

The Circuit Rider

FEBRUARY 2023



Centenary United Methodist Church

PO Box 111
82 S Hancock Street
Pentwater, MI 49449

Rev. Dr. Vaughn W. Thurston-Cox, Pastor



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CUMC Facebook news



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Be the Breath of God in Community

Circuit Rider



The Pastor's Pen

Rev. Dr. Vaughn Thurston-Cox

This week we finish our walk through Centenary's three values. I didn't know where the Church Council would land when we began our journey of discernment, but I am glad we landed where we did. These three values -loving God, serving others, and welcoming all- reflect our community at its very best. These are already graces I see at work here and graces that push to deeper depths of life with God together. If we are pursuing to become the breath of God in community, these three simple rules shape how we go together.

I'm grateful for the chance to speak to these in worship before my pilgrimage to the Holy Land. Love for God roots all our other work. Apart from love, nothing we do heals or transforms. We only add to the world's suffering, and our own. Life with God in ministry together flows in response to that great love we receive in Jesus Christ. Each week we gather for worship is another chance to drink deep from that well that brings alive the soul. Of course, in sitting this center we also displace the self, and all its myriad of manifestations. Love for God, not the tyranny of me, myself, and I. Love for God, not White, Christian Nationalism. Love for God, not theocratic authoritarianism.

Love for God draws our arms up in service. We join Jesus at the feet of our neighbors, washing their feet, because our God in Christ chose service as his way. Not power. Not influence. Not status. Service that changes us and the world around us. We all have umbrellas to share when it's raining.

This week we will explore welcome: what it means and what it looks like. It is more than a cup of coffee and looks a lot like Jesus, who made his home with those the religious establishment considered dangerous or irredeemable. Welcome breaks boundaries. But you'll hear more this Sunday. I hope you can come in person or join us online.

When I return, we will be entering the season of Lent. No. Not lint. Lent, a season set aside by the earliest Christians for prayer, fasting, study, and other special acts of spiritual devotion. It has been historically a time to draw near to God through acts of discipleship. This year we begin

The Pastor's Pen continued

Lent with a Community Ash Wednesday Service here, February 22, at 6:30. The service will include Centenary United Methodist, First Baptist of Pentwater, St. James Episcopal, and St. Paul United Methodist. Maundy Thursday services will be held April 6 at St. James, commemorating



Children's Time - We can all share our umbrellas with others

the Last Supper. The following evening, Friday, April 7, Good Friday services will be held at St. Paul United Methodist commemorating the crucifixion of Christ. Please consider joining us for all these and keep a holy Lent. Jane Van Scoyoc will also be leading a small group study that traces the journey of Christ to the cross through the eyes of common people he met along the way. You can find the book, *On the Road to the Cross* by Rob Burkhardt, at Amazon or Cokesbury.

While I am away, February 6 to 19, Father Sam Morrison will provide pastoral care. His number is (231)869-5095. Please don't miss our services. Susan MacGregor will lead Sunday, February 12, as we celebrate Laity Sunday, and Rev. Roy Martens will lead worship on Transfiguration Sunday, February 19.

Blessings to all! I look forward to seeing you again having walked where our Jesus walked.

Be the Breath, ***Pastor Vaughn***

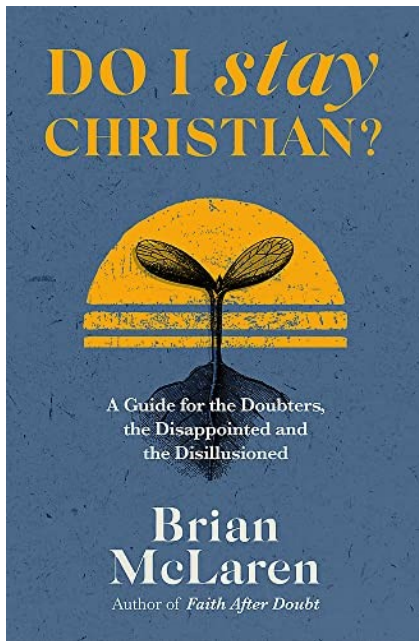
Centenary United Methodist Church

February 2023

Month of February at a Glance

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 Community Dinner 4:30 - 5 pm Take out 5 - 6 pm Dine in 6:30 pm Bell Choir	2 10 am Senior Stretch	3 10 am Prayer & Squares	4
5 9:15 Small Group Study 10:30 am Worship Communion Sunday 11:30 Fellowship Time	6 10 am Senior Stretch	7 9 am Garden Club 10:30 am Program Coordination Team 2 pm Meditation Group	8 Community Dinner 4:30 - 5 pm Take out 5 - 6 pm Dine in 6:30 pm Bell Choir 6:30 Property Maint	9 10 am Senior Stretch 11:30 am Service Club	10	11 9 am Winterfest Farmers Mkt
Pastor Vaughn on Holy Land Pilgrimage						
12 9:15 Small Group Study 10:30 am Worship 11:30 am Fellowship Time	13 10 am Senior Stretch 11:30 am Finance & Operations Team	14 10:30 Worship Team 1pm UWF Program on LOVE	15 Community Dinner 4:30 - 5 pm Take out 5 - 6 pm Dine in 6:30 pm Bell Choir	16 10 am Senior Stretch	17 10 am Prayer & Squares	18
Pastor Vaughn on Holy Land Pilgrimage						
19 9:15 Small Group Study 10:30 am Worship 11:30 am Church Potluck	20 9 am Caregivers Support 10 am Senior Stretch	21 2 pm Meditation Group 6 pm Church Council 6 pm West MI SAIL	22 Community Dinner 4:30 - 5 pm Take out 5 - 6 pm Dine in 6:30 pm Ash Wednesday Service	23 10 am Senior Stretch 11:30 am Service Club 7 pm Zoom Lenten Study	24 10 am Prayer & Squares	25
26 9:15 Small Group Study 10:30 am Worship 11:30 am Fellowship Time	27 March Circuit Rider articles due 10 am Senior Stretch 1 pm PSC Board	28 10:30 am Worship Team	Key: Centenary Activities Community Activities			

Quiet Corner - *Thoughts and Prayers for a Praying Community*



In his latest book, *Do I Stay Christian*, Brian McLaren writes: “Prayer can be an anxious attempt to gain control (with God’s help) over the unknown. But it can also be a healthy practice of relaxation, of settling into quiet confidence and “peace that passes all understanding,” of learning to acknowledge and hold our unknowing, our un-control, and our un-closure.” He wrote the following prayers to help him break down his wall of biases so he could live more wisely with unknowing and to develop more awareness and humility. Perhaps you might find these prayers helpful for the same (or different) reasons.

“I do not know everything. I do not even know how much I do not know. Nor do I know how much of what I know is impartial, faulty, or false. So I pray:

Source of all truth, help me to hunger for truth, even if it upsets, modifies, or overturns what I already think is true. Guide me into all the truth I can bear, and stretch me to bear more, so that I may always choose the whole truth over half-truths with self-deception. Grant me passion to follow wisdom wherever it leads.

Spirit of wisdom and understanding, help me not be secured by simple lies or repelled by complex truths. Instead, teach me to seek out understanding as if it were hidden treasure, digging deep beneath surface appearances to discover what is real in the depths.

Inspirer of holy boldness and humble bravery, give me the humility to learn from my community along with the courage to differ graciously from my community, seeking truth even when my companions are unwilling to see it or accept it. Help me remain humbly loyal to the truth even when I am misjudged and rejected by my community for doing so.

Wellspring of all self-knowledge, give me humility so that I do not overestimate my competence. Save me from both excessive confidence and a lack of confidence; instead, please grant me proper confidence, to see myself, my abilities, and my limitations with a clear eye and sound mind.

Voice who beckons me toward growth, help me see what I am mature enough to see right now, and not only that: help me to know now how little I can know until I grow more mature. Grant me the curiosity and awe to that I may honor the bottomless, limitless wonder, beauty, and mystery of this world.” Amen.

Compiled by Sandy Lyon



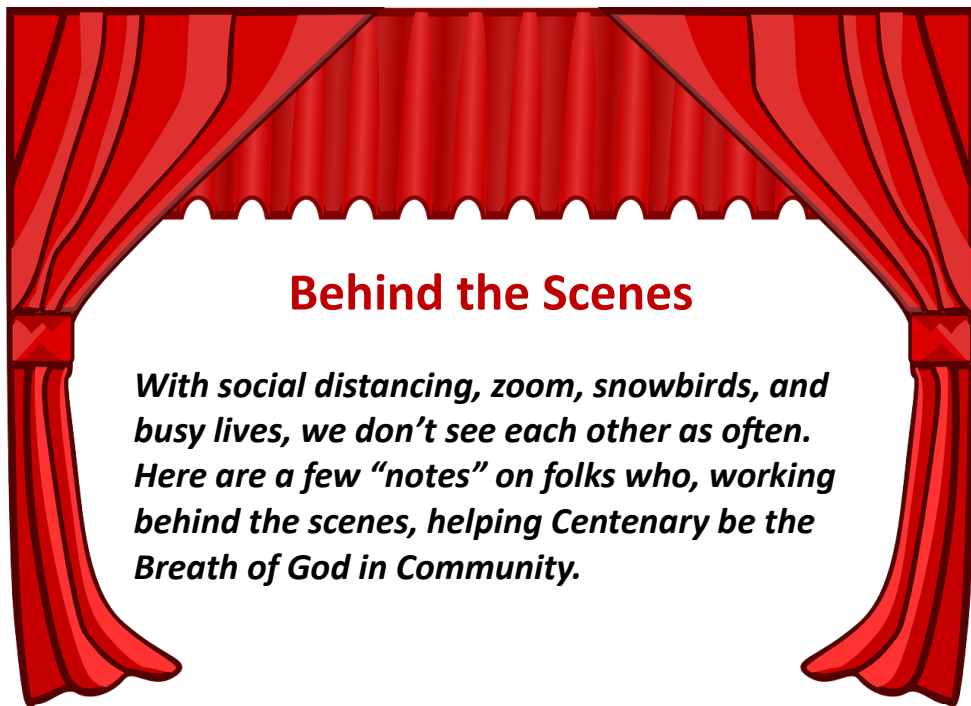
Valentines Meeting

Tuesday, February 14
1 pm, Wesley Room

Share a poem, an old valentine, or bring a reading and gather for conversation and treats as we look at love in some of its appearances.

Please join us for this "LOVE"ly afternoon.





Behind the Scenes

With social distancing, zoom, snowbirds, and busy lives, we don't see each other as often. Here are a few "notes" on folks who, working behind the scenes, helping Centenary be the Breath of God in Community.

Danielson and **Steve Russell**. The bells were magical to the 2nd and 3rd grade girls.

Brownies for the Brownies

The Pentwater Brownie troop helped at the Community Dinner last month and also had a tour of the building as "Community Historical Place"

They were quite impressed with the bell and the stories of lightening strikes, the tall ceiling in the sanctuary and thought that this place looked like a place for a wedding.

As a special bonus, there was **Mrs. Girvan**, former elementary music teacher with a handbell preparing for practice. They stood at rapt attention while she explained her bell (and gloves) and was soon joined by **Keith**

When the Brownies came to help with Community Dinner, their leaders divided them into two groups to work for 45 minutes. Trouble was, they had such a good time that they forgot to end their shift and by mid-meal we had nine helpers bringing soup, salad, and dinner plates and clearing the dishes. **Gabe Lajko**, one of our premier waiters, was taking care of a party of five who had just come in when he found himself with three helpers. Gabe often carries many plates....his helpers, however, were single platers but faster walkers and a good time was had by all. They also enjoyed **Jane Nelson's** delicious brownies, a perfect dessert for our volunteer Brownies.

At the end of Community Dinner, the girls headed toward their regular troop meeting in the Wesley Room, they waved to the dishwashers. One of the girls excitedly said, "They remembered us and they liked us. They thought we did a good job."

Testimonial to John Faas - On January 29, John spoke about his service as the second in a three part series on the Values of the church adopted this fall: **Loving God, Serving Others, and Welcoming All.**

At Fellowship Time, following the Service, all the stories of John's extra help popped up faster than microwave popcorn - Help for Bob Cornelisen in winter isolation; for Betty Graham this fall; stacking wood and other chores for Madeline Hamelen and Rhonda Hamelen Jenkins; replacing a snowmobile tire complete with the rounding up of a wheel puller, for Anne Soles; pulling Tim Barany out of mud up to his axles; pulling Keith Danielson out of another tight fix; not to forget his work as Church Treasurer and numerous building maintenance jobs.

John mentioned some examples in his testimonial during Worship, but we-of-the-fellowship hour want to make certain that everyone knows just what a model (modest though he is) for service John is for us. Thank you John!

Anne Soles

From the Prayers & Squares group

“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come. The old has gone, the new is here!” *2 Corinthians 5:17*



This scripture verse brings to mind the necessity, at times, of preparing spaces (and places) for the emergence of something new. In a physical sense, this may look like clearing clutter. Or, reorganizing things. And it usually entails getting rid of what no longer works...that which is outdated and has outlived its purpose.

During the month of January our P&S team did exactly that! We inventoried the large assortment of fabric and sewing items that we've accumulated since the beginning of our ministry. Deciding what to keep and what to toss and reorganizing fabrics according to color paved the way for discovering new and attractive color combinations!

On a spiritual level, as we take on the task of attending to the “tools of our trade” our ministry is opening itself to a new potential. We look forward to tapping even more fully into the energy of service in 2023. Perhaps considering novel ways of connecting to those who could benefit, and inspiring them in realizing the presence of Christ as healer.

It feels exciting to sense that “something more” wants to emerge. Clearing a way for that to happen is a logical step. So, once again, we invite you to do your own inventory. Ask yourself who in your life could use spiritual and emotional support. Imagine them snuggling with a quilt infused with prayers. See the smile on their face or expression of peace as they experience a very tactile form of comfort. You may contact the UMC office anytime to place a quilt request. Enjoy this month of love!



Carrie Roberts



Remembering How to Potluck

In Pennsylvania, where everyone brings a contribution for a joint meal, these dinners are called Covered Dishes. In Michigan, we recognize the “luck” part. At Centenary we are very lucky and blessed to have such good cooks and good company. The winter potlucks are on 3rd Sundays in January, February and March at 11:30 after service.



Rules of Road:

1. We have a theme - **February 19 is CHILI** - and the main dish is provided. If you want to bring Cincinnati Chili or White Chili – great!
2. Bring a dish to share--- dessert, salad, appetizer, pickles etc.
3. Bring your table service if you want a big plate (there are such things large, many compartmented “professional potluck participant plates”
4. Invite the person next to you, who didn’t know or forgot that we had a meal, to join us.

New Kitchen: The Centenary kitchen has a refrigerator for salads, a warming oven –good ovens and serving utensils. The commercial kitchen status provides us with many tools.

See you on Sunday, February 19th right after church! And March - Ideas for theme needed.



Caregiver Support Group Change of Meeting Time

The Caregiver Support Group is moving its meeting time to 9:00 am, on the 3rd Monday of each month. Anyone from the congregation or community who is proving care for a spouse, parent, or other is invited to attend. We talk about resources, needs, events and care issues.

Monday, February 20th is our next session.

**Thanks to all who
undocked the
halls...**



**Jenny Lynn Girvan
Mat Hacker
Gene & Judy Jankowski
Ken Konyha
Juanita Pierman
Barb Pell
Vicki Spear
Bart Zachrich**

**Great Team work packing up all
the Christmas Decorations**

Thank you everyone! Vicki Poplstein



***We are looking for help and fresh
ideas for decorating the tables in
Fellowship Hall and the annual
decorating for Christmas.***



***If you have an
interest in one or
the other, please
contact the
office ...***

**... 231-869-5900, [pent-
waterumc@gmail.com](mailto:pent-waterumc@gmail.com)**

Love INC reNEW Program

Love INC's reNEW program seeks to strengthen Oceana County families and individuals by offering classes, incentives, weekly one-on-one mentoring, a yearly picnic, and **reNEW** Christmas Store.

reNEW started in January of 2018 with 6 participants attending our Faith & Finance class. We have grown to offer numerous classes with approximately 50 participants and volunteers meeting each week.

Our classes address spiritual, material, relational and emotional areas of our lives. These classes offer the tools for real transformation and hope for individuals and families.

- ♦ **New Image**
- ♦ **Positive Parenting**
- ♦ **Bible Study**
- ♦ **Divorce Care**
- ♦ **Anger management**
- ♦ **Faith & Finances**
- ♦ **Boundaries**
- ♦ **How We Love**
- ♦ **Work Readiness**
- ♦ **Spanish to English**



Classes are free of charge, with participants having the opportunity to earn incentives through class participation. These include gas cards, food boxes with fresh meat, oil changes, haircuts and more. With continued involvement, increased incentives are available. Click here loveincoceana.org for more information.



Betty Graham is cheerfully embracing the next chapter in her life as she prepares to move closer to her family. Betty's new address will be:

805 W. Middle St.
GC662
Chelsea, MI 48118

Betty and her daughter, Sally Brieloff are shown in the photo on the left.

Church Council Meeting Minutes

Centenary United Methodist Church - Pentwater Church Council Minutes November 15, 2022, 6:00 PM

Present: Earleen Barber, Pastor Vaughn Thurston-Cox, Patti Davidson, Shannon Larson, Bart Zachrich, Susan MacGregor, Elaine Curtis, Sandy Lyon, Jim Lambrix, Elaine Curtis, Jeff Gwillim,

Guests: John Faas, Dave DeNolf, Mark Trierweiler

Pastor Vaughn opened the meeting with a prayer.

It was moved (Earleen Barber) and seconded (Jim Lambrix) to accept the October 19, 2022 minutes. Motion approved.

Pastor Vaughn presented a motion [from the Finance & Operations Team] regarding the PPP loan: To Accept the recommendation of the Finance and Operations Team that no further action be taken regarding the PPP loan. Patti Davidson seconded the motion. Pastor Vaughn also reported that the Finance and Operations Team had an extensive discussion about this topic and provided the Council a brief synopsis as recorded in the agenda. In 2021 the Finance and Operations Team, led by Pastor Bill, John Faas, and Mark Trierweiler, applied for a PPP Loan to support payroll expenses. With the assistance of our accountant, Centenary received the loan. After discussion at the following council meeting Jeff recommended that the loan be used to cover the cost of an accountant hired at the death of David Soles and the remainder returned to the government. The council, while concerned the team acted alone, authorized expenditure for "covid related expenses." The Finance & Operations Team, in accordance with the government program, restricted its use for payroll and has disbursed all funds to that purpose. Since then, our treasurer filed the appropriate paperwork, resulting in the loan's forgiveness. All those funds have been spent to the satisfaction of the government in keeping with its purpose.

Discussion points included:

Treasurer John Faas reported his recollection of the process. Mark Trierweiler, Council Chair at the time the loan was applied for, supported John's recollection and added that the Bishop did encourage Methodist Churches to look into applying for this loan if appropriate.

Original motion (March 16, 2021) should have stated the PPP funds would be used for payroll expenses not accountant fees.

It is ok to come to a new decision based on new or a clarification of information.

Stated the moral question of not following the motion made to pay back the funds not used for the accountant.

Questioning of separation of church and state.

The paperwork was signed before getting entire Council's approval.

Mistakes were made but their intent was to help the church.

It was requested that the names of who voted yay and nay be listed in Minutes. The pastor and chair questioned this as not in keeping with Roberts Rules of Order, though the pastor suggested that he didn't imagine anyone would mind answering questions if asked.

Jeff Gwillim will resign from Council if funds are not paid back.

Continued on page 13

Church Council Meeting Minutes (continued)

An objection was made to have a vote on any PPP decision due to notice given that day only and not enough time for proper input from members/former council members.

Council previously advised loan could not be paid back which was in error. The bank/accountant said that it was difficult to pay back.

Other Methodist churches (and conference) applied for PPP loans, some Council members said what other churches do is irrelevant. We should do the right thing.

Other Methodist churches (and conference) applied for and received PPP loans, which shows we are not an outlier either among faith communities or our own denomination.

Motion passed. Six voted yes and three voted no.

Jeff Gwillim made a motion to retain an attorney/chancellor to review PPP documents, specifically the Corporations Resolution to Borrow/Grant Collateral dated February 25, 2021 and signed by John Faas. Jim Lambrix seconded. Motion did not pass. Three voted yes and six voted no. Pastor Vaughn will research with Methodist chancellor.

Jeff Gwillim resigned his position on the council.

Communication of church values, internally and in community: Bart Zachrich thanked the Council for all their hard work defining the church's values over the past year. Now we need to communicate our values internally and externally. He suggested we present our values to the Program Committee (represents all our ministries) so they can be used as we go about our outreach and decision making. Other ideas for communicating our values include: hearing it from the pulpit, yard signs, our relationships (what Jesus has done for you), Literature (online and paper), use Canva to create digital media. Dave DeNolf reported that he is continuing to sort through Congregations input and categorize

Council's Next Steps – information gathering and setting church goals: This process will include identifying what we are doing well and what we can do to improve. Pastor Vaughn shared some tools we could use: Nurture of Love for Other (Social Holiness), identifying Ministry Home, Ministry Focus, Congregational Gifts, Community Needs, Who is being Impacted. Dave DeNolf reported that he is continuing to sort through Congregation's input from September 18 and identify gaps and develop possible solutions.

Pastor Vaughn led the closing prayer.

Council members and family members will gather Tuesday, December 20, at 5:30 at Jamesport to break bread together and celebrate our accomplishments.

Respectfully submitted,

Patti Davidson

Property Management Meeting Minutes

Property Management Meeting Minutes

January 11, 2023

Opening Prayer: Pastor Vaughn

Approved minutes of December 14, 2022

Present: Bart Zachrich, John Faas, Jerry Overla, Jim Crum, Roy Martens, Pastor Vaughn, Mat Hacker

1. Status of sign repair: Jim will look into the "footprint" requirements of the city and John will look into some of the tuck point needs of the church building as preliminary steps.
2. Stain Glass windows: Final last-minute work to be completed in early February pending glass arrival and weather conditions.
3. Lower-level window replacement. Installation is going well. Hope to have job completed by end of January with the exception of trim painting which will be done on our first spring workday or sooner if a qualified painter volunteers.
- 4 Jim, Roy and Pastor Vaughn are coordinating the purchase and installation of the parsonage front door. Plan to finalize details on Friday 1-13-2023 and order door.
5. Budget numbers have been approved for presentation to Council by the Finance & Operations committee.
6. Update on progress of "Security Review". Committee is reviewing data. It was noted there has been some suspicious activity around the church concerning our outside water faucets. All outside faucets have been turned off inside the building.
7. Update on freezer seal repairs. Waiting on shipment from, our supplier.
8. Update on wall divider in Wesley room. Looked into possible solutions for the movable wall. Will further discuss at our next meeting.
9. Review future projects list. Discussed assigning projects to committee individuals for estimating cost of each project. Will review further at our next meeting.
10. Discuss needs for "MARKET DAY" event February 11. A work team will meet at 9:30 on Friday, February 10th to set up the room.
11. Discussed the need for Jerry to set mouse traps in the kitchen storage area if needed.

Property Management Meeting Minutes continued

12. Discussed the need to replace the electric soap dispensers with pump style dispensers in the kitchen area and other areas as the electronic devices are removed.
13. Roy, Jim and John will look into replacing the missing window ledge at the top of the stairway to the sanctuary.

PROJECTS TO BE DONE AS FUNDS ARE AVAILABLE-ALL CURRENTLY ON HOLD

1. Parsonage roof replacement. Cost TBD
2. Parsonage siding replacement. Cost TBD
3. Sound system needs to be updated. Cost TBD
4. Sprinkler system for south side of church.
5. Parsonage deck project. Cost TBD
6. Fire sprinkler system at church Cost TBD
7. Rekeying the church to include electronic locks on the NW entry. Estimate \$4000 to \$20000
8. Electric message screen in the entryway and possible fellowship hall. No estimate.
9. Possible air exchange system for the sanctuary. Cost TBD

Next meeting February 8, 2023, at 6:30.

Stay in touch with us weekly through our Sermon Mail Service.



Many of you enjoy receiving the Circuit Rider every month. We also provide a weekly mailing which includes the gospel reading, sermon, bulletin, and weekly news. This has been a wonderful way to stay in touch with the church if you are unable to attend services. We would be happy to include you in the mailing. Just send us an email pentwaterumc@gmail.com or call the office 231-869-5900 to let us know you are interested.



Kitty Kokx
 Verna Gregwer
 Betty Graham
 Ronda Hamelen Jenkins
 Tim Zeeman
 Lynn Voorheis

- Peace reconciliation for conflicts in Peru and Memphis
- Thankfulness for the snow we count on

Cancer Treatments

Kaylum Dicks
 Tammy
 Suzanne Richey
 Richard Wild
 Father of Kim Kokx
 Lori Tupper
 Jane Jocke
 Gayle Walker

*Names will remain on the list for four weeks and they can be resubmitted.
 Please submit updates or corrections to the Pastor*



Birthdays

Bob Pell	02/05
Betty Danielson	02/13
Robin Martens	02/13
Roy Martens	02/14
Lane Rood	02/18
Katie MacGregor	02/22
Jean Russell	02/24



Anniversaries

Bob & Barb Pell	02/11
Jim & Susan MacGregor	02/14
Bart & Lynn Zachrich	02/14

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Electronic gifts are fast and secure, and they reduce administrative costs, allowing more of every dollar to fund the important work we are called to do.

- Give anytime, anywhere to your favorite funds
- Schedule and manage recurring donations
- Make one-time donations to special appeals
- Pay for events, programs and other activities

If you would like to give electronically, visit our website or contact the church office.



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