



# THE SONLIGHT

April 2024 · Volume 33 · Issue 4

## A Prayer in Spring

By Robert Frost

*Oh, give us pleasure in the flowers today;  
And give us not to think so far away  
As the certain harvest; keep us here  
All simply in the springing of the year.*

*Oh, give us pleasure in the orchard white,  
Like nothing else by day, like ghosts by night;  
And make us happy in the happy bees,  
The swarm dilating round the perfect trees*

*And make us happy in the darting bird  
That suddenly above the bee is heard,  
The meteor that thrusts in with needle bill,  
And off a blossom in mid-air stands still.*

*For this is love nothing else is love,  
The which it is reserved for God above  
To sanctify to what far end He will,  
But which it only needs that we fulfill.*

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



Sulphur Grove has been presented with a unique opportunity regarding the use of the church farm I want to share with you. Amy Brooks, a few others, and I have been in discussion with a solar power company regarding building a solar generation facility on 40-60 acres of the church farm. Currently, only 44 of the 88 total acres are in crop production which generates around \$5,000 per year in income. I understand the remaining 44 acres is scrub brush and is sparsely populated with trees. We pay taxes on that unproductive land. So turning that 44 acres into income producing land might be a good idea.

As one who grew up in a farming community I, along with others, am quite sensitive to the loss of land for crop production. As a result, one of my questions for the solar company was, "Are you willing to use the undeveloped 44 acres for a solar farm?" Their reply was, "Yes." So, *if we choose to do so*, the farmed portion of land can remain as cropland.

The term of the contract being proposed is 25 years with the option to renew the contract in 5 year intervals up to four times. If every option is exercised, the total term of the contract could be up to 45 years. So, this is a long-term commitment. Now the part everyone has likely been waiting for and that is, how much income would a 40 acre solar farm generate? Well, I am not in a position to give you exact numbers. However, once the *solar farm is generating power*, the solar company would pay the church many multiples of what we currently receive in rent per acre on the farmland. The contract also includes a 2% per year increase in the rental fee for the life of the contract. While the solar farm is under construction, the rent is less, but we still get more than we would in cropland rent. (It takes about 2 years to build the solar facility.)

I share this with you to ask that you be in prayer regarding this proposal. It could provide significant income for Sulphur Grove and the Bridge campus. I understand there will likely be concerns, like the loss of green space and what will the farm's neighbors think of a solar farm near them? Or where will the electricity that is generated be sent? Will it stay locally or be sent to some far off city? I assure you the leadership board is considering all these things.

One final caveat. Proposed legislation regarding solar farms here in Ohio *will need to be passed* before any of this can happen. If the legislation does not pass, this proposal becomes moot. I do not know the details of the proposed legislation. It may or may not be good for Ohioans. I have to trust our elected representatives to do what is best for all Ohioans.

As you pray about this proposal, please also pray that the leadership board will be able to discern God's will for in this matter for our church.

Blessings and Peace in Christ Jesus,



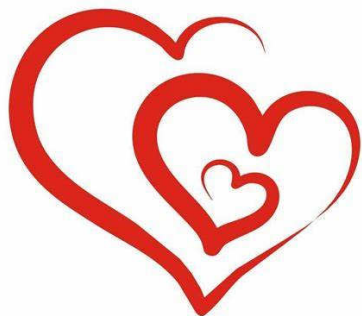
## WATCH OR LISTEN LIVE!



Traveling this spring? 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](http://www.sulphurgrove.org/online) to watch, or if you have a slower internet connection, you can listen to our audio-only broadcast.



## Meditation from my heart...



There is a song we sang during Lent that I just cannot get out of my head. You remember... *"Create in Me a Clean Heart."* I was spiritually moved each Sunday when the words or the meaning of those words came out through scripture or were woven into the messages that Barry and I shared on the Sundays leading up to Easter. It was like God was molding those words into my heart. Have any of you experienced that also?

I found myself humming those words from the time I would wake until I turned out the lights for sleep. There was something else that happened as I was singing *"Create in me a clean heart, O God, Renew a right spirit with in me."* I was suddenly consumed with the need to rid myself of all the clutter that was staring me in the face every time I opened a closet door or a dresser drawer. It became repulsive to me that I had collected so much "stuff" over the years that is collecting dust and not being used.

It was one thing to make this discovery, but it was an annoying time as I fought spiritually with pulling things out and putting into bags to get out of this house. My heart and my mind knew these items would be welcomed by someone who needs warm sweaters, coats, or even socks and shoes. I am ashamed to reveal how many times I would put something into a bag and then pull it out again.

*"Renew a right spirit with in me."* I did not give up on cleaning up my heart or all my hiding places filled with some things I did not even recognize.....oh.....that came from an aunt who died last year and somethings belonged to my mom. I discovered that if I really wanted to experience a renewed spirit, it was a must that I clean up the mess that I have created over time.

*"Restore unto me the joy of my salvation and renew a right Spirit within me."* The longing to be clean before God has become somewhat of an obsession to me and I continue the purge. I have almost all closets cleaned out and reorganized with so much less stuff than when I started. It is so freeing to be getting my over abundance of anything you can think of into the hand of those who can make good use of them. I filled 10 bags of items of clothing of all kinds, along with bedding, and pots and pans that I had too much of. I thought about saving for the grandchildren but then I thought again..... and they are gone!!!

Thank You, God, for a musical reminder of how much more You mean to me than all the clutter in my *world* that is now gone.

*Create in me a clean heart, O God,  
And renew a right spirit within me.  
Create in me a clean heart, O God,  
And renew a right spirit within me.  
Cast me not away from Thy presence.  
Take not thy Holy Spirit from me.  
Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation.  
And renew a right spirit within me.*

*I AM FREE!*

I wish you many BLESSINGS, abundant HOPE, and profound PEACE.

*Pastor Bonnie*

## FROM THE LEADERSHIP BOARD

This is the first of monthly reports from the Leadership Board for the newsletter. They will include notices of actions taken by the Board and other information affecting the membership of Sulphur Grove United Methodist Church.

To bring you up-to-date with the actions of the Board are the following items. In December, 2023 the Board approved the budget for 2024 in the amount of \$681,095. This is a reduction of over \$50,000 from the year 2023. The Board has also been working on a policy manual – a guide to decision-making and fiscal responsibility. We hope to have this completed in the next few months. Finally, we have the appointment of Rev. Wendy Lybarger as our new Pastor beginning in July.

One main point of emphasis for this Board is Communications. This Board is available for questions and comments at any time. Below are the current Board members for your reference. Please pray for this Board, as well as others, for the guidance needed to be more like Jesus.

Faithfully your servants,  
Sulphur Grove Leadership Board

Jim Carman – Chair  
Sue Breisch  
Marge Graves

Ryan Buffenbarger – Vice-Chair  
Diann Barlow  
Jacqueline Bunke

Amy Brooks  
Jean Mahan  
Pam Albers



## ~ FROM THE OFFICE ~

- The office will be closed on Monday, April 1st. We will re-open on Tuesday, April 2nd at 9am.

### NEW NEWSLETTER DEADLINE DATES

Beginning with next month's issue, the deadline for articles will be extended by a week with the deadline day being Thursday at 1:30pm. Anything turned in by anyone after 1:30pm on that Thursday will not be accepted and used in the following issue (if it applies).

This will cut formatting time drastically, so strict adherence to the deadline date and time will be followed.

The new deadline dates will still be published in the weekly email (beginning 3 weeks prior to the deadline date), the Sunday announcements (beginning 2 weeks prior to the deadline date), the wall calendars that are throughout the church, and on the back page of the newsletter.

Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

Next month's deadline date for the May issue will be Thursday, April 18th at 1:30pm.

### REMINDER

Articles for the Sunday announcements will be run for 3 consecutive weeks. Articles that are requested to be run longer than 3 weeks will have a break of a week or two before resuming. Weekly email articles will be run 2 weeks prior to the event date.

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## MISSIONS AND OUTREACH

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*"We are a 'mission church.'*

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

### 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.

### SAVE THE DATE!

The McCurdy Mission Team will be forming soon. This year's trip will be October 26-November 2. More information to follow. Hope you can join us!  
Your 2024 McCurdy Mission Team

### NEW DAYTIME BIBLE STUDY COMING APRIL 9th

Come study the books of I & II Peter and Jude beginning Tuesday, April 9 at 1pm in Room 301 at the Church. We'll study and discuss how first century Christians were taught to live in a hostile culture that doesn't understand who Christians are or why they do what they do, and see how these teachings apply to our Christians lives today. In these three letters in the New Testament, Peter and Jude provide some solutions to real life situations and difficulties: abandon the ways of the world, participate in Jesus' life through the Spirit to learn the new habit of love, put on the spiritual armor that will make you strong to face whatever may come. We will use the bible study guide 1 & 2 Peter and Jude by N. T. Wright published through Inter Varsity Press. Contact Becky Valekis at [rebvalekis@gmail.com](mailto:rebvalekis@gmail.com) who will lead this discussion and study for more information and how to get your study guide.

### NEW EVENING BIBLE STUDY COMING APRIL 10th

Beginning Wednesday April 10, from 6:30 - 7:30pm a bible study designed to help people deeply engage with the Word of God is beginning in the Holden Chapel for anyone interested. It will be for long time believers and even seekers who want to learn how to understand the Scripture. It's designed to help us all engage with deeper understanding of what the Early Church Christians understood what church (and life) is all about by learning how to let the written Word guide you into a deeper and more meaningful relationship with the Living Word, Jesus Christ. Why did the early church grow in an atmosphere when their religion was illegal - when they owned no buildings, and most people didn't even have personal access to the written scripture? Join us at this Bible study, where we'll simply show up with our Bibles and let the Holy Spirit guide us into a deeper journey in the life of Christ designed to help empower us to become the same kind of movement today in our world. Contact Jim Valekis at [valekisjim@gmail.com](mailto:valekisjim@gmail.com) for more information. This Bible Study will be held every 2nd and 4th Wednesdays in Holden Chapel, with seasonal breaks built in.



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## MISSIONS AND OUTREACH

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### WHAT'S NEXT?

On Palm Sunday, our Sunday School Class finished our six-week study "The Walk" by Rev. Adam Hamilton. The first two Sundays in April we will be finishing our study of "The Questions Jesus Asked" by Rev. Margrey deVega. Since we are finishing up things, that begs the question, What's next? Well, next on our "To Do" list is "Stories Jesus Told", a six-week study lead by Dr. Greg Carey that will explore six of Jesus' parables to learn how to read, interpret, and live them in your daily life.

Dr. Carey says "We love stories. That's why we go to movies, read books, and listen to friends recount an experience. That's also why teachers use the technique of storytelling to make a difficult concept easier for us to process. Jesus told stories, or parables, for that very reason—and to help us understand how God wants us to live life. Sometimes, however, stories like the Good Samaritan and the Prodigal Son can be interpreted in more than one way. Even Bible scholars are divided on their meanings."

The new study will begin Sunday, April 21. We expect to have the new books in classroom 302 by Sunday, April 7. If you wish to reimburse the church the cost of the book, the cost is \$15.99 per copy. It is also available from Cokesbury as an eBook and from Amazon as a hard copy or a Kindle electronic version.

Dave Hunt and Skip Mahan look forward to having you join us for this six-week study and to learn how to read, interpret, and live six parables in your daily life.

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## ~~ UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH NEWS ~~

### All Ladies are invited to attend these meetings and events

- ◆ Caritas will meet Wednesday, April 3 at 9:30 am in the Fellowship Hall. The Fish item is a bar of soap. For more information contact Brenda Stevenson (937) 506-8959 or [brenda.stevenson@ameritech.net](mailto:brenda.stevenson@ameritech.net).
- ◆ New Dimensions will meet Tuesday, April 9 at 6:30 pm in the Gathering Area. They will continue discussing the book, Aging Faithfully. The Fish item is a bar of soap. For more information contact Darlene Rabe (937) 307-5489 or [rabedc@aol.com](mailto:rabedc@aol.com).
- ◆ Board meeting will be held Thursday, April 18 at 1:00 pm in room 302/303.

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### THANKS TO THE CONGREGATION

Wow!! 2023 was another great year of giving by the United Women in Faith. With the help of the congregation UWF was able to give \$6,123.45 to missions in the form of supplies and monetary contributions. Through our events and collections, we hope to increase our mission giving in 2024.

You can help us reach this goal by supporting these upcoming events:

### CHURCH WORLD SERVICE HYGIENE KITS

Church World Service Hygiene Kits are given to those in need in the face of natural disasters, violence, or poverty both in the United States and around the world. You can help ensure that someone's needs are going to be met in the wake of an emergency when even basic supplies are hard to come by. These kits can mean the difference between sickness and health for struggling families. Sulphur Grove UWF is privileged to assist our congregation in collecting kit contents, assembling the items into kits, and sending them to Church World Service for distribution.

Please help by donating terry cloth hand towels and wash cloths, sturdy wide-tooth combs, sturdy metal fingernail or toenail clippers, bath size bars of soap in the wrapper, and adult toothbrushes in the package or boxes of standard full-sized band aids.

Throughout April there will be a collection box located in the lower level across from the elevator. For further information contact Sue Wilson at (937) 236-5263 or [swilsonsw@woh.rr.com](mailto:swilsonsw@woh.rr.com).

### SPECIAL WOMEN AND MEN IN YOUR LIFE

United Women in Faith is providing a way for you to honor special people in your life (parents, grandparents, relatives, and friends). You will not only be honoring your loved ones but the contributions will be given to feed our neighbors in need. We encourage you to remember your special loved ones by making a monetary contribution in their honor or memory, we will in turn distribute the monetary gifts between our designated food pantries.

UWF members will be in the Gathering Area before and after services April 21, April 28, and May 5 for you to contribute and complete Special Mother and Women and Special Father and Men forms. The Mother and Women's list will be published in the bulletin on Mother's Day, May 12, the Father's and Men's list on Father Day, June 16.

THANKS AGAIN FOR YOUR GENEROUS SUPPORT!



United  
Women  
in Faith

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# April Worship SCHEDULE

TAYLORSVILLE

Worship 8:30am & 10:45am

<p>April 7 2nd Sunday of Easter COMMUNION John 20: 19-31</p>
<p>April 14 3rd Sunday of Easter Luke 24: 36b-48</p>
<p>April 21 4th Sunday of Easter John 10: 11-18</p>
<p>April 28 5th Sunday of Easter John 15: 1-8</p>

Sermon title information was not available at the time of print.

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.

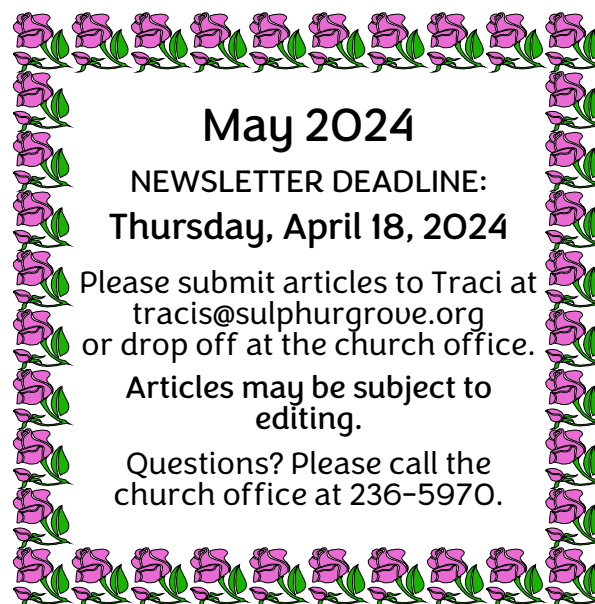


**SULPHUR GROVE GIVING OF OUR TITHES & OFFERINGS—YEAR TO DATE AS OF FEBRUARY 29, 2024**

Total General Fund Giving	\$82,177.97
Transfers to Budget	\$32,160.96
Total General Fund Income	\$114,338.93
Total General Fund Expenses	\$92,987.65
Loan Balance	\$460,895.75
Payment to Loan Principal	\$1,202,702.32

**On-line giving available on our website at [www.sulphurgrove.org](http://www.sulphurgrove.org).**

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



## May 2024

**NEWSLETTER DEADLINE:**

**Thursday, April 18, 2024**

Please submit articles to Traci at [tracis@sulphurgrove.org](mailto: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 Hunt .....Financial Secretary  
Nikki Smith.....Administrative Assistant  
Traci Schaaf .....Administrative 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](http://www.sulphurgrove.org) [office@sulphurgrove.org](mailto:office@sulphurgrove.org)



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