



FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

The Vine

FEBRUARY 2021 NEWSLETTER



Engaging Lent in New Ways

Lent is one of the oldest liturgical tradition of the church. In the earliest days, it was a time when the whole church joined in prayer and fasting with those who were nearing the end of their catechesis (a nearly 2-year education in the faith of Christianity to prepare for baptism). Over centuries, it became a season in which Christians engaged in acts of self-denial and repentance, facing sin and mortality head-on.

But in a year like we've experienced since last Ash Wednesday, even I am asking, how will Lent matter this year? Here are some ways that I might suggest:

1. Attend Ash Wednesday Services. An Ash Wednesday Service will be available on YouTube beginning Wed., Feb. 17 at 6AM, with an invitation to participate ritually in ways that call forth our mortality and God's mercy. We will also offer a drive-through imposition of ashes from noon to one in the parking lot, and a brief Ash Wednesday Service in the sanctuary at 6:30PM.
2. Consider the ancient practice of fasting and why/how it could be helpful to you in this season. Sometimes, people engage in "giving something up for lent" as a practice of self-punishment. As if to remind themselves that as a sinner they don't deserve good things. You may be able to tell that this is not my way of understanding the value of this practice. Instead, I invite you to find a way to "give up" the idea of earning your worth in the world. In what way can you engage in a practice that fasts from trying to make a good impression on God? This year might even be a time when instead of giving something up, you take time to name what you are grieving about the last year? What illusions have you had to give up? Pray for God to replace these losses with something better.
3. Giving. One of the most powerful ways to embrace God's sacrificial love and mercy for us is to engage in generosity. Consider making a commitment to increase your generosity in this season, there are plenty of local and global ways to give that will positively impact the lives of others, including giving to the ministry of the local church, the Food Pantry, Community Emergency Fund, Willow Domestic Violence Shelter, Family Promise, and various funds through <https://www.resourceumc.org/en/churchwide/umcgiving/the-advance>.
4. Prayer. You can engage in intentional prayer practices in a number of ways, an easy one is to check the conference website (www.greatplainsumc.org) each day for a brief devotion and prayer. Another is to simply use the ancient "Jesus Prayer" Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner. OR put this prayer with your masks and pray it each time you put your mask on:

Creator,
as I prepare to go into the world,
help me to see the sacrament
in the wearing of this cloth –
let it be "an outward sign
of an inward grace" –
a tangible and visible way
of living love for my neighbors,
as I love myself.

Christ,
since my lips will be covered,
uncover my heart,
that people would see my smile
in the crinkles around my eyes.
Since my voice may be muffled,
help me to speak clearly,
not only with my words,
but with my actions.

Holy Spirit,
as the elastic touches my ears,
remind me to listen carefully –
and full of care –
to all those I meet.

May this simple piece of cloth
be shield and banner,
and each breath that it holds,
be filled with your love.

In your Name
and in that love,

I pray.
May it be so.
May it be so.



However you engage the coming season,
may it be a holy encounter with God's great
mercy and love.

Peace,

Rev. Amanda Baker

(Watch for an email and/or mail the early
part of the week of Ash Wednesday for
some options for your use to engage in
during Lent)



NANCY ARNOLD, CHAIR., ARNOLDN448@GMAIL.COM
COUNCIL MINUTES AND FINANCIAL UPDATE (BRAD PETERSON, CHAIR.,
PETERSONBRAD@HOTMAIL.COM) ARE SUBSEQUENTLY POSTED ONE MONTH LATER
UPON APPROVAL.

January 5, 2021 ~ via Zoom

Council Members: Council Chair Doug Cheek, (new incoming Chair) Nancy Arnold, Linda Ballinger, Donna Curran, Laura Dickinson, Darren Lawrenz, Kathleen Thomas, Brad Peterson, Tara Welch

Advisory Member: Katherine Cook

Doug opened the meeting at 7:02 p.m. by directing the council to the proposed financial package.

Tara moved to accept the pastoral compensation package at a 75% appointment of \$62,350 reduced from \$70,199.80. Laura seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Additional budgetary plans include:

- Adult Sunday School - \$0
- Worship - \$200
- Music - \$100
- Children Sunday School - \$500
- Youth Programs - \$500
- Parsonage - \$10000

- Trustees - \$12000
- Church Admin - \$36000
- Apportionments - \$10000
- Staff Compensation - \$90,000

Brad moved on behalf of the finance committee to approve the church's budget at \$159,300 for 2021. Tara seconded the motion. The motion passed.

The regular meeting of the month will be on January 25th. The meeting adjourned at 7:41 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Katherine Cook

Financial Update: As of their January 18th Finance committee meeting ([Brad Peterson](#), Finance, Chair): the 2020 checking account balance ended the year at \$29,254.00. Thanks to everyone for your generous EOY contributions. Watch future newsletter monthly updates.



STAFF PARISH PASTOR RELATIONS COMMITTEE

SPRC

TARA WELCH, CHAIR., TSWELCH@KU.EDU

Calling all Volunteers!

By now you all should have received a letter about the reduction in pastoral and staff positions we adopted for 2021 because of reduced income. SPRC is working to support Amanda, Gary, and Cat as we all adjust to the changes.

We request that, as you (or your committee or small group) plan church-related activities, please let Cat know at office@baldwinfirst.org so she can keep the master calendar up-to-date, prepare for the part the office will have to play, and be able to field those phone calls as they come into the office.

Volunteer Needs for this Month

A volunteer database is being compiled in the new membership database system, that as we speak, is being integrated into church office technology. This database will help fill the needs that arise at BFUMC to serve its members, guests, and the community at large. Specific volunteer requests will be published in future newsletters. As we get ready to reopen for in-person worship, in a new year with a new budget, this will help us plan accordingly.

Please sign up on the volunteer interest sign-up form (<https://bit.ly/2NFexnm>) or contact Cat. Some of the more immediate needs near term are:

- someone to write birthday cards to those who have Jan-Feb birthdays
- someone to call 5-10 members of our church community who are isolated or shut-in
- someone to prepare and deliver treat bags for our Sunday School kids
- someone to open and close the church for the Community Blood Drive
- someone to clean/disinfect the main floor bathroom, library, chapel, entryway, and/or narthex

If you would like to resume a volunteer role you served during "pre-pandemic" time please let us know. If you have a desire to serve in a new area or just want to get more information about that area. More information (a volunteer job description and the number of hours involved) will be provided. Keep in mind that many hands make light work and ensure success for the Kingdom. Watch future newsletters for immediate volunteer needs. The interest form for volunteer requests will be updated monthly.

Uncertain where you might fit in the larger picture of church ministry? You may want to start <https://www.umc.org/en/content/exploring-your-spiritual-gifts> for a free spiritual gifts assessment to learn the best spot or direction for you.



The following is a prayerful start in some future areas you might be interested in serving:

Treasurer
Liturgists
Ushers for worship services (one service)
Children & Youth Ministry (Sunday School, VBS, B.L.A.S.T)
More intense one-time group cleanup days for special church events, section of the church
Grounds maintenance
office help
Technology assistance
Mission projects
Food Pantry

Journeys Sunday School

Journeys has started up again! For the next few weeks, we are meeting at 8:30 am via Zoom and will revisit the time as the season progresses. Our first study is of the parables, with the help of a book/media series by Amy-Jill Levine, *The Short Stories of Jesus: Enigmatic Parables by a Controversial Rabbi*. Please let Tara know if you'd like to join us. tswelch@ku.edu or 785.760.1265 (texting is fine).



KidMin is a place for friends and family of the children of Baldwin First UMC to connect and share. Sunday School for Preschool through 5th grade at 9:30 a.m. The zoom link for SS is on our website baldwinfirst.org/kid. To request to join the Facebook group go to <https://www.facebook.com/KidMinistryAtBaldwinFirstUnitedMethodistChurch>. Cynthia Perez (cynthiaaperez1975@gmail.com) leads this group.

Baldwin **B.L.A.S.T. Crew** is the Sunday morning group for Junior High and High School youth at Baldwin First United Methodist Church. The name of our group stands for "Believing, Loving, and Serving Together." We spend time in fellowship, Bible study lessons and in-service opportunities to the church and community. B.L.A.S.T. also has a Facebook group page, request to join the group at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/670722459732960>. Leaders are Brad Peterson (peterstonbrad@yahoo.com) and Angela Murray (murrayslanding@gmail.com).



FOOD PANTRY HOURS ARE EVERY SATURDAY 10AM

LAURA DICKINSON, MISSIONS CHAIR., LDINBC@GMAIL.COM

FOOD PANTRY - The food pantry is the recipient of \$1580 from the Baker University student group, Mungano, as a result of a fundraising effort for MLK Day. Baldwin Academy of Dance and Voice Ambassadors sponsored an MLK activity for the benefit of the food pantry. They gathered donated personal care items from community members to create bags of items for our food pantry neighbors.

The pantry remains closed to shopping inside and continues with a drive-through option to pick up vouchers for use at the Baldwin City Market.

Thank you to all who support the food pantry through gifts of time, funds, donated items, and prayers.

LENT - There will be a Lenten Bible Study made available with a study guide to be sent out the week of Ash Wednesday.

The Missions Team will also be sending out a daily devotional booklet to each BFUMC household for use during Lent.



The following is an excerpt from a letter from Bishop Saenz, sent January 8, 2021, to the Great Plains UMC Conference



GREAT PLAINS ANNUAL CONFERENCE
of The United Methodist Church

REV. DR. RUBEN SAENZ JR., *Resident Bishop*

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Sisters and Brothers of the Great Plains Conference,

Like many of you, I was shocked Wednesday by the television images of our U.S. Capitol being overrun by protesters who do not accept the voting process and results of the recent 2020 presidential election. The protesters sieged and broke through the Capitol's doors and windows to enter the U.S. Senate chamber and the offices of lawmakers. In doing so, they temporarily disrupted the Constitutional duties of our elected officials to ratify the results of the election. Five people are dead as a direct result of Wednesday's protests.

This week's shocking events emphasize the growing depth and breadth of our self-destructive national divide. Jan. 6, 2021, will be forever remembered as an opprobrious day in our nation's history and an occasion for mockery and scorn by a watching world.

I will let others engage in debates about what incited the protesters to move from a rally with the outgoing president to the U.S. Capitol. I choose, instead, to focus on where we go from here as disciples of Jesus Christ and United Methodists of the Great Plains Conference in Kansas and Nebraska.

Our current crisis — deep political divides, a relentless coronavirus pandemic that has prematurely cut short the lives of 360,000 Americans, economic uncertainty, and unresolved social unrest — moves God's Spirit to summon the Church to the work of healing and reconciliation.

In (a)show of God's care and desire to heal our wounded and weary world, I call upon our clergy, laity, and congregations to:

3. Pray for the next 100 days. Beginning Sunday, Jan. 17, through Easter Sunday on April 4, 2021, I urge our clergy, laity, and congregations to set apart a sacred and regular time each day during the next 100 days to pray for our nation and a smooth transition of power using, "A Prayer in a Time of National Crisis" (United Methodist Book of Worship, #517):

God of all the ages, in your sight, nations rise and fall and pass through times of peril. Now when our land is troubled, be near to judge and save. May leaders be led by your wisdom; may they search Your will and see it clearly. If we have turned from Your way, reverse our ways and help us to repent. Give us Your light and Your truth, let them guide us; through Jesus Christ, who is Lord of this world, and our Savior. Amen.

Through prayer, we grow in greater awareness, trust, and embodiment of God's mercy. Walter Brueggemann says prayer helps us turn from our small, preoccupied selves to the larger self we find in God. Prayer, he continues, liberates us to take bold and imaginative action toward a world of neighborliness, a community of care and generosity for our neighbor.

Friends, God is summoning the Church in this season of national crisis to renew our covenant relationship with God and to make a vital contribution that works toward the health and wholeness of our deeply divided and wounded nation. God is summoning us to imagine a new thing and future with (the) hope that is emerging before us. God summoned prophets in times of national crisis to warn and proclaim hope. They willfully responded to God's summons with the words, "Here I am, Lord. Send me." I trust our response as disciples of Jesus Christ and United Methodists to God's summons will be the same.

Paz, Bishop Ruben Saenz Jr.



Worship Services
10:45AM Live Online Services

Feb. 1 Missions 7:00PM

Feb. 8 Trustees 7:00PM

Feb. 15 Finance 7:00PM
SPRC 7:00PM

Feb.17 Ash Wednesday
drive-through imposition of
ashes, noon to 1 PM
Ash Wednesday Service in
the sanctuary 6:30PM.

Feb. 21 - Apr. 3 Lent

Feb. 22 Council 7:00PM

Church Streaming
Addresses & Zoom Meetings
Links Directory

*Note: Links are assessable in the email
version of this newsletter, the links are not
available on the website version of the Vine
due to the way it is posted.*

**Sunday 10:30AM Virtual Coffee
time**

<https://zoom.us/join>

mtg ID#: 98614212250

**Sunday 10:45AM Worship Sign Up
if attending in building at**

<https://www.reopen.church/r/FINU>
SZyc

otherwise

***10:45AM Worship Live Stream:**



<https://www.Baldwinfirst.org>
or at
<https://www.facebook.com/baldwinfirstumc>

or at
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCMwpl81KtGg7h9AhRFW9NWQ>

For ALL CHURCH Zoom Mtgs
go to

<https://zoom.us/join>
mtg ID #: 9644607669
Password: 042020

What, When and Where at BFUMC

ADMIN NOTES: NEWS ITEMS FOR THE VINE NEED TO BE IN THE OFFICE BY THE EVENING OF CHURCH COUNCIL (THE 4TH MONDAY OF EVERY MONTH). IF YOU ARE RECEIVING THIS BY MAIL AND HAVE EMAIL PLEASE LET THE OFFICE KNOW YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS (594.6612 OR OFFICE@BALDWINFIRST.ORG) TO HELP ALLEVIATE MAILING COSTS. **CHURCH OFFICE HOURS 9-2, M,TU & THUR.**

OUR MISSION IS TO LOVE AND SERVE GOD AND OUR NEIGHBORS AS DISCIPLES OF JESUS CHRIST

