

## SUNDAY WORSHIP

10:00 AM

Watch on:

[Greenville First UMC website](#)

[Facebook page](#)

[YouTube Channel](#)

# The Connection

*Greenville First United Methodist Church*

JANUARY - FEBRUARY 2026

## Three Things I Pray

Godspell has some memorable songs for me, the best of which is “Day by Day.” It expresses a full life of discipleship through clear insight, deep love, and faithful travel.

Day by day  
Day by day  
Oh Dear Lord  
Three things I pray  
To see thee more clearly  
Love thee more dearly  
Follow thee more nearly  
Day by day



**How will we show up for active ministry in 2026?** How will you live out your faith this year? My spiritual renewal leave in November was another grace-filled occasion to rest and reflect on the sources of power and beauty and peace in my life and ministry. One fruitful insight of that time is that I want to show up with compassion, inspiration, and encouragement for us to gain clarity in these three relationships:

- **Our relationship with Christ.** Do you know the peace of Jesus Christ? Are you at peace with God? Do you accept God's acceptance of you in Christ? What ways of caring for your soul, also known as the “means of grace,” are you practicing?
- **Our individual relationship with the congregation.** Through our prayers, presence, gifts, service, and witness we activate our faith. As members of the congregation, we are “bound in sacred covenant to shoulder the burdens, share the risks, and celebrate the joys of our fellow members” (2020/2024 Book of Discipline). How are you an active member of our congregation? How would you like to grow in your ministry this year?
- **Our congregation's relationship with the community.** I like the idea that the Church exists for those who are not here yet (nor may ever be). My late father-in-law's observation was that the Church has a center, Jesus Christ, but no circumference. We are meant to be expanding the ministry of loving our neighbors. Great ideas abound here in our fish pond and the commitments we are encouraged to make on 3x5 cards.

To build on these three things I will be offering a membership preparation/exploration class in January. And as a Church we will be intentionally moving along transitional paths with my retirement at the end of June, the payoff of the mortgage, and the celebration of 175 years of ministry. **I am excited about the ways God is moving through our congregation. And I look forward to what we will see more clearly, how we will love more dearly, and where we will follow more nearly in 2026.**

Peace, Pastor Jeff

## January 2026 Worship

### **Epiphany Series** ***What is the Church Doing on Earth?***

#### **January 4 - Epiphany** **Holy Communion**

Let's Be a Church on the Go  
Isaiah 60:1-6  
Ephesians 3:1-12  
Matthew 2:1-12

#### **January 11** **Baptism: Bodie Sherman** Acts 10:34-43 Matthew 3:13-17

#### **January 18 - Epiphany 2** **Holy Communion**

\*\*Human Relations Day offering

Methodist movement; Holy Club; Classes, Bands, and Societies

Psalm 40:1-11  
1 Corinthians 1:1-9

#### **January 25 - Epiphany 3**

Slavery - 1844 split

Isaiah 9:1-4

1 Corinthians 1:10-18

## February 2026 Worship

February 1 - **Epiphany 4**  
**Holy Communion**  
Holiness Movement  
Micah 6:1-8  
Psalm 15  
Matthew 5:1-12

February 8 - **Epiphany 5**  
Our historical moment  
Isaiah 58:1-12  
Matthew 5:13-20

February 15 - **Transfiguration Sunday**  
**Holy Communion**  
*3rd Sunday missions offering*  
Exodus 24:12-18  
2 Peter 1:16-21  
Matthew 17:1-9

February 18  
***Ash Wednesday***  
***drop-in service 5-7 pm***  
Joel 2:1-2, 12-17  
Psalm 51:1-17  
2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10  
Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

### **Lenten Series** ***"Make Good Life Choices"***

February 22 - **Lent 1**  
In the Midst of Pain, We Choose Love  
1 John 4:7-21

# Those In Our Thoughts and Prayers

## Homebound or Minimal Travel

Harley VanHoose  
Liz Campbell  
Tom & Judy VanSyckle  
John Washburn  
Caitlin Jensen  
Betsy Irish  
Dan Sandie  
Ben Chapman  
John and Clarice Thorlund  
Dorothy Sampson  
Jan Carpenter  
Julie Johnston



## THOSE WHO HAVE CLAIMED ETERNAL LIFE

## Recovering at Home

Eleanor Budge  
Eldon Lutz

## Hospitalized or Rehab

Barb Perry



## Thursday Bible Study

Join us Thursday mornings at 10:30. We will delve into the words of scripture. We meet in-person in the Bailey Conference room. You may also join us through Zoom Meeting. We look forward for the opportunity to discuss and learn from each other.

The Zoom link is: [Thursday Bible Study](#)

## Sunday Pastor Chat

Join us in the Church Library **Sundays after worship at 11:30 AM** for reading, study and fellowship. Bring your questions, beverage of choice and snack if you choose, and have the opportunity to discuss the week's message with Pastor Jeff and others. We hope you will gain a better understanding and maybe a different perspective of God's Word.

We hope to see you Sunday!





# HONEST. OPEN. EXPLORING FAITH

Community Book Study

**Location & Time: 6-7pm; 5 Sundays**

First United Methodist Church  
204 W Cass St, Greenville  
Childcare upon request - call 616-754-8532  
<https://www.greenvillefumc.org/small-groups>

Need a Book?

Scan the QR Code for  
a book from Amazon:



## The Book & Why Participate?

### *Letters from a Skeptic:*

*A Son Wrestles with His Father's  
Questions about Christianity*

by Dr. Gregory A. Boyd and Edward  
K. Boyd

- **Connect:** Meet new people who share your love of reading.
- **Discuss:** Share your thoughts and hear different perspectives.
- **Learn:** Gain a deeper understanding of the Bible.
- **Grow:** Expand your horizons and challenge your thinking.

## Dates & Content Discussion

Sunday January 11	Introduction & Letters 1-6	Establishing the relationship between father and son; defining skepticism, doubt, and belief; addressing initial questions about the nature of God, truth, and reason.
Sunday January 18	Letters 7-14	Core philosophical problems - Does God Exist? The infamous "Problem of Evil" and the concept of free will.
Sunday January 25	Letters 15-20	Shifting the philosophy to history; examining the reliability of the New Testament documents, the historical figure of Jesus, and the case for the resurrection.
Sunday February 1	Letters 21-27	Tackling common social and moral objections - Christianity's claim to be the "only way." The nature of the Old Testament God (violence, judgment), moral relativism, and hell.
Sunday February 8	Letters 28-35 & Afterward	What it means to be a Christian - a personal relationship with God, the Holy Spirit, and prayer.

Facilitated by: Pastor Jeff Williams and Malorie Packard

The book is, *Letters from a Skeptic*. It's an easy read, not very long and holds loads of discussion worthy topics about God and faith.

Can't make all the weeks? Come to those you can. No judgment!

Here is a link to the church website: <https://greenvillefumc.org/small-groups>



# BECOMING GOD'S PEOPLE IN CHRIST 2026 MEMBERSHIP CLASS

Meeting in the Bailey Conference Room

11:30 am -12:15 pm

## Sunday, January 11

Five Paths for Disciples: Prayers, Presence, Gifts, Service, Witness

## Sunday, January 18

Four Sources of Wisdom and Action

## Sunday, January 25

Faith Times Three: God, Grace, Books, Rules, Actions, Remainders

## Sunday, February 1

Two Sacraments: Baptism, Communion at an Open Table

## Sunday, February 8

One Commandment: LOVE

Contact Pastor Jeff with your interest:  
[jeffwrev@gmail.com](mailto:jeffwrev@gmail.com); 269-944-9231

# Stephen Ministry

Happy New Year, Church Family!



We've had a busy 2025 and look forward to more service opportunities in 2026.

**Thanks to Karin Blinkilde we are facilitating a Prayer Vigil for everyone. Begins February 18,**

**meeting monthly on the 3rd Wednesday**

**from 6:00 to 7:00pm. in our beautiful Chapel**

There won't be a formal service. It will be a quiet time when you can pray, meditate, or just be in God's presence. There will be some Stephen Ministers there, in case you would like a listening ear or someone to pray with you.

Thanks for supporting Stephen Ministry! Please let Pastor Jeff, Tammy Youmans, Virginia Curtis, or me know if you feel God's call to become a Stephen Minister!

Blessings,  
Barb Perry, Stephen Leader



# Library Link

We have two new reads in the library for you to curl up with on these snowy days. In the newest Mitford novel, *My Beloved*, a Christmas love letter goes astray, and changes lives in the village.

*In The Time of Five Pumpkins*, in Gaborone, Mma Ramotswe is doing her best to care for those she loves, and those who come to her for help. A cup of red bush tea and a chat with her friend Mma Potokwane always helps with problem solving!



## Fill the Cart

### For the Ecumenical Food Pantry

#### Items Needed:

- **Boxed/bagged cereal, peanut butter, jelly.**
- **Canned fruit, vegetables, beans, and meat.**
  - **Spaghetti sauce and pasta.**
  - **Soup, crackers, boxed potatoes.**
  - **Chili spice/flavor packets.**
  - **Toilet paper**

On **Sunday, January 18, 2026**, the Sunday before Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday, we'll receive the **Human Relations Day offering**.

#### What is Human Relations Day?

Human Relations Day is one of six churchwide Special Sundays designated to support ministries and causes important to the entire United Methodist Church. This day invites congregations to strengthen communities, especially those facing poverty, injustice, or lack of opportunity. Inspired by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s vision of the "beloved community." Human Relations Day calls us to build relationships rooted in dignity, equity, and love.

#### Why Does Human Relations Day Matter?

It's a day to remember that every person deserves a chance to thrive. It reminds us that living out our faith means building stronger, caring relationships, especially with those who have been pushed to the margins of society.

Human Relations Day matters because it supports the Church's work in creating communities where everyone can flourish. **When we give**, we support church-based programs that work in local neighborhoods to build justice, offer hope, and walk alongside those who need a second chance.

# January & February 2026 Calendar

Please visit the FUMC website calendar for the latest updates.

Here is the link: <https://greenvillfumc.org/calendar>

## Weekly & Monthly Recurring Events

### Sundays

- 9:00am Choir Practice
- 10:00am Worship, Sanctuary (children exit for Children's Church when indicated during the service)
- 11:00am Coffee Fellowship, Fellowship Hall
- 11:30am Membership Class, Church Library  
(Pastor Chat Resumes February 15)
- 6:00pm Community Book Study, Fellowship Hall

### Mondays

- 5:45pm Missions Meeting, Conference Rm  
(Second Mondays only)
- 6:00pm Optimist Club, Conference Rm  
(First and Third Mondays only)
- 6:30pm Leadership Board Meeting, Conference Rm  
(Fourth Mondays only)

### Tuesdays

- 8:00am Men's Breakfast, Big Boy -Greenville
- 10:00am Survivors Group -Grief, Divorce, Loss of Pet or other losses, Church Library
- 10:00am Parkinson's Exercise Group, Celebration Hall  
(First and Third Tuesdays only)
- 11:30am Ladies' Luncheon, Winter Inn Greenville  
(First Tuesdays only)
- 6:00pm VFRP Craft Club, Fellowship Hall  
(Fourth Tuesdays only)

### Wednesdays

- 10:00am United Women in Faith -All Women Welcome  
(Second Wednesdays only)
- 6:00-7:00pm Monthly Prayer Vigil - Chapel  
(Third Wednesdays only -Starts Feb 18)

### Thursdays

- 10:30am Bible Study, Conference Room & Zoom
- 11:00am Parkinson's Support Group, Fellowship Hall  
(Second Tuesdays only)
- 11:00am Chair Yoga, Celebration Hall  
(First Tuesdays only)

### Upcoming Services, Events or Meetings

#### 2026 Membership Class (Sundays)

Details newsletter page 5  
11:30am-12:15pm  
Jan. 11, 18, 25  
Feb. 1, 8

#### Community Book Study (Sundays)

Details newsletter page 4  
6:00-7:00pm  
Jan. 11, 18, 25  
Feb. 1, 8

#### February 18 (Ash Wednesday)

- 5:00-7:00pm Ash Wednesday  
Drop-in self-guided meditation & ashes
- 6:00-7:00 Prayer Vigil in Chapel  
Facilitated by Stephen Ministers  
(See newsletter page 5 for details)

#### Palm Sunday

March 29 - Beginning of Holy Week

#### Good Friday

April 3 - Service at 12:15

#### Easter Sunday

April 5

#### Community Event

#### GFUMC 175th Anniversary

#### Celebration

July 18 & 19 (Saturday & Sunday)

## January Birthdays

6	Dale Kluzak Curt Pahl Larry Parker
7	Harley VanHoose Trudy Merchant
8	Mike Sikkema
16	Josie Sikkema
18	Tammy Youmans Richard Palmer Jamee Waldbillig-Gunn Kathryn Youmans
20	Martin McDonough
21	Barb Parker
22	Kristin Waber
24	Wyatt Dickinson Andrew Raven



## February Birthdays

1	Kathy Wilkin
2	Brad Harmelink Bailey Sherman
3	Kimberle Bishop
7	Virginia Curtis
8	Bob Hansen
10	Robert Schuster
11	Joan Ellafrits
13	Jan Lamborne
18	Russel Harmelink Emily Raven
26	Denise Besson Linda Leroux

## January



## February

20	Richard & Jemery Palmer
30	Homer & Judy Shrader

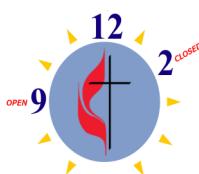
2	John & Clarice Thorlund
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*If you were accidentally omitted from our birthday or anniversary list or have a wrong date, please let the church office know so we can update our records. If you wish to have your information removed please contact the church office. Email: [office@greenvillefumc.org](mailto:office@greenvillefumc.org)*

Happy New Year, Church Family!  
Greenville First United Methodist Church  
204 West Cass Street  
Greenville, MI 48838

«Mailing label»  
«Address1» «Address2»  
«City State» «Zip code»



#### **A Note From Your Church Office:**

The church office will be open on Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday between **10:00 am - 2:00 pm.** Please contact the office by phone or email with any questions: **616-754-8532** or email [office@greenvillefumc.org](mailto:office@greenvillefumc.org).  
Pastor Jeff can be reached anytime by email [jeffwrev@gmail.com](mailto:jeffwrev@gmail.com)

phone, or text (269-944-9231).

**FUMC Event Scheduling:** If you would like to schedule an event at FUMC, please contact the church office at: 616-754-8532.

**Submission Deadlines:** Deadline For the March-April Newsletter is **Tuesday, February 17,** Please forward your submissions to the church office by calling 616-754-8532 or email at: [office@greenvillefumc.org](mailto:office@greenvillefumc.org).