

# THE BRIDGE

## BRIDGEPORT UMC NEWSLETTER

# FEBRUARY 2024

Bridgeport UMC  
1305 Bridgeport Road  
Indianapolis, IN 46231  
317/241-6195

### Worship Schedule

Choir Practice	8:30 am
Fellowship Time	9:15 am
Sunday Service	10:00 am
Bible Study	11:15 am
Latino Worship	11:30 am
Christ International Church	12:30 pm

Also review the "Upcoming Events" section of this Newsletter for special events



### BUMC Hope Coin:



Church Family, it is really a blessing that we can watch Sunday service (remotely). I can see the number of people who are able to see the service online using YouTube.

Click here for Bridgeport UMC YouTube – [Bridgeport UMC Indianapolis](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC...)



On Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/Bridgeport-United-Methodist-Church-156261224432213/>



## Upcoming Events

- **Book Club:** March 9, 2024, both at 10:30am
- **Lenten Breakfast Series:** February 17 – March 23, 2024, 8:00-9:30 am, **BUMC will host on March 2, 2024 (see Lenten Breakfast flyer for other dates/church locations)**
- **BUMC Date Night Dinner:** Saturday, February 24, 2024 (sign-up sheet coming soon)
- **Admin Council Meeting:** March 9, 2024 at 10:15 am (following Prayer Breakfast)
- **Crime Watch Meeting:** 6:00 pm
- **Trustees' Meeting:** April 8, 2024 at 6:00 pm
- **Leap Day:** February 29, 2024

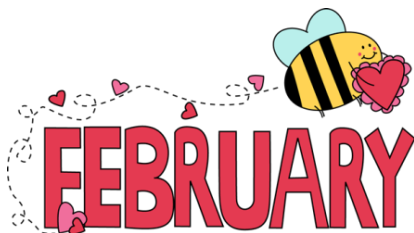
Please watch the online church calendar for any future changes of date or time - should that be necessary. You can access that calendar under the "Activities" tab at <https://www.smallchurchbigheart.com/>

As a reminder, you may access the Directory by placing the following link/address in your search browser on your desktop/tablet/laptop: <https://members.instantchurchdirectory.com/>

## Re-Organization of the Food Pantry

At a recent committee meeting, Jacque Morris suggested that we re-assess the current process for distributing nonperishable foods from our food pantry. Food sometimes sits on the pantry shelves for months before it can be packed up and driven to a larger distribution center. This not only can lead to food dates expiring, but also means the folks who really need it are not benefitting from it in a timely fashion. Any new process will ensure that 1) food does not "expire" as it could be rotated by date more efficiently, and 2) would get to those who would benefit from it on a more regular basis. For now, we are in the gathering stage. Therefore, we would appreciate your support by continuing to bring in any nonperishable foods you wish. Since we are in the winter months, high priority foods would be hot cereals, soups, cans of chili, etc.

## Birthdays



02/11/2024	Cheryl Kuritz
02/17/2024	Courtney Jones-Hunt
02/19/2024	Jim Dill
02/22/2024	Willie C. Benton
02/24/2024	Courtney Stansell
02/24/2024	Krysta Eaton

## How Well Do You Know Me?

This section has hopefully been very meaningful to readers as we have learned a bit more about members of this congregation. This month highlights Wanda Sipe, another long-time member of BUMC.

Wanda has four children, two of which are Gary and Janice, and two who have passed. Gary currently lives with Wanda, and Janice lives fairly close. Wanda has been blessed with 7 grandchildren ranging in ages from 28 to 38, as well as 2 great-grandchildren. Except for one year when she lived in Chicago, Wanda has only lived in Indiana, and graduated from Ben Davis High School. She lived in Speedway for 21 years, but moved to her current home in Chapel Pines more than 37 years ago.

While now retired, Wanda has worked for various companies: RCA, Western Electric, IUPUI, Olan Mills, Ginger and Spice Boutique, and at a daycare. She loved her job at Ginger and Spice the most as she made many friendships while working there.

Wanda is a lady of many talents, including painting ceramics, crocheting, sewing dolls, making sock animals, jewelry making, and storytelling. She has had booths at many craft fairs, and is proud that she was once invited to sell her ceramic pieces at a juried art fair – an art show in which vendors are hand selected to present their pieces. Wanda has a giving heart, and believes she has crocheted and gifted more than 15 baby blankets for the Lebanon Children's Home. Many children at BUMC have been blessed to receive one of Wanda's sock animals or dolls. Wanda used to make up stories for her children and their friends when they were young. She would make up a story line and personalize it to each child. That creativity and imagination led to her becoming an author of children's books later in life. She has already published two, and a third is in the works. This latest book will be called, "The Lost Ring," a story about two little girls searching for a lost ring – characters much like her great granddaughters, Zia and Aryia. The artwork for this book will be drawn by Lexi, Joy Spurgin's granddaughter. It is important to Wanda that all of her stories teach positive life lessons to children. Stay tuned!

Wanda is also an animal lover, and has had many dogs throughout her life, however, she rescued a cat named Sophie, the only cat she ever had. Sophie lived to be 17 years old before she recently passed, and Wanda misses her greatly.

Wanda also has had a "claim to fame" in that she has met Clint Eastwood, and she's had many people tell her she looks just like Debbie Reynolds. In fact, Wanda remembers a few parties she attended times in which she has been mistaken for Ms. Reynolds.

Wanda has attended BUMC for 37 years, and has been a member for at least 20 years. She remembers Max Case was the Pastor when she first started attending BUMC, and she has seen many Pastors come and go. She has been involved in many facets of the church, including digging gravel when the new sanctuary was being built. She personally stained some of the wood work that surrounds the stain glass windows in the sanctuary. Wanda also has read

scripture during Sunday services, has helped in the kitchen, and fondly remembers hosting a party and decorating the tables in Fellowship Hall.

Wanda has a deep faith and just knows that God is always there for us, and will take care of things in His time, and if it His will. She did not grow up in a church family, but always had the sense of someone looking out for her. Wanda is obsessed with angels, and has several painted on the wall over the staircase leading up to her second story. A few things have happened to her over the years that could only be explained by spiritual or angelic intervention. The first occurred when she was just 16 years old. She and a friend, along with some other girls, were waiting for a bus to arrive. Out of nowhere, she heard a strong male voice tell her to “run.” She didn’t see anyone, but that voice had urgency about it, so she grabbed her friend and they ran. Within seconds, a car slammed into the very spot they had been standing. On another occasion, years later, and shortly after her husband’s death, Wanda had been overcome with grief and the heaviness of raising children. She had been searching her home for a particular lockbox, but just could not find it, and she began to tear up. All at once, she felt a gust of wind that blew her hair, and then felt a presence. That presence guided her to a room where she finally found the lockbox. Immediately, a sense of peace came over her, and the house smelled like roses – even her daughter Janice could smell the roses. Wanda’s last affirmation of God’s protection came after getting lost while driving to a friend’s house one night. It was dark, and she had never been to this friend’s home before. No one else was out on the road at the time, and knowing she was lost, she pulled over, and just asked God to help. She got back on the road, and was successfully guided to her friend’s home. Wanda believes one of God’s angels protected her that night and helped her arrive at her destination. Wanda said all three of these events took place earlier in life, but came at a time when she desperately needed God. She feels so blessed that God has and continues to protect her, and now she just **knows** that God has her in His hand, and she doesn’t worry about anything. God has it.

When asked what she dreams for BUMC, Wanda would like to see the church pews full every Sunday and would like to see more children attending. Her favorite hymn is Amazing Grace, and her favorite Bible verse is John 13:34: “A new command I give you: love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.” For this writer, Wanda embodies the spirit of love, and she radiates love to everyone at BUMC. She receives hugs from the children, and is fondly referred to as “grandma” by a few. Her loving heart is captured in a story she told of working in the daycare years ago. She was in charge of a troubled 12 year girl, the daughter of a single mom at the time. Wanda routinely hugged all of the children at the daycare. One day, the 12 year old girl called Wanda a derogatory name after one of those big hugs. Wanda asked her why she would say something like that, and the girl said, “well, you hugged me.” Wanda looked directly into the girl’s eyes and told her she loved her, and loved all the children at the daycare. The girl had difficulty believing she was worthy of that love. Soon after, the Director of the day care noticed a positive change in the girl, and asked Wanda what she did to facilitate that change, and Wanda said, “I just loved her.” That is the sweet loving lady we have to worship with every week.

## Looking Back with Joy

### Hot Chocolate Night (Jan 31, 2024):

Heva Espay hosted a wonderful hot chocolate night event at Nonna's Restaurant on Wednesday evening, January 31, 2024. Hot chocolate, with everything imaginable to top your mug, and other hand held edibles were available. Mia and Alexi sang and played music in the corner of a beautifully decorated room of the restaurant. Heva ensured that kids had fun with lots of games as well. Heva also brought out the Karaoke, and singing ended the evening. Thank you Heva and Lizbeth for hosting and for the wonderful food and drinks.

### Ice Cream for Breakfast (February 3, 2024):

For the children, Heva also hosted an Ice Cream for Breakfast on Saturday, February 3, 2024. About 9-10 kids in their pajamas enjoyed this event. Heva offered a breakfast of bacon, fresh blueberries and strawberries, Jack's donuts, various flavors of waffles, and of course, ice cream, to all who attended. Kids were just allowed to be kids as they watched a cartoon video, played board games, and even got to play duck duck goose outside thanks to Debbie Hefling. Thank you Heva again for hosting this fun children's event.

A few photos from both events:





## Lent Pearls

### Spring training for Christians

The word Lent comes from Middle English and German words for springtime. In light of the start of baseball season, some people call the pre-Easter season “spring training for Christians.” This fresh perspective moves away from the flawed understanding that Lent must be somber, or that giving something up for Lent is punishment for sin or a way to earn God’s favor.

As people of faith, we should never take a season off. But every so often — at least once a year! — we do well to examine where we need to get back in shape spiritually. Perhaps we will indeed opt to give something up: that swearing habit, sleeping in on Sundays, or the cost of a weekly treat so we can donate the money instead. Or maybe we’ll take on something new for Lent: a Bible study, prayer routine or service project.

Hebrews describes spiritual discipline as challenging in the moment but yielding righteousness later. The writer urges us, “Lift your drooping hands and strengthen your weak knees ... so that what is lame may not be put out of joint but rather be healed” (12:11-13, ESV). May the spring training of Lent strengthen and heal us all.

### Christian symbol †

On Ash Wednesday, as Lent begins, worshipers’ foreheads are often marked with ashes in the sign of the cross. The ashes traditionally come from burning palm branches from the previous Palm Sunday. In the Old Testament, ashes were a sign of mourning and repentance. Today, some worshipers wipe off the ashes before leaving church, to symbolize being cleansed from sin by Jesus’ death; others wear the ashes the rest of the day, carrying the cross of Christ into the world. Reciting Genesis 3:19 often accompanies the placement of ashes: “You are dust, and to dust you shall return.”

## Notes From Our Pastor

Let us give thanks to The Lord, for He is good; His Love endures forever. I am thankful to be able to proclaim The Love of God to you and all who will hear.

As we continue to follow our Methodist Mission of: “To Make Disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world all for the glory of God. We are commanded and authorized by Jesus Christ Himself with “The Great Commission” stated by Jesus in Matthew 28:19: “Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.”

We now have entered the season of Lent and have just observed Ash Wednesday. I want to personally thank all who took the time to come to our 1:00 pm service. I also especially want to thank Dave Pearson for webcasting the service as it can still be viewed online. You can find the link on our Facebook page and our BUMC webpage.

I know there were some who wanted to be there and could not make it. We do understand that we all are called to different places at different times, so no worries if you couldn't make it. God knows and loves you and He understands with Grace and Mercy.

During this season of Lent, I have hopes that we as a church will support all of the west side Methodist Churches' observances during the six Saturdays before Easter. We host on March 2, 2024, at 800 am. The breakfasts will be held at five other UMC churches listed in this Lenten Breakfast flyer. All are welcome. I hope to be at all six breakfasts and am hoping that others from BUMC will also be able to make as many as possible.

I am excited about all the activities during each week here at BUMC. We had two great experiences that I want to congratulate Heva Espay for her planning and delivery of Hot Chocolate Night at Nonna's on January 31st where we filled the private party space at this fine and generous establishment. It was so much fun for all.

Another event that was impressive was Ice Cream for breakfast which was also well attended and a personal favorite of my granddaughter Taeko. She as well as the other children loves Miss Heva so much. We are blessed to have her as our Education Director. She is also always willing to let others participate and would always welcome others to join in this growing ministry. Please contact her or me if you have any interest.

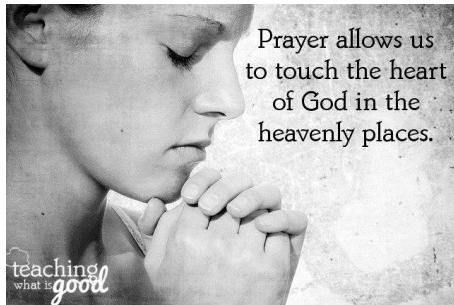
Returning to “The Season of Lent” we are reminded to prepare for Resurrection Sunday. What are you doing these 40 days prior? The tradition is to focus is on repentance—expressing regret to God for our sin (all the things we do wrong and the good things we leave undone). It is also a time that often involves fasting or “giving something up” In doing so you will be served by Christ Jesus who teaches us to serve others all for God's Glory.

This season is about the Message of Hope. May The God of Hope fill you with Joy and Peace in believing and may that hope abound in you by the power of The Holy Spirit all in The Holy name of Jesus Christ. This is my vision for us at BUMC: to be a church in our community

sharing the love of Jesus Christ and His message of hope sharing in worship and activities of service and fellowship.

Love, Hope, Joy, and Peace,

Pastor Ken Loudenback  
Bridgeport United Methodist Church



## Prayer Requests:

### Most recent prayers offered for:

For a complete prayer list, please see the weekly church bulletin. Prayer requests can be sent to:

[prayerlist@smallchurchbigheart.com](mailto:prayerlist@smallchurchbigheart.com)

### Ways to Give:

#### Missions:

- Monetary donations are always welcomed for yarn.
- Please bring nonperishable food donations on Sunday for the food pantry.
- Lebanon United Methodist Children's Home
- Operation Christmas Child
- Fletcher Place
- Allies/Purchased Human Trafficking
- Cardboard Box Ministries

### Continued prayers:

All our Military men and women

Homebound: Janet Jones, Leonard Prator



Online @ [Bridgeport UMC Indianapolis](#)



Download our App



Send letters or donations to: Bridgeport UMC, 1305 Bridgeport Road, Indianapolis, Indiana 46231 OR P.O. Box 420, Plainfield, IN 46168

Email:

[prayerlist@smallchurchbigheart.com](mailto:prayerlist@smallchurchbigheart.com)