

Breckenridge United Methodist Church



September 2020 Newsletter



Welcome Pastor Billie Lou Gillespie and Roger!

Pastor Billie Lou has been with us since July, but since this is the first newsletter since she arrived, I think that a formal welcome needs to be included in this publication. The Covid-19 protocols have stymied any welcome reception from taking place, but we have enjoyed Billie Lou's presence and appreciated her flexibility during these pandemic times. Outside services have been very enjoyable and uplifting and if you cannot attend, the services are available for viewing on YouTube.

Our Doors Will Open for Worship!!

The Church Council recently had much discussion about opening our doors for inside worship service. The number one priority is, and always has been, the safety of our members. The information from Bishop Bard and the Michigan Conference of the United Methodist Church are still recommending churches follow the most recent executive order from our governor. That order includes a limit of indoor gatherings to 10 persons, but also points out that religious organizations are exempt from penalties.

Cooler weather will soon be here and continuing to worship outdoors is not very practical or appealing to most of us. Therefore, we have decided to open for worship on Sunday, September 13, 2020 and worship inside the sanctuary. Worship service begins at 9:30 a.m.

We are recommending you wear a mask and maintain 6-foot social distance when inside. Please refer to the updated Guidelines for Meeting Inside the Sanctuary. They are attached with this newsletter or on our website www.breckenridgeumc.org.

The last 6 months have been challenging for everyone. Our church family has been amazing during these difficult times with financial support. We hope you continue and your gifts and contributions are much appreciated. We will continue to record our worship services and share them on our website and Facebook page. Please watch them if you are unable to attend on Sunday and encourage your friends to check out our weekly services.

At this time, only the sanctuary and restrooms will be open. Please refrain from using the coat room and avoid congestion in that small area. The remainder of the church will still be closed on Sunday mornings and during the week. Please call the church if you need to stop by for any reason, and all visitors are asked to sign in when visiting during the week.

The Fellowship Hall will not be available for rental until November so we can have a chance to see how coming inside is working.

Hope to see you ***inside the church sanctuary*** on Sunday!

Help Michele Update Our Roster

Michele is compiling an updated Church directory. If you have a new phone number or any changes in your contact information, please call or email Michele with those changes. Many people may have made changes during the past 6 months of COVID, so help us keep your contact information current. Contact Michele today with your new information. This information will also be used to implement a new program called "One Call Tell All". This service will allow us to contact all of the congregation with the same message at the same time. This will be very helpful for disseminating information, such as a cancellation or a special need.

Flood Buckets

Pastor Billie Lou is heading up a Flood Bucket project in conjunction with the St. Louis First Methodist Church and is looking for contributions to fill those buckets. Each bucket contains the following items and were very helpful to the people of Sanford and Midland during the recent flood event. You can help by supplying some of the following: a five-gallon bucket with a resealable lid, laundry detergent, concentrated household cleaner, dish soap, air freshener, insect repellent, scrub brushes, cleaning wipes, scouring pads, clothespins, clothesline, trash bags, N95 respirators, kitchen gloves, and work gloves.

There are specific requirements for many of these items, so if you would like to donate, please see Pastor Billie Lou and get the complete list. She is also looking for volunteers who would be willing to pack the buckets, once the items are collected.

The Building Has Been Closed, but the Church Carries On!



100 “Back to School” zip-lock bags were packed and distributed at the Breckenridge Summer Celebration on August 21. 63 bags were given away at the event and most of the rest were taken to grandchildren by church members. This was a good way to get our name out into our community



The congregation thanks Russ Clark, Ray Rohn, Diane Colbry, Mike Cooper, and Dave and Loretta Briggs for their work in pruning the church shrubbery and cleaning and adding fresh mulch to the Memorial Garden area. Russ also replaced the pump on the fountain. Thank you for caring!

The Outreach Committee is also working on plans to host a “Church Full of Treats” in a coronavirus safe manner. This has been a great community event in the past and we would like for this to continue, so we plan on having it, even if it will look differently this year.

The committee also plans on working with the school to see if the “Weekend Care” program can continue in some form. Talks will take place with the school administration once the school year is well underway.

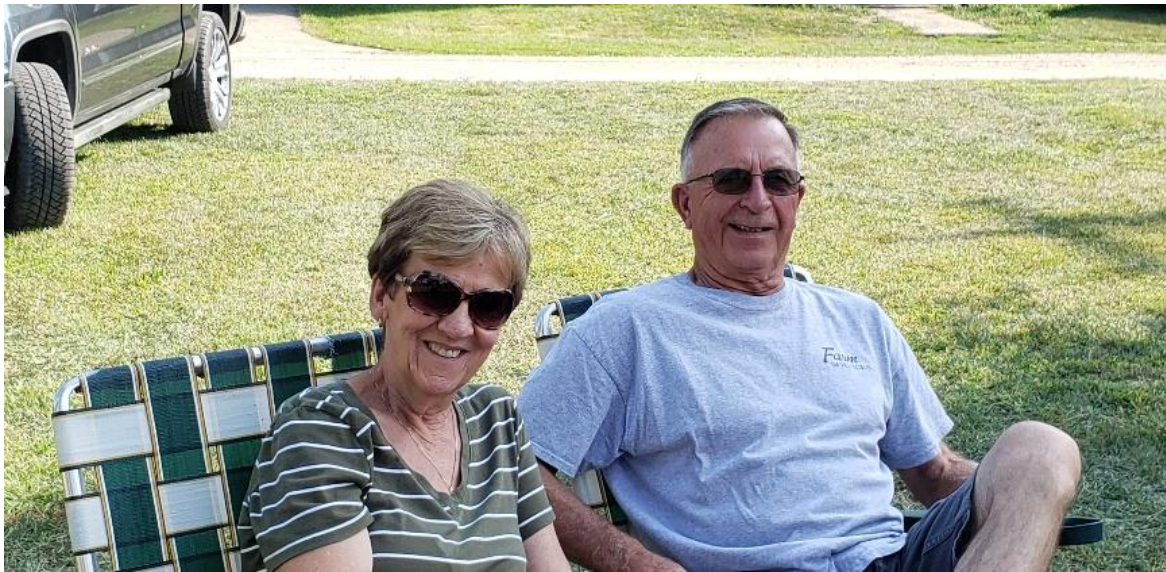
Food Pantry News

We lost a dedicated volunteer for the Food Pantry when we lost Betty Shankel. Her years of service representing our church were remarkable. She dedicated a lot of time to this ministry and she has been greatly missed.

Over the years, our church has dedicated space, time and finances for the Food Pantry. It has always been a vital part of our ministry to the surrounding communities. We need one or two people to represent our church and volunteer with the Food Pantry on Tuesdays. Even if you cannot volunteer every Tuesday, we would love to have your involvement.

If you are interested in volunteering to help with the Food Pantry, please contact Pastor Billie Lou at 810-241-3160.

Congratulations!!



Wedding bells will be ringing this weekend for Jim Brown and Paula Harper! May God bless this union and congratulations to the happy couple!



One of my favorite things to do when I am fearful is to sing... for some reason if I am singing, my mind concentrates on the words of the song, not on my worries, and I can let go of the concern, at least for some moments. I leave a Christian radio station playing in the house and in all the vehicles which keeps me grounded in praise and the Word of God.

One of my favorite songs from "The Faith We Sing" is the hymn: *You Are Mine* # 2218, by our Roman Catholic brother, David Haas. Haas plays on the words from Isaiah 43, Psalm 46 and John 14: "Do not be afraid, I am with you. I have called you each by name. Come and follow me, I will bring you home; I love you and you are mine." "

The verses to the song talk about God coming to us in the silence and lifting us from fear. The song says God is our hope, strength and freedom and will give us peace that the world cannot give. The words of Scripture and song bring to me the promises of God when I am fearful.

We certainly are living in and through fearful times. What do you do to bring peace to your soul? Some of you probably work in the garden or field. Maybe some of you cook, knit, go for walks, or find solace in woodworking or some other hobby. Maybe you can snuggle with a pet or grandchild. Sometimes I can find peace when cleaning—the vacuum does wonders to cancel out my worrisome thoughts!

These times of fear should be bringing us closer to God through prayer, worship, Bible study, singing and praying. This is a test of our real faith. Do we believe that our awesome God is in control or not? Do we believe that God has a plan even we can't fully understand it? Can we trust and praise God even in the time of the dark valley?

Did you know that there are approximately 365 phrases in Scripture that talk about not being afraid? One phrase for each day of the year---isn't that just like God to make sure we could find a verse each day if we wanted to? Some of the verses say: "Fear not," others: "Do not be afraid," and similar wording to bring us comfort.

Ruth Bell Graham wrote a book entitled: "Fear Not Tomorrow, God Is Already There." What a great title! What a great promise!! What a great thing for all of us to believe and practice in these worrisome times!!!

Do not be afraid, God is with you... God's promise.

Love in Christ, Pastor Billie Lou

Breckenridge United Methodist Church Guidelines for Meeting Inside the Sanctuary
Updated: September 8, 2020

- There will only be one entrance door open. Please use the door next to the parking lot under the portico. Please don't come much earlier than 15 minutes prior to service, and upon entry into the church proceed to the sanctuary. Please refrain from using the coat room.
- In compliance with social distancing guidelines, please remain 6 feet apart from each other. The best time to socialize with friends is before or after worship service in the parking lot. There will not be any coffee hour. Other areas of the church will remain closed except for the restrooms.
- If you do not feel well, we ask that you please stay home.
- We encourage everyone that can wear a mask to please do so with the exception of children at the discretion of their parents. Please bring your mask from home or one will be provided for you. For anyone that is unable to wear a mask, there will be seating available in the narthex during the service. The greeters will have disinfectant spray for your hands, or there will be sanitizing gel available inside.
- We will follow recommendations and use every other row of pews. Please sit with your family, but keep 6-foot distance between other families or households in each row.
- Bulletins and attendance pads will not be passed out or used. Hymnals, Bibles, giving envelopes, pens, etc. will be removed from the pews.
- Offering plates will not be passed. Please leave your offering envelope in the plate at the back of the church. We encourage everyone to continue to give online or mail your tithes and offerings into the church office.
- There will not be any Children's time, Nursery or Children's Church. Teachers will provide packets with lessons and activity sheets to help occupy them during the worship service.
- After worship service, the ushers will excuse everyone by row in an orderly fashion. Please remember to limit any gathering and socializing until you are outside in the parking lot.
- Worship services will continue to be recorded and will be available in audio and/or video format to view online.

Our church website for updates, online giving or recorded worship services is:
www.breckenridgeumc.org