

# The Methodist Message



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## Pastor's Page...

*Then Jesus said to his host, "When you give a luncheon or dinner, do not invite your friends, your brothers or sisters, your relatives, or your rich neighbors; if you do, they may invite you back and so you will be repaid. But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed. Although they cannot repay you, you will be repaid at the Resurrection of the righteous."*

*Luke 14: 12-14*

## **A THANKSGIVING BLESSING** -Lisa M. Samra

In 2016, Wanda Dench sent a text inviting her grandson to Thanksgiving dinner, not knowing he'd recently changed his phone number. The text instead went to a stranger, Jamal. Jamal didn't have plans, and so, after clarifying who he was, asked if he could still come to dinner. Wanda said, "Of course you can." Jamal joined the family dinner in what has since become a yearly tradition for him. A mistaken invitation became an annual blessing.

Wanda's kindness in inviting a stranger to dinner reminds me of Jesus' encouragement in Luke's gospel. During a dinner party at a "prominent" Pharisee's house (Luke 14:1), Jesus noticed who was invited and how the guests jostled for the best seats (v.7). Jesus told His host that inviting people based on what they could do for him in return (v.12) meant the blessing would be limited. Instead, Jesus told the host that extending hospitality to people without the resources to repay him would bring even greater blessing (v.14).

For Wanda, inviting Jamal to join her family for Thanksgiving dinner resulted in the unexpected blessing of a lasting friendship that was a great encouragement to her after her husband's death. When we reach out to others, not because of what we might receive, but because of God's love flowing through us, we receive far greater blessing and encouragement.

***When has an unexpected invitation encouraged you? What blessings did you experience?***

*Heavenly Father, may my invitations reflect a heart that wants to bless others as You lead me.*

## **INSIGHT**

Jesus' instruction to invite the poor and the outcast to a meal (Luke 14: 12-14) is something God wanted the Israelites to do. God commanded His people not to mistreat or oppress the poor, the widows, the orphans, and the foreigners living in their midst but instead to love them (Exodus 22:21; 23:9; Leviticus 19:33; Deuteronomy 10:19). Even as the Jews were blessed with material prosperity so they could enjoy the good life, they were commanded to be generous and share with others. They were to include the foreigner and the poor in their celebrations and feasts (Deuteronomy 16: 9-12; 26:8-11) and to give a tithe to share God's provisions and abundance with them (26:12). The Israelites were to treat foreigners as if they were native born Jews and love them as they'd love themselves (Leviticus 19:34; 24:22; Deuteronomy 27:19).

-K.T. Sim, Nov. 2023, Our Daily Bread

May your Thanksgiving be full of many blessings,

**Pastor Billie Lou Gillespie-Brown**



Our neighboring ladies of the Immanuel Lutheran Church, Wheeler, will hold their annual Christmas Bazaar and Cookie Walk on Saturday, December 2 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. The church is located at 10020 East Monroe Rd, Wheeler. The bazaar will feature Christmas and specialty cookies at \$7.00 per dozen, mix or match.



## New Members Joining both St. Louis and Breckenridge UMC

On **Thanksgiving Sunday, November 19<sup>th</sup>** we will welcome new members into each church. What a perfect day in the life of the church to celebrate new members and their faith journeys.

A 2 hour membership class is being offered on either:

- Sat. Nov. 11 from 2-4pm @ BUMC,
- Sun. Nov. 12 from 3-5pm @ SLUMC. OR
- Tuesday, Nov. 14th from 3:30-5:30 @BUMC.

Attend whichever class fits your schedule (you only need to attend one) and then join your church family on the 19<sup>th</sup>. Child care will be provided if needed. Please contact Pastor if you're interested in any of the class dates so that enough materials are prepared.



Free console piano at the St. Louis 1<sup>st</sup> United Methodist Church, 116 S. Franklin St. St. Louis, MI. Call 989-681-3320 during office hours Tuesdays and Wednesdays 9-2 . Comes with bench.

## Staying UMC

The elected leadership at both churches have voted to remain UMC. This decision was made after listening to the church families questions and concerns throughout several weeks.



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.



## ADVENT –CHRISTMAS NEWS

### THEME:

Our 2023 Advent-Christmas theme is: *The Angels of Christmas: Hearing God's Voice in Advent* based on a book and study by Rev. Susan Robb (UMC.) In worship and mid-week study we'll explore the four angelic visits surrounding the birth of Jesus with Zechariah, Mary, Joseph, and the shepherds. We'll look deeper into the angel Gabriel (the Announcer) and other angels in the Old Testament while looking at God's presence in history and our lives today.

### DECORATIONS:

**Family Tree** – Both churches are inviting your family (no matter the size) to bring in an ornament for the tree in Fellowship Hall to represent your family... a **Church Family Tree**. It doesn't have to be fancy or homemade—just what you think represents you. Please bring it to the church BEFORE hanging of the Greens (11/26-SLF, 11/30-B) and put it on the table or cart in the gathering area.

**Angels** – We are decorating the entire facility with angels... if you have one or more angels we can borrow for several weeks, please LABEL and bring to the church before the Hanging of the Greens dates. Place on the table or cart in the gathering area.

### HANGING OF THE GREENS:

Please make a little bit of time to help decorate the churches for Advent & Christmas. Hanging of the Greens at St. Louis will be Sunday, November 26 following worship for a couple hours. A simple lunch will be offered to those choosing to stay and help. Breckenridge will hang greens on Thursday, November 30<sup>th</sup> from 5 – 8pm with a simple supper available for those helping (supper will be open from 6-7pm.) Folks of any age and ability are welcome to help—always a joyous time!

### SHORT-TERM ADULT STUDY WITH SIMPLE SUPPER:

A 4-week adult mid-week study will be offered using the dvd and study that goes with our 2023 theme: *The Angels of Christmas: Hearing God's Voice in Advent* by Rev. Susan Robb (UMC.) We'll explore in-depth the four angelic visits surrounding the birth of Jesus with Zechariah, Mary, Joseph, and the shepherds as well as the angel Gabriel's role and other angels in the Old Testament. We'll rotate our meeting places each week with that church offering a simple supper from 6-6:30pm and then the study from 6:30-8pm. Come for supper or just the study. If you need a ride or childcare please let Pastor know. There will be a sign up list with supper needs at both churches. No cost. *Wednesdays: Nov. 29 @ St. Louis, Dec. 6 @ Breckenridge, Dec. 13 @ St. Louis, Dec. 20 @ Breckenridge.*

### SHORT-TERM CHRISTMAS CHOIR WITH BELLS:

Christy Schnizlein will lead a short-term combined choir for Christmas Eve from 5:30-6pm on *Wednesdays* before the study at the locations where the study is taking place each week. The Choir will repeat last years lovely arrangement of *Silent Night with the handbells*. Older children, youth and adults all welcome.

### CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PLAY:

Carin San Miguel has once again composed a play for the Breckenridge Kids Church. It will be a gift to the congregation on Sunday, Dec. 10 during the 9:30am service. Practices will be starting soon during Kids church time. Kids of all ages and abilities are welcome to join in.



## ADVENT –CHRISTMAS NEWS CONTINUED

### MISSION PROJECT:

Supporting our Advent-Christmas theme we will all be encouraged to “be an angel” this season by picking up a paper angel displayed at both churches which will list a small item to be purchased for our shut-ins, assisted living home friends, and clients of 2 other local nursing homes. Gifts such as socks, slippers, lap blankets, etc. will be listed for men and women. Pick up a paper angel, purchase the item listed, wrap the gift (paper or bag) tape the paper angel onto your gift and return by Sun. Dec. 17<sup>th</sup>. Ken and Lynne Holloway (and BUMC Outreach Team) are coordinating this project for both churches. Delivery persons will be needed the week of Dec. 18—23.

### CHRISTMAS CAROLING:

All are welcome to spread the joy of Christmas by singing Christmas carols on Sun. Dec. 17 from 3-5pm outside Main Street Pizza in Breckenridge. We will be gifting persons entering the pizza place not only with song but with a small financial gift towards their pizza purchase and an invitation to Christmas Eve services. From 4:30-5pm those who have done the caroling will enjoy pizza at Main Street to finish off their good time! All ages are invited from both churches.

### BLUE CHRISTMAS SERVICE:

This lovely service offers all an opportunity to acknowledge that not everything and everyone is full of joy during this darker time of year. This service is usually offered on the day of winter solstice (longest, darkest day of the year.) Thursday, Dec. 21 @ 7:00pm a Blue Christmas time of reflection will be offered at the Breckenridge facility. This service is one of music, poetry, prayer and an opportunity to express a loss or something that grieves you. All are welcome.

### SUNDAY, DEC. 24 MORNING AND EVENING SERVICES:

Christmas Eve falls on a Sunday this year. The combined Worship Team has decided to offer one combined morning service which will be held at the St. Louis facility at 10:00 AM. The Christmas Eve services will be offered at 5:00PM at Breckenridge and & 7:00PM at St. Louis. The services will be similar to the past---children and youth will be invited to help build the nativity scene as we hear the story and sing the songs declaring Christ's birth.

### NEW YEAR'S EVE GAME NIGHT:

A new offering to the church families... many of you gather with family and friends on this night, but for all others interested we will be offering a new Year's Eve Game Night from 7 – 10 PM Dec. 31<sup>st</sup> @ the Breckenridge facility (round game tables.) Bring a snack to share and your favorite game (card, board.) Did you know that Pastor & Roger love to beat their opponents at Euchre?! Join us for euchre, dominoes, golf, spoons, etc.

### TAKING DOWN THE GREENS FOR EPIPHANY:

What goes up, must come down... we will gather again to take down some of the Christmas decorations for the next season of the church year: Epiphany. Breckenridge will take down greens on Wed. Jan. 3 from 5-8pm. St. Louis will take down greens on Sat. Jan. 6 (Epiphany Day) from 10-noon. It's not as much fun, but could you help us with this task—maybe there'll be a treat or two to enjoy!

### 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.)



- 10. Ouida Leach  
Russ Clark
- 12. Lyndsay Wingle
- 15. Justine Ruszkowski  
Nancy Federspiel
- 18. Karen Short
- 27. Janet Greening

## Advice from the Health Care Team

### Staying Healthy Through Flu Season

1. Stay home when you are sick.
2. Stay away from people who are sick.
3. Wash your hands frequently under warm water with soap for at least 20 seconds.
4. Create a clean environment. Flu germs live on surfaces for about 8 hours. Adding 2 TBSP vinegar in 16 oz water in spray bottle will kill the Flu virus.
5. Open windows 20-30 min. a day.
6. Flu viruses cannot live in high temperatures. Set dishwasher at highest setting during winter months. Use high dryer setting for bedding.
7. Use a humidifier. Flu viruses circulate less in humid environments.
8. Bolster your immune system.. Go outside! Sun exposes us to Vitamin D which helps with immune function.
9. Get a good night's sleep.
10. Drink plenty of water, exercise, maintain a well balanced diet.



Prayers for a healthy winter!  
Your Health Care Team



November 11th is Veterans Day. We would like to thank all the veterans in our congregation for their service. Your sacrifice is never forgotten and we are forever thankful for your dedication to our country. God Bless!



All month: Collecting family ornaments for the Fellowship Hall tree, Angels to decorate the entire church, and donations for the mission project.

Sunday, Nov. 5—All Saints Sunday

Saturday, Nov 11—Veterans Day  
New Members Class from 2-4 @ BUMC

Sunday, Nov. 12—New Member Class from 3-5 @ SLFUMC

Tuesday, Nov. 14th—New Member Class from 3:30-5:30 @ BUMC

Sunday, Nov. 19— Thanksgiving Sunday—  
New Member Sunday—Brunch after the service

Thursday, Nov. 23—Thanksgiving Day

Thursday, Nov. 30th—Hanging of the Greens—5pm-8pm— a simple supper will be offered afterward

Tuesday, Nov. 28—Free Soup Supper @4:30-5:30

Wednesday, Nov. 29— Adult Study @ SLFUMC 6-8, simple supper from 6-6:30, study from 6:30-8, Combined choir practice 5:30-6

### Christmas Service Reminder:

Blue Christmas Service—Thursday, Dec. 21 – 7:00 at BUMC

Christmas Eve service:  
Sunday, Dec. 24—10:00 AM at SLFUMC, 5:00 PM at BUMC and 7:00 PM at SLFUMC



**SECRETARY OFFICE HOURS:**

Thursday 8 am— 1 pm

**Email Address:**

breckenridgeumc@yahoo.com

**THE METHODIST MESSAGE**

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

**Breckenridge Methodist Church**

125 Third St.

Breckenridge, MI 48615

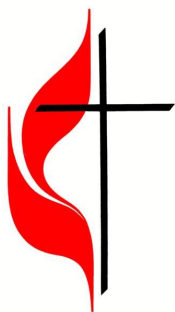
Billie Lou Gillespie-Brown—Pastor

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**

**Return Service Requested**

