

"Connection"

Please see the Worship article in this newsletter for Worship details.



Sermon Series: "This Is My Story"

February 7

5th Sunday after

Epiphany

Communion

"The Good News"

Luke 4:14-22

February 14

6th Sunday after

Epiphany

"Beginnings and Visions"

Acts 2:1-4; 9:1-19

1 Corinthians 1:4-9

Revelation 22:1-5

February 17

Ash Wednesday

Sermon Series: "24 Hours That Changed The World"

February 21

1st Sunday of Lent

"A Holy Meal"

Mark 14:12, 22-25

February 28

2nd Sunday of Lent

"Gethsemane"

Mark 14: 27-41

"In All Things"

I recently read a newsletter article written by a friend and colleague of mine, offering this bit of wisdom and permission: "It's okay if you're enjoying some of what's going on right now." To be clear, he isn't advocating that we should be okay with the state of division in our nation and world, nor should we be content with the rate at which people are becoming sick with COVID-19. No one should be taking pleasure in those things. Instead, what he's referring to is this: it's okay if you've been enjoying worship from your couch while resting with a cup of coffee. It's okay if you're enjoying more time at home with family. It's even okay if you found some solitude around Christmas to be a bit of necessary rest. It's okay if you're not missing your commute to work. It's even okay if you find yourself cooking more meals at home rather than eating out. To reiterate, *it's okay if you're enjoying some of what's going on right now.*

As a frequent listener of podcasts, most of what I listen to are interview shows. Some are faith-based, others political and news oriented, while the rest are often themed with pop-culture TV shows, music, or movies. During this past year, it seems as though just about every interview begins with the question, "How have you been doing during the pandemic?" Almost as if every interviewee read some sort of memo before the show, they all reply with the same basic formula. At first, they lament at how hard it's been – something we can all relate to. Second, they share some of what they've been up to, often regaling the audience of their new sourdough bread hobby. Third, they start to reflect on the positive side of things – the silver linings. And then, finally, they offer a clause that sounds something like this: "None of this is to say this whole thing isn't awful, because it is!" It's almost as if they feel the need to apologize for experiencing happiness and something good during a very challenging and scary time.

I'm wondering if we can trade one feeling for the other. With nearly a year of the pandemic in the rearview mirror, likely with months still to go, I suspect we can adopt a new posture, and this should come as no surprise to you: *Gratitude.*

"Give thanks in every situation because this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus."
-1Thessalonians 5:18 CEB

To be clear, Paul isn't suggesting that hard and scary circumstances are God's will for us. Rather, Paul is saying that a posture of gratitude is required for us to really tap into the Joy of Christ. This also doesn't mean that we should ignore all that is going on around us and focus only on happy things! Instead, gratitude provides a new lens – new glasses, if you will – to see the world through. Let's take a look at some practical examples:

- If you've been worshiping with us from home using Facebook or YouTube, or maybe even from the parking lot with your radio, take time to marvel at the fact that, as a church, we have the ability to record and share a whole worship service over the internet. While there is lots about the internet that is regrettable, we can give thanks for this small glimmer of light, can't we?

Continued on next page



FOR THE HOMEBOUND:

Marge
Woody

OUR CHURCH FAMILY:

Cheryl
Sharel
Ed
Marcia
Eleanor
Marilyn
Dick
Phil
Mary
Paul
Bob
Eileen
Robert
Norma

FOR OTHERS:

Rita
Randy
Robin
Tony
Pat
Alexandra
Nancy
Chris
Scott
Robert
Michael
Jay
Naomi
Charlie
Connie
Gloria
Jeff
Donna
Marty
Barb
Sunny
Jim
Tod

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- I was talking with a church member the other day who was planning to prepare a meal to take and deliver to one of our church's shut-ins. I have to wonder if we'd think to do that regularly if we were more preoccupied with the busyness of life? Has slowing down caused us to think of others a bit more?
- On New Years Eve, as much as we would have loved to gather with friends to celebrate the New Year and watch our similarly-aged children run around and have fun, Stephanie and I sat with our kids on the couch and did an early countdown with cups of sparkling grape juice for the kids. It wasn't what we'd hoped for, but it was beautiful in it's own way.

Once again, this isn't to suggest that the hardships people are facing are not real. It's certainly not to suggest that we shouldn't mourn the 400,000 plus deaths in the United States from COVID-19, and weep with families as loved ones pass away. What I'm suggesting is that it's okay not to apologize when you have an opportunity to give thanks in this season of life. Perhaps it's those moments of gratitude that will help us to see how God is walking with us through the storms of life.
Peace, Pastor Brian

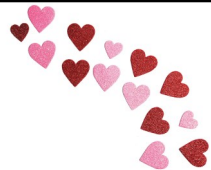


I would like to say thank you to all those who provided words of support and those that took time to send wonderful cards. Of course it has been difficult, but all of the support has really helped. Greg Reigle



If you would like to receive prayer concern emails from the church, please contact the church office at office@grandblancumc.org. You can also receive church updates through email and this newsletter too! Just let us know!

FISH of Grand Blanc is currently providing assistance to approximately 500 people every week. If you would like to donate any non-perishable food, paper products, cleaning supplies or personal hygiene products, you can drop them off at their collection site at St. Christopher's Episcopal Church, 9020 S. Saginaw Street on Wednesdays between 5pm and 7pm and Saturdays between 10am and noon. They also appreciate monetary donations and those can be mailed to FISH of Grand Blanc, P.O. Box 367, Grand Blanc, MI 48480-0367



We extend our deepest sympathy to the family and friends of Jean Tykoski, who passed away on January 13, 2021. Jean is Bill Tykoski's mother.

We also extend our deepest sympathy to the family and friends of Hank Cross, who passed away on January 26, 2021. Hank is Bob & Laurie Tritten's brother-in-law.

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

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.

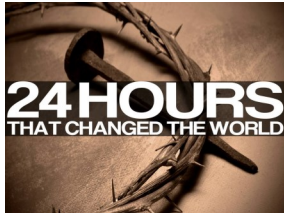
We hope you will take the time to join us in which ever way is most comfortable for you.

Lent

Ash Wednesday, February 17:

5:30pm to 7:00pm Drive-Thru to have Pastor Brian apply ashes to your forehead, or receive a container with just enough ashes to apply them yourself.

7:00pm Ash Wednesday Service will be available through your car radio in the church parking lot, or you can watch on Facebook or YouTube.



"24 Hours that Changed the World" will be Pastor's Sermon Series during the season of Lent, beginning Sunday, February 21st. During those six Sundays, we'll walk with Jesus and the Disciples through the last 24 hours of Jesus' life, beginning in the Upper Room for the Passover meal, and ending on Calvary's hill where Jesus is crucified. While Easter Sunday will bring with it a message of hope, life, and resurrection, it is important that we understand the events that draw us toward that moment of freedom."



The Worship & Arts Committee has begun to plan for Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter. Complete details will be shared in the March Connection.



Speaking of our Worship & Arts Committee, please take a chance, whenever possible, to thank them for all they have been doing as they provide meaningful worship services while continuing to keep us safe during the pandemic.

Committee members are: Julie Koerke, Chairperson, Joni Donaldson, Chad & Kristin Ivan, Sandy Jones, and Pastor Brian. We also appreciate Gary Brandt and Lee Pelton as they provide beautiful music for our worship services.

Youth Group News

Senior High Youth

Plans are being made for the next Senior High Youth Events/activities. Youth and parents will be contacted directly and information will also be shared through church emails and available on the church website

Leaders:

Brian Rice and Jennifer Lengyel

Junior High Youth

February 14th at Noon:

Nature Hike at church. Bring sleds and snow gear if there is snow. We will reschedule if it is less than 20 degrees.

March 6th

Walking to Dawn Donuts for a treat.

Leader: Jessica Smith

ENGAGEmi 2020 Report for GBUMC
(formerly this was the "Spotlight" Church report)

Step 1: 100% of Michigan Conference Ministry Shares	
Michigan Conference Ministry Shares (in budget)	\$36,090.50
Step 2: Michigan - Conference & District Projects	
God's Country Coop. Parish \$500	
Asbury Comm. Dev. \$175; Baldwin Center \$175	
Cass Comm. \$175; UM Retirement \$175	
Family Promise of Genesee Co. \$600	
Love Inc, Flint \$400	\$ 2,200.00
Step 3: National - USA	
Native American Sunday \$25	
Human Relations Sunday \$251	
UM Student Sunday \$135	\$ 411.00
Step 4: International - Global, Haiti, and Liberia	
World Communion Sunday \$25	
Heifer International \$866	
Mujila Falls Agricultural Project \$500	
Annual Conference Offering-Haiti \$150	
Haitian Artisans for Peace Int'l \$202.50	
Annual Conference Offering-Liberia \$150	\$ 1,893.50
Step 5: Mission Personnel	
Paul Lee Webster	\$ 1,000.00
Step 6: UMCOR - United Methodist Committee of Relief	
UMCOR Sunday \$30	
Conference Offering Michigan Relief \$150	\$ 180.00
Sub total	\$41,775.00
Additional Mission funds donated:	
FISH of Grand Blanc	\$ 3,140.00
CWS/CROP Walk	\$ 3,921.00
Appalacia Service Project - given to GBUMC Youth	\$ 2,939.00
(Value of Giving Tree Gifts are not included)	
Grand Total	\$51,775.00

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY IN 2020 !

With the exception of Step 1 above, all the donations made were from our Third Sunday Offering (blue envelopes) and Lent Offering (yellow envelope) and Advent Offering (pink envelope) and other special requests made during the year.

Overeaters Anonymous (OA)

Meets at the church every
Saturday (when possible)
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 the church office.

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.

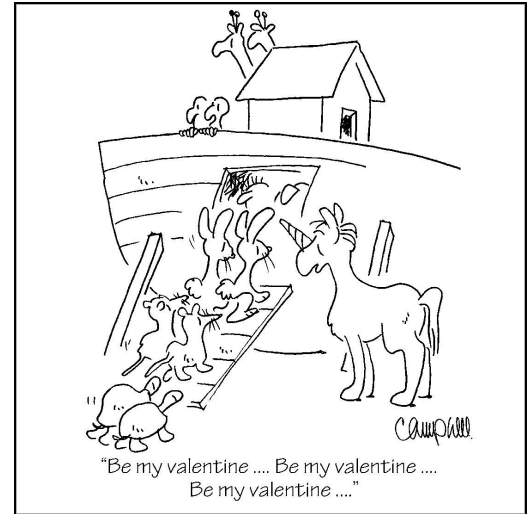


Birthday Wishes

1st Dan, Peggy
2nd Luke
5th Ryan, Cooper,
Sharne
7th Ken, Katie
9th Blakeley
13th Randalynn
16th Becky
17th Hannah, Tony,
Cathy, Peter
18th Will, Sandi,
Benjamin
19th Eleanor
20th Stan, Lori
21st Zayden, Barb,
Linda
23rd Dale
25th Roma, Delilah
27th Aaron,
Aaron

Anniversary Blessings

14th Peggy & Stan
Val & Jim
18th Laurie & Bob Tritten



Ideas for Lent:

—Do a family fast during Lent. This could be for a specific amount of time, a day, or through all of Lent. For example, your family fasts from technology from 6-7pm every day throughout Lent. Or your family fasts from sugary foods every Friday. When you fast from something, make sure that you fill that space by growing closer with God. Praying together, doing a Lenten practice, reading a Bible story, etc. Be sure to talk about what you are doing instead of what you are fasting from. This gives family members something to look forward to.

—Cut out 40 strips of paper (47 if you want to include Sundays and Easter). Write a person, place or group of people (i.e. firefighters, police, teachers, etc.) on each strip. Attach them into a paper chain. Take one off each day and pray for what is written on the chain. Mealtimes or bedtime are a good time to do this.

Grand Blanc United Methodist Church
Building and Roof Mortgage Summary

MORTGAGE BALANCE (as of 12-31-20)

Mortgage Balance with UMF = \$180,452.00

Mortgage Reserve Fund Balance (as of 12-31-20) = \$13,755.89

Roof Reserve Fund Balance (as of 12-31-20) = \$17,434.90

Grand Blanc United Methodist Church
515 Bush Avenue
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



If you have a child/grandchild, that watches the children's time during our Sunday morning worship services and they did not receive any prayer putty, please contact the office and some will be delivered to their door.

This Thank you note was received in the mail (I will just use initials):
Grand Blanc United Methodist Church Family, Our family would like to thank you for the amazing Christmas donations this season. It was a beautiful Christmas morning. "F" was smiling from ear to ear. He loved the NIKE shoes VERY MUCH! That, I believe was his favorite. The gloves were perfect along with the very, very nice outfit. He has already read one of the Michigan Chillers books and is already on the next one. The games were wonderful, as well. But another huge favorite of his was the NERF gun! I'm very grateful for all of the love and support you all have given us at such a hard time our family has been going through. The Kroger gift card helped put food on our table this past week which I can't thank you enough. Thank you again for the support and generosity your congregation has shown our family at this time. It will never be forgotten and one day this will be passed on to others. Love, "B" & "F"



Hey!!

J.A.M. kids and Families...

Keep an eye out for
"Wednesday Dinner" a new
video program for families
and kids! More information
will be shared in an upcoming
email.

(J.A.M. = Jesus and Me)
If you do not receive our
church emails, please contact
the church office. You don't
want to miss this!

Lenten Book Study

During a 6-week Lenten Study, you are invited to read *The Walk* by Rev. Adam Hamilton, and join Pastor Brian for a meaningful conversation and exploration of each chapter as we journey through the season of Lent.

The Walk will help us focus on five essential practices of the Christian life that are rooted in Jesus' own walk with God, and which are evident throughout the New Testament. By setting aside time this Lent to explore these essential practices of worship, study, serving, giving, and bearing witness to our faith, we will be better equipped to journey away from the cross and that Easter morning garden, and live out what it *truly* means to be the church!

Join Pastor Brian for a 6-week virtual Book Study on Tuesdays at 7:00pm beginning February 23, 2021. To register for the class, receive the Zoom link, as well as purchase a copy of the book for \$10, please contact the church office no later than Sunday, February 21st.

