

THE BLACKSTONE VALLEY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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

May 2009



From The Pastor's Heart

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Adam Hamilton, Senior Pastor of the UM Church of the Resurrection writes

"...each of us have been given gifts by the Holy Spirit—Spiritual tools. Some of these gifts are mysterious—we are not exactly sure how they work or what purpose they serve. Others are readily identified and easy to use. But all are meant to be used, and not simply kept safely hidden away."

In my own ministry I have seen something very special happen over and over again! When people discover their spiritual gifts, the work of ministry we do in the church just takes off! I have seen that when people are aware of their particular gift and are using that gift in their ministry, their ministry is more effective and they bring a joyful passion to that ministry! It is amazing what can happen in congregations where people truly know and find the ministry they are gifted for!

In this newsletter there is an article written by Peggy Codner about the evolving ministry of "One Dress at a Time." There is also a short invitation to join a new ministry "Feeding Our Flock" that is being organized by Audry Sherry. I could go on and on in naming the many ministries we are involved in! But, in the case

of each of our successful ministries, the right people have been aligned with the right task—and because of this, not only is the work they are doing more effective, but they themselves receive a great joy! They have found the very ministry God has gifted them for.

In an effort to give every person in this faith community the opportunity to learn about what God has gifted them for, we will be offering the study "Serving from the Heart: Finding your Gifts and Talents for Service." This is an 8 week study that we hope will help you discover your spiritual gifts and begin to use them in the church. There will be both an evening and morning class. Classes begin Thursday evening, May 7th and Friday morning May 8th and continue through June 25/26th. Both classes will have co-leaders. Many thanks to Dean Fortin and Danielle Wilson for their willingness to use their gifts in this way! I am asking that you make the commitment to the study by buying the participant book at the cost of \$11. They will be available at the first class! Come and discover your own unique gifts and talents for service in the church!

Blessings,
Rev. Michele

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



Ministry Opportunities

From Rev. Michele

As I look ahead to **May/June**, I see a need that maybe you can fill! As you read in my letter, beginning on May 8th there will be a new study called **“Serving from the Heart.”** In order for some of our moms to attend this study, we are in need for someone to watch the kids for 1 ½ hours on those 8 Friday mornings. Is this a ministry that you are feeling called to do? If so, please give me a call.

Also, as we head into the summer months, our formal Sunday School will be coming to an end on May 17th. We have been thinking about a way to help make summer worship a fun learning environment for our Preschool – 2nd graders. In order to help the kids **“Hang On To Their Faith”** through the summer we will provide a special time for the younger children to have their own scripture story and craft time while the adults are listening to the sermon! The children will be dismissed before the scriptures are read. The time would include a scripture story and a fun summer crafts and maybe some games! Sue Wood has agreed to plan and provide the necessary material for each Sunday’s activity. *All we need are folks to help out!* The Sundays that we would like to have covered by an adult volunteer are **June 14, 21, 28, July 12, 19, 26, August 9, 16, 23.** The Confirmation youth are invited to sign up to help out. If the Holy Spirit is tugging at you to take a Sunday and participate in this special ministry for our children, please contact Rev. Michele (508-234-2275)

pastor.bvumc@verizon.net or Sue Wood (508-266-2099) SGW0719@yahoo.com.

Sunday School

On **May 17th** as our formal Sunday School comes to an end, we will be celebrating Children’s Day. This year our theme will be **“Hang On To Your Faith.”** The day promises to be filled with joy and excitement as the Sunday school children provide leadership for our worship service. Don’t miss the fun!

Confirmation 2009

Confirmation Day, May 31st is quickly approaching!

On behalf of all the Confirmands I want to invite the entire congregation to be present on this very special day! There will be a very special fellowship celebration following the service! Our confirmands will be leading worship on this Pentecost Sunday and will be sharing their faith statements with you. Please keep the following youth and their mentors in your prayers as they continue to prepare for this special day:

Abbey Barkley, mentor Peggy Codner

Zach Beauchaine, mentor Charlie Ewers

Grant Brown mentor Steve Shangraw

Chloe Mawn, mentor Karen Albright

Cassie McKeon, mentor Becky Brower

Kellen Murphy, mentor Bethany Cammarano

Nathaniel Wilson, mentor Mike Sherry

Brandon Wood, mentor Dean Fortin

As part of our preparation for Confirmation day, the confirmands and their mentors will be reintroduced to you again on **May 17th** during worship. At that time the mentors will choose a confirmation cross for their confirmand. The mentor will then be the keeper of the cross as they continue to pray for their confirmand. On the day of confirmation, the mentor will deliver the cross to the confirmand’s parents, who will then present it to their youth. Don’t miss this exciting day!

HEIFER INTERNATIONAL

The Sunday School children have been given information sheets and a collection carton for Heifer International. Since 1944, Heifer International has helped struggling families become self-reliant through gifts of livestock and training. Recipients pass on the gift of an animal's offspring to others in need, widening the circle of hope. Heifer collection boxes are to be returned to your child's Sunday School teacher by May 10. Thank you.

NORTHBRIDGE ASSOCIATION OF CHURCHES

Baccalaureate for Northbridge High School graduates will be held on Thursday, May 21, at 7:00 p.m. at St. Patrick's Church. Rev. Rick Underwood, pastor of the United Presbyterian Church, will be the speaker. The public is invited.

The ecumenical Vacation Bible School will be July 27 - 31 at the Village Congregational Church. Children ages 4 and up are invited to attend. Youth who have completed grade 6 or older may participate as helpers.

WOMEN'S BOOK STUDY

Women's Book Study is meeting every other Tuesday from 7:15 to 8:30pm. Our upcoming dates are May 12, May 26 and June 9. Currently, we are discussing The Shack. Come join us. All are welcome.

The next book we will be reading is A Woman's Call to Prayer by Elizabeth George.

PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY

We knit, we crochet, we tie knots and we even quilt prayer shawls of many descriptions.

Our shawls are made of many different kinds of yarn, fleece blankets...cut and tied or embroidered and small quilts. We join together for this ministry and for the fellowship. We will be more than happy to teach you a skill that will allow you to have the satisfaction of making something that will bring comfort to someone in need. Our shawls are given to members of our church but many go out into our community and beyond. We meet from 4:30 to 6:00pm in Faith Hall on Sunday, May 3 and Sunday June 7.

WEIGHT AT THE CROSS

Weight At The Cross is a group of believers with a desire to lose weight and get healthy. Our next meeting will be on April 27 at 6:45PM. If you have any questions, please contact Danielle Wilson at 508-883-2547.

Round dancing with Jim and Joyce Gallagher continues on May 13 and 27.

THE EVOLVING STORY OF A MINISTRY

By Peg Codner

Let's begin at the beginning. Bev Wheeler and I renewed a friendship from years ago. We both felt a real connection to each other! She wrote me a note nearly two years ago and said that she felt that God had something special for the two of us. Little did we know! Both of us had reached a point in our lives and in our faith where it was time to give back. This story begins with a search for an appropriate focus. What are we going to do? The project needs to use our personal talents. There needs to be a confidence in skills and a good match between two creators and product. Pray about it! And then pray some more. We need to be able to use our talent to help others. Independently, we had been looking at the Linus Quilt project. It just did not feel right. Prayer helped me and Bev to discern what might be right for us.

Time for more prayer, it had become our constant companion. Making dreams a reality is not for the shy and timid. Trust in the Lord! Bev had seen an article about a woman in Arizona who had begun making dresses for little girls and giving them free to those who may have never had a dress. The program was called "One Dress at a Time". We did our research. We talked to God about it. We felt that this was something we could do for the long haul. We both love to sew. Really, we LOVE to sew. The thought of a little girl never having a dress was inconceivable. We could not change a family's circumstances or financial situation, but maybe we could make a little girl smile and feel pretty.

We started in the fall of 2009. We needed to have a few dresses (inventory) before we could go public. Our plan was modest. We wanted to begin offering free dresses in our community through the schools and social services. She did not know it at the time, but our plan included Luanne Belseth. If she could not help us we did have a plan "B". Luanne agreed to inform the two elementary school nurses and her social services contact about our plan. Praise the Lord. It was important to Bev and me to begin our ministry locally. Our dreams saw this becoming a ministry of the Blackstone Valley United Methodist Church. Our strength comes from the Lord.

Questions. What if we make dresses and no one wants them? Our philosophy was to begin small and deal with today and then tomorrow and then the following day. Prayer had led us this far. Trust. Have faith. Do you remember the study we did as a faith community that asked us to think and act exponentially? Wow! That is scary and exciting in the same breath. We presented our Dress Ministry plan to Church Council in January 2009 and it was accepted. Our "middleman", Luanne, made our dress ministry public in February. Three stitchers enthusiastically joined us. Now there are five of us sewing. The stitchers buy fabric and patterns. There is no cost to anyone else. But, oh, Lord is there a need? These dresses are made with the love of Jesus Christ. We expect no thanks and have no knowledge of who is receiving a dress. Our ministry is to create and send the dresses out into the community. This is our ministry...Yes, Lord. Yes, Lord. Yes, yes, Lord.

Sunday, April 26, 2009, nine dresses graced the sanctuary. During the service the dresses were blessed. On Monday the dresses moved out into our community. On Friday nine dresses had little girls. Also by Friday we had requests for seven more dresses. PRAISE THE LORD!

Our thanks to Joyce Gallagher and Bunny Shangraw and to our special friend, Pat Mahoney for the dresses they have made. They are part of the sewing sweatshop called "One Dress at a Time". Bev and I have talked about how we feel blessed by the path we are walking down and blessed by our friendship. We seem to complement each other. Bev keeps me grounded when my creativity flies off in too many directions. And I am teaching Bev to fly! We feel that we have been in training for this ministry for most of our lives. Faith, Hope and Love!

In the next newsletter we will share some of the poignant stories this ministry is generating.

Summer Fellowship

Hope everyone is looking forward to summer!!
Mark your calendars with the following dates.



Sunday, June 7 – Lunch after church at the Valley Café in Whitinsville

Saturday, June 13 – Southwick's Zoo – meet at the picnic tables behind the Zebra Café at Noon.

Friday, June 19 – West End Creamery – 7:00pm for mini-golf and ice cream (or just ice cream!)

Saturday, June 27 – Cook-Out at the Plourde's at noon. We will supply hot dogs and hamburgers. Please bring a dish to share. R.S.V.P. by June 20 to laurelplourde@charter.net

Please contact Laural Plourde for more information, to R.S.V.P., or to find out who is attending an upcoming event. If you have a suggestion of a place to get together, please e-mail lauralplourde@charter.net.

Blue Bag Food Drive for May

Sunday, May 3, 2009, we will be placing our offerings of food in the front of the church. Items needed are: pasta (except spaghetti), canned pasta, Ramen noodles, macaroni and cheese, canned fruit, apple sauce, gravy, beef stew, canned peas and carrots, mayonnaise, ketchup, mustard, relish, salad dressing, pancake mix, syrup, grape jelly, cake/brownie mix, boxed potatoes, crackers, cookies, and sugar

Items not needed are Corn Flakes, Rice Krispies, peanut butter, canned corn, canned green beans, rice, spaghetti sauce and spaghetti.

Please attach one of the labels provided to each food item.

P.S. Food will be gratefully accepted even if you do not have a "blue bag"! The bags are always available in the back of the sanctuary.

FEED OUR FLOCK

Jesus is called the Great Shepherd and we are His flock. Depending on life events, we all need help in getting the physical and spiritual nourishment we need. The purpose behind a new ministry, "Feeding Our Flock", is to help with physical nourishment. Members of our congregation may volunteer to provide a meal for another member or family when circumstances suggest a helping hand might be in order. Circumstances such as an injury, illness, a new family member or even welcoming a new family member might make the gift of a meal a real blessing. If you are interested in volunteering or want more information, please contact Audrey Sherry at 508-476-2792 or audsherry@yahoo.com.

Good & Faithful Servants

Women, Work & Worship

We have put together a tentative schedule of projects that we are planning work on during our Saturday mornings together. We thought you might like to have some advance notice.

Saturday, April 25 finish 2 small bags and hopefully make 2 more

Saturday, May 23 altering and decorating sweatshirts

Saturday, June 13 work on sweatshirts and sew dresses

Saturday, June 27 sweatshirts and start aprons

Saturday, July 11 finish aprons and sew dresses

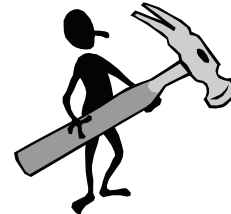
Saturday, July 25 work on tote bags

Saturday, August 8 tote bags and sew dresses

Saturday, August 22 pot holders and table runners

You will notice that we have added some Saturdays. These are the second Saturdays of the month. We felt the need for additional time to coach beginning sewers in making dresses. Our fourth Saturdays will not change. There will be stitching projects, dresses and projects for non-sewers. We'll give it a try!

The Easter Service was outstanding! This community of faith says thank you and gives a standing ovation to our choir, our Resound, our Joyful Noise, and our organist/choir director Todd Marston. The hours of practice, coming to rehearsals directly from work, and the devotion to the music in our sacred space leaves the rest of us in awe. This effort was not just for this Easter. You put this effort in all around the year. For this we again say thank you. We are blessed by the music we hear Sunday after Sunday.



CORRECTION!

A correction to information in the April Newsletter: For information on The Walk to Emmaus 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, Dixi Talke, Ray Talke, Danielle Wilson, Daniel Wilson.

Bishop's Day
On
Central Massachusetts District

May 19, 2009 at First UMC, Framingham

LIVING A "YES, WE CAN FAITH"

in a

"NO, WE CAN'T TIMES"

- | | |
|------------------|---|
| 2:30 p.m. | Registration/Gathering/Fellowship |
| 2:45 p.m. | Worship |
| 3:00 – 5:00 p.m. | Clergy Session with Bishop Weaver |
| 5:30 – 6:30 p.m. | Dinner with <u>clergy and laity</u> - \$6.00 donation |
| 6:30 – 8:30 p.m. | Laity and Clergy Session |
| 8:45 p.m. | Adjourn |

Register attendance and for dinner by May 14th to District Office

508-853-1895 or cmadistrict@charter.net

\$6.00 suggested donation for dinner payable May 19th

Clergy are expected to attend both sessions

Childcare made available upon request. Pre-register at District Office

Directions to First, Framingham - (508) 877-2151

FROM THE WEST or From Framingham Center: Take Route 9 and go north on Edgell Rd. Then travel east on Brook Street to the church.

FROM Route 30 / Mass Pike / Or Route 9: Travel north on Route 126 to Central St. Turn Left onto Central. Turn Right at the first light onto Water St.



Celebrations



May Birthdays



- 2- Jessica Bell
- 3- Marilyn Scott
- 4- Heather Brown
- 5- Paul Wheeler
William Leighton
Courtney Oosterman
- 6- David Harris

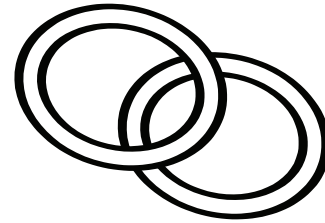
- 10- Tyler Coffey
- 11- Jeff Allard
- 12- Gerry Boudreau
Debbie King
- 14- Jordan Thompson
- 18- Ray Talke
Brian Stevens
- 19- Katie Barkley
- 20- Sarah Spencer
Will Brown III
- 22- Dick Trier



- 24- Hester Kosiba
- 26- Gary Wood
Joe Cicero Jr.
- 30. Andrew Squier
- 31- Todd Richards



May Anniversaries



- 1- Katie & Charlie Rollins
Heather & Pat Mawn
- 2- Beth & John Barkley
- 3- Marilyn & Alex Scott
- 12- Laural & Derek Plourde
- 18- Susan & Richard Leighton
- 21- Kathy & Steve Oosterman



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 9:30AM Momentum for Life (Activity Room)	2 7:30AM AA Meeting (OFH) 8AM Trustee Clean UP Day 10AM Pregnancy/Infant Loss Support Group 1PM District Lay Speaking Course
3 10AM Sunday Worship Blue Bag Sunday 4:30-6PM Prayer Shawl Ministry 6PM Youth Group	4 6:30PM Church Council Meeting	5	6 6:30PM Capital Campaign— Faith Hall 7PM	7 7 PM Serving from the Heart 7PM Girl Scouts	8 9:30AM Serving from the Heart	9 7:30AM AA Meeting 9:00AM Finance Committee Meeting
10 10AM Sunday Worship Sunday School Return Heifer Int'l Boxes 6PM Youth Group	11 6:30PM-8PM United Methodist	12 7:15PM Women's Study-Activities Room	13 12 Noon Young at Hearts 3:30PM Peace of Bread 7PM Weight at the Cross Round Dancing	14 7PM Serving from the Heart 7PM Girl Scouts 7PM Chancel Choir	15 9:30AM Serving from the Heart	16 7:30AM AA Meeting
17 10AM Sunday Worship Children's Sunday 6PM Youth Group	18	19	20 7PM Resound Rehearsal	21 7PM Northbridge Baccalaureate at St. Patrick's 7PM Serving from the Heart 7PM Girl Scouts	22 9:30AM Serving from the Heart	23 7:30AM AA Meeting 9AM-12PM Women, Work & Worship
24 10AM Sunday Worship 6PM Youth Group	25 6:45 PM Weight at the Cross (OFH)	26 7:15PM Women's Study-Activities Room	27 7PM Weight at the Cross	28 7PM Serving from the Heart 7PM Girl Scouts 7PM Chancel Choir	29 9:30AM Serving from the Heart	30
31 Pentecost Sunday 10AM Sunday Worship- Confirmation						