



THE CORNERSTONE

A Newsletter to provide information & inspiration for the members & friends of First United Methodist Church

March 2021

We at First United Methodist Church come together to be a Christian community guided & empowered by the Holy Spirit to:

- Make disciples for Jesus Christ,
- Serve our neighbor,
- Enjoy our fellowship.

Blair First UMC
1656 Colfax Street
Blair, Nebraska 68008

Phone:
402-426-2165

E-mail: office@blairumc.org

Pastor Gina Gile
ggile@greatplainsumc.org
620-794-1345

Website
View the Video
Sermons online
And find the Current
Newsletter

at: www.blairumc.org

Church Office Hours:
Monday thru Thursday
9am-3pm

Online/In Person Worship Times

9:00 - Worship
Facebook Live - Blair
United Methodist Church
Beginning March 7th -
In Person Worship @
10:30 (see Pastor Gina's
article to the right)

Sunday School/Youth

Options for Elementary
Ashley Bacon:
education@blairumc.org

MS/HS Youth, Jill Matney:
blairumcyouth@gmail.com

8th Grade Confirmation
Scheduled Meetings on cal-
endar. Contact Pastor Gina.

Greetings!

As we approach the one-year mark of the pandemic, we have learned much over the past year, especially about ourselves during difficult times. We've learned a lot about what it means to be the church in difficult times, too.

We've appreciated your support and participation as our staff and leadership have continued to navigate new approaches to their ministries. We've appreciated your patience and support as we have navigated online worship. We've appreciated your willingness to join us for in-person worship albeit in a little different format.

We've appreciated your support of our ministries to reach out to those in our congregation and community. We've reached out through food drives, distribution of masks, Care Boxes for Nursing Residents & Shut-ins, Care Boxes for College Students, Advent in a Bag, Christmas Eve Essentials Bag, Lent in a Bag, and a plethora of other ways.

All in all, as difficult as it has been, we've continued being the church, and the church's mission has been our primary focus. Thank you!

We recently offered a second All Church Survey. Thank you to everyone who took it. The data collected is very important to our decision-making process for in-person worship, programming, and activities. With the data in mind, here are March Worship Service Options:

- We will continue offering the 9:00 am Facebook Live Only Worship Service.
- On March 7th we will resume in-person worship at 10:30 am. Our goal is to reduce the risk of a spread of the virus by continuing to follow the CDC guidelines:
 - ◇ Masks and social distancing required.
 - ◇ There will be no congregational singing, but special music will be offered instead.
 - ◇ We will **not** require registration, but if we begin to reach capacity, we will require it once again and add additional worship times.
 - ◇ There will not be a time of fellowship before or after worship just yet. However, when the temperatures warm up there is the thought of gathering outdoors for coffee, donuts, and fellowship.

- Holy Week and Easter Sunday - We will send out a special edition of the newsletter containing information for service times and activities.

Thank you, again, for your incredible support and patience. Our hope is that the more of us get vaccinated, the more the spread of the virus will continue to decrease, eventually allowing us to resume more and more of our regular activities. I'm looking forward to that day as I'm sure you are, too.

In the meantime, keep checking on one another, helping where you can, connecting when you can, and please reach out to us if you should have a need like food, supplies, conversation, or prayer.

Praying with and for you,
Pastor Gina





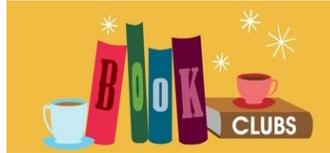
Newsletter Deadline is the 19th of Every Month.

Miss a Sunday? Listen to Sermons online at: www.blairumc.org

Pastor Gina's Contact Info: You may contact Pastor Gina in the following ways: *Cell Phone: 620-794-1345 *Church Phone: 402-426-2165 Email: ggile@greatplainsumc.org You may also friend her via Facebook: Gina Miles Gile. She will friend youth but they must get their parent's permission first per the Great Plains Annual Conference Safe Gatherings policy. * When calling via the cell phone number or church phone number please leave a detailed message and contact information. Pastor Gina is accessible but not always available and will return your call as soon as possible.

Men's Book Club We will be meeting about once every month or two (coordinated thru e-mail). Each member will pick a book and a month to host. Anyone interested can contact Craig Folkers (402-306-3730) for more details or to be added to the Club.

Next Zoom Meeting - March/April TBD @ 5:30: Host - Craig Folkers. Will be discussing River of Doubt by Candice Milliard.



Faithful Book Worms Meets Monthly on the 1st Tuesday at 9:30 in Fellowship Hall. On March 2nd we will be reviewing This Blessed Life by Ted Genoways.

New readers always welcome in both groups!

United Methodist Men

Next Meeting: Will not be meeting until further notice.

"Come & join the group for breakfast, Christian fellowship, fun & Devotions"



United Methodist Women

UMW will not meet in person for March



Tithes/offerings: Thank you for your continued financial support of Blair First UMC. Please continue to mail your tithes/gifts to the church at: 1656 Colfax St., Blair, NE, 68008. Also, we currently have an electronic giving option. You may sign up via our website: www.blairumc.org. You may also sign up by contacting the church office. Thank you for your commitment and generosity during this difficult time.



Direct Your Dollars

We have \$60,000 collected towards our next \$100,00 in receipts to earn our next \$1,000.00

Thank you for your support! Keep up the Great Work! If you shop at Family Fare, please save your receipts! (the whole receipt is needed)

Thank you for your support! Keep up the Great Work

We have a basket just outside the office where you can put your receipts.



VANCO ELECTRONIC GIVING FAST, EASY, AND SECURE

Support the work of Blair First UMC through electronic giving. Have your weekly or monthly contribution debited from your checking or savings account and transferred directly into the church account safely and electronically---you'll never have to remember your checkbook again!

We would love for you to get started!

Pick up an authorization form today in the Church office or sign-up on line at: www.blairumc.org under the "Give Online" tab.

Coming Up in Worship



Lenten Sermon Series – The Best is Yet to Come

March 7 Third Sunday in Lent
Scripture: John 2:13-22
Sermon Title: Clearness

March 14 Fourth Sunday in Lent //
UMCOR Sunday
Scripture: John 3:14-21
Sermon Title: Loveliness

March 21 Fifth Sunday in Lent
Scripture: John 12:20-33
Sermon Title: Gloriousness

March 28 Sixth Sunday in Lent //
Palm Sunday
Scripture: Mark 11:1-11
Sermon Title: Fearlessness

Lenten Children's Messages Theme: - The Life Of Jesus

March 7 - Jesus Heals

March 14 – Jesus Welcomes

March 21 – Jesus Listens

March 28 – Jesus Gives (Palm Sunday)

Holy Week and Easter: More Details coming soon in a Special Edition of the Newsletter

April 1 – Maundy Thursday

April 2 – Community Good Friday Service

April 4 – Easter Sunday

Wednesday Lenten Devotionals –
Facebook Live @ 4:00 PM



Camp Fontanelle Branching Out-- Stewardship Campaign Update

In August of 2018, Blair First UMC's Finance Committee made the decision to join Camp Fontanelle in their fundraising endeavor for improvements to the camp. We committed to \$30,000 over a three-year time period. Through your generosity, we are pleased to announce we have fulfilled our \$30,000 commitment a little ahead of schedule. Thank you so much for your support of this important campaign. The Blair First UMC Finance Committee recently decided that any additional funds given to the Branching Out Stewardship Campaign will be directed toward the matching funds of the Dunklau Foundation for continued support of Camp Fontanelle. Thank you, again, for your support of this financial commitment. Also, don't forget to check out summer camp opportunities. Blair First has long supported Camp Fontanelle and campers. Website:

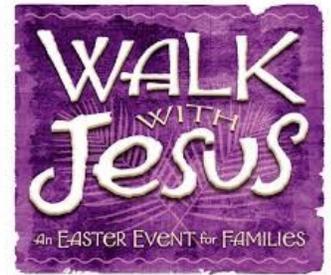
<https://www.campfontanelle.com/>



The Promise of Easter



Walk with Jesus



When: March 24th (for Children's Church & Kingdom Kids) & March 28th (Open to the Public, must RSVP) Where:

Throughout the church building

Children's Church and Kingdom Kids will Walk With Jesus during our time together on Wednesday evening (2/24). Walk with Jesus will be open to the public (must RSVP) on March 28th. Schedule of times to come soon.

Please join us in this awesome experience of walking with Jesus in his final days on earth!

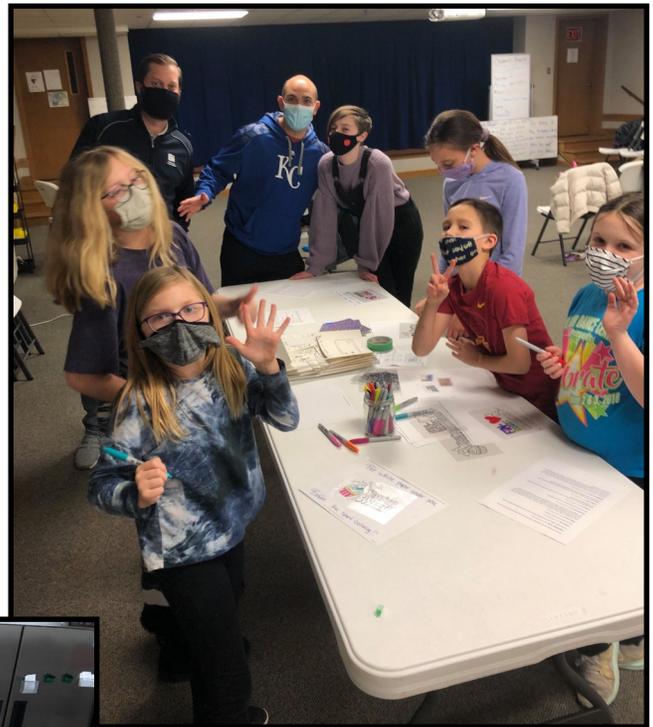
Our Children's Church and Kingdom kids helped spread love this February! Both groups helped with preparing Lent bags for our homebound and nursing home families as well as planting some sweet Valentine's to brighten each individual's day! We will spend the month of March preparing for Walk With Jesus and learning all about lent and Jesus' final days on earth! Come and Join us!! Children's Church and Kingdom Kids will continue to meet on Wednesday evenings throughout the months of March, April and May. We are awaiting approval from the Church Council for our summer and fall plans. Please come and join us any time that works into your schedule! We are missing our church friends and would love to see more participation! Here is the upcoming March, April and May. We are awaiting approval from the Church Council for our summer and fall plans. Please come and join us any time that works into your schedule! We are missing our church friends and would love to see more participation!

April/May schedule.

- March 3rd** - CC @6:30 / KK@7:00-7:45
- March 10th** - CC @6:30 setting up for WWJ / KK7:00-7:45
- March 17th** - No CC or KK- Spring Break
- March 24th** - CC@6:3- / KK@7:00-7:45
- March 31st** - Holy Week TBD
- April 7th** - CC @6:30 / KK@7:00-7:45
- April 14th** - CC @6:30 / KK@7:00-7:45
- April 21st** - CC @6:30 / KK@7:00-7:45
- April 28th** - CC @6:30 / KK@7:00-7:45
- May 5th** - CC @6:30 / KK@7:00-7:45
- May 12th** - CC @6:30 / KK@7:00-7:45- FINAL MEETING BEFORE SUMMER

Children's Church-Wednesday evenings
6:30-7:00

**Kingdom Kids-
 Wednesday evenings**
7:00-7:45



Children's Church and Kingdom Kids helped to fill the Lenten Essential Worship Bags for those in nursing homes and homebound members. Great Job Kids!

Youth News



As a congregation we would like to connect with all ages and play a little game of "Guess Who" where we would have anyone send in a picture of themselves when they were in middle or high school! We will then post the pictures downstairs for the youth on Sunday nights to guess who is who! We would also post them on Facebook for everyone to put in their guess as well! If you would like to join us, please send your pictures to blairumcyouth@gmail.com by March 8th. You may also drop off printed pictures in the Church Office as well.



Having fun introducing the kids to a new game of Spikeball!"

Calling on 2021 Graduates to Apply for Blair First UMC Youth Scholarship

This award is given each year to the graduate who has demonstrated their growing faith through their church and community involvement.

The completed application for the award should be returned to the Church Office by March 31st.

The application is also posted on our website www.blairumc.org or you may contact the church office and we will send you an application. Email: office@blairumc.org or call 403 426-2165.



March Schedule

March 7th- High school 5pm-6pm,
Middle school 6pm-7pm

March 14th- No Youth Activities Spring Break

March 21st- No Youth Activities Spring Break

March 28th- High school 5pm-6pm,
Middle school 6pm-7pm

Upcoming Events:



March 28th- Egg Hunt at Camp Fontanelle at 2pm. We will be helping hide Easter eggs for Camp Fontanelle's Egg Hunt! Please RSVP at blairumcyouth@gmail.com

April 10th- Recycling Center 8am-12pm

Stay Connected



Facebook at
First United Methodist
Youth Blair
Instagram

@bumy_believers

Email: blairumcyouth@gmail.com

Jill Matney, Youth Dir.

Cell: 402 650-1905

Faith Stories

Be on the lookout on Facebook for our guest speakers coming in to share their faith stories with us!

March 7th- Pam Wilhelm
April 18th- Chloe Martin

When the Blair Schools are closed due to inclement weather the church office will also be closed and all church activities canceled.

MOPS Meetings offered to the Community

My name is Kayla Johnson, I'm the Marketing Coordinator for the Blair MOPS Night group. I'm not sure if you're familiar with the MOPS, but our mission is to encourage and equip moms of young children to realize their potential as mothers, women and leaders, in relationship with Jesus.

Our chapter is partnered with Reach Church (formerly, Country Bible Church), where we host our meetings on the third Tuesday of each month that school is in session (September - May) from 7 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

Please feel free to give me, Kayla Johnson a call if you have any questions or would like to discuss further. My number is (402)366-5014.

Undy Sunday Month is Now March

March is now the month to fill up the big bloomers with undies. Bloomers will be located in the east entryway during the week and by the sanctuary on Sunday. We will be donating to Crowell Home & The Bridge. We will be collecting new men's, woman's, and children's under garments of all sizes. The Bridge would also love diapers & Pull-ups in larger sizes. If it's easier to donate money, write the check to the church & write Undy Sunday on the memo line.



January Food Drive Report

Thank you to all who contributed food and monetary donations to the Washington County Food Bank. We are happy to report that we contributed 865 pounds of food and a total of \$1,195 in monetary donations.

United Methodist Men Sponsoring All Church Recycling Center Volunteer Days



Another opportunity to serve at the Washington County Recycling Center, (sponsored by the United Methodist Men) will be on Saturday, April 10th. Members of UMM invite the congregation to join them in serving the community. To volunteer please contact Roger Howland cell: (402) 690-9908 or Email: rogercountrytire@abbnebrask.com or email the church office office@blairumc.org or call 402 426-2165. You may sign up for two different of 8:00 - 10:00 am or 10:00 - Noon. Volunteers can also come for an hour or whatever time you have.

You must bring gloves and a mask. Children 12 & up may volunteer, younger children must be accompanied by an adult. We had great turn-out last time and hope for a repeat performance. It's a worthwhile cause and a great way for Blair First UMC to support

Other dates this year to volunteer are:

- Saturday, August 14th**
- Saturday, November 13th**



Thank you for your support of our local food pantry "Joseph's Coat"! Donations may be brought anytime and dropped off in our "Feed My Lambs" box located by the elevator on the lower level or in the basket at the "Information Station" outside the office.

If you would prefer to donate by way of cash/check note "Food Pantry" in the memo or on the envelope.

Top Most Needed Items:

- Peanut Butter**
- Pancake Mix**
- Hamburger Helper**
- Toilet Paper**

- Cereal**
- Mac & Cheese**
- Syrup**
- Canned Chicken**

- Canned Mixed Vegetables**
- Jelly**
- Canned Corn and Green Beans**
- Toilet Paper**



Stewardship Update

Recent message from Mike Mackie,
Chair of Finance, on Facebook Live

Good morning everyone. My name is Mike Mackie and I am currently the Chair of the Finance Committee here at First United Methodist Church in Blair . I want to wish everyone a good morning and thank you for attending the service. I also want to give a big thank you to everyone who has continued to give even though we have not been able to worship in person. It is very important is very important to the church that we continue to give and I will be giving an update on that.

I think it's also important to signify that the Finance Committee handles the money, we pay the bills, we give the apportionments; we take care of everything in that respect. But I don't think we need to recognize everyone that volunteers for this church. As it says in the Bible that whether you give monetarily or you give time, that is what the Lord asks for. And so whatever you have we have a lot of good volunteers who come to this church and put their time in and so whether it's monetary or whether it's their time we are blessed to have all the volunteers we have in this church. As the finance chairman I also view myself as, you know, naturally I'm a member of this church. That is why I am standing up here. So I don't think of that as a title or a position or anything like that, I am a member of this church, I give regularly to this church. So, I feel that myself, and the committee, as we have our meetings have continued to make sure that we are giving in the right places and doing what is good for the community and also our church. Just to update everybody, we have continued to meet with the Finance Committee regularly, whether that be on Zoom or we have had a few limited meetings in person, we have distanced ourselves and have been keeping up just like the church has not been interrupted, we have doing our business, meeting regularly, making sure that everything is taken care of for the church.

I am happy to report that at this time we are current with everything in the church. We have paid our apportionments to the Methodist Conference. Our bills are paid and that is a very good position to be since we have not met together and passed the offering plate around. The offerings have been coming in and we do want to thank everyone for that.

In ending I would like to quote a verse I found in the Bible from 2 Corinthians 9:7 "Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion for God loves a cheerful giver." And I think coming right out of the Bible that is something we can all relate to and possibly participate in.

I wish for everyone to have a great day and a great week. Keep enjoying the online services that Pastor Gina has been providing during this time. Pastor Gina has done a great job to relate our church during this time.





First United Methodist Church
 Office Hours– M-Th 9am-3pm
 Church Office: 402.426.2165
 Church Website:
www.blairumc.org
 Email: office@blairumc.org

Blair First UMC Vision

Statement: “We are a faith-centered, welcoming congregation that serves God, our community, & the world through our diverse ministry & mission work. We are real people, with real lives, & real faith. We dig deep into the Word so that we are prepared to work in the world & to help change lives in the name of Jesus Christ. We are Blair First United Methodist Church.”

March 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2 9:30 Faithful Bookworms in Fellowship Hall 7:00 NOW Meeting Zoom and in person	3 4:00 Lenten Devotional Facebook Live 6:30-7:00 Children's Church 7:00-7:45 Kingdom Kids (3rd, 4th, & 5th)	4	5 Office Closed	6
7 9:00 Facebook Live Worship 10:30 In Person Worship (see Pastor Gina's article pg. 1) Zoom Sunday TBD School (see box)	8	9	10 4:00 Lenten Devotional Facebook Live 6:30-7:00 Children's Church 7:00-7:45 Kingdom Kids (3rd, 4th, & 5th)	11	12 Office Closed	13
14 9:00 Facebook Live Worship Zoom Sunday TBD School (see box) No Youth Activities	15	16	17 4:00 Lenten Devotional Facebook Live No Children's Activities.	18 6:00 Trustees 7:00 Finance	19 Newsletter Deadline Office Closed	20
21 9:00 Facebook Live Worship Zoom Sunday TBD School (see box) No Youth Activities	22	23	24 4:00 Lenten Devotional Facebook Live 6:30-7:45 Walk with Jesus for Children's Church and Kingdom Kids.	25 7:00 Church Council	26 Office Closed	27
28 Palm Sunday 9:00 Facebook Live Worship Zoom Sunday TBD School (see box) Walk with Jesus for the Congregation (see pg 4) 5:00-6:00 HS Youth 6:00-7:00 All MS	29	30	31 Children's Activities TBD	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> Zoom Sunday School is recurring so it will be the same link and log-info each week. Meeting ID: 889 4798 2416 Passcode: 290439 https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88947982416?pwd=LzRxdnN2Y0ZBWFkvUy9JYkdNMU5odz09 </div>		