

## SUNDAY WORSHIP

10:00 AM

Watch on:

[Greenville First UMC website](#)

[Facebook page](#)

[YouTube Channel](#)

# The Connection

*Greenville First United Methodist Church*

JANUARY - FEBRUARY 2025

## Some Baking Aspirations in 2025

Looking ahead to 2025, I look back to the summer worship series we did on some short stories Jesus told. I enjoy learning new things about familiar stories of Jesus. In particular, I like the parable of the yeast or leaven in [Matthew 13:33-35](#)

Dr. Amy-Jill Levine writes, "**leaven in antiquity is what we today call sourdough starter**...it is essential for baking...the starter serves as the leavening agent when it is subsequently mixed in with more dough" (short stories by Jesus, 108, 111).

Yeast expands what it is added to. Leavened bread or congregations are the **expanded product** of the process, not the sum of their ingredients. There is a multiplying and transforming effect with the addition of yeast or sourdough starter.

And then there is this description of the sourdough starter. "Wild yeast and bacteria occur naturally in flour and also in the air we breathe. **By creating a sourdough starter you are essentially cultivating a concentrated source of wild yeast and bacteria which you can then use to make bread and other baked goods**" (<https://pineapplefarmhouse.com/how-does-sourdough-starter-work/> )

While I have more baking aspirations than actual baked goods to show, I like the spiritual insights here.

**In the Kingdom of Heaven, God cultivates concentrated sources of grace for us to grow in faith.**

These are some of my concentrated sources of grace:

- Study — Loving God with my mind, and looking into ideas, messages, or opportunities with curious and critical perspectives.
- Prayer — I experience this as a spiritual gift and as safe & honest time with God.
- Grief — This has been a positive element in my life and ministry. I affirm Susan Piver's observation in "The Importance of Sadness" that "Despair is what happens when you fight sadness. Compassion is what happens when you don't."



Another fascinating insight for me is the amount of flour. Again Dr. Levine writes, "Three measures, in first century terms, is not synonymous with three cups. Three measures of flour is somewhere between forty and sixty pounds (see the New International Version). **The dough would be far too much for one woman to knead on her own, and the yield would be far too much for one person to consume**" (short stories by Jesus, 121).

The Kingdom of Heaven is social and communal, more than any one individual experience or life. It involves all of us.

**What are your concentrated sources of grace?** What has slowly grown and gradually transformed your life and faith? Are you adding these concentrated sources to your spiritual and social lives? What has transformed our congregation?

Let's be ready to join those larger-than-any-one-of-us baking efforts that God has already started as we give thanks for the slow and powerful and nourishing presence of the Kingdom of Heaven as 2025 begins. Amen. Peace, Pastor Jeff

## January 2025 Worship

### **Epiphany Series**

#### **Terms and Conditions for the Church**

(thanks to 1 Corinthians)

#### **January 5 - Epiphany** **Holy Communion**

Christ is for the World, Not Just Us

[Isaiah 60:1-6](#)

[Matthew 2:1-12](#)

#### **January 12 - Baptism of the Lord**

#### **Baptism Remembrance/Anticipation**

God Speaks about Water and So Do We

[Isaiah 43:1-7](#)

[Psalm 29](#) (read with three voices)

[Luke 3:15-17, 21-22](#)

#### **January 19 - Epiphany 2**

#### **\*\*Human Relations Day offering**

The Spirit Activates Our Gifts

[1 Corinthians 12:1-11](#)

#### **January 26 - Epiphany 3**

How About Some Body Positivity?

[1 Corinthians 12:12-31a](#)

## February 2025 Worship

### **Epiphany Series -continued**

#### **February 2 - Epiphany 4** **Holy Communion**

The Church is Nothing without Love  
[1 Corinthians 13:1-13](#)

#### **February 9 - Epiphany 5**

We Stand Up in the Resurrection  
(hymns with "standing" in the title)  
[1 Corinthians 15:1-11](#)

#### **February 16 - Epiphany 6**

*3rd Sunday missions offering*  
Faith is Empty without the Risen Christ

[1 Corinthians 15:12-20](#) NIV (New International Version)

#### **February 23 - Epiphany 7**

We Live with Mystery and Metaphor  
[1 Corinthians 15:35-38, 42-50](#)



## Get a Fish on the Hook and Share Your Ideas

Your leadership board is asking for your input on what we are wanting to do, change, or expand once we get the Mortgage Paid Off. **Write your idea or thoughts on one side of a fish and your name on the other.**

There are no limits to the amount of fish! You may also cast your idea via email to: [office@greenvillefumc.org](mailto:office@greenvillefumc.org)

The time is NOW to make our plans!



**LET'S STAY  
CONNECTED!**

In-Person  
and  
Online Anytime

**STREAMING SERVICES**  
[greenvillefumc.org/watch-live](http://greenvillefumc.org/watch-live)

**ONLINE GIVING**  
[greenvillefumc.org/give](http://greenvillefumc.org/give)

**PRAYER REQUESTS**  
[greenvillefumc.org/prayer-request](http://greenvillefumc.org/prayer-request)

**FACEBOOK GROUP**  
FUMC of Greenville

# Those In Our Thoughts and Prayers

PAGE 4

## Homebound or Minimal Travel

Harley VanHoose  
Liz Campbell  
Judy Nulf  
Tom & Judy VanSyckle  
John Washburn



## RECOVERING AT HOME

Caitlin Jensen  
Bob & Betty Knapp  
Dorothy Sampson

## THOSE WHO HAVE CLAIMED ETERNAL LIFE

Ron DeYoung



## 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 Bailey Conference Room **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!

**PastorChat**



## United Women In Faith

Wednesday January 8<sup>th</sup> 10:00AM Brotherhood Hall

### PROGRAM: The Christmas Elf

*"Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth. Worship the Lord with gladness; come into his presence with singing. Know that the Lord is God. It is he that made us, and we are his;[we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture."*



## United Women In Faith

February 12<sup>th</sup> - 10:00AM Brotherhood Hall

### PROGRAM: Everyday Miracles

*Remember the wonderful works he has done, his miracles, and the judgements he has uttered ... Psalm 105:5*



## Open Arts Adventure – ages 12-100+

- Do you have an art or craft you love or would like to learn?
- Are you looking for inspiration?

Come and share while we discover gifts of creativity in each other and how we may bless others through teaching, gifts, donations, and social connection.

**When:** 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesdays beginning – January 14, 28 and February 11, 25

**Time:** Large open space available from 4:00pm to 8pm. (If Greenville Schools are closed due to weather, we will cancel)

**Where:** Greenville First United Methodist Church -204 W Cass St. Questions Email: [office@greenvillfumc.org](mailto:office@greenvillfumc.org)



Knitting  
Crocheting  
Quilting  
Sewing



## CRAFTERS

**Wednesday  
January 15  
Brotherhood Hall  
12:30 pm**

**Contact  
Sue Matthews  
(616) 754-7765  
\$30.00 Includes  
all Materials**

## Create a Snowman





## Happy New Year, Church Family!

Because our usual meeting night, the 1st Wednesday of each month, falls on New Year's Day, we will meet on Thursday, January 2, at 6:30 in the Conference Room for this month only. Hope to see you there, Stephen Ministers!

Do you experience the winter blues? We would like to be there for you if you need a Christian friend! We really need to offer a Stephen Ministry Training class so that we can meet all the requests and needs that our church family has. If God is speaking to you about this wonderful, individual, confidential ministry, please let Pastor Jeff, Tammy Youmans, Virginia Curtis, the church office, or me know that you are interested in getting trained.

Blessings,  
Barb Perry  
Stephen Leader



## Prayer Warriors Needed!

If you are not already part of our Prayer Chain, you can join!

Text Barb Perry: 231-349-1811

or e-mail: [Grandmadaisybarb@icloud.com](mailto:Grandmadaisybarb@icloud.com)  
to be part of this very important ministry of  
our church. ❤️ 🙏 😊

# Words of Appreciation and Thanks

To: The 1<sup>st</sup> United Methodist Women of Faith:

A big "Thank You" for a beautiful Christmas Tea. The work of many to organize, set-up, and decorate was very much appreciated! The table decorations and candle light were festive!

The desserts and treats were delicious!

A special "Thank You" to all the men who served!

The dancers were wonderful in the sacred way they performed. Singing carols together was a serene and heartfelt way to usher in the Holiday Season.



You are all appreciated for the work you do for the Church.

Sincerely,

*Sherie Kesten*



Many thanks for the thoughtful birthday card. It meant a lot to me. My wish for all is a very Merry Christmas and many blessings in the New Year.

With love,

John Washburn.

*Thank you all*

*for the personalized  
Birthday Card!  
Loved it!*

**Just a little thank you**

*Ben Chapman*



*First time in my life  
she received a greeting  
of any kind from  
so many people; WOW!*



# MISSIONS



across the street & around the world

Missions is looking at a **new missionary**. Our previous missionary, Trobby, has taken a new position within the UMC Missions but is not an active missions person. We have an idea of who we'd like and are sending in an application for her. We'll let you know when a final decision is made. **The breakfast you supported was a great success! Over \$500 was donated by our generous congregation.** That is about what we pay per year for our Compassion Child. Thanks to you!!! **RAVE will be a fill a pew target in the new year.** We have given to them in the past and they have appreciated all you have done. **IM Kids Third Meal** will also be a place we'll ask for support. They provide sack lunches for kids to take home after school. Great need exists right in our community. We are able to change lives by together doing small things. Small things add up to big changes in lives of others. You are an amazing group. Thanks and thanks!!

## Human Relations Day 2025

**Sunday - January 19**

**Make it a day for all God's children. "Happy are people who make peace, because they will be called God's children." – Matthew 5:9, CEB**

In a social justice commentary, the Rev. I. Malik Saafir highlights two questions before The United Methodist Church: **"Will those on the side of the road know us as the church that passed by on the other side? Or will they know us as the church that provides outreach programs that take the risk to heal their wounds?"**

**Human Relations Day is one of six churchwide Special Sundays with offerings of The United Methodist Church.** Human Relations Day calls United Methodists to recognize the right of all God's children in realizing their potential as human beings in relationship with one another. The special offering benefits neighborhood ministries through Community Developers, community advocacy through United Methodist Voluntary Services and work with at-risk teens through the Youth Offender Rehabilitation Program.

Here is a video link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=risGxXqW2IE>

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			Jan 1, 25 Office & Church Closed New Years Day	2 No Bible Study (Conf Rm or Zoom) Office Closed	3	4 9:30am Sampson Family Christmas
5 9:00am Choir Practice 10:00am FUMC Worship 11:15am Pastor Chat (Conf Rm)	6 6:00pm Optimist Club (First United Methodist Church, 204 W Cass St, Greenville, MI 48838)	7 8:00am Men's Breakfast (Big Boy, Greenville) 10:00am Parkinson's Exercise Group	8 10:00am United Women of Faith (Brotherhood) 11:30am Yoga -Beginner & Chair 5:45pm Play Group	9 10:30am Bible Study (Conf Rm or Zoom)	10	11
12 9:00am Choir Practice 10:00am FUMC Worship 11:15am Pastor Chat (Conf Rm)	13 5:45pm Missions Meeting (Conf Rm)	14 8:00am Men's Breakfast (Big Boy, Greenville) 4:00pm Open Arts Adventure	15 11:30am Yoga -Beginner & Chair 1:30pm 1:30 - Crafters (Brotherhood Hall) 5:45pm Play Group	16 10:30am Bible Study (Conf Rm or Zoom) 11:00am Parkinson's Meeting (Brotherhood Hall)	17	18
19 9:00am Choir Practice 10:00am FUMC Worship 11:15am Pastor Chat (Conf Rm)	20 6:00pm Optimist Club (First United Methodist Church, 204 W Cass St, Greenville, MI 48838)	21 8:00am Men's Breakfast (Big Boy, Greenville) 10:00am Parkinson's Exercise Group	22 11:30am Yoga -Beginner & Chair 5:45pm Play Group	23 10:30am Bible Study (Conf Rm or Zoom)	24	25
26 9:00am Choir Practice 10:00am FUMC Worship 11:15am Pastor Chat (Conf Rm)	27 6:30pm Leadership Board Meeting (Conf Rm)	28 8:00am Men's Breakfast (Big Boy, Greenville) 4:00pm Open Arts Adventure	29 11:30am Yoga -Beginner & Chair 5:45pm Play Group	30 10:30am Bible Study (Conf Rm or Zoom)	31	Feb 1

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						Feb 1
2 9:00am Choir Practice 10:00am FUMC Worship 11:15am Pastor Chat (Conf Rm)	3 6:00pm Optimist Club (First United Methodist Church, 204 W Cass St, Greenville, MI 48838)	4 8:00am Men's Breakfast (Big Boy, Greenville) 10:00am Parkinson's Exercise Group	5 11:30am Yoga -Beginner & Chair 5:45pm Play Group 6:00pm Stephen Minister Leader	6 10:30am Bible Study (Conf Rm or Zoom)	7	8
9 9:00am Choir Practice 10:00am FUMC Worship 11:15am Pastor Chat (Conf Rm)	10 5:45pm Missions Meeting (Conf Rm)	11 8:00am Men's Breakfast (Big Boy, Greenville) 4:00pm Open Arts Adventure	12 10:00am United Women of Faith (Brotherhood) 11:30am Yoga -Beginner & Chair 5:45pm Play Group	13 10:30am Bible Study (Conf Rm or Zoom)	14	15
16 9:00am Choir Practice 10:00am FUMC Worship 11:15am Pastor Chat (Conf Rm)	17 6:00pm Optimist Club (First United Methodist Church, 204 W Cass St, Greenville, MI 48838)	18 8:00am Men's Breakfast (Big Boy, Greenville) 10:00am Parkinson's Exercise Group	19 11:30am Yoga -Beginner & Chair 5:45pm Play Group	20 10:30am Bible Study (Conf Rm or Zoom) 11:00am Parkinson's Meeting (Brotherhood Hall)	21	22
23 9:00am Choir Practice 10:00am FUMC Worship 11:15am Pastor Chat (Conf Rm)	24 7:00pm Leadership Board Meeting (Conf Rm)	25 8:00am Men's Breakfast (Big Boy, Greenville) 4:00pm Open Arts Adventure	26 11:30am Yoga -Beginner & Chair 5:45pm Play Group	27 10:30am Bible Study (Conf Rm or Zoom)	28	Mar 1



## January Birthdays

Larry Parker	01/06
Harley VanHoose	01/07
Vanessa Palmer	01/10
Richard Palmer	01/18
Jamee Gunn	01/18
Kathryn Youmans	01/18
Tammy Youmans	01/18
Martin McDonough	01/20
Barb Parker	01/21
Andrew Raven	01/24

## February Birthdays

Virginia Curtis	02/07
Bob Hansen	02/08
Sharyl Hutchinson	02/10
Robert Schuster	02/10
Janice Lamborne	02/13
Tamara Larsen	02/15
Russel Harmelink	02/18
Emily Raven	02/18



## January

Dick and Jemery Palmer	01/20
Homer and Judy Shrader	01/30

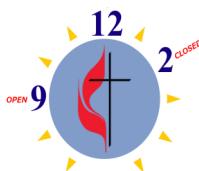
## February

John and Clarice Thorlund	2/02
---------------------------	------

---

*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.*

Greenville First United Methodist Church  
204 West Cass Street  
Greenville, MI 48838



#### **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 Connection is **Thursday, February 13,** Please forward your submissions to the church office by calling 616-754-8532 or email at: [office@greenvillefumc.org](mailto:office@greenvillefumc.org).