



BALATON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH *FEBRUARY 2019 Newsletter*

Notes from Pastor Lori

As we think of February, our minds drift to Valentine's Day, President's Day, and Cold. February is one of those "stuck in the middle" sort of months. It could go either way ... we could have it really cold and snowy or rather mild. A little like our relationships perhaps ... ha. Jim and I aren't ones to get all "googley-eyed" over Valentine's Day! We might go out for Supper or purchase some steaks to enjoy "in" ... last year ... Valentine's Day fell on Ash Wednesday, so you know what I was doing that day. I think we went out for Supper later in the week.

There are several legends surrounding this day named after Saint Valentine. One legend states that a Catholic Bishop named Valentine defied the Roman Emperor's orders not to perform any weddings during wartime ... and yet, he married couple anyway, sparring the husbands from war. Cupid ... is the Roman god (small "g") of LOVE ... and so we see him depicted on Valentines. We see birds (love birds) depicted sometimes because it's thought that the bird mating season begins about mid-February. February 14th is the most common wedding anniversary! I can remember making my Valentine's Day box for school and picking out certain Valentine's for certain special individuals and with anticipation ... waiting to see what they would put in my box. Can I get a witness? Or was this just me? Ha! At any rate We celebrate LOVE this day .. both romantic and platonic friendship. Remember that you are LOVED not just this day ... but always. Our GOD is crazy in LOVE with YOU! And that His Son Jesus was and is our ultimate Valentine.

WORSHIP We will continue to journey through Matthew's Gospel until after Easter. I am looking at Matthew with "new eyes" and as I prepare to preach each week am learning so much more than I have before about this Gospel. Matthew, is always so good at pointing back to the Old Testament to prove that Jesus is the Messiah. On Epiphany, we began by asking the question that both the Wise Guys and King Herod asked "Where Is He?" and we have found Jesus through His righteousness, through His Spiritual strength, and through His teaching these past few weeks. We have been exploring what RIGHTEOUSNESS means "seeing something that is morally wrong in God's eyes and trying to right it, or at least make it better" ... this is Kingdom Living. What have you learned about "Righteousness" the past few weeks? What makes your "Righteousness rise up?"

Over the next month we'll look at The Golden Rule (Matthew 7), Parables of the Kingdom (Matthew 13), Feeding of the 5,000 (Matthew 14 – Sardines, Goldfish Crackers, Swedish Fish – Ha!) after which ... we turn our face towards LENT and Jesus begins to make His way to the Cross. I'm looking forward to walking with you through these upcoming texts.

ONLINE & ELECTRONIC GIVING – Phil and Sue Skramstad have been working diligently on this. We have talked about this for some time during Church Council meetings, so this isn't a new thing or a hasty decision. You'll hear more about this from them (and me) in written and spoken word ... but we will soon have an option that you can give to the church through

Contact Information

Pastor Lori VonHoltum:

Cell: (507) 220-3557

Parsonage: (507)734-4101

Church Office: (507) 734-4811

Email: pastorvonhohum@yahoo.com

Office Email: balatonumc@gmail.com

Church Website:

<https://www.balatonumc.org>



automatic withdrawal from your bank account and/or through an online giving option on our website (new website) and Facebook page through a company called Vanco.

Our MN UM Conference recommends them as do various business services. Vanco also gives us a “gadget” (for lack of term) that attaches to your cell phone that you can give that way during worship as well. As always, you can still give via cash or check during worship or mail ... that is still an option just to be clear.

WHY ALL OF THIS??? – Well, our numbers don’t lie, friends. Our worship attendance needs a boost as do our financials. I understand circumstances – schedules, cold weather, health concerns ... and I don’t want you risking a fall etc. when weather is bad ... that isn’t what this is about. What this IS about is we break about 40 in attendance on a good day (50-60 on a special day such as a baptism) and 25 on days when Sigh. 25 giving units alone can not and should not carry our church financially.

You’ll hear more from our Financial folks soon ... but our expenses still exceed our income (this means not factoring in the farm income), and honestly, our expenses are pretty conservative as many simply pay graciously out of their own for things we might normally not. We need to find other ways to offer GIVING options ... and online is one way. If you can’t make it to worship, you can still give in this manner to support the ministry of the life of our church.

NEW WEBSITE – Sue is in the process of creating a new website for our church through a company called Weebly. The site will be under balatonumc.org. The Shutterfly website has been taken down. Sue has salvaged all of Wanda’s work on the audio sermons, old pictures etc. so we still have those. She will create photo archive so anyone can download the pictures that would like them. She and I will go through and pick out a few favorite “old sermons” to pop back up on the new website too. Shutterfly was not able to work with our online giving option, nor was it easy to navigate. Again, we need to continue to be current. Please thank Sue and Phil for their many hours of work to on behalf of our church. Stay tuned.

BISHOP’S WAY FORWARD – What’s this? Our United Methodist Council of Bishops was asked after the last session of General Conference to prayerfully draft options of a “Way Forward” in the United Methodist Church surrounding the issue of homosexuality. Currently, our Book of Discipline does not allow for gay marriage or ordination of practicing gay clergy. This has been an ongoing debate in our denomination for many years. There will be a special session of General Conference held in St. Louis February 23-26 where three proposals will be brought to the conference floor for vote on how to move forward as a denomination. Yes ... this is BIG stuff! Out of the three, the Bishop’s are recommending the “One Church Model”. The other models would bring about some big changes and division of our denomination.

We Pastors have been charged by our Bishop Bruce Ough with offering some education surrounding the proposals so you can prepare (There is NO option for you as church members to vote on this at this time ...) but we do want you to be aware of what may come down the pike ... so ...

On Sunday, February 10th following 9am worship ... I will direct us in some education surrounding this Special Session of General Conference and the three models proposed. You can get coffee and then meet back in the Sanctuary for a time together. You can also find more information on our Minnesota Annual Conference Website to read in advance.

That was A LOT of information, along with just this time of year might have you feeling anxious. If this is the case Pause ... Breathe ... Pray ... Repeat. We put our trust and faith in the one who is unwavering ... and we move forward each day in faith.

Praying with you in these days

Pastor Lori (PL)

PL's Calendar

Sunday, February 3rd – COMMUNION/at the rail. “Souper Bowl Sunday” – bring an item for the Tracy Food Shelf and wear your favorite sports team.

Monday February 4th – PL has a premarital meeting in Sioux Falls (evening) with Moriah & Wes (weather permitting).

Wednesday, February 6th – 9am-11am PL Murray County Hospice in Slayton
JAM @ UMC beginning with 5:30pm worship.

Thursday February 7th – 11am-2pm PL to Springfield Licensed Local Pastor Group

Sunday February 10th – PL to talk about the UM Special Session of General Conference after Worship regarding the “Way Forward” for those who want to stay.

Tuesday February 12th PL & Jim in Worthington for a tax appointment

Wednesday February 13th – JAM @ UMC



Thursday February 14th – VALENTINE's DAY! GOD LOVES YOU! Even if you don't receive flowers/candy today.

Tuesday February 19th – PL's Dad has knee Surgery in Sioux Falls (PL out of town)

Wednesday February 20th – 9am-11am PL Murray County Hospice in Slayton
JAM @ UMC

Thursday February 21st – 6:30pm PL a part of “Service of Remembrance Christ Lutheran in Slayton as Hospice Chaplain Murray County.

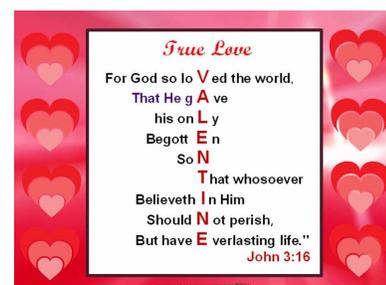
Friday February 22nd – 9am COLONIAL MANOR COMMUNION & WORSHIP with PL

Sunday February 24th – 1pm PL & Peggy Colonial Manor Worship

Monday February 25th – PL & Jim Financial Appointment in Pipestone (afternoon)

Wednesday February 27th – JAM @ UMC/POTLUCK!

Sunday, March 3rd – COMMUNION/at the rail.



LENT begins **WEDNESDAY MARCH 6th ASH WEDNESDAY** Stay tuned for the Lenten Schedule.

9th GRADE CONFIRMATION EVENT – Friday April 5th-Saturday April 6th in Alexandria (info out next week from Pastors).

CONFIRMATION Sunday, April 28th (NO UMCers this year)

ANNUAL CONFERENCE SESSION – Monday June 18-Thursday June 20th

RISE-FEST MUSIC FEST – Friday June 21st-Saturday June 22nd

Notes from Board Chair-

After putting up with snow, wind, freezing cold temps I am ready for some warmer weather. I can grumble about it being cold but also am so thankful for all that we have. We have a home that is warm, food to eat and the love of family and friends. When I see on the news the homeless people living on the streets trying to keep warm it is just hard to comprehend. I can't imagine trying to live like that. Maybe some of them choose to be homeless, I don't know. It is still hard to see.

We were surprised to hear about Julie falling and breaking her hip. Have talked to her a few times and seems she is doing well and going to start therapy. Not sure if she made it out this week with all the wind and snow. The road is not good. I know the kids at the middle school sure miss her. Also grateful for all the school closings it's good to know the children did not have to be out in it, because most children do not dress for the cold. I have only been to work and back. Mike and I went to the movie *The Upside* on Sunday afternoon, it had just started snowing when we pulled into the theater parking lot, when we left it was snowing pretty good, the road was good, just some ground drifting. It is an awesome movie based on a true story so if you get the chance go and see it.

We are grateful the city is starting to make some progress regarding the nursing home. The special meeting on Tuesday night sounded very promising, and also very informative, thanks to Megan Gernetz for all the hard work she has put into this.

So far Mike and I have not had the flu, I heard it is starting to go around Tracy and RTR. Maybe with all the days with school closed is good thing for the spread of the flu.

Have been trying to go through my closets and get rid of stuff that I don't need or use, almost have my closet done have one garbage full, and a couple of boxes to take to the thrift store.

Sunday is the Super Bowl it always amazes how much the commercials cost to produce, what they would be able to do with all that money they spend. We are going over to a friend's house to watch it. Might actually be able to get somewhere to buy groceries.

Well have to get up for work tomorrow so but get ready to head to bed.

Thanks to Jordan and crew and Craig for keeping our church scooped out.

Lois Swanson



Balaton UMW Communications

January is the start of a New Year and we should rejoice because we have a chance for a brand new start!

The past year may have created challenges that left some of us with mixed emotions, or we may have had a wonderful year or just looked at the good in everything that hindered us in 2018. Either way, we are still tasked to walk side by side with our Lord.

January led our Unit to task the winter, cold and cancellations. After two tries we decided to discuss our Unit business meeting at the February meeting. This will be held on Wednesday, February 13th at 1:30 pm We will be meeting with Betty Chandler. Our books have been audited, we will discuss and propose our budget, collect our yearly dues and collect for call to prayer and self denial.

Friday, March 1st at 2:00 pm we will be hosting World Day of Prayer with the location to be announced.

I always want to remind you to pick up our devotional, the Upper Room booklet. There are so many good writers who share their lives.

Our prayer chain keeps busy sharing our love and concerns to many.



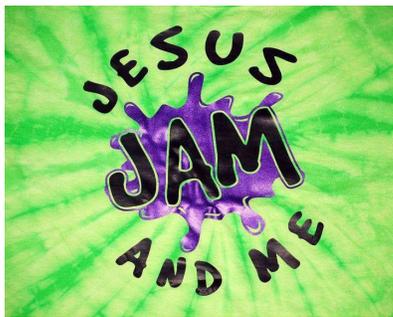
Winter seems to find many folks falling. Remember we are all praying for you.

We enjoy mailing out cards to cheer ones that we know need our remembrance.

I asked that our faith be renewed. Walk with us and send your angels out to protect us in the upcoming year.

If God is with us, who can be against us?

Betty Leversedge



FEBRUARY READERS

Feb 3: Phil Skramstad

Feb 10: June Terhark

Feb. 17: Nancy Iversen

Feb 24: Sue Skramstad

February J.A.M. Serving List~

UMC Hosting

Feb. 6: Ann Gifford-Chair

Greg Taveirne

Julie Lokken

Crystal Leversedge Marron

Feb. 13: Nancy Iversen-Chair

Sue Skramstad

Peggy Bundy

Sara Swenhaugen

Feb. 20: Carrie Jones-Chair

Denise Crumrine

Bonnie Dreckman

Missy Dreckman

Feb. 27: POTLUCK

February Coffee Servers:

Feb. 3: PL, Lois and Denise

Feb. 10: Virginia and Penni

Feb. 17: UMW

Feb. 24: Lois and Stella

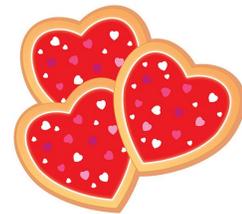


February Usher List

Stacy Chandler

Ruth Lehnhoff

Lanny and Nancy Iversen



February 2019 Balaton United Methodist Church Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 Keith Pickering's B-day	2 Mason Scharfe's B-day
3 Worship 9:00 Communion @ rail "Souper Bowl Sunday" Jasa Smidt's B-day	4 PL Premarital mtg in Sioux Falls Jeff Chandler's B-day	5	6 9-11 Murray Co Hospice Slayton JAM~@ UMC 5:30 Traditional Worship 6:00 Meal~6:30 Worship 7 pm Sm Group	7 PL to Springfield Licensed Pastor mtg 11-2	8	9
10 Worship 9:00 PL speak after church-special session General Conference	11	12 PL & Jim in Worthington for taxes Dawn Schelhaas B-day	13 JAM~@ UMC 5:30 Traditional Worship 6:00 Meal~6:30 Worship 7 pm Sm Group Dana Medina B-day	14 Easton Lustfield B-day	15 Carol Chandler B-day	16
17 Worship 9:00 Virginia Yearous B-day	18	19 PL's Dad has knee surgery -PL out of town	20 9-11 PL Murray Co Hospice JAM~@ UMC 5:30 Traditional Worship 6:00 Meal~6:30 Worship 7 pm Sm Group	21 PL Murray Co Hospice Service 6:30 Bruce & Dawn Schelhaas Anniv	22 9:00 Colonial Manor Service & Communion w/PL Mike Swanson B-day	23
24 Worship 9:00 1:00 Colonial Manor PL & Peggy Denise Hoek B-day	25	26 Denise Crumrine B-day Allen Chandler B-day	27 JAM~@ UMC 5:30 Traditional Worship 6:00 Potluck~6:30 Worship 7 pm Sm Group	28		



Balaton UMC Website Update: We are pleased to announce that BUMC has a brand new website complete with online giving through a completely safe and secure link from Vanco.

Phil and Sue Skramstad have been working on this for the past several weeks, and Sue has constructed an awesome new site. More details will be coming in the next few weeks.

Check out the new site at: balatonumc.org



**CHURCH
DIRECTORIES
AND PORTRAITS**

**Mark Your Calendars for:
Friday, April 26 and
Saturday, April 27**

More details coming soon! Thank you Nancy, Ann, Nellie and Peggy T for volunteering to help. We might need more help too at the registration table those two days - we will keep you posted!

Easy OREO Truffles

Ingredients

- 1 (16 ounce) package OREO Chocolate Sandwich Cookies, divided
- 1 (8 ounce) package PHILADELPHIA Cream Cheese, softened
- 2 (8 ounce) packages BAKER'S Semi-Sweet Baking Chocolate, melted



Directions

1. Crush 9 of the cookies to fine crumbs in food processor; reserve for later use. (Cookies can also be finely crushed in a resealable plastic bag using a rolling pin.) Crush remaining 36 cookies to fine crumbs; place in medium bowl. Add cream cheese; mix until well blended. Roll cookie mixture into 42 balls, about 1-inch in diameter.
2. Dip balls in chocolate; place on wax paper-covered baking sheet. (Any leftover chocolate can be stored at room temperature for another use.) Sprinkle with reserved cookie crumbs.
3. Refrigerate until firm, about 1 hour. Store leftover truffles, covered, in refrigerator.

Balaton United Methodist Church

Lori VonHoltum, Pastor

220 2nd Street West

Balaton MN 56115

**Remember our Nursing Home Residents: Colonial Manor: Mert Holm and Neva Manguson.
Remembering & praying for Brandon Swanson..... missing from his family since May 2008**