



From the Pastor's Desk

New Year's Prayer

As the dawn breaks on a new year, let us give thanks for all we hold dear: our health, our family, and our friends.

Let us release our grudges, our anger, and our pains, for these are nothing but binding chains. Let us live each day in the most loving ways, the God-conscious way. Let us serve all who are in need, regardless of race, color, or creed.

Let us keep God of our own understanding in our hearts and to chant God's name each day. Let us lead the world from darkness to light, from falsehood to truth and from wrong to right.

Let us remember that we are all one, embracing all, discriminating against none.

May your year be filled with peace, prosperity, and love. May God's blessings shower upon you and bestow upon each of you a bright, healthy, and peaceful new year.

The next 12 months

I want to share some thoughts as we start the new year 2024. This thought will guide us as a church for the next 12 months.

Embracing Love and Compassion

Embracing love and compassion lies at the heart of humanity. It is a call to extend kindness and care to our fellow beings, to exhibit empathy and understanding towards those in need. By showing love and compassion, we foster an environment of

warmth and acceptance, creating a ripple effect that touches lives for the next 12 months. Let us open our hearts and let the true essence of compassion guide our actions throughout the year.

Fostering Unity and Forgiveness

Fostering unity and forgiveness is a pivotal aspect of all human beings. It urges us to mend broken relationships and reconcile with those we may have drifted apart from last year 2023. Letting go of grudges and offering forgiveness brings about healing and restores harmony. By embracing unity and forgiveness, we strengthen the bonds of our communities and families, creating an atmosphere of peace and love. Fostering unity and forgiveness provides an opportune time to bridge divides and cultivate a spirit of togetherness. A church that stays together can foster unity and embrace love.

Your prayer 2024 - Author Unknown; Adapted by Debra Mooney

May God make your year a happy one!
Not by shielding us from all sorrows and pain,
But by strengthening us to bear it, as it comes;
Not by making our path easy,
But by making us sturdy to travel any path;
Not by taking hardships from us,
But by taking fear from our heart;
Not by granting us unbroken sunshine,
But by keeping our face bright, even in the shadows;
Not by making our life always pleasant,
But by showing us when people and their causes need us most,
and by making us anxious to be there to help.
God's love, peace, hope and joy to us for the year ahead.

Finally Happy New Year 2024

Reverend Dr. Douglas Obwoye



UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH NEWS - One Year Ends – A New One Begins

In 2023 our group accomplished a lot! We are proud of that, and we couldn't have done it without your support. Thank you!! Here are some highlights:

- We gave \$360 to our district's mission giving as "*Gifts in Memory*" to honor Cody Aldrich, Ruth Closser, Myra Crawford, Bob Geer, Earl Goodrich, Marian Grody, Don Johnson, Barry Moeke, and Sandy Scholl.
- We honored Gerry Deater and Robin Fisher as recipients of the *Wave of Love* award for their service to our church and to our community.
- We made handmade Valentine cards for residents at Meadowbrook and sent some to church members who can no longer attend services.
- In February, we had our annual *Empty the Treasury* and donated \$2,500 to a variety of charities in our state, our nation, and the world!
- An Easter Egg hunt was held on April 8 as we worked with the Nurture & Outreach Committee to provide this fun activity for our community.
- We honored three graduates Francesca Meeder, Jason Naumcheff, and Cooper Thompson.
- In June, we participated in Mancelona High School's Give Back Day by providing cookies and thank-you notes to students for giving back to our community. Students helped clean up our church grounds as well as weeded and planted new perennials at the Mancelona Labyrinth of Hope, and, in addition, helped clean up lawns for some community members.
- Our Harvest Supper was held on September 14 and was a resounding success! We raised approximately \$2,000+ dollars and enjoyed the joy on the faces of community members who look forward to this event each year. Two more fundraisers were held for missions – a craft show at Mancelona Elementary School, earning \$1,178 plus \$247 from Rada and a bake sale held at Family Fare, earning \$400. Thanks to everyone who contributed crafts and goodies!
- October 7 was a very rewarding day for our group as well as others in the Northern Waters District as we hosted their Annual Celebration event. Attendees were asked to consider bringing supplies and/or making a monetary donation to the Iron Vault in our community. A total of \$309 was raised plus a lot of supplies for students.
- We held a clean-up day for our church and thoroughly cleaned and organized several rooms and areas of our church building, and, in addition, helped clean up lawns for some community members.
- Christmas cards were sent to friends we do not see often or who cannot attend church.
- Our annual Christmas Soup and Salad Luncheon was held on December 13, and we welcomed over 60 people from our community with scrumptious soups, salads, and desserts.
- In addition to fundraisers and activities as noted above, we enjoyed programs at our monthly meeting such as guest speaker Fawn Southwell who spoke about life in Hungary and the ways she, her husband Mike, and children make a difference by sharing God's love through ministries. We are grateful for the commitment of our members who volunteer to enrich every meeting with devotions, prayers, and an inspirational program.

In February, we will "Empty the Treasury" again to support missions here and around the world. If you have suggestions for organizations you think we should support, let one of our members know, and we will be happy to consider them.

We are thankful, proud, yet humbled, for all the ways we serve others through our Mancelona United Women in Faith. We couldn't do it all without your help! Thank you, thank you, thank you!

Submitted by Ellen Whitehead, UMW Secretary



Community Meal Update

Very proud to say that we served a total of 2176 meals January through December 2023!

Community Meal has been going strong for close to 12 years. Sandy Neumann shared that *the first meal was March 27, 2012. We served soup (for an army) and had 12 people and about 20 volunteers. We were so excited!* Twelve years, due to volunteer commitment and donations from our church and community. As Sandy noted in her weekly email to the cooking teams, *we couldn't have this outreach without each one of you!*

Mike Allen attends the Food Coalition meetings and reports:

2023 has been a record year for food rescue. 1.97 million pounds distributed. Food Rescue has been at capacity often. They have expanded to nearby pantries, Grayling, Gaylord, Otsego, Mana, and Feeding America, just to name a few. That is extraordinary, and we are thankful to be a part of that distribution.

Grand Traverse Band has once again applied for the third time for a grant which will provide funds of around \$220,000 for purchasing fresh produce, frozen fish, and meat.

Food Rescue provides some wonderful produce for our use. Items such as butternut squash, potatoes, sweet potatoes, leeks, and onions will be available. Each cooking team chooses what they will cook and anything that isn't used is put on our "Free Table" so our attendees may take advantage of this fresh produce. Quite often, this is lettuce, apples, in addition to sweet treats!

As usual, outstanding meals were served in November and December. The Christmas holiday sendoff included marinated pork loin with bacon strips, sweet and sour pork fried rice with mixed Chinese vegetables, green salad, bread, and assorted desserts. What a Christmas send off! Sandy Neumann held a drawing for 20 frozen turkeys from the Salvation Army. What a blessing for those families!

In 2023, it's a lot more than soup! All meals are truly outstanding, angel hair pasta with chicken and broccoli, baked chicken wings and drumsticks, scalloped potatoes, peas and carrots. An outstanding Thanksgiving Tuesday dinner with turkey, dressing, gravy, mashed sweet potatoes, cranberry sauce, green bean casserole (sounds like Grandma's house!). Then, Beef Stroganoff, green beans with almonds; Goulash and fresh apples. That's it folks.....every meal has a great salad, bread from Shirley's, plus dessert and milk!

In November and December, we served 387 meals on six Tuesdays. The last Tuesday in November was a snow day, and the last Tuesday in December was closed for Christmas so an average of 65 meals served with an average takeout of 14.

Jackie Bates shared that while working at the bake sale a person commented to her how much he appreciated the Community Meal! So, there you have it! It's not only the excellent food, but an opportunity for attendees to connect!

Submitted by Sandy Neumann and Carol Kingsley

Community Meal Co-Chairs





The Mission Committee will have a change in mission giving starting January 2, 2024. We will not be doing a mission project every month like we have in the past. We will be doing a last Sunday offering if we have a need in the community, nationally or internationally.

2023 October mission – Community Meal..... \$2032.75 (includes \$1000 match)

2023 November mission - Habitat (a Mancelona home)....\$266.25

2023 December mission - Christmas family.....Not yet figured

We want to thank all those who helped make this year's mission possible. We have a very giving church, God is good!

Brenda Lockman, Gerry Deater, MaryAnn Peterson, and all those who helped. Thank you

Submitted by Brenda Lockman, Mission Chair



The newly formed Young-at-Heart ladies' group had another successful get together early in December. Eleven ladies met at church, had a group prayer, and then carpoled to the Boyne City Christmas Craft Show. The ladies spent about an hour shopping and then met in the cafeteria for lunch. It was a fun way to spend some pre-Christmas time together. Stay tuned for details about the January event.

FYI: If an event is planned on a weekday evening and the weather has caused the Mancelona Public Schools to be closed, our Young-at-Heart plans will be cancelled as well. If the weather turns ugly toward the end of a school day, Lori Derror will send out an email and post on Facebook.

Administrative Council:

In November, our Ad Council met to discuss the business aspect of the church including project status and future plans. The Finance Team reported to the church leadership that their best estimate was that we would break even for the year with income covering expenses. This was a surprise since we expected a \$10,000 deficit.

The bubble burst a couple of weeks later when the Michigan UMC Conference discovered they had forgotten to bill for the last five months of insurance. (over \$10,000). We now project a deficit of \$7,700 for the year. We do have the funds to cover the shortfall, however, deficits like this are not sustainable in the long run.

If you have an interest in participating in the management of the church, please contact the Rev Dr. Douglas Obwoje or Mike Allen.

Submitted by Mike Allen- Finance Chair



Trustees January 2024

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

It's been pretty quiet since the November newsletter. We've had to have the church parking lot plowed only three times in November and not at all in December. We were able to use the north ramp into the Narthex for the Christmas Eve services. Once we get some more snow that entrance will again be closed.

I've noticed that the bell tower is dark at night. I've checked the timer box which seems to be working. It may be something as simple as replacing a lightbulb in the tower, finding someone willing to do that might be a challenge. I'm working on that. The stained-glass windows in the tower are beautiful and need to be illuminated.

Robin and David Fisher have signed up for clearing the walkways in January. Thank you, Robin and David. The small snowblower in the church garage has been repaired. Robin also volunteered David to assemble the new chair rack, purchased by Sue Thomas. It will be much easier to use than the current cart that holds extra folding chairs.

Submitted by Laurie Allison - Trustee Chair



January 26th – Dave & Robin Fisher

January 29th – Kenneth & Dana Proffer

February 13th – Michael & Laurie Allison



Each week (usually Monday) an email is sent noting prayers, praises, and announcements, that have been shared in our service on Sunday, and it will include Rev. Douglas's Gospel Lesson and Message for the week which is posted on Facebook. If you wish to be on that email list, send an email request to carolkingsley62@gmail.com text or call 231.360.9029

January 8- 4:00 pm Ad Council meeting.

January 10 – 1:00 pm United Women in Faith

January 14 – Potluck

January 28 – Snacks and Chat - Welcome Center

February 14 – 1:00 pm United Women in Faith

February 11 – Potluck

February 25 - Snacks and Chat -Welcome Center

February 25 - MUMC March/April Newsletter

Community Meal every Tuesday at 5:00 pm in Fellowship Hall. If Mancelona Schools has a snow day, the meal is cancelled.



Mancelona United Methodist Church

PO Box 301

117 E Hinman St

Mancelona, MI 49659

Sunday Service @ 11:00 am

231-587-8461

Ad Board Meeting – 2nd Monday of month/odd Months
at 4 PM

Boyne Falls UMC

3057 Mill St

Boyne Falls, MI

Sunday Service @ 9:30 am



Mancelona Birthdays

January

- 1st – Kathy Rick
- 3rd – Barbara Castle
- 4th – Marv Kingsley
- 7th – Pat Derror
- 7th – Kathy Johnson
- 8th – Kathy VanBruggan
- 10th – Ron Aldrich
- 10th – Braedon Moeke
- 15th – Jackie Allsopp
- 16th – Emma Miller
- 16th – Burt Thompson
- 24th – Diane Lirones
- 27th – Carol Kingsley

28th -- Dana Proffer

29th – Ken Bronson

31st – Julia Kirby

February

6th – Carolyn Grody

8th – Denise Nixon

9th – Michael Allison

16th – Jim MacArthur

18th – Lynn Cummings

18th – Gage Johnson

25th – Garret Derrer

25th – Cody Derrer

25th – Rae Ann Thompson

27th – Linda Olds



You are always welcome here!