillborn angel.
- All in our faith community who privately hold heavy concerns in their hearts and lives. 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, trust, and support.



*With Deepest Sympathy*



**Kyle William Lustig**, 50, of Owatonna, died unexpectedly of natural causes Wednesday, December 13, 2023, at his home. He was born June 28, 1973 in Owatonna the son of Marie Ann Lustig. He grew up in Owatonna where he attended school and graduated from Owatonna High School in 1992. On August 26, 2000, he married Becky Karsten. The couple was blessed with three daughters, Sammy, Sierra and Lex and later separated. He is survived by his daughters, Sammy Lustig, Sierra Lustig and Lex Lustig all of Owatonna and his sister, Tiffany Lustig of Waseca.



**Arthur H. Harren**, age 86, of Waite Park, passed away Friday, December 29, 2023. Art is Ken Harren's brother.

Art was born August 18, 1937 in Albany to Arthur and Rosemund (Pratchner) Harren Sr. He married Arlene Wischnewski on June 23, 1962 at St Augustine's Catholic Church in St Cloud. Arlene passed away January 28, 2007. He married Arlene Prom on April 18, 2009. Art owned and operated Art Harren Construction for 35 years and served as president of the Central MN Home Builders Association in 1985. He retired in 2001. Art was a long-time member of the St Cloud Barbershop Chorus, was a member of the St Augustine's Church choir and spent many years tending to the Church flowers. Art served his country with the US Army Reserves and was a member of the St Cloud Eagles. He was an enthusiastic outdoorsman who built and paddled his canoes across the boundary waters. Art loved to fish, bike, hike and spend time with family. Well known for his beautiful gardens on Wapicada golf course, his "green thumb" brought joy to so many people over the years.

### Prayer Shawl Thank-you



Thank you to all for my prayer shawl given to me by Tracie. It is awesome and I feel the prayers when I touch or wrap in it bless all.

Leola Martin

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

January 2024

**The Blooming Grove Visitor**

*Since 1936*

**Blooming Grove United Methodist Church**

**Mailing Address: P.O. Box 171**

**Medford, MN 55049-0171**

Physical Location:

43089 180th Street, Morristown, MN 55052

(NE corner of Waseca County)

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Email: [bloominggroveumc@gmail.com](mailto:bloominggroveumc@gmail.com)

Check us out on Facebook!

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**[kking5@hickorytech.net](mailto:kking5@hickorytech.net)**

**507-382-2483**

**Join Us**

If you are interested in  
becoming a member of  
Blooming Grove UMC,  
see Pastor Kathy.



Requests for Prayer Chain Email:

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*Words of John  
Wesley to carry  
us into 2024.  
Happy New Year*

Do  
all the  
good you can,  
by all the means  
you can, to all the  
people you can, in all  
the places you can, as long  
as ever you can  
John Wesley