



# February Messenger

## ASBURY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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From the very early days of the church, Christians journeyed the 40 days of Lent in a trifold practice as an intentional and contemplative experience of God's unconditional, agape love. This included **Prayer, Fasting, and Almsgiving**. This Lent, Asbury UMC is offering these means of grace to all ages, so all might observe a Holy Lent.

### PRAYING: 40 DAYS OF PRAYER

You are invited to take a packet with a devotional booklet and prayer cards for five people or households in our church on Sunday, February 11. Please pray for them beginning February 14 and throughout Lent, and send a note or card to them before Easter to let them know you have been praying for them. Persons in the church directory will automatically be placed on cards. If you would like to add others, you may complete a prayer card at the piano in the Great Room where Mona Ray will assist you on Sunday, February 4.

### FASTING: A DIFFERENT WAY TO FAST – GROW, PRAY, STUDY WEEKLY GUIDE

Based on the new book, *A Different Way to Fast*, you will receive weekly ideas as how to fast beyond food. In our busy world, what a welcome relief it would be to fast from consuming, from multi-tasking and inattention, from scarcity anxiety, and more. All ages are invited through the Grow, Pray, Study guide each week to practice fasting in an alternate way.

### ALMSGIVING: LAUNDRY LOVE – LENTEN BOXES COLLECTION

During the Lenten season, individuals/families will pick up a Lenten Box, in which persons can make donations of quarters, dollars, or checks (made out to Asbury UMC with Laundry Love in the memo line) for Laundry Love, a local ministry that enables some of our low income or underserved neighbors to wash up to 4 loads of laundry at the Super Wash & Tan in Delaware, Ohio.

**The Lenten Boxes will be collected on March 31.** Laundry Love is held at Super Wash & Tan, 256 S. Sandusky St., twice a month (one night and one day). The cost of doing one load of laundry (wash and dry) is approximately \$60.

### BEGINNING THE JOURNEY: SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 11 – FOLLOWING WORSHIP

You are invited to Palms and Potluck. Bring a dish or purchase a goodie from the Chocolate Fare to share, as well as a service set for you and your family. Following worship, we will burning last year's palms to make ashes for Ash Wednesday, then we will come together for a meal in the McCoy room. You will also have time that morning to put together a Lenten bag of the materials you will need for the season, including the items listed above. **On February 14, we will celebrate Ash Wednesday together at 7 pm in the Sanctuary.** Blessings to you on this journey of God's love in the season of Lent.

**Rev. Katie Osier**

### **CHURCH STAFF**

#### MINISTER:

Rev. Katie Osier

#### ADMINISTRATIVE ASST:

Sheila Hemans (interim)

#### INTERTWINE YOUTH MINISTRY:

Rev. Kara Jones

#### DIRECTOR OF MUSIC:

Rev. Carol Ann Bradley

#### WORSHIP LEADER:

Peter Baylis

#### CHILDREN'S CHOIR DIRECTOR:

Natalie Ritchie

#### CUSTODIAN:

Tom Szymkowiak

# FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT TO DARKNESS

By Peter Baylis, Lay Leader

The other day someone had mentioned to me that I had forgotten or that I somehow totally missed taking down the star banner which is hanging in the Great Room over the balcony railing. Well, I didn't forget for I left the star banner up on purpose. The mention of the star banner does, however, allow me the opportunity to explain why it is still hanging and why it will remain hanging for the Sundays until Ash Wednesday.

During the season of Advent, as we prepare for Christmas, we, churches, tend to dwell and focus on images of darkness and light. The music that is prepared and sung during this time reminds each of us that the light of Christ is on the way and that the darkness that we experience in our lives as we wait for the birth of Jesus is not the end of God's story, but rather a continuation of God's story which started even before the creation of the world. During the Christmas season we hear once again the wonderful reassurance from the Gospel of John, "The light shines in the darkness and the darkness does not overcome it (John 1:5)." From Advent, we move to Christmas and from Christmas we move to the season of Epiphany, a season of light, which continues to Ash Wednesday and the beginning of Lent. It is during Epiphany that we hear the encouraging words from Isaiah, "Rise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of God has risen upon you (Isaiah 60:1)." And the star banner is a continual reminder of God's light in our lives and in our world. But from the light of Epiphany, we move into the darkness of Lent. For Lent beckons each of us to consider what our true state of existence would be like apart from God. For if our lives are apart from Christ, our lives would be immersed in complete mess and crumble and fall into deeper darkness.

The Good News is that the darkness of Lent is not the end, but rather it is through this darkness and the struggles that we face daily that allow us to emerge into a new understanding of the light and the brightness of the joy of Easter. However, before we can get to Easter we need to look and understand the meaning of Lent.

Lent is a season that stands totally on its own. Advent and the Christmas season have become whitewashed and often diluted due to the commercialism of the season. The Christmas season is so intertwined with elements away from the church that one can easily be distracted and lost from its true meaning and significance in our lives. Lent, however, has been left alone from the outside influences of secular society. Lent is heavy and Lent is serious. Lent is not a time of joyful singing and merriment. Lent is a time of reflection and critical deep self-examination. It is a time for intentional contemplation of what we believe and what we stand for as children of God. And just as Jesus was in the wilderness and tested for 40 days after his baptism, Lent enables each of us the opportunity to search inwards and emerge in 40 days with a renewed understanding of the significance of Jesus' sacrifice for us and a renewed trust in God's sovereignty in the light of the greatest event that the universe as ever known: Easter.

The central theme of Lent is to help us adopt the time to remember the passion, death, and resurrection of Jesus. Lent becomes a necessary time of reflection, of prayer, of penance, of charity giving, and a time to repent from our sins and help us to deny our super inflated egos, "For if we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us, but if we confess our sins, God who is steadfast and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness (1 John 1:1-8)."

Lent is the season of the year which calls us back to simple living. A time of purposeful and deep prayer to grow closer and more intimate with our Creator and Savior. Lent challenges each of us and provides us the opportunity to intentionally look inward, to search and see who we truly are without false pretense or self-fabrication. Our inward journey begins on Ash Wednesday with a simple action, yet a deep and profound statement, in the receiving of ashes. For by receiving these ashes we acknowledge our mortality, we repent of our sins, and we express our desire to return to our loving God. Ashes that acknowledge that all life as a precious gift from God as we turn to walk with Jesus daily. Lent makes possible for us to make resolutions and to commit to changing our lives over the next forty days, and not just forty days, but beyond, so that we might be more like Christ in all that we think and do and speak.

Jesus Walked This Lonesome Valley, arr. John Ferguson

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6NdSDgwY-x0>

2023	Deposits	Expenses	Surplus/(Deficit)
<i>Prepaid</i> & Jan - Nov	\$452,448.86	\$447,151.94	\$5,296.92
December	\$51,764.84	\$38,182.34	\$13,582.50
<b>YTD Cumulative</b>	<b>\$504,213.70</b>	<b>\$485,334.28</b>	<b>\$18,879.42</b>

Throughout this past year, the table above has included ALL donations and offerings received whether they be designated or not. It has also included ALL dollars that leave the main checking account. As of December 31, the Christmas Special Offering has totaled \$18,829. As you can see, that is the surplus listed in the table above. A tithe of this offering will be donated to Turning Point in February when we have a final total. The remainder of the offering will be available for 2024 general use, providing a nice cash reserve which enables us to remain current with expenses.

It might be of interest to know that in 2023, \$405,880 was received as General Use offerings. The remaining donations and offerings were designated by the giver for specific purposes. Only the General Use funds can be used to cover our budgeted expenses which totaled \$405,202. Budgeted expenses were totally covered by General Use offerings received in 2023. The donations and offerings that were designated have to be used in accordance with the giver's wishes. These included things like mortgage reduction, memorials, special conference giving (UMCOR, Blanket Sunday, etc.), specific church expenses (plumbing repairs, new kitchen appliance, etc.), ministry team use, and various other designations.

#### Update on 2024 Pledges

As of mid-January, when this article was written, the church has received 87 pledged offerings for 2024 totaling \$325,968. The pledged offerings cover approximately 71% of the approved 2024 Budget of \$458,670. This is a higher percent coverage than last year. Congratulations!

The Finance Committee is grateful for every single dollar the church receives from the entire congregation - whether pledged or not. Asbury is blessed with a congregation who is committed to the work and witness that Asbury provides. We will continue to grow spiritually, care for our community, and provide a welcoming environment for all to worship.

Tom Major - Treasurer

## FAMILY PROMISE—WEEK LONG MEAL PROVISION: FEBRUARY 4-10

*Building communities and strengthening lives.*

During the week, volunteers from Asbury UMC are needed to help provide meals *or* portions of meals for the Family Promise House, 39 N. Washington St., whose mission is to work with families and set them on a sustainable path of living.

Meals are to be delivered by 5:30p each day during our week.

Not sure what to do? That's okay – we are here to help. Feel free to contact Leslie Beyer-Hermsen or contact the church office and we will get you connected. It is easier than you think!

**Volunteer Link:** <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/70A094BAAAC2D6-46904502-1st2024>

Packaging for meal items can be found in the church's kitchenette. If you have packaging questions, please contact Lynn Cook 614-361-9907.

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## SANDWICH SUNDAY: FEBRUARY 25, 2024

Though White Sands, an underserved low-income community located on the west side of Lake Street in Delaware, is in the process of being vacated, there are still folks living there. The owner has welcomed us to continue to provide lunches, while folks are still there.



Volunteer

Link: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/70A094BAAAC2D6-47339952-february>

Please review the available slots and click on the button to sign up.  
Thank you for serving our Delaware Community with Love!

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## LAUNDRY LOVE—2024



Asbury UMC has been invited to care for the community through Laundry Love. This occurs twice a month – one time during the day and one time in the evening. Those who attend do a maximum of 4 loads, paid for by the financial donations from area churches and organizations. Volunteers are needed to help connect with the neighbors that come through conversation, serving food, and various other roles. The next dates for Laundry Love, at the Superwash on Sandusky are **Monday, February 12 @ 5-8 PM** and **Monday, February 26 @ 10 AM – 1 PM**.

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## GIVING OPPORTUNITY (GO): NEW SOCKS FOR COMMON GROUND FREE STORE

New sock donations of any size can be brought to the church and placed in the Common Ground Free Store bin on Sundays, through February 11. Socks are an essential need for families.

## SUNDAY SCHOOL FOR ALL AGES: 9:30 AM EVERY SUNDAY

The regular Sunday School schedule resumes on January 8 at 9:30 AM. Since the new year can be a time for new beginnings, the Christian Education Committee invites you to consider trying out one of our Sunday school classes in January. If you have any questions, please contact the church office for more information.

### Godly Play Class - PreK-Grade 5 - Lower Education Wing

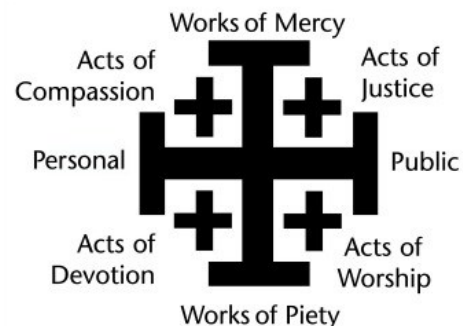
Our Godly Play stories continue to explore some of the miracles Jesus performed during his ministry. In mid-February, we learn the meaning of Ash Wednesday and prepare for the Mystery of Easter.

February 4 Jesus and the Storm

February 11 A Godly Play Story About Ash Wednesday

February 18 The Mystery of Easter

February 25 The Legend of the Easter Egg



### Youth Class - Grades 6-12 – Middle Room of the Balcony

Youth are continuing on their quest for questions and answers, as well as their mural painting. Colors have been started and visions taking hold.

### Spiritual Journey Adult Class – Asbury UMC Library

This class will take on a new study called **Bible Stories for Grown-Ups** by Josh Scott. Erik English will be leading the class, starting with the Introduction and Chapter 1 on Sunday, February 4. You are most welcome to come and journey with this class.

### “Class With No Name” Adult Class – McCoy Room

This new group, led by Eric Osier, explores the text of the day for worship. The class delves into understanding different perspectives in the text and how it connects to life. Bring your coffee or tea and join us for an open-ended discussion. You are welcome to join us any Sunday morning!

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## INTERTWINE YOUTH MINISTRY COLLECTIVE



All high school and middle school youth – you are invited to start the new year by coming to an Intertwine gathering. There’s always lots of fun for everyone, along with thoughtful conversations in age-level groups. Intertwine meets twice each month, once together and once as Middle School and High School separate gatherings. Mark your calendars for these January Intertwine gatherings, and please remember to RSVP to Rev. Kara so she can plan on how many to expect.

Sunday, February 4, 6:30-8:00 PM (GR 6-12) @ Asbury UMC

Sunday, February 25, 5:00-6:30 PM (GR 6-8); 7-8:30 PM (GR 9-12)  
@ Zion UCC

# UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH NEWS

## ASBURY UWF ANNUAL CHOCOLATE FARE

February 10, 2024 @ 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

The Great Hall at Asbury UMC

It's almost that time of year, when our church parlor is filled with the sweet aroma of tasty chocolate. An important fundraiser for UWF, this event is made possible by volunteers, dessert makers, and shoppers! Those interested in being involved can sign up after church beginning January 28 or contact Kathleen Miller at 5millers1980@gmail.com or 740-360-2421.

### CIRCLE GATHERINGS

Hannah Circle

February 1, 2024 @ 1:30 pm

Program: Intertwine, by Rev. Kara Jones

Host: Julia Foster (34 Willow Brook Way)

Lydia Circle

February 8, 2024 @ 7:00 pm

Program: "Born on the Water," by Terri Litchfield

Host: Kathleen Miller (415 N. Sandusky Str.)

Rebekah Circle

February 21, 2024 @ 9:30 am

Program: Fellowship Time

Location: McDonalds (279 S. Sandusky St)

### *Welcome New UWF Board Member, Sue Chaney*

We are excited and grateful to announce that Sue Chaney will serve as the 2024 Vice President of Asbury's United Women in Faith board. We thank her and look forward to her leadership.

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## TALENT SHOW & SWEET TREATS: SATURDAY, MARCH 2 @ 6:33 PM

Start practicing and planning now for the evening of Saturday, March 2.

Share with your talents with the Asbury UMC family, whether it is juggling, stand-up comedy, singing, instrumental, dance, or something of a unique variety. Following the talent show, we will gather in the Great Room to sample culinary talents: homemade sweet treats.

Watch for sign-ups in the Great Room. For any further questions, please contact Jim Bartha.

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**WINTER WEATHER:** If a Level 2 Snow Emergency is in place at 7:00 AM Sunday, Sunday School and the Worship Service will be cancelled for that day. For the Level of snow emergency, you may access your favorite up-to-date local news source or check the Delaware County Sheriff's website: <https://sheriff.co.delaware.oh.us>.

### DEADLINE FOR THE MARCH MESSENGER

Articles for the March Messenger are due by **February 16**. Send to [asburychurchohio@gmail.com](mailto:asburychurchohio@gmail.com). Thank you!

**Dawn McCleery & Family** in the passing of her mother, Ethel Smith, on Tuesday, Jan 9.

**Dale & Nancy Sanford**, in the passing of his brother, Wayne, on Jan. 10

*With Sympathy*

**Siobhan Johnson**, in the passing of her Mother Jan. 12

**Tera Whitmore & Family**, in the passing of her Father-in-Law on Jan. 12.

*February*  
**BIRTHDAYS**



**Prayers for the Congregation**

Nancy Henkle	Mike Jones
Sandy Mead	Steve Mead
Ken Morton	Winnie Wright



**Limited Activities List**

Lois Benton	Helen Berrisford
Norma Chidester	Paula Gordin
Rosalie Hutter	Mike Jones
Kay & David Nardin	Yvonne Potts
Janet Schwab	Jeff Viri-Dunahue
Winnie Wright	

**Friends in Need of Prayer**

**Bill Backus:** brother of Bob Backus

**Graciana Stonsifer:** 2nd cousin of Steve Dolk

**Sue Byers:** Ann Davis's sister

**Leigh Rabby:** Ann Davis's friend

**Vivien Backus:** daughter of Bob Backus

**Jeff Brubaker,** Dan & Heather Phillips request

**Kathy Childress and family,** sister-in-law of Heather and Dan Phillips

**Greg Maddox,** friend of Dan Phillips

**Carrie Hall,** Carol & Dick Brulotte's daughter

**Tom Ebbert,** Doris Ebbert's husband

**Linda Potter,** friend of Carol Brulotte

**Bonnie Slusser,** Mother of Ruth Ward

**Jeff Campbell,** friend of Mary Jean Roach

**Our Asbury church members whose families are serving in the military**

- 2 Heather Lowry  
Georgie Morrison  
Caleb Richardson  
Kyndall Spires  
Reid Stultz
- 4 Dick Brulotte  
Art Kumpf
- 5 Stella Flanery
- 6 Bill McCartney
- 7 Rene Villanueva-Henkle
- 10 Katie Caplinger  
Emily Caton  
Dave Mansperger
- 12 Elise Haase  
Sandy Miller
- 14 Tera Whitmore
- 18 Ryan Osier
- 22 Annie Kumpf  
Robin Vermillion
- 23 Ed Powell
- 24 Siobhan Johnson  
Melody Long  
Trista Todt  
Evie Warr-Omness
- 28 Katie Gibson  
Paige Markward
- 29 Charles Haase  
Tom Moore

# February 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	
4 9:00 am Children's Choirs 9:30 am Sunday School for all 10:45 am Worship	5 5:30 pm Delaware Community Chorus	6 10 am All Staff Mtg 5:15 pm Wesley Prayer Challenge 6 pm Bells 7 pm Adult Choir	7 7 pm Lydia Circle 7 pm DCP Mtg	8 8 am Prayer Group	9 8 am Prayer Group	10 10 am UWF Chocolate Fare
11 9:00 am Children's Choirs 9:30 am Sunday School for all 10:45 am Worship 12 noon Palms and Potluck 12 noon Confirmation	12 10 am UWF Board 5 pm DCP Family Yoga Night 5:30 pm Delaware	13 7 pm Trustees	14 6 pm Bells 7 pm Ash Wednesday Service	15 Messenger Deadline 8 am Prayer Group	16	17
18 9:00 am Children's Choirs 9:30 am Sunday School for all 10:45 am Worship	19 Office Closed 5 pm DCP Ed Night 5:30 pm Delaware Community Chorus	20 2 pm Alzheimer's Caregiver Group 7 pm Christian Ed	21 9:30 am Rebekah Circle 1:30 pm Hannah Circle 6 pm Bells 7 pm Adult Choir	22 8 am Prayer Group	23 8 am Prayer Group	24 Confirmation Retreat Depart 5 PM
25 9:00 am Children's Choirs 9:30 am Sunday School for all 10:45 am Worship Students Return at 3 pm 5:00 pm MS Intertwine 7:00 pm HS Intertwine	26 5:30 pm Delaware Community Chorus	27	28	29 7 pm Administrative Council		