

THE BLACKSTONE VALLEY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Our Mission is to change peoples' lives
through a relationship with Jesus Christ

April 2009



From The Pastor's Heart

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

A few Sundays ago I officially introduced the confirmands and their mentors to the faith community. Everyone was invited to ask the youth anything about their faith, being a United Methodist, or what they believed. No one had questions for them during worship, but as I was greeting folks on their way out, a couple of the confirmands were waiting to talk to me.

Remembering my invitation, one of the ladies in line turned to them and asked, "So how is your relationship with Jesus?" Well, as you can imagine, one of the youth pretended he wasn't there by hiding behind some papers he was holding. But, after a little while, the other young man said something like, "You know, I think it's better since I've been in the confirmation class..."

Since Sunday, I have been thinking about the woman's question. I think it's a good question to reflect upon as we come to the last weeks of Lent.

So, how is your relationship with Jesus Christ today?

Think about that question for a minute.

You might have noticed that there has been an ongoing theme during this Lenten season. The theme has even been brought up by the *Momentum For Life* study. It was mentioned again during our last "Dream Team" meeting. And just last week, I again was struck by the same theme through a video from the United Methodist Communications.

The theme is this:

"Church" is not a place you go to for one hour just on Sunday morning!

Do you get it? "Church" is really who you are seven days a week, 24 hours a day. "Church" is who you are when you are awake or asleep; tired or full of energy; in a good mood or a bad mood! You don't stop being "church" because you leave the building. It's who you are as you wait in line at the grocery store; it's how you respond to the driver who cuts you off on your way to work; it's how you treat your body; it's how you spend your time; it's how you talk to your kids when you are angry; it's how you settle an argument with a friend, co-worker or family member; it's how you care for those who are hurting; it's how you partner with God to care for the world and it's people; it's even in how you do your job.

"Church" is who you are, how you behave, what you believe, what you say --- or what you don't say. It's not a building.

Whew! That's hard work isn't it?!

So, how is your relationship with Jesus Christ today?

Does it need work? As we come to the last days of our Lenten journey let us once again re-focus our lives so that our whole life will be "...a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God." I wonder if perhaps then answering the question might be a little easier?

Grace & Peace,

Rev. Michele

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Special points of interest:

- Summer Fellowship Planning
- Keep Confirmands and Mentors in your prayers



Confirmands & Mentors

Please keep the following Confirmands and their Mentors in your prayers:

<u>Confirmand</u>	<u>Mentor</u>
Abbey Barkley	Peggy Codner
Zach Beauchaine	Charlie Ewers
Grant Brown	Steve Shangraw
Chloe Mawn	Karen Albright
Cassie McKeon	Becky Brower
Kellen Murphy	Bethany Cammarano
Nathaniel Wilson	Mike Sherry
Brandon Wood	Dean Fortin

The youth will be confirmed on Pentecost Sunday, May 31st

Christian Education

Sunday, April 12, Easter Sunday Program for the Children: Crafts, Easter Egg Hunt and treats for the children. This will be held during church services on Easter Sunday during regular Sunday School Time

Sunday, May 17, Children's Day. Sunday School will end for the year with this event.

Sunday, May 31st, Confirmation

Holy Week and Easter

April 5 ~ Passion / Palm Sunday

April 9 ~ Maundy Thursday Service at 7:00PM

April 10 ~ Good Friday Afternoon Ecumenical Service from 12 noon – 3PM – Pleasant Street Christian Reform Church. This will be sponsored by the Northbridge Association of Churches and different pastors will speak on “The Last Words of Christ.” The public is invited to enter or leave any time during the three hours.

April 11 ~ Easter Egg Hunt at 10am at Purgatory Chasm. Meet at the large grass area behind the Visitors' Center. All ages are welcome. Come and join the fun. Refreshments will be served.

April 12 ~ Easter Sunday Sunrise Ecumenical Service at 6:45 AM at Whitinsville Town Square (Next to Trinity Episcopal Church). The public is invited and refreshments will be served after the service. In case of inclement weather, the service will be held at Trinity Church. Again, this is sponsored by the Northbridge Association of Churches.

April 12 ~ Easter Sunday: BVUMC Easter Service at 10AM

Easter Sunday Program for the Children: Crafts, Easter Egg Hunt and treats for the children. This will be held during church services on Easter Sunday during regular Sunday School Time

Used Winter Clothing

The Northbridge Association of Churches is still collecting used winter clothing for the homeless. Drop-offs may be made at the Village Congregational Church.

Weight At The Cross

Our Weight at the Cross (WATC) group will be setting up different opportunities for movement like walking groups, line dancing, round dancing (see below), yoga, biking, etc. Keep an eye out for these activities. All are welcome! Our next meeting will be held on **Monday, April 27, at 6:45** in the old Fellowship Hall. The topic is to be announced. Mark your calendar!

"Weight at the Cross" will be sponsoring another night of country round dancing on **April 1st at 7:00 pm** in the old fellowship hall. Jim and Joyce Gallagher will do a demonstration of five different dances. Everyone is invited to attend even if you just want to see the demonstration and see what it is all about. It is great exercise for anyone. You don't have to have a partner and we will not force you to dance if you just want to watch. Come one, come all.

Also, if you're interested in setting up a walking group, please contact Danielle Wilson.

Summer Fellowship

Spring is here! Let's start thinking about summer!

Summer Fellowship will return for the months of June, July and August. Laural Plourde will be putting together a calendar of events you may want to attend with your fellow church-goers to have some fun this summer. There will be things to do around the Blackstone Valley and events people choose to host in their homes. If you have suggestions for places to get together or if you'd like to host an event, please email Laural at lauralplourde@charter.net

Start Thinking Summer....Open House Tours of Camp Aldersgate



Camp Aldersgate is a Methodist-owned campground 30 minutes away. Camping experiences are offered for grades 1 - 12 from June to August. Open House dates are April 26 and May 17, both 1-4 p.m. Brochures are available. Talk to the many folks in our church who have had wonderful camping experiences at Camp Aldersgate.

From Tina Beauchaine: Pregnancy and Infant Loss Support Group

Each year in the United States there are approximately 900,000 miscarriages, 26,000 stillbirths and 19,000 neonatal losses (death of a baby before one month). Because many of these losses are early, people tend to minimize their importance and impact, but they can be devastating. Often, no one talks about these losses.

A couple of months ago, on one of those awful, snowy, winter days, Rev. Michele preached about answering your calling. I decided that I have a calling to begin a support group for anyone who has experienced a pregnancy or infant loss due to miscarriage, stillbirth, neonatal loss, SIDS or other causes.

The group will meet the first Saturday of each month beginning in April here at BVUMC from 10am to 11:30am. Everyone is welcome. It is my hope that more than just moms will attend. Often fathers also feel these losses more strongly than anyone realizes. Grandparents grieve not only for the loss of their grandchild but they hurt for their bereaved children as well. I hope the group draws members from the Blackstone Valley and beyond.

Please pass this information on to anyone you think might find it helpful. Also, if you've experienced a miscarriage in your past and you'd like to attend a meeting as a mentor, let me know. There are few resources available about these losses. It can be very helpful to talk to someone whose loss is not as recent to find out how they managed to deal with the loss.

I'd like to thank everyone in our congregation for their support both in regards to my own losses and in my starting this support group.

Love & Peace,

Tina Beauchaine

THE DREAM TEAM

The Dream Team is a group of volunteers/ interested folks meeting regularly in an effort to identify a church-wide mission project(s) for us. The group has just completed a process that will help us choose a project that will appeal to our faith community. Just what is it that God would have us do? You will be hearing more about this as the team prays and works together to identify and give substance to the ideas that seem to demand highest priority and present the most workable solutions. Keep the Dream Team in your prayers and join us at the next meeting if this challenge has interest for you. The **next meeting is Wednesday, May 6 at 7pm in Faith Hall.**



Prayer Shawl And Blanket Ministry

The Prayer Shawl and Blanket Ministry will meet on Sunday, April 5 and Sunday, May 3 (first Sunday of each month) from 4:30 PM to 6:00 PM. Meetings are held in Faith Hall at the church on 61 Linwood Avenue, Whitinsville, Massachusetts.

Come and join us as we work on projects for those in need. If you can't knit or crochet, you can learn here! We also need people who can tie knots for the blankets! We have a marvelous time. Join us!

Great Volunteer(s) Opportunity for the Uxbridge Food Pantry

The People First Food pantry of Uxbridge has recently been approved to receive USDA food on a weekly basis. This food will play an important part of providing for those in need. USDA will provide us with meat and eggs and many other items every week. We are looking for people to help us with the shopping that needs to be done each week. The volunteer will have to use their own vehicle (large car or a truck) and there may be some heavy (but not too heavy) lifting involved. The shoppers will pick up USDA food and deliver it back to the food pantry. Shopping is done at The Worcester County Food Bank located on Rte 9 in Shrewsbury. We are hoping whoever signs up can make their own "team" of shoppers that can help them on their specific week. Only one of each group's shoppers will need to attend the orientation. There is a "shopper orientation" at the Worcester County Food Bank on April 21st. Shopping must be done during their business hours 9-3 Monday thru Friday. If you or someone you know would like to volunteer for this opportunity to help those in need, please have them contact Denise Mussulli through e-mail at thepeoplefirstfoodpantry@msn.com or call 278-5506.

Thanks for all you do and continue to do on behalf of the families we serve!

Denise Mussulli
Coordinator

BLUE BAG FOOD DRIVE FOR APRIL

The "Blue Bag Food Drive" for April will be for the Douglas Food Pantry. Food will be collected on **Sunday, April 5th.**

Items needed are spaghetti sauce, pasta, canned vegetables, soups, macaroni & cheese and personal items such as toilet paper, paper towels, toothpaste, etc. Peanut butter is not needed at this time. Please pick up your blue bags Sunday March 29th at the regular service

The Walk to Emmaus

Are you curious about the Walk to Emmaus? We have had more than 15 people from our church family attend a Walk to Emmaus weekend, and often someone will say, “Can you tell me what it’s like?” This short article will try to answer some of the most common questions.

What exactly is “The Walk to Emmaus?” It is a spiritual renewal program intended to develop Christian disciples and leaders, who return to and strengthen their local church. It is sometimes referred to as a short course in Christianity – but not in the history of Christianity. The program’s approach offers a serious consideration of the model of Christ’s servanthood, and encourages Christ’s disciples to act in ways appropriate to being “a servant of all.” (read Luke 24:13-35) The effect is that the weekend can give the participant an intense awareness of God’s grace, the power of prayer, and Christian love.

What happens on a Walk? The weekend of a Walk starts about 7:00pm on a Thursday night and ends about 7:00pm on Sunday night – a 72 hour experience. Over that time you will hear fifteen short talks given by lay people and clergy on different topics, such as God’s grace, personal priorities, Christian discipleship and action, and what it means to be “the church.” Following each talk you get the opportunity to discuss and share your thoughts on the subject with other members of your small group. The weekend also includes periods of prayer and meditation, singing, special times of worship, and daily celebration of Holy Communion.

When are the Walks? The weekends are usually held twice a year, in the spring and fall. There are separate weekends for men and women.

What is expected of me after I attend? There are no specific requirements – it is really up to you. Emmaus leaders encourage participants to meet regularly in small groups, during and after the weekend of the Walk. The members of the small groups both challenge and support one another in faithful living. The three-day Emmaus experience and follow-up groups strengthen and renew Christian people as disciples of Jesus Christ and as active members of the body of Christ in mission to the world. In this way, participants seek to Christianize their environments of family, job, and community through the ministry of their congregations.

Why are some parts of the Walk so secretive? None of the Walk experience is a secret, but there are many wonderful and loving surprises for you to experience. Previous participants try to be careful not to give away those surprises, and sometimes that comes across as “secrets.” Rest assured that this is not a secret society, a cult, an alternative to your local church, or anything other than a chance to experience Christ alive in the world today.

Is there anything else I should know? If you have specific questions beyond those in this article, ask any of the folks listed below. If you’re trying to decide whether you should go, pray about it. Ask God if this is the right time for you. Remember there is something God wants you to learn. Ask Him to open your ears, your mind and your heart so that you will know what He wants you to learn.

For more information ask: Reverend Michele, Charlie Ewers, Karen Albright, Shawn Brown, Peg Codner, Lee Ducharme, Barbara Fortin, Dean Fortin, Mark Gentry, Tim Hall, Carolyn Mitchell, Helen Pimentel, Russ Pimentel, Audry Sherry, Mike Sherry, Pam Spencer, Danielle Wilson, Daniel Wilson

Good And Faithful Servants

This month we salute the Wilson Family as our Good and Faithful Servants. Both Danielle and Daniel Wilson have been actively involved in our faith community since they came to BVUMC some 10+ years ago. Christian music is very important to them. Both are key members of Resound, our contemporary music group. Daniel plays the bass guitar and on occasion sings. Danielle plays the flute, rhythm instruments and sings. She also keeps track of the music, does copying, and scheduling, and generally keeps everyone in line.

In addition to Resound, The Power of Praise services were, in part, their inspiration. This group provided evening services once a month with singing, skits, Bible readings and personal stories to inspire.

The couple also started a youth group in our church at a time when we had no programs in place for our youth.

About three years ago, Danielle began our Prayer Shawl Ministry, which makes and gives shawls as reminders of God's love in times of chaos, need, births, and transitions. This powerful ministry has reached out to family and friends around the country.

This winter Danielle started the Weight at the Cross Ministry. This group is working to create healthier bodies through nutrition and exercise. Exercise opportunities abound.

Their son, Nathaniel, following in his parents' footsteps, organized buckets of supplies through United Methodist Missions for use by flood victims.

And both Nathaniel and Arielle are regular acolytes at Sunday morning services.

We are thankful and delighted to have the Wilson Family in our faith community, you good and faithful servants.

Women's Ministries

Women, Work and Worship (formerly known as Women's Craft Day) meets the fourth Saturday of each month from 9am to noon in Faith Hall. Currently we are creating handmade articles to sell at our Clam Chowder Luncheon in November. If you are currently working on a personal project, bring it with you. You are not required to work on group projects! We want you to come and enjoy fellowship and fun. The bonds that we make while working together will strengthen our faith community. Women, Work and Worship will meet **April 25**. Bring a friend, bring a neighbor, but best of all bring yourself!!



One Dress at a Time is currently part of Women Work and Worship. This is a new mission project started by Bev Wheeler and Peg Codner. We are making dresses for disadvantaged young girls in sizes 5-10. We cannot change the financial situation in a family, but maybe we can delight a girl with a new dress made just for her. Dresses are not high on the priority list for a family with minimal money to spend for clothes. A pair of jeans are much more practical. We have set up a distribution network. We do not expect to ever know to whom these dresses are given. Our mission is to make the dresses and get them to people who can connect a dress to a little girl. Can you help? We are looking for women who would be like to be a part of this ministry. Are your sewing skills rusty? Bev and Peg are more than willing to help you polish them up. Questions? E-mail Peg at pscodner@juno.com.



Celebrations

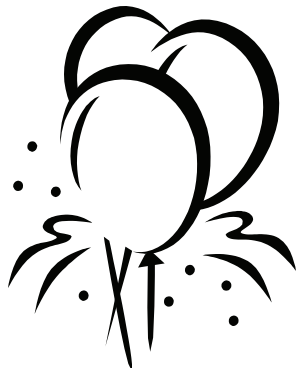


April Birthdays



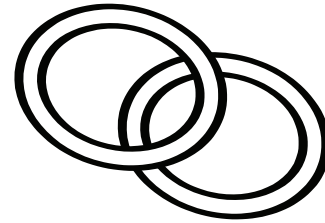
- 1- Steve Shangraw
- 2- Carolyn Mitchell
- 3- Susan Wood
- 5- James Viana
- 11- Tom Farley
Ruth Parsons
- 12- Brian Niro

- 13- Alex Wheeler
- 14- Vicki Warner
- 15- Wade Warner
- 19- Jean Gilpatrick
- 21- Florence Phillips
- 22- William Hoover
- 23- LuAnn Belseth
- 24- Carolyn Dougan
- 25- Susan Leighton
- 26- Beth Hall
Bob Marseglia



- 27- Stephen Mochun Sr
Ben Wheeler
- 30- Harold Gilmore
Tim Hall

April Anniversaries



- 1- Jean & Lew Gilpatrick
- 4- Roberta & Dick Trier
- 7- Diane & Steve Belle
- 9- Melanie & Tom Bagaglio
- 15- Marie & George Henderson
- 18- Vicki & Alexandre Viana
- 22- Sylvia & Ken Downing



Please help the Communications Team keep the Birthday/Anniversary list up-to-date. Should you notice an error or omission, please let us know.



THE BLACKSTONE VALLEY
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

APRIL 2009

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 7PM Weight at the Cross (OFH)	2 6:30PM Girl Scouts (OFH) 7PM Momentum for Life (Activity Room) 7PM Chancel Choir	3 9:30AM Momentum for Life (Activity Room)	4 7:30AM AA Meeting (OFH) 10AM Pregnancy/Infant Loss Support Group (Faith Hall) 5PM & 6:30PM Boy Scout Spaghetti Supper (Faith Hall)
5 PASSION/PALM SUNDAY 10AM Sunday Worship Sunday School Blue Bag Sunday 4:30-6PM Prayer Shawl Ministry 6PM Youth Group	6 6:30PM Confirmation Class—Activity Room	7 6:30PM Brownies- Fellowship Hall	8 6:30PM Capital Campaign— Faith Hall 7PM Resound Rehearsal	9 6:30PM Girl Scouts 7PM Service of Tenebrae	10 Noon-3PM Good Friday Service at Pleasant Street Christian Reform Church	11 7:30AM AA Meeting 9:00AM Finance Committee Meeting 10AM Easter Egg Hunt— Purgatory Chasm
12 EASTER SUNDAY 6:45 AM NAC Easter Sunrise Service 10AM Sunday Worship Sunday School	13 6:30PM-8PM United Methodist Men	14 6:30PM Brownies- Fellowship Hall 7:15PM Women's Study-Activities Room	15 12 Noon Young at Hearts- Faith Hall 7PM Resound Rehearsal	16 6:30PM Girl Scouts 7PM Chancel Choir	17	18 7:30AM AA Meeting
19 10AM Sunday Worship Sunday School 6PM Youth Group	20	21 6:30PM Brownies- Fellowship Hall	22 7PM Resound Rehearsal	23 6:30PM Girl Scouts 7PM Chancel Choir	24	25 7:30AM AA Meeting 9AM-12PM Women, Work & Worship
26 10AM Sunday Worship Sunday School 1PM-4PM Camp Aldersgate Open House 6PM Youth Group	27 6:45 PM Weight at the Cross (OFH)	28 6:30PM Brownies- Fellowship Hall 7:15PM Women's Study-Activities Room	29 7PM Resound Rehearsal	30 6:30PM Girl Scouts 7PM Chancel		