



## Balaton United Methodist Church January 2021 Newsletter

### Blessings from PL~

***“Hey Jude, don’t make it bad, take a sad song and make it better ....”***

The Beatles song, “Hey, Jude” was composed by Paul McCartney as a comfort for John Lennon’s then five year old Son Julian after his Parents John Lennon and Wife Cynthia divorced. However, Lennon himself, thought it had been written for him ... the song really is about relationships. Intended for Lennon’s young Son in order to deal with a really tough situation, but could be said about Lennon and McCartney’s turbulent relationship as well.

**SAD SONGS –TOUGH TIMES ..... How then DO we make it better?**

#### **JUDE 20-21 THE MESSAGE**

***20-21 But you, dear friends, carefully build yourselves up in this most holy faith by praying in the Holy Spirit, staying right at the center of God’s love, keeping your arms open and outstretched, ready for the mercy of our Master, Jesus Christ. This is the unending life, the real life! 22-23 Go easy on those who hesitate in the faith. Go after those who take the wrong way. Be tender with sinners, but not soft on sin. The sin itself stinks to high heaven.***

The later New Testament (largely the Epistles – Letters) are filled with the *HOW* these Followers of Christ navigated the tough times. Here ... many thought the “*PAROUSIA*” – Greek, meaning The Second Coming Of Jesus Christ was near (We are still waiting). Many .. fell away and thought this an opportunity to simply “Party It Up” ... taking care of SELF ... indulging in un-Godly behavior and false teaching. These Epistles are filled with warnings against such.

But, they are also filled with something else ... *OPPORTUNITY*. This is how our faithful apostles looked at “The Lord’s Delay” in some very difficult times of persecution and other such “Sad Songs” ... how to take a sad song and make it better? *OPPORTUNITY*.

JUDE .... First warns, and then talks about the Lord’s Delay as an opportunity to “go out and get” those who are wavering in their faith and bring them into this marvelous LIGHT of God’s Love. The Apostle Peter in his Epistles talks of much of the same, and that the Lord’s time is not our time ... and so we don’t wait idly, nor corruptly in the midst of these troubled times but rather we take advantage of this *OPPORTUNITY* to continue to do *OFFER LIGHT* ... in other words “Share Our JESUS” so that as many as possible would come to know Him.

We can either stay stuck on the SAD SONG ... OR ... We can MAKE IT BETTER by offering LIGHT and LIFE in dark places. EPIPHANY .... Means “Revelation of God Incarnate”, an Illumination, an “Ah-Ha!” Shedding LIGHT on something. Perhaps .... Someone will have an EPIPHANY about this LOVE of CHRIST ... simply because of YOU!

We can take this SAD SONG of a Year ... and make it better by “Letting Our JESUS SHINE Through” .... Letting Our JESUS .... SING! Amen? Amen!!

I have come to the place or revelation of the fact that “I can do what I can do, in the midst of this pandemic, and let it be enough” ... as long as what I do reflects the Love of Jesus Christ. How am I “Offering Christ” during this season that God has given us as an *OPPORTUNITY*?

Just some things that I am pondering as I/We step into this New Year.

**Contact Information**  
Pastor Lori VonHoltum:  
**Cell:** (507) 220-3557  
**Parsonage:** (507)734-4101  
**Church Office:** (507) 734-4811  
**Email:** [pastorvonhohum@yahoo.com](mailto:pastorvonhohum@yahoo.com)  
**Office Email:** [balatonumc@gmail.com](mailto:balatonumc@gmail.com)  
**Church Website:**  
<https://www.balatonumc.org>



**WORSHIP** – We will still be worshipping ONLINE only during this month of January. Bishop Ough still has us in “Phase RED” which means No-In Person gathering is highly recommended. Hang in there. We can do this. Light is beginning to break through as vaccines are being distributed. However, this is not a time to “party it up” and let our guard down just yet. We are United Methodists who live by ... “*FIRST DO NO HARM*”. Even as I, like you, long for things, including gathering together in our Sanctuary, with Peggy playing Organ/Piano and us singing together, sitting around the table for coffee fellowship, socializing and study. Not yet ... be patient. Be faithful. Finding opportunity to offer Christ to yourself and others in various ways.

**WORSHIP PACKETS** will continue to be delivered every Saturday.

**CONFIRMATION** – I just spoke with Vicar Rick this morning (Wednesday). We both think that it is the wise and responsible thing to not gather in person yet for Confirmation due to the anticipated spike in COVID-19 cases after the holidays. However ... we both feel like we need to stay connected to our teenagers and offer “something”. NO ZOOM – Our young people (and us) have enough screen time to navigate right now. Rick and I will be meeting this week to brainstorm and come up with a plan .... But it will be something like sending out a question where our youth can respond to us via phone, text, snapchat, facebook, marco polo etc. .... We will be focusing on *Luther’s Catechism* which is simply things like: *The Lord’s Prayer, Apostle’s Creed, Ten Commandments* as well as other important parts of our faith. We will make this as fun and interactive as we can ... while still learning together, and keeping them (and us) safe. Both Vicar Rick and I understand that we have a responsibility to stay as healthy as possible for all of YOU – Three congregations and JAM. We talk about it often .... We care about all of you ... and so we are trying to also be responsible by staying as healthy as we can in order to care for each of you as well.

**JAM-JESUS AND ME** – will still be available via FaceBook LIVE Wednesdays at 6pm. We will not be bringing in groups at this time, although we may be having a Baptism with a small number of the same family. JAM Coordinator is still on hold. These next months are assumed to be difficult in terms of COVID ... be patient ... we’ll get there in God’s time. Until then, we’ll keep offering what we can.

**HOSPICE** – I am still serving as Hospice Chaplain, and attending in person bi-weekly team meetings (masked). I just received word today that as Hospice Chaplain, I will be able to receive the COVID-19 vaccine soon ... and I will be rolling up my sleeve as soon as available.

**IF** ... you would like an In Person visit from me ... I am OK with that ... as long as we both are masked up and social distanced. Preferably at the Church in the Sanctuary so we can spread out more. Just let me know. I am always available by phone or social media as well.

I have several upcoming meetings through the Conference ... all via ZOOM. It’s that time of year for Board of Ordained Ministry interviews with candidates. This year, that will all be done online ... certainly different ... so add in some training prior to the actual interviews. Licensed Local Pastor Group meets via ZOOM monthly as does Clergy Leadership Academy and the group of four new Clergy that I mentor through this. \*I would much rather meet in person, although my travel time is ZERO as opposed to MUCH .... “OPPORTUNITY”, Remember?? It’s all in how we look at it.

Jim and I want to say a BIG Thank YOU for all the greetings, gifts, goodies, gift cards, and generous gratuities sent our way over Christmas. We appreciate you all so very much! Our Christmas with the kids/grandkids got postponed until this Sunday ... maybe we will get a picture to send off some late New Years greetings. I did spend some time at the farm, and will continue to bop back and forth as time and weather permits. I’m working on taxes (here at the parsonage) as well as just “stuff” at both places. Don’t hesitate to call if something comes up. I’m available.

**My Parents** ... are remaining healthy as they can. Mom doesn’t go out. Dad does the grocery shopping. I bring them a few things when I can. They stay pretty close to home too. My Dad’s Partner in the Auction Business for many years, Andy Scheffler from Lismore just died recently (from COVID). Andy & JoAnn were Dining Room Host & Hostess at our Wedding. Dad certainly misses him. Andy (and his Daughter) caught COVID at a recent Funeral they attended ... thus she couldn’t attend her Dad’s Graveside Service. All to say .... Stay steady in masking, physical distancing, hand washing ...

and just making some conscious choices to stay healthy as we can. Soon .... We will get to the other side of all of this ... but we aren't there yet just because we flip a calendar to a New Year. But, we are getting closer.

Even Still .....

*OFFER CHRIST.*

As we are given this time of OPPORTUNITY .... As we wait ... together.

God's LOVE in this New Year.

*Pastor Lori (PL)*

#### **WHAT WE CAN DO ....**

What we CAN DO – We can still view the sermon/worship online – direct others outside of our church to tune in as well. Sue, works so hard to also post all of them on the church website for those who do not have FaceBook. They are also on YouTube under: Lori Von Holtum. If you have internet, you can access them! Those that receive “Worship Packets” can read the sermon, do the study questions, puzzles/coloring sheets, enjoy the treats that go along with the message. We can still check in on each other view phone, and social media, even old fashioned “snail mail” which I think in these crazy times is such a welcome treat to receive! Did you make a big meal today? How about offer a plate to an elderly neighbor – include fruits, veggies, and a sweet treat. PRAY – Good one below .SING at home ... whatever you want ... just SING. Go for a walk (careful on the ice/snow) or walk around inside the house. Read – we are almost done with Bible-In-A-Year. Write to your kids/grandkids. PRAY ... some more. (PL)

#### **PRAYER AGAINST CORONAVIRUS**

Corona Virus, I rebuke you in Jesus name. I cast you out. You have no place here. Father Lord, protect us from this disease. Have mercy on us. Loose your healing on us Lord. Deliver us from this virus and all other infections. Cover us with the blood of Jesus. The Bible says that by His stripes we are healed. So, we call on your healing powers today. Please heal us all. Thank you for hearing our plea, Oh Lord. In Jesus name, I pray.  
Amen.

(found in a paper – PL)

#### CALENDAR - PL

**Friday, January 1<sup>st</sup>** – Hallelujah! New Year 2021!



**Sunday, January 3<sup>rd</sup>** – Epiphany Worship with Communion ONLINE Only 9am



**Wednesday, January 6<sup>th</sup>** – PL @ Hospice Team Meeting 9am  
1pm meeting with Vicar Rick/UMC  
6pm J.A.M. FaceBook LIVE

**Sunday, January 10<sup>th</sup>** – Worship ONLINE Only 9am

**Tuesday, January 12<sup>th</sup>** – ZOOM Board of Ordained Ministry Training 9am-3pm (PL @ Church)

**Wednesday, January 13<sup>th</sup>** – 6pm J.A.M. FaceBook LIVE

**Thursday, January 14<sup>th</sup>** – ZOOM Licensed Local Pastor Mentor Group 10:30am-11:45am

**Sunday, January 17<sup>th</sup>** – Worship ONLINE Only 9am

**Wednesday, January 20<sup>th</sup>** – PL @ Hospice Team Meeting 9am; 6pm J.A.M. FaceBook LIVE

**Thursday, January 21<sup>st</sup>** – ZOOM Clergy Leadership Academy 10-11:30am & 1:30-3pm (PL @ Church)

**Sunday, January 24<sup>th</sup>** – Worship ONLINE Only 9am

**Wednesday, January 27<sup>th</sup>** – 6pm J.A.M. FaceBook LIVE

**Sunday, January, 31<sup>st</sup>** – Worship ONLINE Only 9am.



### Notes from Board Chair~

It will soon be 2021, a brand new year. Let's hope that this coming year we will be able to get back to normal. I hope COVID 19 will just go away. Happy New Year to all of you.

Schools will be starting again on the 4th of January, Tracy will do distance learning the first week back, then too full time after that. RTR will be going back to full time. Whitney says she likes the distance learning.

Our days are gradually getting longer, they said on the news the other night that by the 21st of February we will have gained an hour and 20 minutes. Can't wait, don't like when it gets dark so early. We got all of our trees in the front yard trimmed. They look so nice hopefully that will help come spring so there won't be as many dead branches down. We are planning on doing the backyard this next year sometime.

I have enjoyed watching the birds and squirrels at the feeder. It is amazing how much they eat in a day. The squirrels would eat 4 ears of corn a day if I let them.

Christmas was different for us this year. I only had 6 here as compared to other years when we have 30 or more. Wasn't near as much work. I made ham and bean soup with the ham bone from Christmas dinner and the ham bone from our ham dinner from church. It was very good. I may have to share some of it.

Hope you all have a Blessed New Year.

Congratulations to Stacy Chandler for getting the city clerk job. She will do a wonderful job.

*Lois*

### A Note from Your Lay Leader

**1 Peter 2:9-10. But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.**

What does it mean to be called by God? We discover our call to service by walking closely with the Lord, practicing obedience, and offering ourselves to do His work as we are led by faith. Many people are called but not all are called to do the same things because our unique gifts are, well, uniquely ours. For some the call is life changing like it was for Pastor Lori as she accepted the call to ministry. For others, the call is an "ah-ha" moment, an idea or an urgency to do something. I think of Denise's story about how the idea for J.A.M. was birthed and how she nurtured that mighty and powerful calling in her life. Some are called to be prayer warriors, volunteers, teachers of the Word, youth workers, doers and servers. The Lord calls to His own asking us to be His hands, His feet and His voice.

With the Covid-19 pandemic shut-down we had to reinvent "how we do church". Pastor Lori has found inventive ways to do online church and has done an outstanding job! We discovered her reach goes well beyond the walls of the BUMC. She plans and distributes worship bags every week to those without the Internet. We know some of our younger members know technology and could assist with our online services. If this is you, please reach out and answer the call to this part of ministry. We need you! The Lord is calling us...all of us...asking us to do more. If you have an idea that would enhance worship, if you can add something "cool" using technology, then please accept this as your invitation, your call, to reach out to Pastor Lori and offer your help. Many hands make light the load.

May the Lord richly bless you in 2021. Check in on one another and stay prayed up!

***Sue Skramstad, Lay Leader***



### **UMW**

Happy New Year from the UMW! We are looking forward to being able to get back to a little more normal living and be able to meet again before too long!

As crazy as this year has been it still went pretty fast even if we have spent a lot of time just being home.

I'm so glad to be moving onto a "New" year tho.

Pastor Lori has worked so hard to keep us in touch online and by delivering worship packets. She is working long and hard but she has reached a lot of people through this! Thank you so much PL!

I wish everyone a "Happy New Year!"

***Yours in Christ,  
June Terhark***

### **Rose Wheeler**

Greetings to each of you,

I have been asked to share some of my thoughts again--so let's forget the turmoil in the entire world and be thankful! For:

1. A warm house to live in
2. A bed to sleep in
3. Food to eat and food available to buy.



4. Clean water to drink, cook with or bathe in.
5. Clothes on our back and more in the closet
6. Shoes for our feet
7. Mild temperatures to enjoy
8. Good roads to travel on if you can decide where to go that is safe especially if you are older and have a few ailments.
9. We have the freedom:  
To speak your mind if you decide to  
Read whatever you want or not

We didn't get to choose our family but we can choose our friends and faith - and practice without fear.

If all the world could enjoy even half of these blessings, how wonderful that would be. We can sit alone and get reacquainted with yourself. Or, we can call a friend or family member or reconnect with someone who has made a big difference in your life. Most of these are blessings that we mostly take for granted. And, we are starting a New Year - "Let's Make The Most Of It!"

### **Phyllis Swanson**

I received a Christmas card from my niece Wanda. Enclosed was a coaster with the words "Today is a new day, begin again." What a great reminder as I start my day (and New Year) with a cup of coffee.

As I reflect on this past year, I realize "2020" is gone. I can't change the past, but I do have a choice. I choose to reflect on what is past, learn from it and to look forward to "2021" with joy and anticipation for the future.

**"Teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom:" Psalm 90:12**

### **Verlane Ross**

Greetings as we look forward to the New Year! Our UMW has been pretty inactive because of COVID19, but I do need to balance out the treasurer's books for the year and get them audited. Rose and I did complete Plan II of our reading program-reading two books in five different categories - very inspirational. It opened my eyes to many areas from the native american indian to the troubled lives of black people in our nation, just to mention a couple.

May God continue to abide in each of us in the new year. He is our hope and our Savior. I do miss church, but Pastor Lori is a Godsend.

### **Stella Swanson,**

Happy New Year Everyone,

As I'm sitting here with my morning coffee, many things are going through my mind. I stayed up until 11:00 switched to Channel 5 and watched New York welcome in the New Year. Heard some fireworks going off in town. Whoop! Whoop!

The last couple of nights I've watched the big golden moon on the horizon. I stood in awe at my patio door watching as it rose higher and higher in the sky. The hymn "For the Beauty of the Earth" was singing in my heart. God gave us such a beautiful world. As we start a New Year, let there be peace on earth we pray.

### **Sue Skramstad**

Happy New Year to our church family! I am missing you all and our beautiful UMW ladies! The holidays were sure different this year. We didn't like being separated from family, but we kept in touch using Zoom, Facetime calls, doing smaller gatherings and just made the best of it like all of you had to do too. We still dressed for Christmas Eve service, listened online, lit our advent candles and sang Silent Night. Not the same for sure, but we felt the spirit move and we know we are very blessed. Phil and I commented how quickly 2020 went by. Strange as it seems, the days of the pandemic, the craziness of the media and even with the election, the days seemed to fly by. I find I'm missing the simple things of life like loving up on family, having lunch with friends, hugs, handshakes and being able to talk to a stranger without them backing away from you or ignoring you all together. I pray over all of you often and look forward to gathering as a church again to enjoy a little

“Minnesota lunch” in the near future. Sending each of you hugs and blessings as we step into 2021 as a faith community filled with the love and peace of Christ.

### Some Extras from Denise:

I was on FaceBook this morning. This post made me smile so I wanted to make you smile too! This is the post - I left out some names.



So Lifetouch sent me the wrong kid. I kind of felt bad for him, so I put him up on the wall with my other children. (Really we just wanted to see how long it would take our kids to notice. 🤔 ) Amazingly enough, they all noticed within about 6 hours! 🙏  
Kierstyn and I decided he is staying until we can find his parents. It seems like the right thing to do. 🙏



Anyone know Alex? He is a Senior in High School. This is all I know about him. But he kind of feels like one of my own now. ❤️

**New Song Release - Hey God - Mitch Rossell.** You have to give it a listen. Just type Hey God in the search box on YouTube:

Hey God, we need some help down here  
The devil's been a busy man, bullyin' us all year  
He's spinnin' lies, made us pick a side, now our fists are up  
We're headed down a path where a mask, can't save us

#### [Chorus]

So Lord I pray, with all my night  
Help us see each other... through your eyes  
Let's take the red, take the blue, wave the white, call a truce  
Build a bridge across the line drawn through this country  
Before hindsight's 2020

#### [Verse 2]

Hey God, could you shine a light?  
'Cause it's hard for love to grow, in weeds this high  
It's gotten dark, we need a spark, of your gospel truth  
'Cause in the end, we're all the same even though we're different too.

#### [Chorus]

So Lord I pray, with all my night

Help us see each other... through your eyes  
Let's take the red, take the blue, wave the white, call a truce  
Build a bridge across the line drawn through this country  
Before hindsight's 2020

#### [Bridge]

Yeah, regret is closing in  
We've had the milk and honey  
We can get it back again

#### [Chorus]

So Lord I pray, with all my night  
Help us see each other... through your eyes  
Let's take the red, take the blue, wave the white, call a truce  
Build a bridge across the line drawn through this country  
Before hindsight's 2020

#### [Outro]

Hey God, we need some help down here

## Balaton UMC Tree Ornaments 2020

From	In Memory Of:
Joel & Crystal Leversedge & boys	Dave Leversedge
Joel & Crystal Leversedge & boys	Betty Leversedge
Jennie Minett	Grandma Linda
Jennie Minett	Grandpa Marv
Bruce & Dawn Schelhaas	Cap
Bruce & Dawn Schelhaas	John B.
Phil & Sue Skramstad	David Buysse
Phil & Sue Skramstad	Ellen Skramstad
Dave & Ruth Lehnhoff	Loved Ones
Virginia Yearous	Delmar Yearous & Loved Ones
Dale & Julie Wieme	Lester Anderson
Dale & Julie Wieme	Irene & Andrew Wieme
Dave & Pam Ray and Family	Delores Helling
Dave & Pam Ray and Family	Don Helling
Dave & Pam Ray and Family	Erik Helling
Tabor & Denise Hoek and Family	Loved Ones
Lanny & Nancy Iversen	Loved Ones
Dave & Peggy Bundy	Cody Bundy
Dave & Peggy Bundy	Loved Ones
John & Amy Ross and Family	Irene Antony
John & Amy Ross and Family	Ethan Frank
John & Amy Ross and Family	Grandma Antony
John & Amy Ross and Family	Amy Ross
Lois Swanson	Ron Bruns
Lois Swanson	Harvey & Dottie Wendland from Wanda & Dawn
Lois Swanson	Parents
Lois Swanson	David Walters
Duane & Christie Sutherland and Family	Mom Linda
Duane & Christie Sutherland and Family	Grandmother Ruth
Don & Bonnie Ewing	Donnie
June Terhark	Arnie Terhark
Stella Swanson	Loved Ones
Dave & Gayle Kaup	Loved Ones
Greg & Kathy Taveirne	Loved Ones
Verlane Ross	Stan Ross
Peggy Tutt	Mom and Dad
Jim and Pastor Lori	Aunt Barbie
Jim and Pastor Lori	Myrt
Keith & Dianne Scherbart	To those that follow the rules
Keith & Dianne Scherbart	To those who lost loved ones due to the pandemic
Keith & Dianne Scherbart	To those who are the heroes of the pandemic
Rose Wheeler	Loved Ones
Craig & Ann Gifford	Loved Ones
Brandon & Karly Kirk	Loved Ones
Susan Olson	Loved Ones
Brad & Stacy Chandler	Loved Ones
Marvin & Charlene Chandler	Loved Ones



# JANUARY

## 2021 BALATON UMC CALENDAR

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 HALLELUJAH!! 	2 
3 Epiphany Worship w/communion online only 9:00 am Mya Smidt B-day	4 Jill Wreath B-day	5 	6 PL @ Hospice Mtg 9:00 am 1pm mtg w/Vicar Rick/UMC 6pm JAM Facebook Live	7	8 Ellie Crumrine B-day	9
10 9 am Worship online Kelsey Lustfield B-day	11 Josh Kirk B-day	12 ZOOM Board of Ordained Ministry Training 9-3 April Ray B-day	13 6 pm JAM Facebook Live Darrell Crumrine B-day	14 ZOOM Licensed Local Pastor Mentor group 1:30-11:45 am	15 Mariah Jennings B-day	16 
17 9 am Worship online Stevie McMath B-day	18	19	20 PL @ Hospice Team mtg 9am	21 ZOOM Clergy Leadership Academy 10-11:30 am & 1:30-3pm	22	23
24 9 am Worship online	25 	26	27 6 pm JAM Facebook Live Dave Kirk & Jeff McMath B-days	28	29	30
31 9 am Worship online Marvin Chandler B-day Mike & Colleen Wreath Anniv						

Balaton United Methodist Church  
**Lori VonHoltum, Pastor**  
220 2nd Street West  
Balaton MN 56115

**Remember our Nursing Home Residents:**

**Avera Morningside Heights Care Center-Marshall:** Neva Manguson  
Remembering & praying for Brandon Swanson..... missing from his family since May 2008