

# The Spark



## New Beginnings

I was right out of high school in the summer of '86 when I took a job traveling throughout Michigan as a carpenter assistant.

My task was resurfacing bowling lanes. Our crew once spent a week working at Miracle Lanes on Plainfield Ave. in Grand Rapids.

As was our custom, we stayed in motels and ate in restaurants for every meal. For breakfast during that week, we ate at a place called New Beginnings—an intriguing name for an eatery.

This new year remember that God is far more concerned with your future than he is with your past. What you have done (or, *not* done) is not nearly as important as what you *could* do with your future, submitted to His purposes. Think about it. Make it a matter of prayer. And then, begin in the strength that He provides (1 Peter 4).

As we prepare to roll the calendars around for another year my mind always returns to beginnings. Like many, the start of a new year is a time I think about resolutions. Maybe this is the year I will start my exercise regimen. Maybe this is the year I will try to read through the Bible again. Maybe this is the year I will try to give up a bad habit or take up a healthy one. I think it is normal to consider new beginnings at a time when the calendar itself is beginning anew.

Have you ever considered that God is a fan of beginnings? In the beginning God created (Gen. 1:1). And, since then, He began a good work in you (Phil. 1:6). He is forever giving people fresh starts at life. No wonder He is

May God bless each First Union person throughout the upcoming year and may He begin even now!



Pastor Jamey Nichols

January  
2021

## FIRST UNION CHURCH

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# A Matter of Prayer.....Addresses

We are very serious about praying for our friends and families at First Union Church and around our town. If you have a particular request please send it to the *spark email* address on the back cover of this newsletter or contact **Pastor Jamey**. We don't want to miss praying for anyone.

## Please continue to pray for:

**Lois Tassier**, Health issues

**Freel Family**...death of brother

**Jacob Family**...death of brother

**Wyatt Dodson**, infant health issue

**Kathi Frontjes**, surgery recovery

**Joan Leach**, health issues

**Rene Rudd**, health issues

**Bob Smith**, health issues

**Gary Bigelow**, health issues

**Tom Moore**, health issues

**Norman Brood**, recovery from car accident and surgery

**Paul Smith Family**, death of wife & mother  
**Stephanie**

**Loren Dingman**, in Thornapple Manor ➡

**Jeanne Hays**, homebound

**Barb Murray**, homebound

**Cedar Cove** friends

**Christmas Tea**  
**2020**

## Addresses

**Loren Dingman**, 2700 Nashville Rd. Room 411, Bed  
2, Hastings, MI 49058

**Margaret Dingman**, 181 Lois Dr. Battle Creek, MI  
49015

**Jeff & Becky Meyers**, 6749 S. Westnedge Ste K PMB  
254,Portage,MI 49002

**Dr. Jamey Nichols**, First Union Church, 179 E.  
Hodeck St. PO BX 426 Cedarville, MI 49719



Left: **Emily And Katie Bigelow**

**Christy O'Hare and Samantha Davis**

Below: **Men serving the women (yes!)**



## How About You?...Mike Davis

The Advent Tea is over and the Advent candle has been put away. The beautiful Christmas Eve service is now over. So now, it is a short wait to Ash Wednesday, February 17 and the six weeks after that till Good Friday and Easter!

Of course there are the New Year's Resolutions where we say we will do something or do without something. It really is a good time to make some changes in our lives to improve ourselves and be mindful to the needs of others. At the end of each day, I often ask myself; what have I done for someone else today? Was everything I did today for just me? Did I even think about my Christian responsibility to at least give a few minutes of my time to someone else? It is not suppose to make you feel guilty, but rather to feel good, that you were "able" to help out others.

How About You... Do you at least pray for someone else everyday? Do you make a call or write an old fashion note or letter, or in these unusual days, use Zoom, text or e-mail option?

More than ever in the long winter days and especially during this pandemic scare, we need to reach out to one another. Stay in touch, and if the First Union Church can in any way help you in this effort, don't hesitate to let an elder or Pastor Jamey know of that need. Let's have a Happy New Year and get past the issues of 2020.



## Just Off the Highway...

About 40 miles east of Knoxville, in Dandridge, Tennessee, 3901 US 411, is the home of the Bush's Bean Company. This family-owned company was started in 1908 by **A.J. Bush**. Although the company did not start out canning beans, it is now their signature product. A new visitor center is located across the street from the company and it replaces the factory tours that were available just a few years ago.

some female), in the rare TV ads, banter about the secret family recipe for baked beans which started in 1969. The recipe was created by Mom, **Kathleen Bush**.

After over 100 years Bush Beans is still family-owned, and they follow good family values. As a side note, a good portion of their beans come from Michigan and Ontario.

A faith-based family that closes the manufacturing on Sunday except on rare occasions (when the family on one side of the table and the board on the other agrees and only when employees volunteer to work on Sunday). When the economy is doing poorly their business skyrockets as people turn to inexpensive canned beans as a staple.

WWII was a huge boost for the company that sent can goods to the troops. Jay Bush and his dog, Duke (Duke in reality has been three dogs,



# The Recipe Box



Time for resolutions maybe? I've done the same one for the last 3 years, because it's a good one that I need to work on every year. I also love my niece Michelle's resolution ***"Not mine to tell"***.

The first recipe I'm sharing, I actually made and I thought it was really tasty. As with any of these soup recipes, you can add different spices to your taste or put in more or different vegetables as you wish. This is not split pea soup, this is...

## **Creamy Green Pea Soup**

1 T. olive oil

3 shallots, chopped (I used onions)

12 oz. potatoes, peeled & chopped, maybe 3)

1-1/2 t salt & 1/2 t pepper

4 cans low-sodium chicken broth

32 oz frozen green peas

2 T chopped, fresh dill

1/2 cup heavy cream+ additional

Crumbled, cooked bacon (optional)

- In large pot, heat oil over low heat, add shallots and cook until softened..2 min. Add potatoes, salt & pepper & cook til golden, 2 min. Add broth, bring to a boil, reduce to low & cook until potatoes are tender.15 min.
- Add peas and dill; cook 2 min. In blender, puree (optional) until smooth, return to pot and add heavy cream. Garnish with bacon.
- My tweaks were: I used onions. I used my

favorite spice from Pampered Chef...Dill/ garlic. It gives wonderful flavor. You could add cheese or doctor it up however you like.  
*I did not puree, I like the chunks.*

## **Chewy Salted Peanut Bars**

1-1/2 cups flour

3/4 cup packed brown sugar

1/2 cup (1 stick) cold butter cubed

2 cups lightly salted, dry roasted peanuts

1 cup butterscotch chips

1/2 cup light corn syrup

2 T butter

- Oven 350. Line a 9x13 baking pan with foil over the ends and use the 2T butter to grease foil well. In small bowl, mix flour and brown sugar and cut in the butter with a pastry cutter or fork until crumbly. Press into the prepared pan and bake 8–10 min until browned. Sprinkle peanuts over the crust.
- In a small saucepan, melt butterscotch chips, corn syrup and 2T butter over medium heat, stirring until smooth. Drizzle over the peanuts. Bake 6-8 min until bubbly. Cool completely in pan on a wire rack , then lift out by the foil ends and cut in bars.
- My tweaks were: I used white chocolate chips because I didn't have butterscotch on hand. I think I would like chocolate chips the best. These were really good and even better the second day.

**Sue Rye**



# To Your Health...

## What is Next?

The holiday season is upon us and so is the ongoing concern for Covid-19. The last few months we have all experienced many changes in our normal activities and wonder what the future holds.

In effect, we are all grieving with loss of family members or friends to the illness, of our jobs, not being able to attend school or family gatherings. The list can go on. For many there is a loss of familiar routines in our lives and sudden and unexpected endings to things in our lives. Not only do we have to learn to cope with the losses, but also with how we can move forward.

You may find yourself feeling numb, angry, sad, or experiencing physical symptoms with sleep problems, not wanting to eat and becoming fatigued, for example.

Through the pandemic, remember that God is in control of this situation. We need to know that in our lives we will experience difficulties and uncertainties. God does not promise us happiness at all times. As we greet each day, we need to call on God for wisdom to know what God wants us to do and then obey His leading. With his wisdom we will be able to cope with each day.

Some ways to deal with your grief include maintaining those positive friendships with family and friends. Social distancing may keep us from being in close physical contact, but phone calls, texts, letters or video chats are possible ways of staying connected. You may let someone know you will drive by their home just to wave at them through the window. Use your creative side to help you and others feel better.

Share your anxieties with others or write down your experiences may help someone in their struggles with the pandemic. Avoid too many TV and news programs reporting on the pandemic that may make you even more anxious.

Grief in our life is natural and helpful whatever the cause. However, the losses from the pandemic are not quite like the death of a family member or friend that has a definite point in time. This is a living loss that seems unending. We need to be persistent in relying on God as we work through the pandemic.

At some time in the future, the pandemic will be over, and we may not be able to return to our normal activities as we once knew. With God guiding us now, we will find it easier to make adjustments in the future.

Source: [www.mayoclinic.org/coping-with-coronavirus-grief/art-20486392?p=1](http://www.mayoclinic.org/coping-with-coronavirus-grief/art-20486392?p=1);  
<https://www.apa.org/news/apa/2020/04/grief-covid-19>

*Trust in him at all times, O people; pour out your heart before him; God is a refuge to us.*

Psalm 62:8

**Betty Mitchell BSN**



**Advent Candle**

**Del & Carole**

**Jacob**

## Pictures



Team **"Primary Sunday School"**, led by **Sue Rye** and **Marcia Perkins** with assistance from teachers **Katherine Tassier** and **Sue Freel**.

This year we are trying to spend the whole year with a "kindness" theme.

We were very happy to find the **"Be Kind"** shirts in Wal Mart one day!



**Kal Peltari**  
sermon



# Library Leaves...Carole Peltari

## Great Lakes Digital Libraries

I was thrilled to find Great Lakes Digital Libraries ([gldl.overdrive.com](http://gldl.overdrive.com)) during the pandemic.

Thousands of books can be accessed. As long as you have a library card, you can register and borrow books. In the last couple months I've borrowed and read three books online through Great Lakes Digital Libraries.

1. ***To the Copper Country: Mihaela's Journey*** by Barbara Carney-Coston: young teen historical fiction about immigration to the UP in the late 1800s.
2. ***The Rise of Theodore Roosevelt*** by Edmund Morris: biography. I was inspired to read this by our September trip to North and South Dakota. Now I know why Roosevelt's face is carved on Mt. Rushmore! It's a long book; I had to renew it after the first 14-day loan. It offers a glimpse of an unconventional but brilliant man and a politician who didn't mince words. Felt familiar.
3. ***Cilka's Journey*** by Heather Morris: historical fiction, based on the life of a real woman. What could be worse than being imprisoned three years in

Auschwitz for the crime of being Jewish? Maybe being immediately afterward imprisoned ten additional years in Siberia for the crime of being a prisoner in Auschwitz? Amidst the inhumane circumstances, Cilka survives. Sacrificial love wins

## Christmas Program



3-year-old Evyn Tassier learned his lines for the Christmas Program and said them perfectly. Yay Evyn!!

## Pastor Search...Ken Drenth

The most constant thing in our lives is change. Sometimes we rejoice in changes. Change can also bring a great deal of uncertainty and sometimes sadness. Some changes we can control, and then there are issues beyond our control. What we do know is that First Union Church is in the midst of change. After 20-plus years of serving this congregation and community, **Pastor Meyers and Becky** have moved on to what we hope for them is another rewarding and fulfilling chapter in their lives.

To assist us through transition, the Church Board appointed a committee to advise on who will become our new pastor. No timelines have been established because prevailing wisdom suggests that we should not hurry. The congregation needs time to heal, reflect and pray.

We believe that God already has someone in mind to become our new pastor. In that context we would encourage you to begin and continue praying that He would start working in that person's heart and that the process being used for advertising may somehow cross this person's path. If you are wondering about how best to pray, allow me to offer some help. The following was taken from a book recommended by **Pastor Nichols** entitled: ***When the Word Leads Your Pastoral Search***:

A. Pray for the Search Committee to have patience, the mind of Christ, the wisdom to choose the right person to recommend to the congregation.

B. Pray for the next Pastor to be able to increase his or her passion for preaching the Word of God, that God would give that person a love for our church, that God would prepare our future pastor to shepherd us more effectively, and that the new pastor's family would be happy living in the area.

C. Pray for our fellow congregants, that we will have patience with the search process, that we place a high

priority on biblical preaching and that we will not react to either the perceived strengths or weaknesses of our previous pastor.

While we eventually will be advertising at various seminaries, we also know that each of us has our own network of acquaintances. It could very well be that a friend, relative or someone who reads *THE SPARK*, has the credentials, gifts and the calling to come to the Les Cheneaux area. So spread the word, and who can tell where this person may hear of the opportunity?

To date the committee has started the following:

- > Reviewed a listing of faith statements from various denominational and non-denominational seminaries
- > Started a list of questions to pose to a candidate
- > Are working on narratives that describe both our community and our congregation
- > Reviewed additional ways that we could make the position known to a broad range of possible candidates
- > Have met with **Pastor Nichols** to get his insight into what to consider and how best to proceed

While we will attempt to keep the Church Board and congregation informed of our progress, please understand that this process takes time. We will go through the process one step at a time.

Your input is always welcomed and appreciated.

Members of the committee are: **Sue Bowlby, Kim Dunn, Mike Freel, Victoria Gulder, Carole Pelttari, Marcia Perkins, Dustin Tas-**

## Board Highlights (November)

- Missions offerings on 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays to restart
- CCLI subscription renewed for another year
- **Pastor Jamey** seeking p.t. job at Cedar Cove to connect with residents
- **Gene Nutter** offered availability to begin a Christian Care Ministry
- Elders continue meeting weekly with **Pastor Jamey** to reconnect and restore
- Projector is being fixed and should be reinstalled in December
- **Dick Nye** pulled cedar stumps from manse yard (Thanks, **Dick!**)
- Deacons began evaluating manse needs prior to next pastor
- Annual Advent Tea planned for December 5
- Women's Bible study on hold will resume in January
- Plans were made to bake for some of our shut-ins
- Kids' Sunday School preparing a couple Christmas songs
- Signs indicating mask requirements for fellowship hall worshippers will be hung
- \$50 donation made by church to the school's PBIS program
- Meetings have been changed to 3rd Monday of each month at 7:00 p.m.

**Pastor Jamey**



**Christmas  
Tea**



# FIRST UNION CHURCH

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**Join us online for Sunday worship!**  
**We are now offering full services on our**  
**YouTube channel. If you haven't visited**  
**us before on YouTube, do a search for:**  
***"First Union Church Cedarville***  
***YouTube."***

**If you need assistance, call Pastor Jamey**  
**at 906-430-1113 and he'll help get you**  
**going.**

**Jamey**  
Psalm 16:2

# *The Spark*