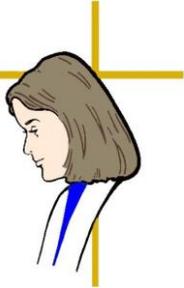


# THE PARISH POST

Volume 46 - Issue 11

11:00 a.m. Worship Service  
*Open Hearts. Open Minds. Open Doors.*

January 2018



## Pastor Susan's Corner

We've made it through 2017 and are seven days into 2018. And I have to admit, I am glad we have the opportunity to start fresh for 2018. 2017 turned out to be a difficult year

for me - it was a year filled with loss and disappointment. I lost my wonderful mother in April, moved in June, lost a relationship with my daughter and many sentimental and valuable items that were stolen from our home, and became the temporary guardian of my grandchildren all in October. Needless to say, it ended up being quite a stressful and unplanned turn of events for the year. The only loss I planned for and am happy about is the 100+ pounds of excess baggage I carried around for almost 35 years. I have almost reached my goal and I know it is attainable in the next couple months (and has required a total lifestyle change).

Each one of these losses has lasting effects on our entire family, and I ask for your prayers and support as we continue to recover and heal from these losses. This week we have another hearing, a status hearing in regards to the guardianship, and I covet your prayers as we seek what is best for Micah and Elisabeth.

As we look forward to a New Year together as a Church, I know it is going to be a year with endless possibilities as we journey together and strive to be the Body of Christ in Three Oaks and Harbor Country. Join me this Sunday, January 7 as we think and dream about the endless possibilities God has in store for us for 2018. We will also join in the John Wesley Covenant prayer, installation of officers and holy Communion.

Blessings to all,

*Pastor Susan*

*Thank you for blessing our family this Christmas season. The goodies--- cookies, candy, popcorn balls, cheese ball, gift cards, and cash were well appreciated. Micah and Eli especially loved the cookies!! We will be using the gift cards when the weather clears up a little bit.*

*I also want to thank you all for your love and support through the past 6 months and trust that God has a great future planned for our ministry together.*

*Pastor Susan and family.*



## Prayer Chain

You may have heard that the church's email was "hacked" a few months ago. As a result, we lost

all of our email addresses. This means we have lost our email Prayer Chain. If you would like to be part of our email Prayer Chain, please email the church at: [toumc@att.net](mailto:toumc@att.net) and let us know. We appreciate your patience as we rebuild our email network. Thanks for your help!



Make sure to check your narthex mailbox for Christmas greetings from your church family.



## 2017 Greeters

A big thank you to everyone who were greeters in 2017! Your service is much appreciated. It's nice to be greeted and welcomed with a friendly hello and smile as we enter the church. Thank you to: *George and Sally Frye, Nancy Davis, Sharon Phillips, Elmer and Linda Doyle, Jon and Penny Vollman, Chuck and Julie Sittig, Rick Cooper, Faye Sittig, Jim Thompson, Judy Ross, Shirley Schroeter, Pete Stathakis, Danelle Springer, Ray and Jean James, Ellie Rogers, Chris Zebell, Mike and Joanie Davidson.*



*“When one member suffers, we all suffer and when one member is honored, we all rejoice.”  
I Corinthians 12:26*

**Those who serve as missionaries, especially:**

Kate & Peter Walugembe in Jinja, Uganda;  
Del & Sandy Groves in Zambia;  
Dr. Elma Jocson in the Philippines.

**Those who are in the military, including:**

Christopher Blackwell, Gabrielle (Gabby) Crumley,  
Ricky Zeiger, and Ethan Zeiger.

**Those who are in care facilities:**

Buchanan Meadows – Sabra Lambert;  
Pine Ridge – Esther Thomas;  
Woodland Terrace – Shirley Hoadley

**Those who are homebound:**

Dorothy Brayboy, Helen Heward, Doris Krossovitch,  
and Ken Williams.

**Those with health problems:**

David Baker, Dick Best, Dorothy Brayboy,  
Larry Colgren, Bob Flick, Andrew Hamilton,  
Bryce Hamilton, Dawn Hayes, Priscilla Hellenga,  
Jim Ireland, Steve Kiburis, Karen King,  
Maria Povlock Lewis, Linda Methany,  
Eileen Osmond, Steven Patzer, Alexis Renbarger,  
Jerry Schaffer, Gert Schlieter, Dorothy Schoff,  
Rick Schroeter, Ken Seifert, Bob & Charlene Sprick,  
Frances Stanage, Kevin Strauss, Bill Swanson,  
Crystal Thompson, Kat Turner, Elsie Zabel.

**Those who grieve:**

Family and friends of Craig Stanage,  
and Steve Hodinski.

**Other:**

Ben Bartelmay as he serves in the Peace Corps.  
Peace throughout our world.

***Please note:*** Names will be deleted from the above list after one month unless an updated request is received.

**Bible Trivia**

In Matthew 14:13-21 we read about Jesus giving a huge, hungry crowd all the fish and bread they wanted to eat, though He had only a little food to begin with.



1. How many fish did He start with?
2. How many loaves of bread did He with?
3. How many baskets of leftovers were there?
4. How many people did He feed?

*Answers on page three*

**Christmas Decorations**



Our church always looks so lovely at the holidays. Of course, what goes up must come down. The Worship Committee will be putting away the decorations on Saturday, January 13, at 9:00 a.m. They would welcome help from anyone who is available that morning.

**Church Leaders**



New leaders for our various church committees were elected at the annual Church Conference held on December 3. A directory of those individuals who will be serving in 2018 is posted at our

website: [www.toumc.org](http://www.toumc.org) and also on the narthex bulletin board.

Thank you to all these persons for agreeing to serve Christ and his church through these important ministries. We will install our 2018 church leaders during worship on January 7.



## From the Bookshelf by Rhonda Hinman

This month's featured book is *"In This Moment"* by Karen Kingsbury. It is the third book in the *Baxter Family Collection*. The first two titles are *"A Baxter Family Christmas,"* and *"The Baxter Family: Love Story."* These books are in the library. They don't really have to be read in order.

Luke Baxter, a lawyer specializing in religious freedom cases takes on the flight of his life when public high school principal, Wendell Quinn, is sued for starting an after-school Bible study called Raise the Bar. Wendell has already lost the love of his life because of the program, but still he refuses to end it. Thanks to the program, Hamilton High has seen a dramatic decrease in the drug abuse, violence, and teen pregnancies that once plagued the student population. However, this lawsuit threatens to bring everything to a screeching halt.

But God's truth won't be silenced, and Luke Baxter vows to stand up for Wendell Quinn. Because the fight is about more than statistics, improved test scores, and better student life, it's about religious liberty and protecting the very things Wendell and the Baxters hold dear: faith, family and freedom.

At home, though, Luke struggles to keep his work from taking over his life. His wife, Reagan, worries about his increased hours and the time away from the family. She knows his job is crucial, but at what cost? *"In This Moment"* is an inspiring, relevant story about the nuances of religious freedom, the cost of the fight and how a group of determined people just might restore the meaning of faith in today's culture.

This is another great book by Karen Kingsbury. You will feel like you know the characters in the story.

Answers from page two:

1. two
2. five
3. twelve
4. 5,000 men, besides women and children



We are looking for volunteers to provide refreshments after our worship services. Sign up in the narthex.



## Sisters in Faith

Last month twelve ladies enjoyed our annual Christmas party at the beautiful holiday-decorated home of Faye Sittig. A wonderful time was had by all.

Our next meeting will be Wednesday, January 17, at 7:00 p.m. at the church.

As a New Year begins, we want to extend an invitation to all the women of the church to join us in fellowship, study, service and fun! Our meetings are held on the third Wednesday of each month.



## Special Sunday Offering

Turn on the news or drive around the outskirts of your town and you will find what Jesus called "the least of these." Those living in the margins of society,

struggling to survive. People like:

- An immigrant teenager in Texas' poorest county, being recruited by a local gang
- A father struggling for sobriety in Little Rock, Arkansas
- An Oklahoma woman recently released from incarceration looking for work

Over and over Jesus served people like this, embracing them. And that's what we want to model as the people of The United Methodist Church. To continue the ministry of Jesus, Human Relations Day was established as a Special Sunday that calls all of our churches to participate in helping all God's children to realize their potential.

Will you support the ministry of Christ among those on the margins? Will you support Human Relations Day? Will you nurture at-risk youth, strengthen communities' self-improvement efforts and advocate for the oppressed?

Rev. I Maliik Safir, whose church works with those gripped by addiction in Little Rock, sums up the work of Human Relations Day by recalling Jesus' story of the Good Samaritan: "to meet the poor, the disadvantaged and the underserved at the places where others have robbed them and help them to recover from the wounds of social inequality."

Please give generously on Human Relations Day, January 14. There will be an insert in your worship bulletin. Your gifts make a world of difference!



### Community Rewards

Sign up today for Harding's Community Rewards to help Three Oaks United Methodist Church. It's easy and only takes a couple of minutes!

1. Visit [www.hardings.com](http://www.hardings.com)
2. Go to the SAVINGS & REWARDS tab.
3. Click the CLICK HERE TO SIGN UP button; enter your information to register.
4. Go to MY PROFILE by clicking the head icon on the far right corner.
5. Click COMMUNITY REWARDS and choose Three Oaks United Methodist Church.
6. Click ADD COMMUNITY. You can change your organization at any time by visiting your profile page.
7. When checking out at the register in the store, simply type in your 10 digit phone number on the pinpad. NO CARD REQUIRED!

The more you spend – the more we earn!

- 1% rebate – monthly purchase \$0-\$299.99
- 2% rebate – monthly purchase \$300-\$599.99
- 4% rebate – monthly purchase \$600-\$1999.99

### Trustees



The Board of Trustees will have an organizational meeting on Monday, January 8, at 7:00 p.m. to elect officers and prioritize projects for the coming year. We hope all

committee members will be able to attend. If you have any suggestions for maintenance needs around the church, please speak to a Trustee member or Pastor Sherri.



National Council on Aging

### Navigating Longer Lives: Join the Adventure!

The Aging Mastery Program (AMP)

encourages mastery – developing behaviors across many dimensions that will lead to improved health, stronger financial security and overall well-being.

This 10-week nationally based Aging Mastery Program will offer a fun and engaging education and behavior change curriculum for aging well. Your participation in this evidence-informed program will help you:

- Make and maintain small but impactful changes in your health behaviors, financial well-being and enrichment in later life
- Meet new friends, provide support and encouragement to your peers and become more involved in your community
- Improve your well-being.

The classes will be on Tuesday, January 9 through March 13, 2018, 10:00 – 11:30 a.m. at the Region IV Agency on Aging, 2900 Lakeview Ave., St. Joseph. The course fee is \$100; scholarships are available. To learn more or register, call Tara Gillette at 269-408-4369.

*Thank you all for the Christmas gift from the congregation. Thank you for all the gifts of candy, cookies and other yummy baked goods.*



*Cheryl Kersey*

### Communion Stewards



Thanks to those who prepared communion for our worship services this past year. They are: *Joan Davidson, Tracy Donner,*

*Sharon Flick, Debby Springer, Amy Vollman, Connie Warnke, and Chris Zebell.* If you would be willing to take a turn preparing communion in the coming year, please inform our new Worship chairperson, *Joan Davidson.*

### Recycle and ReUse!

If anyone has any binding combs at home from old Church Directories or Church Conference booklets, please return them to the church office and we will gladly re-use them. Thanks for your help!



Thank you to the ladies of Three Oaks UMC for providing a wonderful meal following my mom's memorial service. We have been blessed to have spent this time in fellowship with our family and friends.

Much Loves,  
Sven, Lisa, Lauren and Carson Verlinden

thank  
you!



### Sermons for January

January 7 - "A New Year: Fresh Start with Infinite Possibilities"

A few months ago, we had a series on "Circle Maker: We embarked on a 40 day prayer journey dreaming and praying for our congregation and community; seeking God's guidance to be a vital presence in our community. We were challenged to Dream Big, to Pray Hard, and to think Long. As we continue to pray circles around the people and situations we want God's intervention. We learned to pray boldly--- being specific in our prayers.

Whisper is a follow-up to this. As we learn to listen for God's answers to our prayers. God's voice is often drowned out by other voices and noise in our lives. So through this two-week series we will look at ways to hear "God's Still, Small Voice, and make it the most meaningful voice we hear.

January 14 - "Whisper: The Bravest Prayer" learning to discern the voice of God is the solution to a thousand problems. It's also the key to discovering your identity and destiny. Is God's voice the loudest voice in your life?

January 21 - "Whisper: A Pierced Ear - Whoever Has Ears, Let Them Hear." It's only six words, but it's an urgent exhortation with exponential implications. The word "obey" in Latin means "to give ear." God speaks in seven languages. The first language is Scripture, and it's in a category by itself. But there are six secondary languages - desires, dreams, doors, people, promptings, and pain. Your ability to learn those languages is the key to your destiny.

January 28 - "Praying: Ask, Seek, Knock, and Listen"

### Weather Closings



As winter is upon us, we are making preparations for the possibility of bad weather. Usually, we will have Sunday services if Pastor Susan can

manage the drive. However, if we should decide to close, this information will be posted on [www.WSBT.com](http://www.WSBT.com), TV channel 22; and [www.WNDU.com](http://www.WNDU.com), TV channel 16. You can go to these websites and have closing information automatically sent to your cell phone or via email. On weekdays, the church office will be closed if River Valley Schools are closed. Please use caution when venturing out over these next several months. We want everyone to stay safe!

New offering envelopes for 2018 have been placed in the narthex mailboxes. If you would like a set, please speak to Rhonda Hinman or leave a note in the office.



If you have any questions about your contributions from 2017, please contact Rhonda Hinman at 756-7560.

Please note this change of address in your Church Directory:

Shirley Schroeter  
212 W. Madison Ave.  
New Buffalo, MI 49117-1788



Three Oaks United Methodist Church  
2 East Sycamore Street  
Three Oaks, MI 49128

Phone 269-756-2053  
Fax 269-756-2061  
E-mail [toumc@att.net](mailto:toumc@att.net)  
Web [www.toumc.org](http://www.toumc.org)

*Address Service Requested*

# January 2018



## Please Note

Please turn in all submissions for next month's Parish Post newsletter by January 21.



If we could deliver your next Parish Post by e-mail, please inform the church office. It would be faster, easier, and cheaper.

Thanks for your help!

- |            |  |
|------------|--|
| January 7  | "A New Year: Fresh Start with Infinite Possibilities"      |
| January 14 | "Whisper: The Bravest Prayer"                              |
| January 21 | "Whisper: A Pierced Ear – Whoever Has Ears, Let Them Hear" |
| January 28 | "Prayers: Ask, Seek, Knock, and Listen"                    |

Three Oaks  
United Methodist Church Staff:  
Pastor: *Rev. Susan Martin*  
Cell phone: *574-370-5121*

Secretary: *Cheryl Kersey*  
Pianist/Organist: *Martha Spychalski*