

### Pastor's Page...

Most folks think that the twelve days of Christmas come before Christmas day but they actually are meant to come following Christmas to the day of Epiphany (always January 6th.) Epiphany is the 3rd season of the liturgical church year following Advent and Christmas. Epiphany is six weeks long. It's color is a dark, rich forest green. Some of the symbols are: the Christmas star, three crowns, 3 Magi.

We think about the Magi visiting the Holy Family when Jesus is about 2 years old to give them the kingly gifts of gold, Frankincense and Myrrh. We don't know how many Magi, Sages, Wise Men there actually were—we sing *We Three Kings*, but that's based on the three gifts. Joseph is warned in a dream to travel to Egypt to save Jesus who will be sought out by Herod the puppet king to be murdered, Herod fearing Jesus' power. The three expensive gifts would make it possible for the Holy Family to be in exile until it would be safe for them to return to Nazareth in Israel following Herod's death.

Julie S. and Pat P. shared this interesting Facebook page with me and I thought it was good to share as we enter the next season of the church year: Epiphany.



#### TWELVE DAYS OF CHRISTMAS (Dec. 25-Jan. 6)

The partridge in a pear tree is Jesus Christ.

Two turtle doves are the Old and New Testaments.

Three French hens stand for faith, hope, and love.

The four calling birds are the four gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.

The five golden rings recalled the Torah or Law, the first five books of the Old Testament.

The six geese a-laying stand for the six days of creation.

Seven swans a-swimming represent the sevenfold gifts of the Holy Spirit--Prophecy, Serving, Teaching, Exhortation, Contribution, Leadership, and Mercy.

The eight maids a-milking are the eight Beatitudes.

Nine ladies dancing are the nine fruits of the Holy Spirit--Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, Gentleness, and Self Control.

The ten lords a-leaping are the Ten Commandments.

The eleven pipers piping stand for the eleven faithful disciples.

The twelve drummers drumming symbolize the twelve points of belief in the Apostles' Creed.

*Happy New Year and Epiphany!*  
*Pastor Billie Lou*



# Upcoming Worship Themes:

January 7	Epiphany	Matt. 2: 1-12	Communion
January 14	Baptism of our Lord	Mark 4: 1-11	Baptisms
January 21	Forgiveness-Finding Peace Through Letting Go	Wk 1: The Divine Answer	Psalm 32: 1 - 5
January 28	Forgiveness	Wk 2: For Better for Worse	Galatians 3: 12-15
February 4	Forgiveness	Wk 3: Seventy Times Seven	Matthew 5: 23-24
February 11	Forgiveness	Wk 4: The Dreamcoat	Genesis 50: 15-21
		Scout Sunday	
February 14	Ash Wednesday and the beginning of Lent (also Valentines Day!)		



**United Women in Faith** Dear Friends,

I've always loved the word **JOY**. I say it often, especially during the Christmas season. I often write on birthday cards, "I hope you have a joy filled day!" It has always seemed to be a word that expresses more than just happy or good.

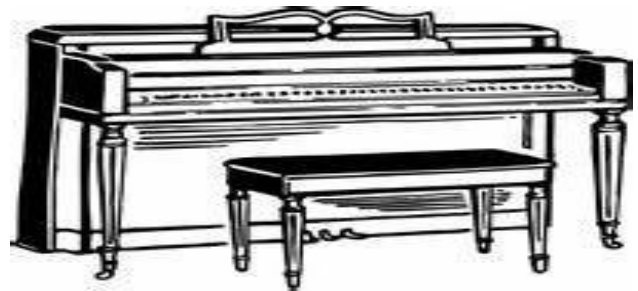
I'm reminded of the angel appearing to the shepherds announcing, "Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you tidings of great **joy**."

Adele Rogers St. Johns in a women's Christmas devotional shares that, "**joy** seems to me- a step beyond happiness. Happiness is a sort of atmosphere you can live with sometimes when you're lucky. **Joy** is a light that fills you with hope and faith, and love."

The UWif held their first business meeting of 2024, January 3rd. It was voted to continue funeral luncheons and reunion dinners. Anyone wishing to donate a salad or dessert for funeral luncheons can contact chairman Brenda Siefka at 989-330-5467. We appreciate members of the congregation who help provide this service.

The Potato Bash is back once again and will be held Sunday, March 17th immediately following church. Your donations for the bash help fund service organizations in Gratiot County.

In closing, best wishes for a "joy filled" 2024!  
Sue Baker, UWif President



## Funeral Dinner Volunteers Needed

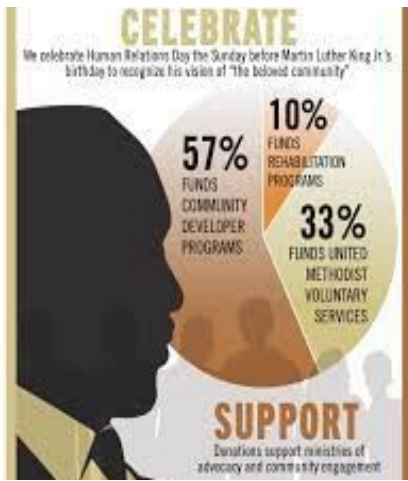
The United Women in Faith is seeking volunteers to make side dishes and desserts for the funeral dinners. If you would be able to help with this, please contact the office and your name and phone number will be put on a calling list and you will be called when your services are needed. Any help would be appreciated.

Would you or someone you know like to learn to play the piano, but don't have one to practice with? The church can help you out! We have a piano we would love to give to someone who could use it and love it for years to come. If interested, call the SL office at 989-681-3320 during office hours, Tuesdays and Wednesdays 9-2. Did we mention, it also comes with a lovely bench. Bench! You will need to bring help to move





# Special Offering Sundays



SLFUMC and BUMC have chosen to participate in 6 special offerings in the upcoming year. The first Special Sunday will be on **January 14th**. The focus for this Special Sunday is Human Relations Day. Human Relations Day is always celebrated the Sunday before the observance of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday. Human Relations Day supports community developers, United Methodist voluntary service, and youth offender rehabilitation programs. The goal of this Sunday is to strengthen United Methodist outreach in the United States and Puerto Rico, encouraging social justice.



## Feeling Ill?

IF YOU ARE NOT FEELING WELL IN ANY WAY, PLEASE STAY HOME. KNOW YOU WILL BE MISSED, BUT IT IS IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER OUR BIGGER PICTURE AND GOAL:

TO REMAIN OPEN FOR CHURCH AND COMMUNITY MISSIONS AND USE. WITH COVID, FLU AND OTHER ILLNESSES UPON US REMEMBER THAT THIS IS NOT ABOUT US AS INDIVIDUALS, BUT IT IS US AS THE HANDS AND HEART OF CHRIST. THIS APPLIES TO ALL INDIVIDUALS AND GROUPS USING THE FACILITY.

## BAPTISM OF THE LORD SUNDAY

Sunday, January 14<sup>th</sup>, 2024 baptisms for any age will be offered in both services (9:30 & 11.)

Please contact Pastor directly if you or someone in your family would like to be baptized, or if you would like to reaffirm your baptism (Methodists don't re-baptize, but we do reaffirm.)

## Liturgist Schedule for January 2024

**January 7—Jan Edgar**

**January 14 - Lois Arthur**

**January 21—Lyndsay Wingle**

**January 28—Lynne Holloway**





## Coffee Hour Sign Up

The new sign up sheets for 2024 are on the table in the narthex. If you are able, please sign up for coffee hour and/or brunch set up and clean up. If we want to continue to enjoy our fellowship time, we need people to get involved with these events. If everyone does just a little, it will make it easier for all of us.



The ladies have been working hard creating some beautiful prayer shawls. There are many available in the front of the sanctuary. If you know someone who could use one, please take one to them with our blessings. Please make sure to register the recipient in the notebook located next to the prayer shawls.

The revised 2024 Leadership lists are now available. Please pick up the new list in the narthex. If at any time throughout the year you have a specific question, please call the leader of that committee and they can assist you.



Thank you to all for the many Christmas, anniversary and birthday gifts as well as the many wishes for

health and happiness. You bring joy into our lives in many ways.

God's continuing love and ours,  
*Pastor Billie Lou and Roger*



## Angel Tree Thank You

A big thank you goes out to everyone who helped make the Angel Tree Mission a success this Christmas season. Whether you chose to donate items to individuals, or delivered the gifts to the area nursing homes and shut ins, your time, thoughtfulness and commitment is appreciated. We were able to deliver 28 gifts to friends and members of BUMC.



BUMC

We very much appreciate your generous donation of pet supplies. We wouldn't be able to do what we do without the support of people like you. Thank you for making a difference through your generosity.

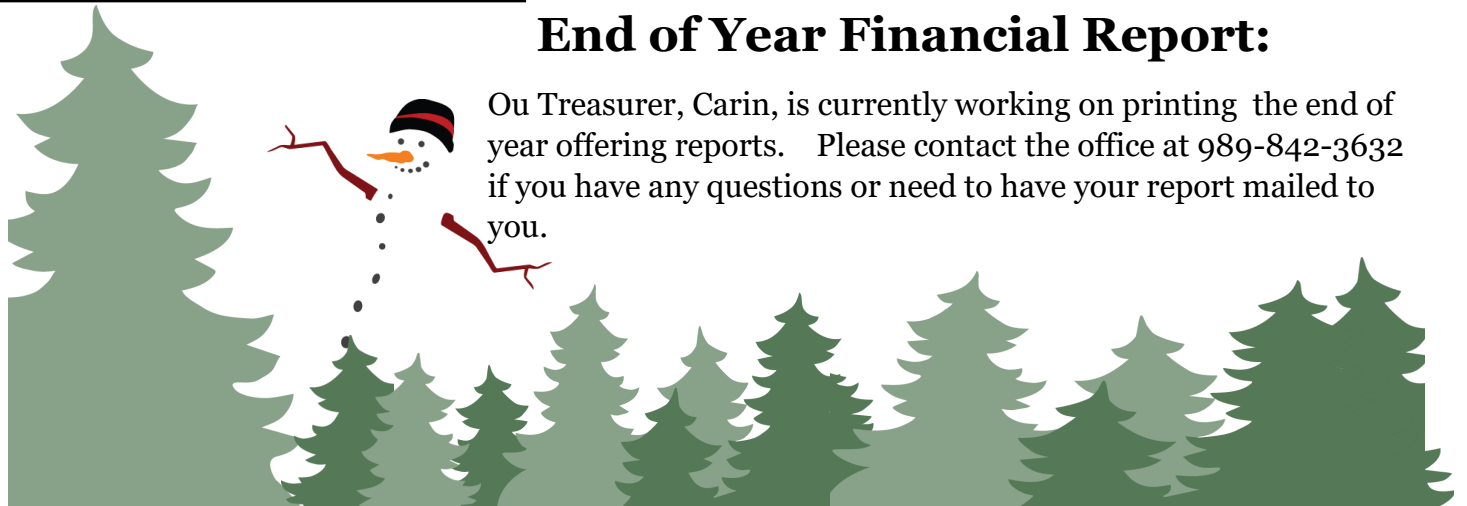
Gratiot Animals In Need (G.A.I.N.)



Thank you for the visitors that brought a lovely angel gift. I have enjoyed the cards I have received this season and all the ones throughout the year. Thanks!

## End of Year Financial Report:

Our Treasurer, Carin, is currently working on printing the end of year offering reports. Please contact the office at 989-842-3632 if you have any questions or need to have your report mailed to you.



## UPCOMING EVENTS

Mark Your Calendars



Wednesday, January 3—UWiF Meeting @ 9:39 AM

Hostess: Carrie Knause

Sunday, January 14 - Baptism of Our Lord Sunday

Wednesday, January 17—Carrie Knause Meeting @ 9:30 AM

Sunday, January 21—BUMC Monthly Brunch following the service

Tuesday, January 23—SLFUMC Free Community Soup Supper @ 4:30 PM

Every Thursday—Gratiot County Personal Needs Pantry is open  
12-3



Our sympathies go out to the family of Nancy Sensabaugh. Nancy passed away on December 19 in Florida. Nancy was a long time member of our church, her absence will be felt by us all.

*Remember me when flowers bloom  
Early in the spring  
Remember me on sunny days  
In the fun that summer brings*

*Remember me in the fall  
As you walk through the leaves of gold  
And in the wintertime - remember me  
In the stories that are told*

*But most of all remember  
Each day - right from the start  
I will be forever near  
For I live within your heart*

## January Birthdays



1. Jackie Cooper
4. Sheri Murphy
8. Josh Gulick
21. Linda Bigelow
22. Edith Humm  
Elaine Napieralski
25. Ray Rohn
31. Larry Sensabaugh

## Happy Anniversary

11. Ted and Angie Sherwood



SECRETARY OFFICE HOURS:

Nancy—Thursday 8 am—1 pm

Email

breckenridgeumc@yahoo.com

**THE METHODIST MESSAGE**

**“SERVING ONE ANOTHER AND SHARING GOD’S LOVE”**

**United Methodist Church**

125 Third St.

P.O. Box 248

Breckenridge, MI 48615

Billie Lou Gillespie-Brown—Pastor

Office phone: 989-842-3632

9 :30 AM worship

**“Open Hearts, Open Minds, Open Doors.”**

\*\*Please notify the church if you wish to be taken off the mailing list.

Breckenridge United  
Methodist Church  
125 Third Street  
PO box 248  
Breckenridge, MI 48615

