



The Grand Blanc UMC "Connection"

January, 2024

January 7

Epiphany Sunday
"New Year, New You"
Matthew 2:1-12; Psalm 29



January 14

2nd Sunday after the Epiphany
Community & Human Relations
Sunday
"Chasms"
Luke 16:19-31



January 21

3rd Sunday after the Epiphany
Sermon Series:
"Your Kingdom Come"
Message:
"Daily Bread"
Matthew 6:9-13



January 28

4th Sunday after the Epiphany
Sermon Series:
"Your Kingdom Come"
Message:
"Forgive and Repent"
Matthew 6:9-15

Muddy Footprints in Jesus' Church *And Other Reasons It's Not Really About Us*

A number of years ago, a church I served, after about 10 years of hosting a very popular Trunk-or-Treat on Halloween night, finally had to move things indoors on a particularly rainy Halloween night. Rain became mud, and not a soul wanted to be outside unless it was to move from one candy source to another. The night was still a great success, but, as you can imagine, the church's carpets were pretty well muddied and in need of cleaning. The next day, as I listened to a church member complain about the community's disrespect of *her* church, I offered a not-so-subtle reminder of an important truth: "This church is not yours or mine. This church belongs to those who don't yet have a church family." The conversation ended, but I do hope that my point was taken. Sometimes, in the busyness of being the church, it's easy to forget what our purpose is.

In John 21:15, responding to Jesus' question as to whether Simon Peter truly loved Jesus, Simon Peter's reply was, "Yes. Lord...you know that I love you." It was at that moment that Jesus gave the first of three nearly identical instructions: "Feed my lambs."

In Mark 1:17, after calling his disciples, Jesus tells the two fishermen, Andrew and Simon, "Come, follow me...and I will send you out to fish for people."

In Matthew 28:19, we discover the resurrected Jesus giving the disciples what has become known as the "Great Commission." All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

Time and time again, Jesus invites his disciples (and we are his disciples, too), that the notion of the church – the "Body of Christ" – is only about us up to the point that we are fed. Once we are fed, it is no longer really about *us*. We become the church for someone else! It becomes our obligation to become fishers of people, lamb feeders, and into-the-world goers!

The problem is, over time, the Church as institution (note the capital "C") has done an amazing job of convincing Christians that church is all about "us." We've been taught that Christianity's goal is getting to heaven and getting as many people to go with us as possible. We've been taught that good people "go to church" and that Sundays are the most important thing we do.

Now, don't get me wrong! I absolutely love the Church! I love being a Christian and I love being a follower of Jesus. That said, the Christian Church (notice that capital "C" again) needs to reexamine its role. We need deeply to see that the goal of Christianity is and has always really been about caring for and seeing the image of God in our neighbor, loving those who struggle to love us back, and praying for those we'd otherwise call our enemy. We deeply need to see that there are many, even in our community – our own backyard – who have been hurt by Churches and have walked away because Christians haven't always been the best reflections of God's immense and limitless love. We deeply need to begin to understand that worship attendance, while immensely important to our spiritual health and relationship with God, is not the marker of one's "goodness" or their Christian faith, for that matter. Worship is, at its core an expression of gratitude and love for a God who has loved us before we could ever comprehend it (we call that prevenient grace).

Does this mean that we ignore one another and only focus on those not in relationship with this church or another church? Absolutely not! Jesus' commission

Continued on next page

was never to forget one another. In the early church, we see countless examples of seeing and caring for one another, praying, encouraging one another, and growing deeper in faith! Just read Paul's letter and you'll discover it immediately. But you'll also discover that the goal for all of that was singular – that others might come to discover through the church (little "c" means "Body of Christ) the good news of Jesus Christ.

In other words, its time for the Church to embody the church, and to see the muddy footprints on the carpet as evidence of grace, goodness, and good news. It's not my Church and it's not your Church. We exist as a church for those who have yet to discover the real gospel!

Are we ready – are you ready - to do what it takes to fish for people, feed sheep, and go into all the world?

Today is a new day.
Pastor Brian



FOR THE HOMEBOUND:

Marge Berryman
2700 Shimmons Rd, #193
Auburn Hills, MI 48326

Marge Cramer
42400 12 Mile Rd, #214
Novi, MI 48377

Shirley Crane
Temporarily @ Wellbridge
3139 E. Baldwin Road
Grand Blanc, MI 48439

Eleanor Hall
The Oaks at Woodfield
5370 E. Baldwin Road
Room 403
Grand Blanc, MI 48439

OUR CHURCH FAMILY:

Shirley Andrews
Ron Blakemore
Donna Brookins
Jim Bunker
Rev. Julius Del Pino
Lisa England
Marcia Ferguson
Judy Gratsch
Dick Hubler
Janice King
Gail Lutton
Paul Manning
Paul & Anna Roth family
Bob Tritten



FOR OTHERS:

Susan Allan
Kim Allward
Minnie Armstrong
Dave Ax
Rich Bennetts
Nancy Bilas
Sallie Burek
Patricia Crawfis
Warren Crawfis
Cindy Dunn
Ellen Farr
Harold Ferguson
Larry Fox
Alea Gardner
Sharon Graham
Gene Griffel
Rev. John Hice
Jim Hood
Allan Jawors
Dave Jones

Ellie Lauth
Adrianna Martell
Julie McKenna
Rev. Gordon Mitchinson
Joshua Nelson
David Oden
Larry Oden
Laura O'Neill
Rick Palmer
Carl Pate
Linda Polehanki
Martin Ryder
Paul Schultes
Bill Shier
John Smith
Eddie Snow
Jeff & Amy Tebo
Marvin Thompson
Emery Wacser
Laura Wilson
Ed Woodard



~ We extend our deepest sympathy to the family and friends of Ray Dickinson who passed away on October 16. Ray is Kelli Hedding's uncle.

~ We extend our deepest sympathy to the family and friends of Janet Davis who passed away on December 12.

~ We extend our deepest sympathy to the family and friends of Greg Waisanen who passed away on December 12. Greg is Bernie Waisanen's brother.



I want to start by saying thank you for all the support, food, hugs, cards, and the words you use, or don't use. Sometimes there are just no words. I appreciate my church family and Kaja and Ron, Alex and Seth and Karl, and Jeff and Lisa (McGehee, Donnie's sister) are grateful you have been there for them and for me!

I would like to make it my mission to get everyone to take their health seriously. Go to the Dr for regular check ups and tell them honestly how you are feeling. If you are tired and dragging all the time, there is a reason for that, help the Dr figure it out. Donnie died, unexpectedly, of hardening of the arteries. Fatigue is a very prominent side effect.

And lastly, take care of your family monetarily. Get life insurance, start early saving for retirement and you won't miss the money you put into investments. Right after Kaja was born, Donnie and I started a term life insurance policy for each of us in case the worst thing might happen. Donnie died at age 52, and I don't need to worry, he made sure of that.

Again, we appreciate all of the thoughts and prayers and we will be okay in time. The backing of our church has been a great help getting through this difficult period.

Thank you, Tammy, Kaja, Ron, Alex, Seth, and Karl.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Director of Christian Education
Angela Campbell
christian.education@grandblancumc.org

Office Hours:
Monday & Wednesday: 11am to 2:30pm
Thursday: 10am to 2:30pm
Sunday: 9am to 11am

Pastor's Pick!

Each month Pastor Brian will be offering his "Pastor's Pick" book recommendation. This book could be one that he is highlighting in his sermon series, one that goes with the current church season, or one that is just a good book to read. Hope you enjoy. **The church will be purchasing a copy of each of Pastor's book picks for the church library. If you are interested in reading any of them, you are welcome to "check them out!" Previous "Pastor's Picks can be found in the Church Library.**

January 2024 book pick: "For Sabbath's Sake: Embracing Your Need for Rest, Worship, and Community" By J. Dana Trent

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Our Christmas Eve play message was a simple one we have all heard before. It is a call to "Love thy neighbor." We here at Grand Blanc United Methodist Church are working hard to put those words into action. We are asking for donations of new or gently used hats, gloves, and scarves to add to our blessing bags to help keep our neighbor warm during these cold winter months. Drop off boxes will be located in the gathering space during the month of January. Thank you for your support.



Child Care
Available

Our nursery is available for preschool age and younger during all worship services. All children are always

welcome in the Sanctuary during worship services. Adrianna and a volunteer adult are in the Nursery, if you would prefer to let your children play there while you worship.

Sunday School for all ages @ 10:00 a.m.



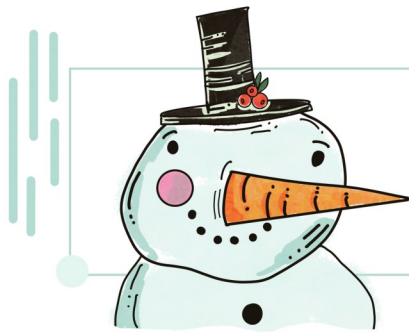
Pastor Brian's
Drop-In Online Bible Study

10-11am Every Thursday

No start date or end date. Just come and join us!

A weekly Bible Study lead by Pastor Brian for everyone who has ever wanted to take a closer look at Scripture. Drop-in anytime you want!





HELLO *january*

YOUTH GROUP!

All youth grades 6 through 12 are invited to participate!
We've got lots of great events planned for this Fall!
We hope you will join us and bring a friend!

Leaders:
Angela Campbell 810-241-7275
Nathan Rahn 734-276-3949

Thank you to everyone who participated and/or donated during our Christmas wrapping fundraiser. There was a lot of joy put into the wrapping of the gifts!

The Youth Group

Sunday, January 14

5pm to 7pm

Ice Skating at Physician's Park,
weather permitting



Drop-off & Pick up @
Physician's Park

If there is no ice because it's
too warm, we will meet at
Rollhaven

Sunday, January 7
and
Sunday, January 21
5pm to 7pm
Volleyball, snacks, etc.
Here at the church

Sunday, January 28

3:30pm to 5pm

Trip to the Planetarium!
Drop off and pick up at the
Planetarium



COMMUNITY OUTREACH & ENGAGEMENT

Community Outreach & Engagement, a long title for such a simple concept

♥ LOVING and CARING for our neighbors.

We serve a **FREE DINNER** every first Wednesday of the month from 5-6:30 pm.

COMMUNITY DINNER

All are welcome!!!

NOW SERVING UNTIL 6:30

Wednesday, January 3, 2024

Breakfast for dinner!

Pancakes, Egg Casserole, Sausage,
Fruit & Drink



WE CONTINUE TO CONNECT WITH OUR COMMUNITY BUSINESSES BY SHARING OUR THANKS AND AFFIRMING WHAT THEY DO IN OUR COMMUNITY. ♥

JARRING GRACE has been a great tool to connect and build relationships with our community leaders and businesses. It is easy, fun and is ongoing, but it can also be a one time thing. If you appreciate one of our businesses, schools or community services, please consider helping.

With more volunteers we will have the opportunity to connect with more of our business community. If you would like to volunteer with **JARRING GRACE**, please contact Melinda, melmehajek@gmail.com or call 810 845-2089.

It's the easiest thing to do...giving away candy,

Tuesday, January 30, 2024, 12 - 4 PM

Giving 

WARMS THE HEART

DONATE BLOOD

Grand Blanc United Methodist Church



SCAN the QR code to register to donate

Open the Camera app & Select camera.
Hold your device so that the QR code appears in the viewfinder in the Camera
Tap the link associated with the code to register.

A Look Back at 2023

As a church committed to Community Outreach and Engagement...2023 was an excellent year

- **11 FREE Community Dinners**
- **Jarring Grace Connections**- 43 ongoing connections with local businesses. .
- **Grand Blanc Community EXPO** – First time and it was GOOD. *Be sure to join us this March 16.*
- **Indian Hill Subdivision** Gave away hotdogs on Friday and Saturday of the Sale
- **Homecoming Parade**
- **Trunk or Treat**
- **Dinner Comedy Show** – a wonderful evening benefiting all and raising funds for the Care Fund.
- **Winterfest** - Gave away nearly 300 cups of Hot Chocolate before we ran out.
- **Worship in the Park**
- **Two Blood Drives** (more to come)
- **And MORE!**

MORE TO COME IN 2024!

ADVOCACY DAY

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 13, 2024
Michigan State Capital
Lansing

**SUPPORTING MENTAL
HEALTH CARE ACCESS**



Save the date • Learn more
michiganumc.org/justice-and-advocacy



**Community Engagement comes in many forms.
Watch for more information on this March 13 event.**

The gift of SERVICE
volunteer
do good, feel good

01/07
01/14
01/21
01/28



There is a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board next to the prayer room, or feel free to call or email the office to order flowers for the Sunday of your choice. Flower arrangements are \$15.00 each from Grand Blanc Florist and you may take them home following the 11:00am worship service. Your name and who the arrangement is in honor/memory of will be listed in the Sunday bulletin.

Coffee Hour

01/07 The Luttons
01/14 Comm. Outreach & Engage
01/21 United Women of Faith
01/28 The Wests

11:00am Worship Ushers

1st Sunday Jim Wise, Carol Cerny
2nd Sunday Virginia Sullivan
3rd Sunday Bob & Barb Mills
4th Sunday Gary Bendall,
Tom Cerny



COUNTERS

01/07 Jessica Smith, Carol Cerny
01/14 Tom Cerny, Jim Wise
01/21 Sandy Jones, Tom Cerny
01/28 Carol Capell, Ron Blakemore

Would you like to help? Let the office know! We just need a couple more volunteers to keep everyone at no more than once a month!



Birthdays and Anniversaries

Birthday Wishes

1st Sarah Carlson, Mary Rimmell
2nd Sandy Labby, Jacob Sanborn
3rd Dorothy Colby, Jan Pettit,
Sandy Sandrock
6th Jacob Russell
7th Frank Maxwell (100)
8th Sharon Bohms, Ernie Brookins
9th Kevin Cook
10th Ernest Lyons
11th Shirley Andrews (88)
12th Curtis Cantley,
Angela Cherniawski,
Julie Koerke, Felicia Lawcock
13th Melba Arrowood
14th Dave Griffus, Ashley Trinidad
18th Julia Greenlees, Sophie Rahn
19th Dennis Brudnak (82),
Connie Skinner

20th Janice King, Paul Roth
21st Jody Church
23rd Lianna Williams
24th Bob Mills (87),
25th Gary Bendall, Charlotte Reed
27th James Cook, Leland Mitchinson
28th Ashton Bjorkman,
Leonard Herron, Brian Martin
29th Donna Hubler, Tracy Sanborn
31st Lee Pelton (88), Ellie Reed



Anniversary Blessings

16th Wanda & David Roberts (53)

Greeters

	9:00am	11:00am
01/07	Shirley Wheeler	Viginia Sullivan
01/14	John Billings	Tom Cerny
01/21	Becky Doran	Nan Rahn
01/28	RaeAnn Waisanen	Nancy Bigler

Contact Tom Cerny with questions or to volunteer! tomcerny1@aol.com

Grand Blanc United Methodist Church Financial Summary

General Fund Balance (as of 11-30-23) = \$22,917
Mortgage Fund Balance (as of 11-30-23) = \$2,004

MORTGAGE BALANCE (as of 11-30-23) = \$109,911



January 2024



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 	2 10a Pastor @ Panera 10a Prayer Group 10a Yoga 7p Worship & Arts Zoom	3 10a Prayer Shawl 5p Community Dinner 6:30p Celebration Ringers	4 10a Drop-in Bible Study	5 10a Men's Coffee 7p Al Anon	6 10a O.A. 10a Yoga
7 9a Worship 10a Coffee Hour 10a Sunday Sch 10:15a Choir 11a Worship Noon De-hanging of the greens 5p Youth Group	8 7p Ad Council via Zoom	9 10a Pastor @ Panera 10a Prayer Group 10a Yoga	10 10a Prayer Shawl 6:30p Celebration Ringers	11 10a Drop-in Bible Study Noon Seasoned Citizens 6p Common Grace	12 10a Men's Coffee 7p Al Anon	13 10a O.A. 10a Yoga
14 9a Worship 10a Coffee Hour 10a Sunday Sch 10:15a Choir 11a Worship 5p Youth Group Ice Skating @ Physician's Park	15 10a Zentangle 7p Finance Meeting	16 10a Pastor @ Panera 10a Prayer Group 10a Yoga	17 10a Women's Circles 10a Prayer Shawl 6:30p Celebration Ringers	18 10a Drop-in Bible Study 6p Common Grace	19 10a Men's Coffee 7p Al Anon	20 10a O.A. 10a Yoga
21 9a Worship 10a Coffee Hour 10a Sunday Sch 10:15a Choir 11a Worship 12:15p UMW Baby Shower 5p Youth Group	22	23 10a Pastor @ Panera 10a Prayer Group 10a Yoga	24 10a Prayer Shawl 6:30p Celebration Ringers	25 10a Drop-in Bible Study 6p Common Grace	26 10a Men's Coffee 7p Al Anon	27 10a O.A. 10a Yoga
28 9a Worship 10a Sunday Sch 10a Coffee Hour 10:15a Choir 11a Worship 3:30p Youth @ Planetarium	29	30 10a Pastor @ Panera 10a Prayer Group 10a Yoga BLOOD DRIVE	31 10a Prayer Shawl 6:30p Celebration Ringers			

THANK YOU for your support to the Giving Tree this Christmas. Cathy Mitchinson set us up with the Sign Up Genius and it was another successful experience, thank you Cathy! This year we had 20 gifts that went to individuals without family living nearby at Medilodge Nursing home. The FISH clothes closet received 82 pairs of girls socks, 12 pairs of boys socks, 117 pairs of girls underwear, 61 pairs of boys underwear, 39 pairs of gloves and two hats for girls, 15 pairs of gloves and 2 hats for boys. The Methodist Children's Village received 39 \$20 gift cards. We also collected items for the Ennis Center for Children in Flint including 12 boxes of diapers, 28 deodorants, 14 shampoos, 15 body washes, and 60 bars of soap. The GBUMC Prayer Shawl Ministry donated 25 hats for the FISH family children (11 girls and 14 boys). Also each family received a \$25 gas card.

The FISH organization sponsored over 400 families in the Grand Blanc area this year. GBUMC groups or individuals sponsored 13 FISH families this year. First Congregational Church (FCC) also donated paper products, cleaning products and toiletries for these FISH families. FISH will also provide food to these families for Christmas. GBUMC and FCC have worked together for many years to provide for the FISH families. GBUMC was again the staging area for the Christmas presents for FISH. Thank you Pastor Brian for allowing the use of our church.

The GBUMC sponsors were: Dan Carvill (2) families, United Women of Faith/ UMW (Gina Briscoe), Barb Benson, Pam Eklund, Kevin & Angela Cook, Chad & Sandy Labby, Ron & Colleen Fitch, Melinda Elmore-Hajek, Don Sawyer, Seasoned Citizens, Jr/Sr High Youth, and Stepping Stones Sunday School (Karen Rossman). Thank you so much for your sponsorship!

A special thank you to Jessica Smith, Carol Capell, Pam Eklund, Gina Briscoe, Joann Lepri, Bernie Waisanen, Dave Griffus and the Mission Team, Becky Doran, RaeAnn Waisanen, Mariann Quaderer, Pat Cooper, Margaret Frelander, Dori Huntoon and Luann Griffus for sorting and bagging all of the gifts. Thanks to RaeAnn Waisanen for delivering the Medilodge gifts, Becky Doran for delivering the Ennis Children's items, and to Dave & Luann Griffus for delivering the UM Children's gift cards. A very special thanks to all who purchased the gifts and gave so generously so these families could have a great Christmas. It was challenging doing all of this without our fearless leader Donna Hedding. We know she's smiling on us from above. Thank you again, everyone (I hope we didn't leave anyone out!)

Human Relations Day Sunday, January 14th

Human Relations Day Sunday is celebrated on January 14, 2024. Donations to this UMCOR project provide interactive training experiences for better response to social challenges such as drug trafficking, abuse, alcoholism, and domestic violence in the United States. Together we extend a helping hand to those in crisis so they can overcome formidable obstacles.

The focus is on nurturing at-risk youth, strengthening communities' self-improvement efforts, and advocating for the oppressed. Over and over Jesus served people like this, embracing them; and that's what we want to model as the people of the United Methodist Church; to continue the ministry of Jesus and help all God's children to realize their potential.

The Human Relations Day offering encourages acceptance of all God's children. Your generous gift strengthens community outreach and empowers at-risk youth.

Envelopes will be provided on Sunday, January 14th with your program or you can donate online by designating your gift for Human Relations Day. Please give generously! Thank you from the Missions Committee!

2024 Opportunities for Giving Back

Your contributions to GBUMC have regional, national and international impact through our connectional giving system. In 2024 we are asking you to consider giving to the special six Sunday offerings listed below.

January 14 – 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 10 – UMCOR Sunday

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 14 – 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 26 – 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 6 – 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 24 – 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 missions in our community,
country and world!**

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, Director of Christian Education
and Webmaster

Gary Brandt, 9:00 Music Director/Director of Common Grace
Andrew Cramer, Music Director for Traditional Worship
Nancy Petrie, Bell Choir Director
Adrianna White, Nursery Attendant



Grand Blanc UMC will follow the
Grand Blanc School District in closing
our campus for inclement weather.

So if Grand Blanc Schools are closed
due to weather conditions, the church
will also be closed. All in-person events for that day will be
cancelled. If the weather clears and a group chooses to
meet later in the day, it will be the responsibility of the
group leader to convey that information to the group.

Most staff will remain available via email and phone when
working from home.

You're Invited to a Baby Shower!

Our United Women of Faith will be hosting a
Baby Shower at the church for Heartbeat of
Flint on

Sunday, January 21 @ 12:15pm

Heartbeat is a nonprofit organization that provides supportive
services to pregnant women and families. In order to provide the
best assistance possible, we seek to establish a personal
relationship with each individual client. We listen to understand
the unique situation and then offer appropriate assistance. It is
our hope that every mother has the support she needs to care for
herself and her growing baby, from pregnancy to delivery and
beyond.



Gift Ideas:
Similac—Newborn
Formula
Bottles & Pacifiers
Diapers (larger than Size 3)
Wipes



Baby Clothes (Size 0 to 5 years)

Used Car seats—any size (must be within 6 months of the
Manufacturer's Tag)



GRAND BLANC UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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



SEASONED CITIZENS

Thursday, January 11

12:00p Coffee & Conversation

12:25p Prayer & Devotion

12:30p Potluck Lunch

Leonard Thomas from Swartz Creek
Historical Society will tell us about his
quest to find forgotten (?), neglected (?),
Civil War veteran gravesites.

Join us for good food
& this interesting program.
Bring a friend!!



Mark your calendars!!

Help us take down
decorations

Sunday, January 7 at Noon

Lunch will be provided.

**EUCHRE
TOURNAMENT**
Saturday, February 3, 6 pm



GBUMC Fellowship Hall ☺ Bring a treat to share.
Come at 5:30 if you want to refresh your skills.