



May 2025

Methodist Message

United to God Through Christ

Because He Lives Gloria & William Gaither, 1971

Refrain: Because He lives, I can face tomorrow; because He lives, all fear is gone;

because I know He holds the future, and life is worth the living just because He lives.

Throughout the centuries, people have grappled with the amazing mystery that believers enjoy union with God through Christ. For instance, Bernard of Clairvaux, a 12th century French monk, used the ordinary things of life to explain this wonderful truth. He noted how a drop of water seems to disappear into a glass of wine, taking on the wine's flavor and color. Or how a beam of light transforms the air, lighting it up.

Jesus promised to dwell in those who believe in Him. During Jesus' last conversation with the disciples, He reassured them that He wouldn't leave them as orphans but would come to them (John 14: 18.) And that, *because He lives*, they would live: "On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you" (v.20). Just as Jesus and the Spirit dwell with the Father, so we're in Him, and He's in us.

No wonder we need illustrations from ordinary things. It's mind-blowing to consider that God through Christ and the Spirit would dwell within us! What does this mean for us in our daily lives? With Christ living within, we find comfort when we face uncertainty and peace when we feel anxious. Jesus keeps us from overreacting if someone slights us. We can speak out against injustice in Jesus' love and power.

Christ dwells in you and I spiritually if we've received Him as our Savior. As we think about that truth, let's ask Jesus to show us how He can change us from within.

Adapted from Our Daily Bread May 2025, Amy Boucher Pye

What simple things in life...ordinary things... remind you of God's amazing love and hope? The first robin of the spring singing its beautiful song? The crocuses arising through the snow? The unique earthy (wormy) smell after a spring rain? Winter windows needing a good cleaning as the spring sunshine beams through them? Beautiful buds on the spring flowering trees like magnolia, tulip, Bradford pear, crabapple, etc. The lush green of hard winter wheat beginning to push upward in the farm fields? The hungry chirps of baby birds crying for their next morsel to come quickly? Our Triune God uses simple things, ordinary things to remind us of God's unconditional love: Bread and Juice shared, 3 nails and an empty cross and grave, and by calling each of us by name to follow.

We are Blessed to be a Blessing, Pastor Billie Lou

Seasons of the Church Year: EASTER

EASTER is the fifth season of the Christian church year. Easter is 50 days long. The 50 days do not include Sundays (Sabbath.) Sundays are considered "little Easters" or mini celebrations. Eastertide begins the day after Easter and goes to the Day of Pentecost (the giving of the Holy Spirit to each Believer and the birthday of the Christian Church.) The days of Easter and Pentecost change from year to year—they do not have a set date.

LITURGICAL COLORS OF EASTER: The color for Easter is white—sometimes accompanied by gold. It reminds us of Jesus' purity and the giving up of His life for our sins, which He has now made whiter than snow. Special liturgical Sundays during the Easter season are: Good Shepherd Sunday (May 11, 2025) and Ascension Sunday (June 1, 2025.) Special Church or Denominational Sundays in the UMC are: Native American Ministries Sunday (May 4) and Festival of the Christian Home (also May 11 this year.) Secular celebrations include: Mother's Day (May 11, '25,) Memorial Sunday (May 25, '25) and Graduation Sunday (at the end of May or beginning of June.)

SYMBOLS OF EASTER:

Crown: A Gold Crown now replaces the Crown of Thorns (Lent.) The Crown reminds us that Jesus the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.



Empty Cross (Crosses): An empty Cross now replaces the crucifixion cross. Jesus, once crucified and dead, now is risen, so the cross is empty. Sometimes, 3 empty crosses are depicted, representing Jesus and the two thieves crucified with Him.



Lamb: We call Jesus the Lamb of God. The One who was slain for our sinfulness. Something or someone had to pay for our sins—Jesus took our place as the sacrificial Lamb of God—the scapegoat for our wrongs. The lamb symbol may have the three-rayed nimbus to designate Jesus as a member of the Trinity.



Easter Eggs: Eggs are a symbol of new life and hope. The colored Easter eggs bring us joy in their bright spring colors. The egg can also remind us of the empty tomb after Jesus' resurrection.



Easter Lily: The Easter lily reminds us of Jesus' purity in its beautiful white petals and the way the bud opens up unfurling from its deep green to white reminds us again of the tomb and new life.



Peacock Feathers: A lesser, but beautiful symbol of Easter is the peacock feather. The spectacular iridescent colors remind us of Jesus' splendor and magnificence. The "eye" of the peacock feather reminds us that God is all-knowing, all-present, and all-powerful. The peacock sheds its feathers as if they are "dying" but grows new feathers to remind us that Jesus died but rose again to new life.



Empty Tomb: An empty tomb also reminds us of new life. Jesus our Christ was victorious over death. Jesus' truth may be put in a grave, but it will never die.



Butterfly: Butterflies also symbolize new life. As this amazing and beautiful creature goes through its stages of metamorphosis, it changes from a lowly caterpillar to forming a chrysalis around its changing body to reemerge as the butterfly soaring to new heights.





United
Women
in Faith



4th Tuesday Sandwich Supper

The circles have once again taken the responsibility of the 4th Tuesday free community meals for the next 5 months. In the warmer months it will be a "sandwich supper" and allows the soup supper folks to have a break. We appreciate those who volunteered to chair. St. Louis First UMC



Join us for a fun filled game night on Saturday , May 3rd from 7-10pm. If you have a board game or a card game that you would like to play, bring it along . All are welcome!!

Loons Baseball Game



There is a sign up sheet in the gathering area for the Loons Game on Sunday Aug. 10 @ 1pm.

The cost is \$12.50/person. Kids eat free!

If interested, please sign up!

The money is due by 7/20/25

Music & Arts Camp

Where: SLFUMC, 116 S. Franklin St. St. Louis

When: Mon. June 23-Wed. June 25
9 am-11:30 am

What: Learn about different instruments
And
Learn about different artists and styles of art;
complete several projects to take home

Who: Kindergarten-Middle School
Nursery available 18 mo-4/5 yr.
Parents are welcome to participate

How Much\$: FREE!!

Join us **Thursday, June 26th from 7-8 pm** for a Gallery Open House where family members can view all the projects and then take the projects home.

Pre-register by leaving a message at
989-681-3320

Music & Arts Camp

Where: BUMC, 125 Third St. Breckenridge

When: Mon. June 16-Wed. June 18
9 am-11:30 am

What: Learn about different instruments
And
Learn about different artists and styles of art;
complete several projects to take home

Who: Kindergarten-Middle School
Nursery available 18 mo-4/5 yr.
Parents are welcome to participate

How Much\$: FREE!!

Join us **Thursday, June 19th from 7-8 pm** for a Gallery Open House where family members can view all the projects and then take the projects home.

Pre-register by leaving a message at
989-842-3632

MEMORIAL SUNDAY FLOWERS

If you would like to remember someone who has passed on Memorial Sunday, May 25th by donating \$5.00 **for each person's name** that you wish to honor, then fill out the small form found on the table in the gathering area and place that along with the \$5.00 in the church office. You may also stop into the office during business hours to complete the forms and make payment. All names of those honored will be printed on an insert in the bulletin and flowers will be purchased with the monies for the Memorial Garden and church grounds.



Michigan Conference of the UMC

The Michigan Conference UMC will meet in Traverse City from Thursday May 29-Sunday June 1 for the Annual Conference. Pastor Billie Lou will be joined by Linda Johnson and Nancy Gee, who will represent the churches.

THEATER OUTING



The SLFUMC and the BUMC will be heading to the Strand Theater on **Friday, May 16th at 7:30** to see the Gratiot County Players production of "A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder". Tickets are \$14.00 for seniors and \$17.00 for younger adults. Please sign up on the table in the Gathering Hall.



We received a letter from Pearl, one of the students who traveled to North Carolina with the CMU Wesley Spring Break Service Trip. She wrote:

Dear Breckenridge UMC,

Thank you for supporting our Wesley @ CMU Spring Break Service Trip to Asheville, NC. This year has been filled with profound experiences, but this week has honestly been life changing. In Asheville, we got the opportunity to work with members of Covenant Community UMC on one of their post hurricane projects. Their pastor, Sam, began with sharing his own hurricane experience; trapped while watching the river rise and emerging three days later to utter devastation, Sam expressed relief that his church remained untouched, but complete sorrow for those around him, most having just lost everything. He, while aided by Buddhists, Islamic Practitioners, and other local congregations, came together to provide basic needs to the community. Sam also expressed the need for homes, specifically for those who have kids, both before and directly after Helen. He and his friend, Dave, created a RV/mobile home community at Covenant for families with kids experiencing displacement or houselessness due to Helen. Armed with the hope for continued growth and the desire to keep their project alive long after the hurricane relief is finished, Sam and Dave have already changed so many lives in Asheville. Three families have "graduated" into permanent housing, ending their chapter at Covenant's RV community, and more are transitioning into the RV community with the hopes of one day leaving.

Thank you for making this trip possible.

Pearl at CMU Wesley



Saturday, May 3—Game Night 7-10 PM

Sunday, May 4— Holy Communion and Native

American Ministries Sunday

Tuesday, May 6— United Leadership Team @6:30pm

Thurs, May 8— BHS Senior Luncheon, YAHA at noon and Outreach Team @1:30

Sunday, May 11—Mother's Day Service

Wednesday, May 14— Dorcas Circle @ 1:00 SLFUMC

Friday, May 16— Theater Outing at the Strand Theater -7:30 pm

Wednesday—May 21 - Carrie Knause Circle @ 9:30 am SLFUMC GCPNP Fundraiser –Blue Shamrock All day

Sunday, May 25— Memorial Sunday

Tuesday, May 27—Soup Supper

1. Angie Sherwood, Katie Short
3. Jim Brown, Leshia Colthorp
4. Wayne Crambell
12. Jameson Gulick
14. Andrea Randall
20. Mary Beth Locke
21. Dave Stoneman
25. Cheryl Reeves
27. Dave Briggs
29. Kimberlee Rossmann



If you know of a graduate that needs to be honored on **Graduation Sunday**, please notify the office. Graduates can be from high school, college, tech or trade schools. Graduation Sunday will be held on **Sunday, June 8th**.



**GRATIOT COUNTY
PERSONAL NEEDS PANTRY**

Where: Blue Shamrock

223 N. Mill St. St. Louis, MI

When: Wednesday, May 21

Time: 11:00am-10:00 pm

How Can You Help the GCPNP?



The Blue Shamrock will be donating a percentage of all the sales for the day directly to the Personal Needs Pantry. So, grab your friends and family and head down to **THE BLUE SHAMROCK** for some good food and help a great cause at the same time!



**WHAT IS THE
GRATIOT COUNTY
PERSONAL NEEDS
PANTRY?**

WHAT WE DO:

We supply a supplemental amount of personal needs items to Gratiot County residents. **Clients will need some form of identification that proves they are Gratiot County residents.

WHAT WE SUPPLY:

Toothbrushes
Toothpaste
Hand soap
Shampoo
Conditioner
Tampons
Pads
Dish Soap
Bar Soap
Facial tissue
Laundry Soap
Razors
Deodorant
Paper Towel
Toilet paper
Incontinence items

HOURS:

Every Thursday From 12-3pm

LOCATION:

St. Louis 1st United Methodist Church
116 S. Franklin St
St. Louis, MI