



The Grand Blanc UMC "Connection"

January, 2021

Worship services will be available on Facebook, YouTube and through your car radio.

January 3

Epiphany

"By Another Route"

Matthew 2:1-12



Sermon Series:

"This Is My Story"

January 10

Baptism of the Lord

Communion

"Beginning Instructions"

Genesis 2:15-17

Deuteronomy 5:1-21

January 17

2nd Sunday after

Epiphany

"Of the Many Before"

Joshua 6:1-5

Samuel 8:1-9; 19-22

January 24

3rd Sunday after

Epiphany

"Words Will Do"

Psalms 139

January 31

4th Sunday after

Epiphany

"Speaking For God"

Isaiah 6:1-8

Jonah 1:1-2; 3:10-4:11

Enrich All Lives

...To enrich all lives. This is how Grand Blanc UMC's mission and vision statement ends. And, not coincidentally, it's how this series of Connection newsletter articles will conclude before moving on to something new in February. Over the last four months, I've spent time on this page expressing my impressions and thoughts about the mission and vision statement of this church. I've explored the idea of being "friends in Christ," I dared to utter that word "exercise," and we talked, of course, about *hope*, *love*, and *grace*. But now, the crux of the whole statement: "...to enrich all lives."

While it may be the greatest cliché, it seems important to say this. Mariam-Webster Dictionary defines "Enrich" as *to make rich or richer especially by the addition or increase of some desirable quality, attribute, or ingredient*.

Why is this definition important? It's important – even vital – because these final last words of our statement identify the purpose for which we are bothering to do any of this! We call ourselves friends of Christ, and live into that identity; we exercise hope, love and grace with one another, and extend it into the world, understanding that God is still working on each of us in a perfect-making sort of way; we do all of this, we extend all of this, we embrace all of this, and we believe all of this all for the purpose of *enriching all lives*. All that we do has no other purpose! The work of the church is not primarily about providing a social network for all of us to enjoy. It's not about creating a status that emboldens us in the social and economic community. It's not even about fostering a righteousness within us that we can measure ourselves against others with. It is *all* about enriching all lives.

To be sure, there is other language that we use in the church to talk about enriching all lives. One of my favorite is when we talk about "kingdom-making." You see, here we're talking about God's kingdom (often written "kin-dom" as a way of reminding us that we're not talking about a monarchy, but something altogether different...the reign of God)! And God's kingdom *on earth as it is in heaven* (sound familiar?) is about ensuring that all lives – *all* lives – are made richer (no, not money) by the addition and increase of a remarkable quality, attribute and ingredient that we call *GRACE*!

And so, we are, by the statement we have adopted as a church, a *kingdom-making church*! We are in the business of enriching the lives of all people with the grace, love, hope, peace, promise, and joy of Jesus Christ! We proclaim that *all* – *everyone* – *excluding no one* – is invited into this amazing and grace-filled covenant with Jesus Christ. The door is open, the admission is free, the result is freeing! This is what we are about and nothing more!

My prayer as you come to the end of this article is that you will read our mission statement once more, and read it as a prayer for this church. Where we are already living into it, let us rejoice! Where we are not yet living into it – where we're still holding on to a part of what we want it to be rather than what *God* wants it to be – let us draw closer to God who, with amazing grace, forgiveness and love, calls us back into even deeper relationship with our Creator!

A few years back, I had a conversation with an upset parishioner of another church who insisted that "everyone needs to stop trying to take over my church" (the great offense was that the food bank volunteers had temporarily placed food donations on a table in the fellowship hall). I calmly replied, "we need to

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1 Thessalonians 1:2, NIV

FOR THE HOMEBOUND:

Marge Berryman
Woody Woodbeck

OUR CHURCH FAMILY:

Cheryl Cottrell
Sharel Etheridge
Eleanor Hall
Marilyn Horton
Dick Hubler
Phil Jackson
Mary Manning
Paul Manning
Bob Mills
Eileen Scott
Robert Sharpe
Norma Stanbury

FOR OTHERS:

John Batson
Rita Brackrog
Randy Cole
Robin Cole
Tony Conklin
David Crane
Hank Cross
Alexandra Faulkner
Nancy Harrington
Chris Hayes
Robert Koerke, Sr.
Michael Lackey
Dick Laing
Cathy McCready
Karyn Pilon
Naomi Rimmell
Connie Skinner
Gloria Sosa
Archie Stroub
Jeff Sumerix
Marty Weaver
Natalie Whidby
Barb Wickersham
Sunny Wilson
Jim Winn
Tod Wolfgram

Autumn Ridge of Clarkston
Shirley Robertson
Great Lakes Christian Home
Helen Floyd

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remember that this church is not ours. We are simply stewards of it. The church does not belong to us. It belongs to God and to the person who has yet to walk through its doors."

When we say that we're here to "enrich all lives," we have to remember that this means we are here with a dedicated purpose to welcome and serve the person who walks through our church doors for the first time. We are here, and function as a church for the child who has been told many things throughout his life, except for that fact that he is lovable and loved. We are here for the woman who stands before a judge and learns that she'll be incarcerated. We are here for the grieving person, so hurt that they have stopped praying.

We are here - the church is here – God is here...to enrich all lives.

Peace, Pastor Brian

GIVING TREE UPDATE

Thank you, for your generous support to the Giving Tree this Christmas. Cathy Mitchinson set us up with Sign-Up Genius and it was a huge success, thank you Cathy!. This year we had gift cards for 15 children whose parent is currently in prison, **Angel Tree (Prison Ministry)**. We also had 15 gifts that went to individuals at **MediLodge Nursing Home**. These gifts are for residents that don't have any family living in this area. **U.M. Community Center (Neighborhood House)** received 48 pkgs. of socks, 43 pkgs. of underwear, and 58 toys/games! **The Methodist Children's Village** received 50/\$20.00 gift cards. Because of the pandemic this year things were done differently with the FISH families. G.B.U.M.C had 14 groups or individuals sponsor a family for FISH this year. The First Congregational Church sponsored those same 14 FISH families for Christmas with cleaning supplies, paper products and toiletries. The food was given to all 14 families by way of the **FISH** organization. **GBUMC and FCC** have been doing this for many years. The women of the Prayer Shawl Ministry made the hats for each child in each of the families....19 boys and 12 girls! A \$25 gift card for gas was also given to each family.

This year the FISH organization found sponsors for 209 families wanting help for Christmas. A few others in our church or friends of our church volunteered to help out a family. Those sponsoring a family this year were: Barb Benson (1), Bella Vista Bunco Club (1), Carvill Family (2), Pam Eklund (1), Hagenstein family (1), Don Sawyer (1) Junior High MYF (1), MOMS (1), Rebekah Circle (1), Seasoned Citizens (1), Senior High MYF (1), Stepping Stones Sunday School Class (1), and Susanna Wesley Circle (1).

A special thank you to Emily Carvill, and Jessica Smith who shopped for me this year. To Jessica who also helped sort and count with me. Kelli Hedding for taking care of the Angel Tree gift tags. Tracy and David Sanborn for delivering to MediLodge and to The Methodist Children's Village. The Seasoned Citizens for collecting so much for the family they sponsored that \$440 was also given to FISH! Of course special thanks to all of you that helped to make this a successful year. You certainly have helped a lot of people have a better Christmas this year. Don't you know Jesus is smiling on this loving, and caring congregation!
Praise the Lord and AMEN!



We extend our deepest sympathy to the family and friends of:

~ Barbara Hansen, who passed away on November 26, 2020. Barbara is Gretchen Jablonski's mother.

~ Kay Mueller, who passed away on November 30, 2020. Kay is a former member of GBUMC.

~ Michael Messmore, who passed away on December 6, 2020. Michael is Bea Messmore's son.

~ Bill Grover who passed away on December 16, 2020. Bill is Carol Cerny's brother.

~ Sharon Reigle, who passed away on December 22, 2020. Sharon is Greg Reigle's mother.

WORSHIP INFORMATION

Sundays at 11:00a.m.

There are 3 ways that the worship service is made available for you at this time:

1. Listen in the church parking lot, through your car radio at 11:00am
2. Watch live on Facebook at 11:00am (the Facebook video can be accessed again later).
3. Watch on YouTube anytime after 11:00am.


We hope you will take the time to join us in which ever way is most comfortable for you.

Communion will be shared on Sunday, January 10, 2021

You may use whatever you may have in your house, as communion elements (like crackers and water) or you are welcome to drive to the church immediately following the worship service on January 10 to receive individual communion elements from Pastor Brian. He will be available for half hour immediately following the worship service.



Junior High Youth

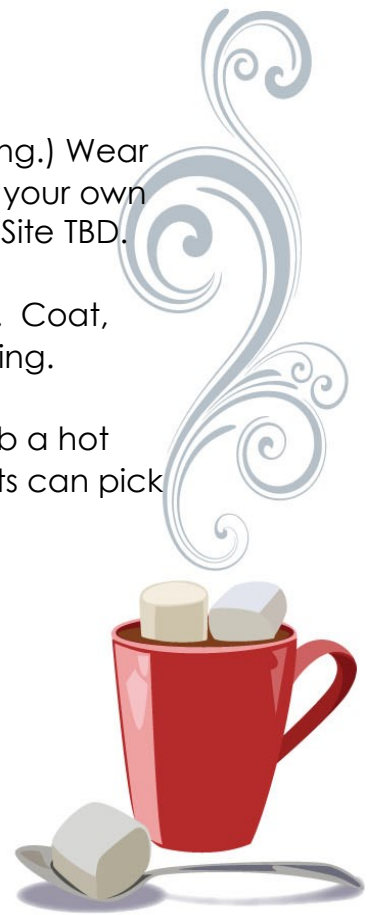
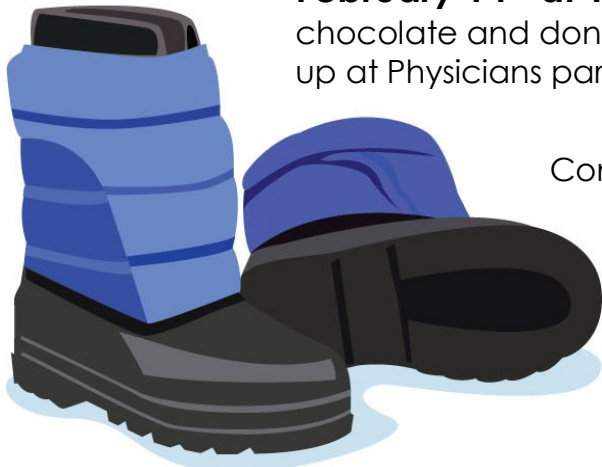


January 16th at 1:00pm: Sledding (weather permitting.) Wear snow pants, coat, glove, hat and boots required. Bring your own sled. Parents can drop off and pick up at sledding hill. Site TBD.

January 31st at 12:30pm: Nature hike at the church. Coat, gloves, hat, boots and mask required. Weather permitting.

February 14th at 12:30pm: Meet at Tim Hortons, grab a hot chocolate and donuts and visit Physician's Park. Parents can pick up at Physicians park at 1:45pm.

Contact Jessica Smith 810-287-8506,
with any questions.



For so many, 2020 has posed some of the greatest challenges of our lifetime. Turning the calendar page to 2021 is a time to remind yourself to take good care of YOU in the New Year. The faculty at Palo Alto University, which is dedicated to psychology and counseling, curated this list of 21 meaningful ways to make 2021 a more balanced year for you and other people in your life.

- **Practice self-compassion.** Self-compassion gives us space to breathe and take the time to take care of ourselves in a healing and kind way.
- **Take care of your basic needs.** When we are tired, hungry, and/or sedentary, our mood can dip. **Prioritize sleep** by going to bed earlier and getting 7-9 hours of sleep a night; **Eat consistent balanced meals** and **walk outdoors** for 20 minutes three times a week.
- **Be present.** If you find yourself reliving the past or worrying about the future, try to bring yourself back to the present moment using your senses. Notice five things that you see, four things that you feel, three things that you hear, two things that you smell, and one thing that you taste - and then proceed with your day.
- **Watch your breathing.** The simple act of watching our breath throughout the day and noting how we feel can alert us to times and opportunities for taking care of ourselves.
- **Pick a few simple, easy goals.** If you're feeling stuck at home, accomplish a few activities you wouldn't normally have time for like reorganizing a closet, purging old emails, or planning a new exercise regimen.
- **Take an early morning walk.** Spend each day on an early morning walk listening to Podcasts, your favorite music or learning a new language.
- **Maintain a daily plan that puts you first.** Take the time to put yourself and your own needs first. Are you adding some fun to your life? Are you staying connected to those who are important to you? By creating a space for yourself, it will make it easier to continue to support others.
- **Write a letter.** Write to someone who has been meaningful in your life and tell them why you're thankful for their contribution and/or call them up and read the letter. A study showed that people who did this felt a significant increase in happiness, meaning, optimism, and life satisfaction for up to 3 months after reading the letter.
- **Write a poem a day.** Create your own 30-day poetry challenge. It helps to focus your mind on one moment, idea, breath, sensation. It creates a rhythm beyond the daily news sound bites and taps us into the rhythms of the seasons and our souls.
- **Read your way through your stack of magazines.** This activity helps break the boredom, creates a sense of accomplishment and helps you to decide whether or not to continue or cancel a magazine subscription.
- **Take an on-line yoga class.** Yoga increases body awareness, relieves stress, reduces muscle tension, strain, and inflammation, sharpens attention and concentration, and calms and centers the nervous system.
- **Be gentle with yourself.** If something feels stressful, consider its purpose. Is it necessary or simply expected? If you didn't do it, what would be the worst outcome? At the end of each day, ask yourself what felt productive, what felt meaningful, and what contributed to your mental health. Focus on what went well, no matter how small, and build on those successes!
- **Reflect and think about "What I'm Leaving in 2020".** Write a letter to yourself listing all of the accomplishments, lessons, and things you are most grateful for in 2020. This is a wonderful way to give yourself perspective and make the year feel complete. It's also a good time to begin charting how you may or may not do things differently in 2021.
- **Think of well-being as a journey rather than a destination.** This simple shift in concept allows for grace and patience if we find ourselves distracted or having fallen off the path along the way. Well-being as a journey recognizes improvements come gradually and if we **maintain a sense of purpose** and direction, in time, we will reach our desired goal.
- **Well-being is not a "one size fits all" experience.** There can be some variance in what it looks and feels like from one person to the next. Where one lives may impact the frequency in which one can engage in outdoor activities. Genetics can predispose some to physical and emotional conditions and culture can shape the ways in which well-being is defined and practiced. With this in mind, consider what well-being looks like for you and engage in those things that support your own personal experience of the concept.
- **Give yourself permission to take a tech-break.** For many, 2020 has increased our reliance upon social media and technology. Consider how this surge of dependency impacts your sense of well-being. Are you constantly scanning for missed texts, tweets and emails throughout the day? Are you spending more time on Zoom and Facebook than you are with the people who actually share your living space? Evaluate how much time is spent using technology and how this time can be shifted to enhancing your well-being.
- **Clean one space or thing.** This is a win-win. Whether you clean out your refrigerator, scrub the tub, or wash the inside of your car windshield, the reward of a sparkling clean space is always uplifting.
- **Eat Healthy.** Healthy eating means having a healthy attitude toward food. Try new foods, enjoy meals with friends, and plan ahead so you can be sure to include lots of fresh fruits and vegetables
- **Learn a new skill.** Learning a new skill can boost self-confidence and raise self-esteem. If your time is limited, there are many ways to bring learning into your life. Try learning a new recipe, use a YouTube tutorial to take on a DIY project. There are plenty of mobile apps that can help you learn anything from astronomy and chess to video editing and computer coding.
- **Recall Positive Life Events.** Spend time thinking about some of your best memories. Whether it's a vacation, an award you received, or a special time spent with a friend, recalling the happiest times in your life can bring more positivity to your mindset.
- **Practice Forgiveness.** Letting go of past hurt and anger is key to good psychological well-being. Forgiveness is about releasing these emotions that are holding you back and moving into a greater state of well-being.

Overeaters Anonymous (OA)

Meets at the church every
Saturday
10:00am to 11:00am

We are all Compulsive Overeaters & Food Addicts. Our program is built on the Spiritual, Physical and Mental. We follow AA guidelines. Everyone who has an eating disorder is welcome and no cost to come. We are more than happy to welcome newcomers. If you would like more information please feel free to call Mary Kirkpatrick at 248-215-6822

Our C.A.R.E. Team is ready and willing to contact you or anyone you know who could benefit from a phone call or card or whatever it is that would help them with what they (or you) might be dealing with today.

Feel free to contact them at
care.team@grandblancumc.org



Have you been watching Pastor Brian's daily devotionals? He shares his recordings every morning, Monday through Friday. Go to our website: www.grandblancumc.org and you can find a link to the devotionals on our home page.



January

Birthday Wishes

- 1st Mary Rimmell
- 2nd Jacob Sanborn
- 3rd Dorothy Colby, Sandy Sandrock
- 5th David Moore
- 6th Jacob Russell
- 7th Frank Maxwell (97)
- 8th Sharon Bohms, Ernie Brookins
- 9th Kevin Cook
- 11th Shirley Andrews (85)
- 12th Angela Cherniawski,
Julie Koerke,
Felicia Lawcock
- 14th Ashley Trinidad
- 18th Julia Greenlees
- 19th Dennis Brudnak
- 20th Paul Roth
- 21st Jody Church
- 23rd Lianna Williams
- 24th Bob Mills (84)
- 25th Gary Bendall, Cadence Gould
- 27th James Cook, Leland Mitchinson
- 28th Ashton Bjorkman,
Leonard Herron,
Brian Martin
- 29th Donna Huebler, Tracy Sanborn
- 31st Lee Pelton (85)

Anniversary Blessings

- 16th Wanda & David Roberts (50)
- 31st Carole & Jack Hitchens (46)



The GBUMC staff would like to thank everyone for their generous donations to staff appreciation. We are so grateful for all of you and the support you have given us throughout this crazy year!

2021 UMC Camping!!!

Please check out www.umccamping.org for information on this Summer's opportunities (for all ages)! What a great way to unplug and make some great friends and memories! GBUMC has a camp scholarship fund to help with expenses. Please contact the office with any questions.



Grand Blanc United Methodist Church
Building and Roof Mortgage Summary

MORTGAGE BALANCE (as of 11-30-20)

Mortgage Balance with UMF = \$181,345.68

Mortgage Reserve Fund Balance (as of 11-30-20) = \$14,626.55

Roof Reserve Fund Balance (as of 11-30-20) = \$17,164.90

Grand Blanc United Methodist Church
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Grand Blanc, MI 48439

Church Office 810-694-9040 fax 810-694-1916
www.grandblancumc.org

Rev. Brian West, Pastor
Cathy Mitchinson, Office Administrator
Angela Campbell, Office Assistant
Dr. Lee Pelton, Organist/Choir Director
Gary Brandt, 9:00 Music Director/Director of Common Grace
Nancy Petrie, Bell Choir Director
Adrienne Jablonski, Nursery Supervisor
Allison Jablonski, Nursery Assistant



GRAND BLANC UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

FRIENDS IN CHRIST EXERCISING
LOVE, HOPE AND GRACE TO
ENRICH ALL LIVES



2021 Opportunities for Giving Back

Your contributions to GBUMC have regional, national and international impact through our connectional giving system. In 2021 we are asking you to give generously to the special Sunday offerings listed below.

January 17 – Human Relations Day

Together, we extend a helping hand to those in crisis so they can overcome formidable obstacles, nurture at-risk youth, strengthen communities' self-improvement efforts and advocate for the oppressed in the United States. Your gift encourages acceptance of all of God's children.

March 14 – UMCOR Sunday (formerly One Great Hour of Sharing)

When you give to the UMCOR Sunday special offering, you support the operating activities of our worldwide relief agency, enabling it to assist churches and communities in times of disaster. The offering ensures that 100 percent of every designated gift made through UMCOR for disaster response and other critical needs goes directly to address those needs.

April 18 – Native American Ministries

Your contribution supports aspiring Native American pastors and enriches outreach in their communities. Together, we empower local, spiritual development and educate Native American seminary students to serve God faithfully, who will honor and celebrate Native American culture in their ministries and to minister to their communities with the love of Christ.

May 30 – Peace With Justice Sunday

Our Social Principles call us to love our enemies, seek justice, and serve as reconcilers of conflict. As a congregation we may lack the resources alone to effect change in a broken world, your giving is vital for the UMC to continue its global ministries of reconciliation. Because of the Peace with Justice Sunday offering, the people of The United Methodist Church are able to make a difference together by sowing seeds—and yielding fruit!—of peace.

October 3 – World Communion Sunday

Around the globe, countless gifted and qualified people face financial obstacles that hinder them from preparing for the vocation God has given them, especially youth and young adults. Your gift funds World Communion and Ethnic Scholarships and Ethnic In-Service training. Your gift provides acceptance and love.

November 28 – United Methodist Student Day

Together, we educate students so they can make a difference in the world. When you support United Methodist Student Day your gift transforms lives through education. Your contribution enriches ministry and connects students to their faith.

**Thank you for your continued support for outreach in our community,
country and world!**