



## FROM THE PASTOR

August, 2019

Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect.

--Romans 12:2

Hall of fame football coach Lou Holtz once said, “In this world you’re either growing or you’re dying, so get moving and grow.” While I do appreciate his sentiment I think that it is missing an important piece, moving just for the sake of moving is not really growth, nor is it beneficial to anyone. We know through the Scriptures that Jesus kept a pretty busy schedule. He was on the go quite regularly, traveling from town to town, simply put he was on the move. But, the thing that is easy to forget in all the journeys of Jesus that we read about is that He also took time to slow down and rest. He took time to step away, to pray to God, to seek God’s will for what He should do next. He didn’t stay stagnate for long, but He did take the time that was needed for discernment and understanding to occur before continuing forward on the journey.



Amy Leader 8/9  
Anna Bragg 8/13  
Natalie Gordon 8/13  
Tyler Keller 8/17  
Judy Sampson 8/17  
Billy Bowser 8/24  
Glendora Klump 8/25  
Bruce Loar 8/29



Earl & Beryl McHenry 8/5  
Howard & Tammy Butler  
8/6  
Wendell & Alice Goetz 8/31

Attached to this month’s newsletter is the *Vitality Assessment Report* we received as a part of the Local Church Assessment program we recently went through. Copies of it have been available, but I wanted to be sure that as many people as possible have a chance to see it. The report recognizes the good and fruitful ministry that has taken place here at Emmanuel, but it also recognizes the challenges we face. Challenges of financial need, building maintenance, and how best to continue to serve within the Blissfield community. The Lead team is in discussions as to what we can do as a church to address some of these questions, but the questions are not for the Lead Team alone. They are for all of us. My hope is that we will all take some time in the coming weeks to prayerfully consider and discern how we as individuals, and we as the Church can “get moving and grow,” not for our own benefit, but to bring glory to God and God’s Kingdom.

Please know that I am always willing to sit down and discuss this, as are the members of the Lead Team. If you have any questions or comments about the Assessment letter or anything else my door is always open.

*God Bless,  
Pastor Devin*



### HELP OUR NEIGHBORS!

Do you have a window or floor A/C unit taking up space in a garage or attic? If so we encourage you to bring it into the Emmanuel UMC church (215 E. Jefferson) or call the office (517-486-3020) to arrange to have it picked up. We are working to spread the word that we have some units available to share with those in the community who have been dealing with the high temperatures we've been having recently. If you know of someone who could benefit please pass the information along as we will be working as hard as possible to fill requests on a first come first served basis.

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### 2019 CHARGE CONFERENCE

Add them to your calendar now...This years Charge Conference dates are:

SPRC meeting with Rev. Hill Saturday  
September 21 at Noon at Erie UMC

Charge Conference (Open to all) Sunday  
September 22 at 2pm at Lambertville UMC

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Our Wednesday evening program for the 2019-20 season will start off with a party at 6:00pm on Wednesday, September 11. We'll provide the hotdogs. Bring a side dish or dessert to share, a game you'd like to play, and lots of friends. Let's celebrate!

### FOOD PANTRY DONATIONS

For the month of August, the Blissfield Area Food Pantry is asking for donations of cream of mushroom soup, applesauce, canned pears and paper towel.

Donations may be left in the church entrance area. We will see to it that they get delivered to the food pantry.

If you or anyone you know is in need, please call the food pantry Monday-Friday at 517-486-2404 to make arrangements for assistance.

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### GOOD NEWS BOARD

Do you have any good news to share? Birth announcements, graduation, anniversaries, milestones, special achievements, newspaper articles or photos? Feel free to post them on the red bulletin board in the education wing outside the nursery.



“First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people” -1 Timothy 2:1

**Those needing continued healing and strength:**

- Wendell & Alice Goetz
- Nancy Jenkins
- Cathy Jenkins
- Jim Tipton
- Kate Noelanders
- Mary Roback
- Ruth Rodesiler
- Our covenant missionaries, Mary Glastone-Highland and Kristen Brown
- Our nation, state and local community and those in leadership positions

**THANK YOU!**

This summer has been amazing and life-changing for me, and I'm very grateful to my church family for helping make it happen.

I had the opportunity to attend Annual Conference in May as a voting delegate. This is a historic time in the church, and it's a humbling challenge to be part of everything that is happening. I had a chance to spend time with other youth and adults from around the conference, talking about all that is being done around the world and praying about how to move forward in God's grace.

In June, I got to go to Kentucky with others from our church and Lambertville to serve at the Henderson Settlement. I got the worst sunburn ever, but it was worth it for the chance to see the things that happen when we let God to use us to serve others.

Then, in July, you all helped me go to Youth 2019. This conference only happens once every four years, so to attend as a youth really is a once in a lifetime opportunity. Because of the timing, the Michigan Conference combined THRIVE Youth Leadership Camp with the conference. I have never attended a worship service with thousands of people who were all so excited to be together! We learned about ways to use drama in worship (one of my favorite parts!), how to lead small group Bible studies, and so much more. We even learned a bit about professional hula-hooping, but that's a story for another day. The chance to talk with several bishops and share communion was amazing and, I can't lie, the food was kind of awesome.

Wherever life takes me, I know that this summer will always be one that stands out as one of the best of my life, and I can't thank you all enough for your prayers and financial support.

-Mary Violet Comiskey

June 5, 2019  
Blissfield Emmanuel United Methodist Church  
215 E. Jefferson  
Blissfield, MI 49228-1323



We sincerely thank you for participating in the Heritage District Process for Assessing Church Potential which was conducted at the request of the District Superintendent. The facilitators of the assessment team met to discuss the strengths and challenges for Blissfield Emmanuel United Methodist Church.

God calls us to be faithful stewards of all the resources granted us. Struggling simply to keep a building in good repair with paid utilities does not allow you the necessary vitality to look out into the world and discover the ways that God is calling you to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. As we worked with you to assess your church's potential, we all remind ourselves of God's call to make disciples of all nations (Mat 28:19) and to fulfill Christ's commandment to love God and our neighbor (Mat 22:34-40).

In offering the recommendations below, the district team has reviewed the information that you compiled and, prayerfully asked, as you did, the following questions:

- a. What is the potential for ministry in the community?
- b. Does the church currently have the resources (leadership and financial/facilities resources) to serve the community through ministries of nurture, outreach, and witness?
- c. Is the church currently able to fulfill its call to ministry and to optimize the stewardship of the ministry resources available?

In considering the information you collected and reviewed about your congregation, the team noted the following key factors in making its decision:

### **Strengths**

The church has a stable attendance and has paid 100% of their ministry shares. The leaders in the church have built upon this stability, by creating a strong youth ministry. The building is well-maintained and there is a deep love for the wider community as seen through the outreach programs.

### **Challenges**

However, Blissfield Emmanuel UMC is facing formidable challenges. While the building has been kept up some maintenance issues will need to be addressed. The building is in need of a new roof, the windows are in need of repair and the parking lot needs resurfacing. In addition, the church is not fully handicap accessible which is a hinderance for those who are not fully able-bodied. Finally, the mission and vision of the church is unclear especially when considering its relationship to the community.

As the team developed the following action steps, we kept in mind that the primary purpose of the local church is to be outwardly focused and missional. Here are the action steps you are being asked to pray about, discuss and decide over the in the next few months:

### **Plan A**

The Team highly recommends beginning a process based on the book: *Church Unique: How Missional Leaders Cast Vision, Capture Culture and Create Movement*.

This process will:

- develop a clear vision and accompanying core values
- once completed align all ministries and outreach around this vision

Contact David Bell and Jeff Regan with the United Methodist Foundation to develop a stewardship program encompassing preaching and teaching on stewardship

Develop a long-term strategy for the building and its growing maintenance needs.



#### Plan B

Build a relationship with Blissfield First UMC forming joint bible studies, VBS, missions, outreach and worship programs. The long-term viability of both congregations might depend on the two congregations working closely together through shared ministries. This may lead to a merged congregation in the future.

We ask that you prayerfully discern God's will in this important matter.

Let the District Superintendent know which recommendation you would like to pursue by October 15, 2019. We will then schedule a church conference to consider the matter. Your pastor and the Vitality Assessment Team are available to assist you as you decide. If you decide to go ahead with these recommendations, a coach will be assigned to your church who will assist you through the process.

Yours in Christ,

*Rev. Elizabeth Hill*, District Superintendent  
*Rev. Gary Step*, Associate Director for Congregational Vibrancy

**THIS VBS IS  
GRRREAT!  
(AND I'M  
NOT LYIN'?)**



**We're setting out for  
Serengeti Trek!**

**Location:** Emmanuel United  
Methodist Church  
215 E. Jefferson St.  
Blissfield, MI 49228

**Dates:** August 5-9, 2019

**Time:** 5:30—8:00 pm

**For more info:**

Call the church at 517-486-3020

Visit our website at

[www.BlissfieldEmmanuel.com](http://www.BlissfieldEmmanuel.com)

Email us at

[EmmanuelUMC@live.com](mailto:EmmanuelUMC@live.com)



2019

*Sunday*      *Monday*      *Tuesday*      *Wednesday*      *Thursday*      *Friday*      *Saturday*

**WoW Helper Schedule:**

August 4—Denise Smith & Kendra Goetz  
 August 11—Beverly & Lawson Crane  
 August 18—Patty Hamann & Helper  
 August 25—Brian & Elizabeth Comiskey  
 September 1—James Bowser & Judy Sampson

					1	2	3
4 Adult Sunday School 9:15  Worship at 10:30	5	6	7	8	9	10	
	SERENGETI TREK—WHERE KIDS ARE WILD ABOUT GOD!						
11 Adult Sunday School 9:15  Worship at 10:30	12	13	14	15	16	17	
18 Adult Sunday School 9:15  Worship at 10:30	19	20	21	22	23	24	
	Meals on Wheels Delivery						
25 Adult Sunday School 9:15  Worship at 10:30	26	27	28	29	30	31	





Loving God. Loving others.  
Making disciples of  
Jesus Christ.



Emmanuel United Methodist Church  
215 E. Jefferson St.  
Blissfield, MI 49228

