



THE SONLIGHT

February 2024 · Volume 33 · Issue 2



ASH

WEDNESDAY

*Wednesday, February 14th
Service at 7pm Taylorsville
7pm at Bridge of Hope*

The SonLight
Published Monthly

Sulphur Grove UMC
7505 Taylorsville Road
Huber Heights, OH
45424



Sulphur Grove United Methodist Church

“Growing Disciples, Living and Sharing God’s love”



Coffee Chat



This month brings us to the season of Lent. It is a season of self-reflection, self-denial, and penitence. It is a season that reminds us of our fallen nature and need for salvation through Jesus Christ.

There are traditions that have developed throughout the history of the church such as giving up something for Lent. One of the items I have heard given up very frequently throughout my time in ministry is chocolate. Over time, the meaning and customs have evolved or been lost. For example, many people believe that when you give something up for Lent, like chocolate, you refrain from eating chocolate for the entire Lenten season. This is not correct. Whatever is given up for Lent can properly be partaken of on the Sundays of Lent. Why is it okay to eat chocolate, for example, on the Sundays of Lent? It is because all Sundays of the year are “little Easters”. Easter, and all the “little Easters” throughout the year are days of celebration not mourning or self-denial. So go ahead and celebrate the resurrection of Jesus eating chocolate or by partaking of the thing you have chosen to deny yourself during the Sundays of Lent.

There is another Lenten tradition that I was completely unfamiliar with here at Sulphur Grove. You are probably aware that we change the version of the doxology we sing after the offering during Lent. We stop singing the version that uses the word *Alleluia* and switch to the version that uses “Praise God from whom all blessings flow”. Again, I never learned of any such practice while I was in seminary and that is *because this practice is not a United Methodist tradition*, and our *Book of Worship* does not call for this practice nor does it provide any directions for doing so.

After some searching on UMC.org I learned that this practice is formally known as *despositio* which means “discontinuance”. It originated in a time when the major focus during Lent was on repentance and penance. As such, there was to be no celebratory singing of *Alleluias* during the season of Lent. This contradicts our United Methodist understanding that all Sundays, including the Sundays of Lent, are “little Easters”, days of celebrating the resurrection of our Lord, Jesus Christ. It also seems rather silly to me as *Alleluia* translates as “Praise Yah!” (Yah as in Yahweh) or Praise God. The *despositio* holds the contradicting position that we can sing “Praise God” in English but not in Hebrew!

This year during Lent I am going to *despositio* the *despositio* and we will sing the doxology that uses the more celebratory *Alleluia*!

Blessings and Peace in Christ Jesus,



WATCH OR LISTEN LIVE!



Traveling this winter? Visiting family? You can still worship with your friends and neighbors at Sulphur Grove! We broadcast the 10:45am service live online every week. Simply go to www.sulphurgrove.org/online to watch, or if you have a slower internet connection, you can listen to our audio-only broadcast.



MISSIONS AND OUTREACH

"We are a 'mission church.'

We believe in reaching out to those in need locally, nationally, and globally."

NEW SUNDAY STUDY CLASS

Join us in a 6-week study of six of the most provocative questions Jesus posed to others as Magrey R. deVega guides us in answering them for ourselves. Beginning Sunday, January 21, 2024 we will start this 6 week study of his book "Questions Jesus Asked". The publisher of the book tells us:

"Jesus was fond of asking questions, many of which cut right to the heart of what it means to be human. Why are you terrified? What do you live for? Who do you say that I am? In Questions Jesus Asked, author Magrey deVega explores six of the most provocative questions Jesus posed to others and guides us in answering them for ourselves.

Asking these questions takes courage. Not only do they reveal what Jesus really cares about, they open a window into our hearts. We all have questions for God, but growth happens when we turn things around and ask what Jesus wants to know about us. When we dare to raise them, these questions bring us a fuller appreciation for the wisdom, power, and presence of God in our lives. Are you willing to step out in faith? Are you ready to answer the questions Jesus asked?"

The timing of our study will be briefly interrupted by our church-wide Lenten Study starting February 18. We will then pick up our "Questions Jesus Asked" study on Sunday, April 7, following Easter. A syllabus will be available for you shortly. If you wish to review a copy, please email Skip Mahan at cwm4028@gmail.com.

"Are you willing to step out in faith? Are you ready to answer the questions Jesus asked?" Come join us, Sunday January 21 at 9:30 AM, Rooms 302-303, Sulphur Grove UMC.

LESSONS ON AGING

Tina Timmons, Certified Senior Advisor, Certified Dementia Practitioner, Owner of Oasis Senior Advisors along with a Medicare specialist will be at Sulphur Grove Church on Saturday, April 13, 2024 from 10am - 12pm in the Activity Center. This seminar will cover topics regarding elderly care, home health care, and assisted living options. Oasis offers free personalized referrals for senior housing and other resources to older adults and their families.

FOOD PANTRY AT SULPHUR GROVE

In June of 2023 after quite a few weeks of pulling out carpet, putting up shelves and then stocking those shelves, we had a soft opening of the Sulphur Grove Food Pantry. We invited people who come regularly to Body and Soul feast and Grub on the Run and it was great! For the first few weeks we had 4 to 6 families who came each week. And then after we got our feet under us, we opened to the public on October 8th.

We are now serving 7 to 10 families a week from the community, Body and Soul feast and Grub on the Run all the while sharing the love of Jesus. Families range from people living alone to families as big as 8 people and are allowed to come twice a month and receive toiletries once a month. Everybody has been very open to talking about their lives, hearing about God, and learning of the opportunities here at Sulphur Grove to worship.

For the past 6 months we have met and helped 134 families. And it wouldn't have been possible without all of us saying yes to God. Many people over the years have come to Sulphur Grove because they are hungry and struggling. And God made a way for us to not only feed people through wonderful programs like Grub on the Run, Bags of Love, Body and Soul Feast, the Blessing Box and now this pantry.

Next up in our plans are classes. We are very interested in enabling people to make their circumstances better. So many people have great ideas from an exercise class, blood pressure check nights, Medicare info classes, and classes on caring for aging parents. Be on the lookout for these because they will be so helpful to many, are coming soon, and are open to everyone.

Serving on the pantry team is a fulfilling experience. We need at least five people each Wednesday evening serving as hosts or shoppers to walk through the pantry with patrons. And throughout the week we need servants to pick up groceries from Walmart and bread from Schwebbels. If you would love to help please let Candy Buffenbarger know as soon as you can at candyb@sulphurgrove.org or (937) 470-1870.



MISSIONS AND OUTREACH

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LOOK WHAT'S COMING TO SULPHUR GROVE A WEEKLY FAITH & FITNESS PROGRAM!!

How many of you made a New Year Resolution to start eating better to take off a few pounds or thought about joining an exercise class? Have you followed through with those resolutions?

At the end of summer, I began working with a personal trainer. The best part of my workout was being able to share conversations about faith with my trainer. My trainer is a Christian! She and I have prayed a long time about beginning a FAITH & FITNESS CLASS here at Sulphur Grove. God has brought us together to motivate YOU to come join us on a new journey to improve your health.

God told us to start during the Season of Lent. Instead of giving something up for Lent this year, take on something that will not only move you to a healthier you, but also be a time of growing your faith as we all journey together toward Easter.

We are starting out with one day a week. Following the Lenten Season, we will consider increasing it to two days a week. Here are the details:

WHEN: Wednesday afternoons at 1:00pm (Beginning on February 28th)

WHERE: Activity Center (Room 100)

COST: \$7.00 per class or free will offering (Don't let this keep you away.)

THE PAYOFF: The classes will help participants maintain good balance and flexibility, increase muscle strength, and build endurance.

The classes will be 60 minutes long. We will begin with a short devotion and end the session with prayer. Each of you will need to bring:

- ◆ Yoga Mat
- ◆ 3-5 lb. Weights
- ◆ Water bottle
- ◆ Sweat towel
- ◆ The trainer will provide resistance tubing and bender balls

Our trainer is Julie Early. These classes are open to all levels of fitness from beginners to those of you who are experts. Julie is ACE certified and has been a Group Fitness Instructor for over 25 years. I met Julie when I presided at her father's funeral. I spent time with David Iden, Sr. in the last weeks of his life. Now you all know her brother is David Iden Jr.!

Julie and I are praying and waiting to see who God sends to commit to this NEW MINISTRY! If you have questions, please contact me at 937-371-6966. Oh, by the way, these classes are not limited to women. We want to encourage men to join us also!

Blessing,
Pastor Bonnie



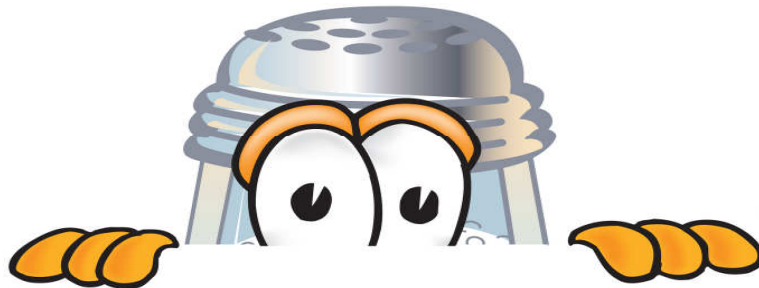
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NEW SALT SHAKERS WELCOME

Looking for a place to get to know your Sulphur Grove Family better? Join one of the Salt Shaker Groups to experience an informal home setting where members of Sulphur Grove meet to have fun, food (always food) and fellowship. It's a great way to be in a fun group. Interested couples and singles call Peggy Beavin (937-236-6260) to become part of one of these groups. You'll be glad you did and feel even more comfortable in your church home.



HELP!!!!

I came to Sulphur Grove just three years ago to take on Congregational Ministries. My life has been blessed as I have spent time caring for many of YOU in our church family. I have spent time sacred moments with visits to hospitals, extended care facilities, and sometimes in your homes. I have been humbled to be with you in times of crisis and sometimes in the fading moments before death of your loved one.

I need YOUR HELP to be sure I never miss anyone who is in the hospital, or in a nursing home, or if suddenly you become a care giver to a loved one living in your home. I know that life changes quickly and sometimes people get so wrapped up in the crisis that has hit ... and the last thing on their mind is calling the church. When a crisis hits, they may share with YOU what is happening. YOUR PURPOSE then is to make a call to me, so I can reach out to give the support that sometimes people do not even realize they need.

In today's world, there are many people scheduled for Outpatient Surgery. PLEASE let me know! I have prayed with many of you already the night before and then follow up when you are home.

I am just a phone call away! Please don't assume I already know what is happening with members of our church family. Call me ... 24/7!
You can reach me at 937-371-6966.

Blessings,
Pastor Bonnie



~~ UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH NEWS ~~

All Ladies are invited to attend these meetings and events

- ◇ **CARITAS** will meet **Wednesday, February 7 at 9:30am** in the Fellowship Hall. The Fish item is toilet paper. For more information contact Brenda Stevenson (937) 506-8959 or BrendaStevenson@ameritech.net.
- ◇ **NEW DIMENSIONS** will meet **Tuesday, February 13 at 6:30pm** in the Gathering Area. They will continue discussing the book, Aging Faithfully. The Fish item is toilet paper. For more information contact Darlene Rabe (937) 307-5489 or rabedc@aol.com.
- ◇ **BOARD MEETING** will be held on **Thursday, February 15 at 1pm** in room 302/303.



United
Women
in Faith



IT'S DIRECTORY TIME AGAIN!!

Update Membership Information



It is time for us to update our database with any changes, additions, or deletions that may have occurred in your family over the past year.

Have you changed your phone number? Have you moved? Are you preparing to move soon? Are all of your children still at home and are they all included in your membership record? Do you want your record published?

If you have not already informed the Church Office about changes to your record, please let us know ***now*** so that the information in the Guide Book & Directory is correct. We need to have all updated information turned in before the end of day (1:30pm) on **Friday, February 2, 2024**. If we do not hear from you by the deadline, we will go with what is currently on file. Please send an email to the church office with your updated information.

Our email is: office@sulphurgrove.org. Thank you for your help!

CHURCH DIRECTORY

ADVERTISING OPPORTUNITY



We are in the process of updating our annual Guide Book & Directory for the church. This book will contain everything pertinent to our church: the various ministries, organizations, committees, activities, functions and events plus a complete directory of all members. This book is being provided

and direct-mailed to each family at no cost to our church, and it is again being subsidized by local businesses that advertise. If you own or manage a business and would like to find out about advertising in our book, please email the Church Office by the end of day (1:30pm) **Friday, February 2, 2024**.

A representative from Guide Book will reach out to those who have advertised in the past.

Recent survey results by Guide Book Publishing show that 92.1% of families would rather patronize a Guide Book & Directory advertiser over a non-advertiser. It "will pay" to advertise in our new Guide Book & Directory. Thank you for your support!

February Worship SCHEDULE

TAYLORSVILLE

Worship 8:30am & 10:45am

<p>February 4 COMMUNION <i>"Discipleship Clarity of Call"</i> Mark 1: 29-39</p>
<p>February 11 Transfiguration Sunday <i>"Discipleship Taking the Reins"</i> Mark 9: 2-9</p>
<p>February 18 1st Sunday of Lent <i>"Kingdom Living: A Life of Submission to God: Believe the 'Good' News?"</i> Mark 1: 9-15</p>
<p>February 25 <i>"Kingdom Living: A Life of Submission to God: Take Up My Cross?"</i> Mark 8: 31-38</p>

Please keep in mind, if you do not feel comfortable returning to church just yet, or physically cannot join us in person, online streaming is available.

SULPHUR GROVE GIVING OF OUR TITHES & OFFERINGS—YEAR TO DATE AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2023

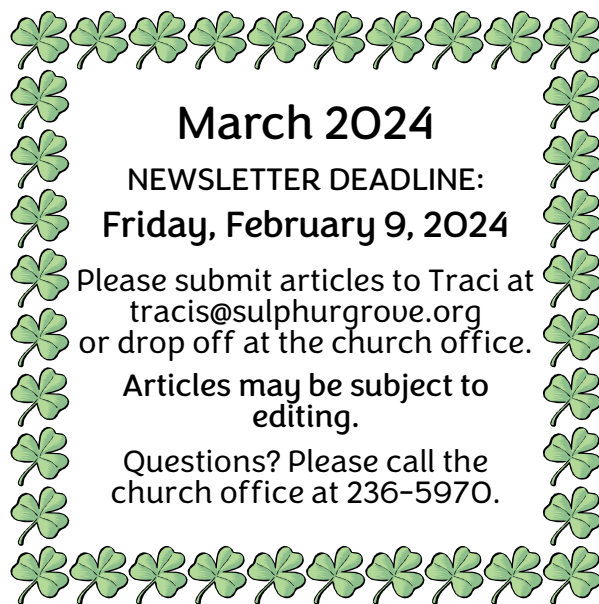
Total General Fund Giving \$600,805.27
 Transfers to Budget \$252.24

Total General Fund Income \$601,057.51
 Total General Fund Expenses \$633,021.50

Loan Balance \$463,958.45
 Payment to Loan Principal \$1,199,639.62

On-line giving available on our website at www.sulphurgrove.org.

Monthly detailed finance reports are available through the church office. Please contact Ray Fosnot at treasurer@sulphurgrove.org or 236-5970 if you would like to receive a report or have questions.



March 2024

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE:

Friday, February 9, 2024

Please submit articles to Traci at tracis@sulphurgrove.org or drop off at the church office.

Articles may be subject to editing.

Questions? Please call the church office at 236-5970.

Sulphur Grove United Methodist Church Ministers

The People of Sulphur Grove United Methodist Church including:

Barry Baughman Lead Pastor
 Bonnie Loudner Congregational Care Pastor
 Jerrie Bell-Brion Interim Pastor, Bridge of Hope

Candy Buffenbarger..Director of Children's Ministries
 Samantha Seeberg.....Choir Director
 James Edwards-Kenion...Handbell Choir Director

Ray Fosnot.....Treasurer
 Dave HuntFinancial Secretary
 Nikki Smith.....Administrative Assistant
 Traci SchaafAdministrative Assistant

SULPHUR GROVE CHURCH
 7505 Taylorsville Road
 Huber Heights OH 45424
 (937) 236-5970
 Worship ~ 8:30am & 10:45am
 Kiawanda Language Worship
 4:00pm-6:00pm in Holden Chapel

Bridge of Hope
 6805 US 40
 Tipp City, OH 45371
 937-845-8025
 Worship ~ 11am

Office Hours:

Mon - Fri: 9:00am - 1:30pm

www.sulphurgrove.org office@sulphurgrove.org



Check out our Info Hub for quick and easy access to our Digital Bulletin, Announcements & Events, Digital Connect Card, Online Giving, or submit Prayer Requests. Go to www.sulphurgrove.org/info or scan the code with your phone's camera!