



Tower Bell

BISHOP JANES UNITED METHODIST CHURCH | SPRING 2024

A Letter From Pastor Dave

Ah, spring is in the air! As the vibrant colors of spring begin to blossom around us, I am filled with an overwhelming sense of joy and excitement for the season ahead. Spring is a time of renewal, growth, and the promise of new beginnings. It is a time when we emerge from our homes and enjoy the sun on our backs as we prepare our gardens and yards for the summer season of growth. It is a season that beautifully mirrors the spiritual journey we embark upon during the liturgical seasons of Lent and Easter.

At the time of this newsletter's publishing, we find ourselves in the reflective period of Lent, a time of self-examination, repentance, and preparation for the celebration of Easter. It is a season that invites us to reflect on our lives and take stock on where we've been, where we are, and where God is leading us to go. As we do, we take the opportunity to renew our hearts, refocus our minds, and recommit ourselves to the teachings of Christ.

As we journey through Lent together, it is my hope that we will embrace this sacred time as an opportunity for personal and communal growth, opening our hearts to God's transformative love and grace, allowing it to shape us into more compassionate, faithful disciples.

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For behold, the winter is past; the rain is over and gone. The flowers appear on the earth, the time of singing has come, and the voice of the turtledove is heard in our land.

SONG OF SOLOMON
2:11-12

ONGOING MINISTRY SCHEDULE

Sunday Worship
9:30 AM

Children's Sunday School
(except first Sundays
of the month)
9:45 AM

Daily Pause to
Pray and Praise
(Facebook & YouTube)
7:30 AM

Bible Study
Sunday's 11:00 AM

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And then, having renewed our hearts, we will joyfully celebrate the resurrection of our Lord during Eastertide. This is a time of jubilation and praise, as we rejoice in the victory of life over death and the promise of redemption through Christ's sacrifice.

Indeed, Jesus' resurrection has opened the doors to our future with God—a future filled with hope, grace, and endless possibilities. It is a future that we eagerly anticipate and celebrate during this sacred season.

As your pastor, I am deeply grateful for the opportunity to walk alongside each of you during this journey of faith. Inside these pages, you will discover the many ways we are journeying in faith together and continue to grow in our relationship with God and one another.

May this season be a time of spiritual renewal and deepening for us all.

In Resurrection hope,
Pastor Dave
pastor.dave@bjumc.org



Join us for Holy Week Worship!

PALM SUNDAY

3/24 @9:30AM in our sanctuary

MAUNDY THURSDAY

3/28 @6:30PM dinner service in Melick Hall

GOOD FRIDAY

3/29 @7:00PM at the Presbyterian Church

EASTER SUNRISE

3/31 @6:30AM at Evergreen Cemetery

EASTER CELEBRATION

3/31 @9:30 AM in our sanctuary

Easter Flower Dedications

As we approach the celebration of Easter, we invite you to partake in a tradition of remembrance and celebration. Starting February 18th through March 17th, we will be offering Easter lilies or pink azaleas for dedications at \$30 each. 🌸 What a wonderful way to honor the memory of a loved one or celebrate the season!

To participate, simply reach out to Richard Blauvelt with your dedication details or stop by the table in the Narthex before worship. Your dedication will add a special touch to our Easter celebrations.

Discover Your Place in Our Ministry

As we embrace the spirit of renewal and growth that comes with the arrival of spring, we are reminded of the vibrant and diverse community of believers that make up our church family. Each one of us has a unique role to play in furthering the mission and ministry of Bishop Janes UMC, and we invite you to consider how you can contribute your gifts and talents to serve alongside us.

We are a ministry of all believers, and there are countless opportunities for you to find your place within our community. Currently, we have several positions available for those who are eager to get involved:

Know God Team: Are you passionate about Christian education and helping others deepen their understanding of faith? We are seeking individuals to join our Know God team, where you will have the opportunity to contribute to the development and implementation of our educational and spiritual growth programs for all ages.

Social Media Coordinator: In today's digital age, an effective online presence is essential for sharing the story of our ministry and reaching out to our wider community. If you have a knack for social media and storytelling, consider stepping into the role of Social Media Coordinator, where you will help us spread the word about the amazing work happening within our church.

Serve God Team: Our mission and outreach efforts are at the heart of who we are as a church. We are looking for individuals who are passionate about serving as God's hands and feet to join our Serve God team, where you will have the opportunity to lead our church in connecting with and serving our community through various outreach initiatives and service projects.

Whether you feel called to one of these specific roles or are simply looking for ways to become more engaged in our ministry, we encourage you to reach out to Pastor Dave to learn more. He will be happy to discuss your interests, talents, and how you can best find your place in God's work through our church.

Remember, each one of us has a unique role to play in building up the body of Christ and spreading God's love to the world. No contribution is too small, and every act of service is deeply meaningful.



STAY IN TOUCH

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SUPPORT US

BJUMC is a not for profit 501c3 organization that depends on the generosity of our community to continue our ministry of making disciples of Jesus Christ. Your support matters in so many ways, and we thank you!



*There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them.
There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are
different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the
same God at work. 1 Corinthians 12:4-6*

Harmony in Music and Community: Join Our Choirs!

As we embark on this journey through the Lenten season towards the joyous celebration of Easter, our music programs are in full swing, and we extend a heartfelt invitation to all who have a passion for music to join us in song and fellowship.

Chancel Choir:

Calling all voices who love to sing! Whether you're a seasoned vocalist or just discovering your talent, we welcome you to become a part of our Chancel Choir. Join us regularly as we uplift our congregation through hymns and anthems, or lend your voice specifically for our Lenten preparations leading up to Easter. This year, we have a unique opportunity to collaborate with the Basking Ridge Presbyterian Church for a special Choral Service centered around the Stations of the Cross on

Good Friday. Additionally, we are in need of extra singers, especially sopranos and altos, for our enchanting Easter music. Your voice will truly make a difference in enhancing our worship experience.

Adult Bell Choir:

Do you have an interest in creating beautiful melodies with bells? Our Adult Bell Choir is calling for more ringers to join their harmonious ensemble. Whether you're a novice or an experienced hand, we encourage you to consider becoming a part of this enriching musical tradition. Your dedication and enthusiasm will add another layer of resonance to our worship services.



Children's Bell Choir:

We are thrilled to develop a love of music in our young disciples with our Children's Bell Choir! If you have a child in elementary or middle school who delights in music, we invite them to be a part of this joyful choir. Practices are held on Sundays after worship, providing a fun and educational environment for young musicians to flourish.

If any of these opportunities to participate in our music ministries resonate with you, we encourage you to reach out to Jany Izaguirre, our Director of Music Ministries, at jany.izaguirre@yahoo.com. Jany will be delighted to provide you with more information and warmly welcome you into our musical family.



Join the Book Group for Engaging Discussions and Literary Exploration!

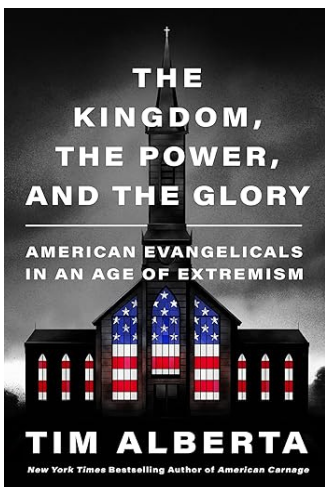
Are you an avid reader who loves to delve into the depths of literature? Do you enjoy sharing your thoughts and insights with fellow book enthusiasts? If so, we invite you to become a part of the BJUMC Book Group, where lively discussions and stimulating conversations await!

Our book group meets monthly, typically on the 2nd Thursday of the month, from September to November and January to May, at 7:00 p.m. We gather in classroom 3/4, although occasionally we venture to alternate locations for a change of scenery. Members of our group have the opportunity to suggest books for discussion, ensuring a diverse range of genres and topics to explore.

New members are always welcome to join us as we embark on our literary adventures. Whether you're a seasoned bibliophile or just starting to cultivate your love for reading, you'll find a warm and welcoming community among us.

As spring blossoms around us, we eagerly anticipate our upcoming meeting on Thursday, March 14, 2024, in classroom 3/4, starting at 7:00 p.m. Prior to our discussion, some of us will gather for a pre-discussion dinner at Ridge Italian Comfort Food (25 S. Finley Avenue) at 5:30 p.m. It's a wonderful opportunity to connect with fellow members in a relaxed setting.

For any inquiries or to RSVP for the dinner, please don't hesitate to contact Janet Kaefer at jbkaefer@optonline.net. To reserve your spot for the dinner, kindly reach out to Carol Lutes at (908-672-4600) or carollutes@gmail.com by 5 p.m. on March 14.



Below, you'll find the list of books we'll be exploring from March through May:

- The Kingdom, the Power, and the Glory: American Evangelicals in an Age of Extremism by Tim Alberta (led by Art Martin)
- Trust by Herman Diaz (led by Kathy Liu)
- The Secret Life of Sunflowers by Marta Molnar (led by Janet Kaefer)

We encourage you to dive into these captivating reads and come prepared to share your thoughts and insights with fellow members during our upcoming meetings.

Happy reading, and we look forward to welcoming you to the BJUMC Book Group!

Welcoming New Faces: Celebrating Our Growing Community

It is with great joy and gratitude that we celebrate the influx of new visitors joining us in worship at our church. In recent months, we have been blessed to see new faces among our congregation, each bringing their unique presence and perspective to our community.

As followers of Christ, we are called to embody love, hospitality, and inclusivity. Welcoming newcomers with open arms is not only an expression of our faith but also an opportunity to expand and enrich our church family. Each person who walks through our doors brings with them a story, a journey, and a longing to connect with others on their spiritual path.

We encourage each and every one of you to take a moment to extend a warm greeting to our new visitors. A simple smile, handshake, or word of welcome can go a long way in making someone feel seen, valued, and embraced. Together we can create an environment where everyone feels accepted and appreciated for who they are.

Furthermore, let us actively seek out opportunities to connect with our new friends beyond the walls of our church. Invite them to join you for coffee after service, participate in a small group or Bible study together, or simply engage in conversation to get to know them better. Building meaningful relationships takes effort and intentionality, but the rewards are immeasurable as we grow together in faith and fellowship.

If you notice someone who may be visiting for the first time or seems unfamiliar with our church community, consider reaching out to them personally. Offer to show them around, introduce them to others, and inquire about their interests and spiritual journey. Your kindness and hospitality can make a significant difference in their experience at Bishop Janes.



HELLO
I am
*Visiting your
church this
Sunday...*

Remember, our church is not just a building or a gathering place; it is a living, breathing community of faith where all are welcome, valued, and loved. Let us continue to nurture a culture of warmth, acceptance, and belonging as we welcome new faces into our midst.

Thank you for your commitment to fostering a spirit of hospitality and connection within our church family. Together, let us embrace the journey of faith with open hearts and open arms.

Serving God: Reach Our as Christ's Hands and Feet



SUMMER MISSION TRIP OPPORTUNITY

Looking for an opportunity to serve people in need and learn new skills with a great group of people? This summer, a group will be heading to the Red Bird Mission from July 13-19, 2024. If you are interested in attending, please contact Terri at dowie0101@aol.com The first deadline to register is March 20 More information can be found at <https://www.redbirdky.org/>

T-SHIRT DESIGN CONTEST!

In an effort to help our members show their pride whenever BJUMC is out in the community, we would like to design t-shirts for them to wear as they share the Good News! Have a logo/slogan idea? Submit it to Terri at the above email address. Your reward? read 1 Cor 9:18

FOOD BANK DONATIONS UPDATE

Did you know that more than 77,000 people in Somerset County are food-insecure? Also, 1 in 2 families with children in diapers have trouble buying diapers.

Please continue to donate items to these important ministries. Items that are most needed are posted on the Ebbe Bin located in the narthex. Remember to check food expiration dates prior to donation.

BJUMC FUNFACT:

We recently hit a record weekly Food Bank donation: 139 pounds of food!

THANK YOU!

CHARTER DAY MAY 18

Mark your calendars for May 18, 2024. BJUMC will have a booth there! Interested in helping out? Have ideas on ways we can connect with our community? Contact Terri.

THANKSGIVING AGAIN?

Our Thanksgiving meal ministry was such a success, we thought we would do it again ...and again perhaps! If you are interested in being a part of this ministry of serving meals to those in need, please contact Terri.

As for me and my house, we will serve the LORD

Joshua 24:15

Our Little Lambs Toddler Center is a busy place!

If you stop by our church on a weekday morning, you will be treated to lots of laughter, love, singing, praying and learning!

During the months of January and February, we focused on kindness and sharing God's love. Our school families with BJUMC to collect a record amount of food for the Somerset County Food Network as well as God's Co-op Food pantry. Thanks to all the generous families of the school and church! We also created well over 100 Valentines which we sent to Ridge Oak to share with residents. Thank you, Nancy Sweazey for being our "Cupid" (delivery person!) The students, teachers and families loved created something beautiful to share.



Once again, we partnered with the Goryeb Children's Hospital program, Operation Smile. The purpose is to bring a smile to pediatric patients. Last year we made a commercial for their in-house TV station. This year we created personalized bookmarks for the reading program. Through all these activities in our kindness unit, students learned that it is important to share love and kindness with our neighbors.

Students were treated to a presentation from John



Miller of Pearl Observatory and his traveling planetarium. We were amazed at the beauty of God's universe as we gazed at planets and stars. Thank you, Mr. Miller! In March, Mr Miller will return with his very popular L'il Al Dinosaur presentation. The highlight of this program is the assembling of a 6-foot baby T-Rex from wooden pieces constructed by Mr. Miller. Amazing! The students love it!

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More Happening at Little Lambs!



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Our enrichment classes continue to be popular and well attended. Wee Little Arts introduces students to famous artists and provides lots of (messy!) painting, drawing and gluing. PEP Club gets kids moving with gymnastics, games and obstacle courses. In Friday Fun, we focus on science experiments, cooking, and math activities.



Pastor Dave and Kim Dial are loving teaching the Little Shepherds classes. On Thursdays, both threes and fours meet to sing, pray, hear Bible stories and play some fun games. Every week we light the Christ candle and say together, "Jesus is the light of the world." It is a privilege to bring the word of God to these beautiful (and spirited!) children.

We are looking forward to celebrating spring. We will hunt through our hallways for a mischievous Leprechaun, observe the changing beauty of our earth, and learn about birds, caterpillars and insects. Easter will be a central focus with egg hunts, parties, and of course learning about Jesus and the joy of the resurrection.



We are in the midst of registration for the school year 2024-25. Some classes are already full, but we do have room for a few new friends – so please spread the word!

It is truly a blessing to be among the families, staff and children of Little Lambs. They bring so much joy to our church! Please continue to keep all of us in your prayers as we journey through our school year!

What Is Church Council?

In case you've ever wondered what our Church Council is and what it does, read on! The Council consists of leaders of the church's five ministry teams, four administrative teams, pastor and student pastor, lay leader, lay member to annual conference, Tower Club chair, Ridge Oak trustee, youth representative, youth leader, membership secretary, Sunday School coordinator, United Women in Faith and chair of the Council itself.

The responsibilities of the Church Council include:

- Oversight and coordination of the church's ministries, administrative teams and others referenced above
- Envision, plan, implement and annually evaluate the church's ministry and mission (our "reason for being")
- Create and supervise a strategic plan for an effective congregation
- Approve significant and important recommendations from ministries and committees by majority vote
- Hold a broad view or "big picture" of the future of the congregation
- Provide for the administration of the church and its daily life
- Review the membership of the church
- Fill interim vacancies among lay officers through the Nominations Committee
- Approve pastor and staff compensation after receiving recommendations from the Staff Pastor Parish Relations Committee

In many ways, the Church Council functions similarly to the board of directors of a company.

The Council meets at least six times per year in person as well as online via Google Meet as needed.

Visitors are always welcome and encouraged to join Council meetings - dates for 2024 sessions are April 16, June 18, Aug 20, October 15 and December 17.

Gratitude and Stewardship from our Finance Team

Our hearts are full of gratitude and praise for your generous contributions and steadfast support. Your dedication to our church community enables us to fulfill our mission and ministry, and for that, we are truly thankful.

We are pleased to report that the budget year 2023 concluded with a surplus, which allowed us to transfer \$10,000 into our designated fund for Capital Improvements. With upcoming needs such as a new roof, fire alarm system, and HVAC system in the Dutcher wing, your continued support is vital in ensuring the upkeep and maintenance of our facilities.

The recent Pledge Campaign was met with overwhelming generosity, resulting in 36 pledges totaling \$205,490. Your commitments have enabled us to establish a balanced 2024 Operating Budget, supporting our dedicated staff, maintaining our facilities, and sustaining our various ministries.

As stewards of the resources entrusted to us, we are pleased to announce that the BJUMC Endowment fund and the Capital Investment Fund have a combined balance of \$422,400 as of December 31, 2023. We are actively exploring new investment opportunities through the United Methodist Stewardship Foundation of Greater New Jersey to further our investment objectives and ensure long-term financial stability.

In addition to our regular sources of funding, we are excited to explore grant opportunities to support our growing ministries. We are seeking a dedicated volunteer to lead this effort, and we invite anyone interested to reach out to the Finance team.

As we look ahead, we are filled with hope and anticipation. We extend our warmest thanks to all who contribute their time, talents, and resources to the glory of God through BJUMC. Together, let us continue to steward our blessings wisely and faithfully as we journey forward in faith.

Trustees: Keeping Our Church Running Smoothly!

As the season of renewal and growth unfolds around us, we want to take a moment to share some of the ongoing projects and maintenance efforts that the Trustees of [Church Name] have been diligently working on since late 2023. While many of these tasks may go unnoticed, they are essential to ensuring the smooth operation and upkeep of our beloved church community.

Here is a partial list of the projects and initiatives that have been underway:

Elevator Phone Line: The phone line used for the Elevator emergency call button has been repaired and is now in working order.

WiFi Network: Our WiFi network has been re-configured to provide better coverage throughout the church premises.

Thermostats: New programmable thermostats have been acquired and are being installed to improve energy efficiency.

Water Valve Replacement: A leaking water valve in Room 2 was replaced to prevent further damage.

Mold Remediation: Mold remediation has been completed in classrooms, ensuring a safe and healthy environment for all.

Bathroom Water Intrusion: Issues with water intrusion in the Women's bathroom by Wesley have been identified and are being addressed.

Energy Analysis: An energy analysis has been conducted, and plans are in place to replace old lighting with energy-efficient LED fixtures.

Parsonage Water Heater & Boiler were both replaced to prevent possible leaks

Evergreen Cemetery: an intensive ongoing analysis has been conducted for financial viability and future operating plan

Maintenance and Repairs: Various maintenance tasks and repairs have been carried out across the church property, including but not limited to the kitchen, cemetery, parsonage, and Dutcher wing bathrooms.



James 2:15-18

Trustee Ministry

We are grateful for the dedication and hard work of our Trustees in overseeing these projects and ensuring that our facilities are well-maintained and functional. We also want to extend our appreciation to those who have volunteered their time and talents to assist with these efforts.

If you have some time to spare and would like to contribute to the ongoing maintenance and improvement of our church, we invite you to join us. Your talents and expertise are valuable assets, and we welcome your assistance with open arms.

A list of maintenance items to be addressed is now posted in the office copier room. If you notice any issues that require attention, please feel free to add them to the list or reach out to any of the Trustees directly.

Together, let us continue to care for and nurture our church home, ensuring that it remains a welcoming and vibrant space for all who enter its doors.

United Women in Faith: Connecting, Nurturing, and Serving Together

We are thrilled to share the exciting events lined up for our United Women in Faith ministry. These gatherings, circles, and ministries are not only a celebration of our shared faith but also an invitation for all women and youth of BJUMC, our friends, and the wider community to join us in fellowship and service.

Walk and Talk at Harry Dunham Park

When: Mondays at 9:00 am (Weather dependent)
Gather for a refreshing walk in the park. Meet in the parking lot on Liberty Corner Road. For more information, please reach out to Barbara Conca at conca@optonline.net.

New Circle Dinners

When: Third Tuesdays of the month (3/19, 4/16, 5/14) at 5:30 pm
This diverse group, spanning various ages and occupations, welcomes everyone for engaging conversation. Locations will be announced. Connect with Linda Cargo at cargoph@aol.com for details.

Grace Circle

When: Fourth Tuesdays of the month at 9:30 am (3/26, 4/23, 5/21)
Experience a time of devotion, fellowship, discussion, or activities at Grace Circle. Held at the home of Gloria Walker, 14 Valley View Road, Basking Ridge. Reach out to Gloria Walker at ghwalker1046@gmail.com for more information.

Hearts2Hands Ministry

When: Fourth Tuesdays of the month at 7:00pm (3/26, 4/23, 5/21)
Join the Hearts2Hands Ministry in the Youth Room, where we knit or crochet shawls for those in need of prayer and support during challenging times. Knitting instruction and materials are provided. Connect with Linda Cargo at cargoph@aol.com for details.

College Student Care Packages

A big **THANK YOU** goes out to all who donated and came out to assemble College Student Care packages that were sent out just before Valentines Day. We were able to send seventeen packages to students near and far.

One parent wrote to let us know their student's reaction: "just called via FaceTime to show me the care package they received! 'This box is packed with great stuff' and 'Wow, so thoughtful' and 'There are some cool unique snacks here' and 'Woo nice socks' were just a few of the comments. The toy from Target (?) was also a HUGE hit! ... they noted that the letter in the box said 'from your church family' and I think that was very meaningful to them... and to me! "



Spring Rummage Sale: A Community Event for a Worthy Cause!

Mark your calendars for an exciting opportunity to support a worthy cause and snag some fantastic finds at our Annual Rummage Sale! Taking place on Friday and Saturday, March 15th and 16th, this event promises two days of treasure hunting, camaraderie, and charitable giving.

To make this event a success, we need your help! We will begin collecting items in Melick Hall starting Monday, March 11th through Thursday, March 14th, from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon. We kindly ask for donations of clean, salable, and working items such as housewares, dishes, decorative items, garden items, toys, sports equipment, pet items, kitchen items, books, jewelry, small appliances, linens, tools, and electronics. Please note that we are unable to accept car seats, VHS tapes, textbooks, or large furniture. A complete list of items we cannot accept is posted on the UWF bulletin board outside of the sanctuary.

The proceeds from the Rummage Sale will benefit the United Women in Faith mission giving, supporting important initiatives and programs that make a difference in the lives of many. Your contributions and participation in this event truly make an impact and embody the spirit of generosity and compassion that defines our church community.

We are also seeking volunteers to assist with various tasks throughout the week, including sorting and pricing items, helping during the sale itself, and assisting with cleanup at the end of the event on Saturday. If you are able to lend a helping hand, please contact Karen Hayworth at karenahayworth@gmail.com or Linda Cargo at cargoph@aol.com. Your support and involvement are greatly appreciated!

So mark your calendars, gather your donations, and join us for a weekend of fellowship, fun, and bargains at our Annual Rummage Sale. Together, let us make a meaningful difference in the lives of others while enjoying the thrill of the hunt for hidden treasures!



SPRING RUMMAGE SALE

FIND GREAT DEALS AND HIDDEN
TREASURES MARCH 15 & 16

Bishop Janes United Methodist Church
22 S. Finley Ave. Basking Ridge, NJ

Fellowship and Fun at our Hoppin' Hot Luau!



Members of our community enjoyed a wonderful time at our Hoppin' Hot Luau in February. Revelers were greeted with colorful leis and cold drinks (non-alcoholic), enjoyed some great games including mini golf and the limbo, and feasted on some delicious food (we are Methodist, after all!). Keep your eyes out for future gatherings from our Membership Care Team!

