



Tower Bell

BISHOP JANES UNITED METHODIST CHURCH | SPRING 2025

Finding God in the Desert Places

Dear friends,

As winter reluctantly loosens its grip on our New Jersey landscape, we find ourselves in that peculiar in-between season – where bare branches and remnants of snow exist alongside the first tentative crocuses and lengthening daylight. This tension between winter's last hold and spring's gradual emergence mirrors the spiritual journey of Lent. We stand in the "already but not yet," witnessing signs of new life while still walking through barren places.

This Lent, I invite you to journey with us through the wilderness. Our worship series "Wilderness Wanderings: Finding God in the Desert Places" explores how God meets us in our most challenging landscapes – those times when the familiar ground shifts beneath our feet and the path forward seems unclear.

Many of us are experiencing wilderness moments – navigating uncertainty, feeling spiritually parched, or searching for direction. Scripture reminds us that these desert places aren't just spaces of testing, but opportunities for profound encounter with God.

Each Sunday at 9:30 am, we'll walk with biblical companions who found God in their wilderness: Jesus facing temptation, Abram receiving covenant in darkness, the prodigal finding his way home, and Jesus entering Jerusalem with revolutionary humility.

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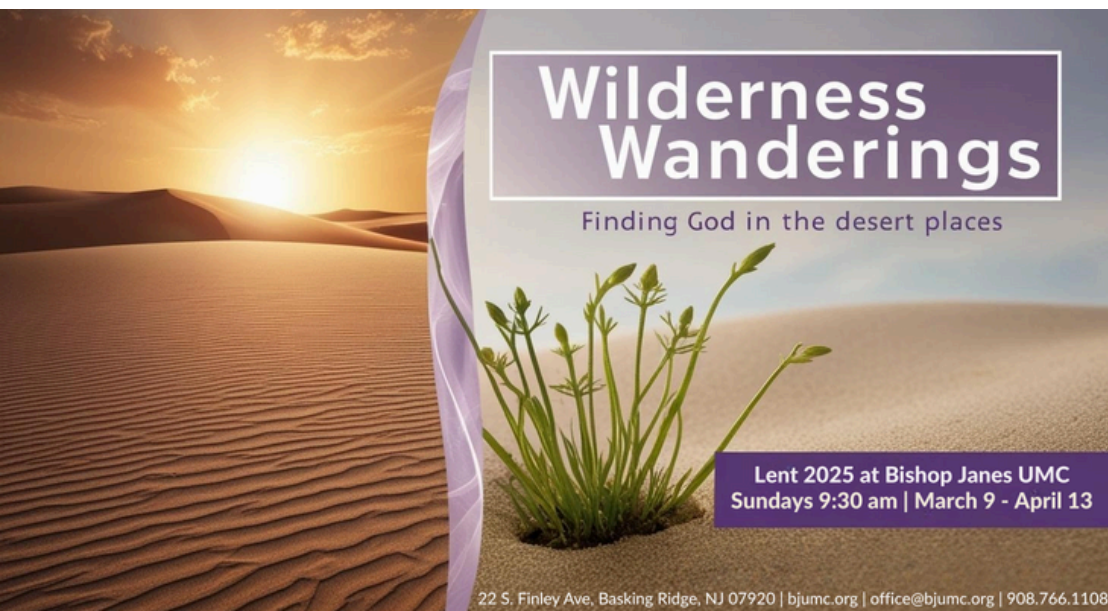
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Wilderness Wanderings

Finding God in the desert places

Lent 2025 at Bishop Janes UMC
Sundays 9:30 am | March 9 - April 13

*"See! The winter is past;
the rains are over and
gone.*

*Flowers appear on the
earth; the season of
singing has come, the
cooing of doves is heard
in our land.*

*The fig tree forms its early
fruit; the blossoming vines
spread their fragrance.*

*Arise, come, my darling;
my beautiful one, come
with me."*

SONG OF SONGS 2:11-13

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

(Continued from page 1)

Deepen your journey by:

- Taking home our Lenten devotional booklets (available in the narthex)
- Participating in our "Daily Pause to Pray and Praise" online devotions
- Visiting our Lenten prayer station outside the sanctuary

The wilderness, while challenging, has always been where God's people experience transformation. Just as spring emerges gradually through dormant ground, God's renewing work often begins in our most barren seasons.

I look forward to discovering together how our desert places might become sacred ground where new life takes root.

Grace and peace,

Pastor Dave
pastor.dave@bjumc.org

Celebrate Easter at Bishop Janes UMC

One Journey, Four Sacred Moments

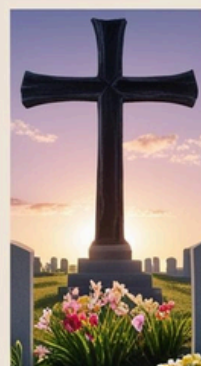


MAUNDY THURSDAY
April 17 | 6:30 PM



GOOD FRIDAY
April 18 | 7:00 PM

Experience the
complete
journey from
table to cross
to empty tomb.



EASTER SUNRISE
April 20 | 6:30 AM



EASTER SUNDAY
April 20 | 9:30 AM

22 S. Finley Ave, Basking Ridge, NJ 07920 | bjumc.org | office@bjumc.org | 908.766.1108

Easter Flower Dedications

Approaching the celebration of Easter, we invite you to partake in a tradition of remembrance and celebration.

Starting March 30 through April 13, you can place orders for Easter lilies or pink azaleas for dedications at \$30 each. 🌸

What a wonderful way to honor a loved one or celebrate the season!

To participate, simply see Richard Blauvelt in the Narthex before worship to order and complete your dedication information or reach out to him at 973-518-2029.

Your dedication will add a special touch to our Easter celebrations.

Spring Renewal: A Season of Growth and Grace

Brothers and Sister in Christ,

As the days grow longer and the earth awakens with new life, we are reminded of the beauty of God's creation and the renewal that comes with spring. This season is a powerful reflection of the grace and growth we experience in our faith journey.

At Bishop Janes United Methodist Church, we are blessed to journey together, supporting one another in faith, service, and love. This spring, I encourage all to embrace the opportunities for spiritual renewal. Whether through worship, small group studies, acts of service, or moments of quiet reflection, open your heart to God's presence in new and meaningful ways.

As Easter approaches, we celebrate the resurrection of Christ—the ultimate sign of renewal and hope. Let us be a church that radiates Christ's love, welcoming all who seek His grace.

I invite you to take part in the upcoming events and ministries that will enrich our spiritual lives and strengthen our bonds as a congregation. Continue to grow together, planting seeds of faith that will bear fruit for generations to come.

Reflecting on this past year, I am strengthened to see all the ways that God is working within and through us supporting each other and reaching out into the community

- Christmas Tree Sales which provide real community bonding and supports our missions and outreach projects
- Valentines Cards to Ridge Oak residents showing they are loved
- Care packages to our college age young adults who always greet the United Women in Faith's packages with a smile
- Thanksgiving and F.E.A.S.T. community meals demonstrating to the entire community that we are here, and we WELCOME ALL
- A successful budget season which yielded even greater opportunities to help us make disciples of Christ
- A lovely Christmas pageant from our Little Lambs Toddler Center students
- Facilities that are constantly monitored and cared for to help ensure we are ready for those visiting us
- Our Sunday School and Youth programs that were simply non-existent just a short time ago, now has young persons in attendance ... something we have all been praying about
- And so, so much more

(continued on page 4)



STAY IN TOUCH

Bishop Janes United
Methodist Church
22 S. Finley Ave.
Basking Ridge, NJ 07920

908.766.1108
office@bjumc.org
www.bjumc.org

Facebook.com
@BJUMC

Instagram.com
@bishopjanesumc

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!





Spring Renewal - contd.

As I look forward, I am energized to see what amazing ways my Brothers and Sister in Christ think of to help make disciples of Christ and to let our community know that they are welcome at BJUMC, and that in fact they belong at BJUMC

- Celebrating Black History month with a beautifully planned concert
- Serving those who are not as fortunate at Red Bird Mission
- Easter celebration
- More F.E.A.S.T. opportunities
- A hopeful planning season to bring Vacation Bible School back
- And - much more that is still being formulated in our leaders minds .. maybe even as we speak!

Brothers and Sisters in Christ - we find ourselves living in a world that is crying out for love, and a great big hug! Please consider inviting someone to BJUMC. A personal invitation has been proven to be the most effective means of getting someone engaged.

I confess I get butterflies in my belly when I consider inviting someone to worship. But I do believe in the blessings God has provide and still has in store for all of us, so I step beyond my fear. I pray you can find strength within to do the same.

I feel it is important, as United Methodists, to remain aware of what our senior spiritual leaders are saying and doing. Pastor Dave recently shared Bishop Moore-KoiKoi's (our Bishop for the Greater New Jersey Conference and the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference) video release titled "We Stand in Solidarity". I thank our Bishop for her spiritual leadership.

I would also like to inform you of a letter that our United Methodist Council of Bishops recently sent to the Honorable President of the United States on February 3 in response to the cuts in funding to U.S. Foreign Assistance Programs (url below). Regardless of how we might receive their message, I feel it is important to remain knowledgeable of how our spiritual leadership is thinking.

I feel both Bishop Moore-KoiKoi and the United Methodist Council of Bishops are acknowledging the realities of our current world, while calling forth the imperative's of the biblical world. Sharing these two worlds on one pathway is hard. That is why we are all on the journey, and that is why I give thanks to all of you daily, for your support and love

As Lay Leader, I stand ready to engage with each and every one of you. I may not know the answers to all your queries, but I promise to be an open and honest friend as we walk this journey called life.

In Christ's love,

Brett Hodges
Lay Leader, Bishop Janes United Methodist Church



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 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 reparations leading up to Easter.



This year, we have a unique opportunity to collaborate with the Basking Ridge Presbyterian Church for a special Choral Service on Good Friday in our Sanctuary.

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 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.



Choirs Rehearsal Schedule:

Wednesdays

Bell Choir – 6:15 pm

Chancel Choir – 7 pm

Sundays

Chancel Choir – 8:30 am

Children Bell Choir – 10:45 am

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 music@bjumc.org.

Jany will be delighted to provide you with more information and warmly welcome you into the musical family.

The Easter Triduum: A Journey Worth Taking

"One day that just happens to have three sunsets and three sunrises."

When we hear the term "Easter Triduum" (pronounced "TRID-oo-um"), many of us might wonder what it means or why it matters. This ancient observance—the most sacred 72 hours in the Christian calendar—offers us a profound spiritual journey that transforms how we experience the resurrection.

What Is the Easter Triduum?

The word "triduum" simply means "three days" in Latin. The Easter Triduum begins at sundown on Maundy Thursday and continues until sundown on Easter Sunday. While chronologically spanning three days, these sacred hours function liturgically as one unified observance—one continuous worship experience unfolding through four distinct services, each revealing a different facet of Christ's paschal mystery.

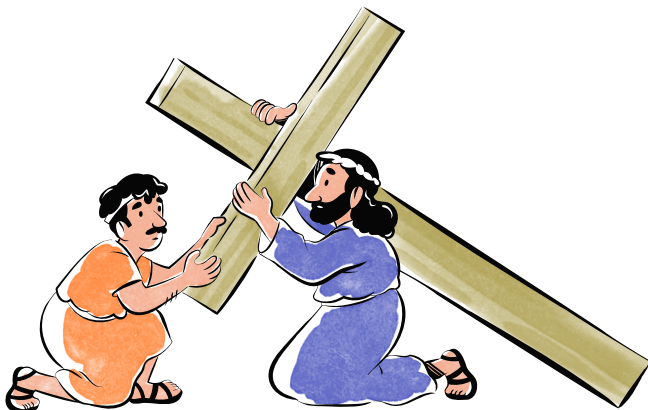
Rather than treating these as optional add-ons to Easter Sunday, the early church understood that experiencing the full arc of this journey—from table to cross to empty tomb—allows us to grasp the profound depth of Christ's sacrifice and the transformative power of resurrection.

Four Sacred Moments: A Complete Journey

At Bishop Janes UMC, we will observe this sacred time through four special services, each offering a unique perspective on Christ's final days:

Maundy Thursday: The Rite of Servant Love (April 17, 6:30 pm, Melick Hall) On this night, we'll gather around tables for a shared meal, experiencing the intimate fellowship Jesus had with his disciples.

Through foot washing and Holy Communion, we'll embody Christ's new commandment (mandatum, from which we get "Maundy") to "love one another as I have loved you." This service helps us understand that resurrection power begins with humble service.



PASTOR DAVE'S SCHEDULE:

- Tue: 12:00 PM – 9:00 PM
- Wed: 7:30 AM – 5:30 PM
- Thu: 12:00 PM – 9:00 PM
- Fri: 7:30 AM – 5:30 PM
- Sat: 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM
- Sun :7:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Meetings are best by appointment.

To schedule a time, contact him by email (pastor.dave@bjumc.org) or phone (908.766.1108)



Good Friday: The Rite of Sacrificial Love (April 18, 7:00 pm, Sanctuary) In partnership with our friends from Basking Ridge Presbyterian Church, the combined choirs will present "Not My Will but Yours" by Lloyd Larson, a moving musical reflection on Christ's passion.

Through Nine Universal Prayers for the world and a gradual extinguishing of lights, we'll experience how Christ's sacrificial love embraces all of creation. This solemn service creates space to contemplate the cost of our redemption.



Easter Sunrise: The Rite of New Beginnings (April 20, 6:30 am, Evergreen Cemetery by the mausoleum) As dawn breaks, we'll gather among the graves—not in despair, but in defiant hope—to proclaim that death does not have the final word. In this brief, meaningful service, we'll renew our baptismal covenant, claiming our participation in Christ's resurrection.

There's something uniquely powerful about proclaiming "Christ is risen!" as the sun itself rises over the horizon.

Easter Sunday: The Rite of Resurrection Life (April 20, 9:30 am, Sanctuary) Our journey culminates in a joyful celebration of resurrection with brass, bells, and voices raised in triumphant praise.

Through word, song, and Holy Communion, we'll launch our new sermon series "Made for More: Living the Resurrection Life." festive service reminds us that resurrection isn't just an historical event but a present reality that transforms how we live.

Why Experience the Whole Journey?

When we participate in all four services, something remarkable happens. Easter becomes more than a single Sunday celebration—it becomes a transformative journey that draws us into the very pattern of Christ's life, death, and resurrection.

Think of it this way: watching only the final scene of a great film might be satisfying, but experiencing the complete story—with all its tensions, conflicts, and resolutions—creates a much deeper impact. Similarly, entering fully into the Triduum allows us to experience the profound emotional and spiritual arc from Jesus's last meal with his disciples through the agony of crucifixion to the astounding joy of resurrection.

An Invitation to Share This Journey

This Easter season, I invite you not only to experience this sacred journey yourself but to share it with others. Who in your life might benefit from experiencing these sacred days? Consider inviting family members, neighbors, colleagues, or friends to join you for one or all of these special services. When we extend these invitations, we're not just asking people to attend a religious event—we're inviting them into a transformative story that has the power to change how they understand themselves and their place in God's world.

As you prepare to welcome guests, remember that your warm greeting might be the first step in someone's journey toward faith. A simple "I'm so glad you're here" can open the door to profound spiritual connections.

The Easter Triduum invites us to slow down, to enter fully into the mystery of Christ's passion and resurrection, and to be transformed by this journey from darkness to light. I hope you'll join us for this sacred pilgrimage—and bring someone along to share in its wonder.

Christ's peace, Pastor Dave

"Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here, but has risen." - Luke 24:5

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, you're invited to join the BJUMC Book Group, where lively discussions and stimulating conversations await!

New members are always welcome as we embark on our literary adventures. You'll find a warm and welcoming community. We meet monthly, usually on the 2nd Thursday of the month from September–November and January–May at 7:00 p.m. in classroom 3 /4, or sometimes at alternate locations.

Members suggest the books for discussion, ensuring a diverse range of genres and topics to explore.

For the month of April, we've moved our meeting on Monday, April 14, 2025 at 7:00 pm. in classroom 3/4 in the Dutcher Center.

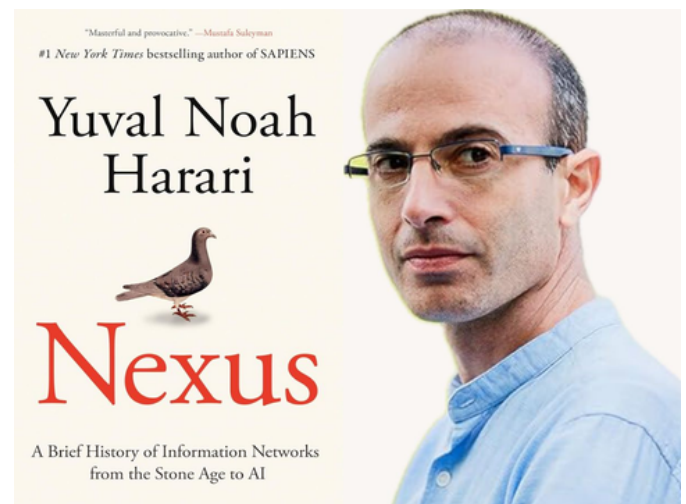
Prior to our discussion, some of us will gather for a pre-discussion dinner at Ridge Italian Comfort Food (25 S. Finley Avenue) at 5:30 pm. It's a wonderful opportunity to connect with fellow members in a relaxed setting.

Please contact Janet Kaefer at jbkaefer@optonline.net with any inquiries. Reserve your spot for the dinner, by reaching out to Carol Lutes at (908-672-4600) or carollutes@gmail.com by 5 pm. on the date of the Book Group.

Below is the list of books we'll be exploring this spring:

- April 14: Nexus: A Brief History of Information Networks from the Stone Age to AI by Yuval Noah Harari (led by Art Martin)
- May 8: The Frozen River by Ariel Lawhon (led by Sue Kennedy)

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



Little Lambs Toddler Center

The winter season was full of joy, music, art and growth at Little Lambs Toddler Center.

Prior to the holiday break the students participated in a heartwarming Christmas Pageant complete with angels, wisemen and even a camel. It was a pleasure watching our 3's and 4's classes act and sing on stage and to welcome back some of our alums to get in on the holiday fun.

January and February were full of science experiments involving snow, learning about the habitats of winter animals and predicting the weather for the future weeks with Groundhog Day. We even welcomed some special visitors!



The 4s students participated in a traveling planetarium where they learned about planets and constellations. Our students also enjoyed a lesson on Lunar New Year taught by Wen Ling Tillisch and music classes with Mrs. Voight.

As we look ahead to the spring months, we are delighted to enjoy another season of playing outside, learning more about our surrounding community and strengthening our friendships that make our school so special.



Registration is currently open to families for 2025 school year. We are thrilled to welcome back current students and open the doors of learning for our new friends joining us in the fall.

We are enormously grateful to the Bishop Janes Church community and the ways in which they support the Little Lambs ministry.



MARCH IS RUMMAGE SALE MONTH!

The annual UWF Rummage Sale will be held this year on Friday and Saturday, March 21st and 22nd.

Collection for church members and Little Lamb families begins March 1st in Melick Hall.

Items may be placed on the designated tables along the back of the room.

Community donations will be accepted the week prior to the sale beginning Monday, March 17th from 9 am to 12 pm.



We are seeking clean, salable and working items including housewares, dishes, decorative items, garden items, toys, sports equipment, pet items, kitchen items, book, jewelry, small appliances, linens, tools and electronics.

Items we cannot accept include car seats, VHS tapes, text books and large furniture. A complete list of items we cannot accept is posted on the UWF bulletin board outside of the Sanctuary.

Proceeds benefit United Women in Faith mission giving.

Please contact Karen Hayworth, karenahayworth@gmail.com or Linda Cargo, cargoph@aol.com if you can help to sort and price during the week, help during the sale or clean up at the end on Saturday.

Trustees Plan for a Busy Spring!

This year, the Trustees are embarking on several significant improvement projects to enhance our building's beauty and functionality.

Among the key projects is exterior restoration of our cherished stained glass window of Jesus the Shepherd facing North Finley, ensuring its brilliance is preserved for generations to come.

In addition, we are replacing the heavy folding tables and most of chairs throughout our space to provide fresh and comfortable furnishings for our congregation.

The choir room exit stairs will receive thorough wood repairs and a new coat of paint to ensure safety.

We also will be addressing other essential updates, including:

- installing a sump pump backup battery
- repairing aging faucets and urinal fixtures
- replacing the parsonage entry door
- updating the Melick Hall covering
- refreshing the courtyard with new shrubs
- interior painting in many areas
- tackling miscellaneous repairs

We look forward to sharing updates as these projects progress and thank you for your continued support and prayers as we care for our beloved space.



United Women in Faith Regular Gatherings

All United Women in Faith events, circles and ministries are open to all women and youth of BJUMC, friends, and the community.

Walk and Talk Resumes!! MONDAY mornings, 9:00 am, at Harry Dunham Park beginning Monday, March 10th. All are welcome! Weather dependent. Meet in the parking lot on Liberty Corner Road.

Contact person: Barbara Conca, conca@optonline.net

New Circle meets for dinner on the third Tuesdays (March 18th, April 15th and May 20th) **at 5:30 pm** Locations TBD. This group spans a variety of ages and occupations - younger, married, single - but all work hard at something during the day. Everyone is welcome to join in conversation.
Contact person: Linda Cargo, cargoph@aol.com

Grace Circle meets at the home of Carol Lutes on the fourth Mondays (March 24th, April 21st and May 26th) **at 9:30 am**, 51 summit Drive, Basking Ridge. This group has no set agenda and is primarily a time for devotion, fellowship, discussion or an activity.
Contact person: Carol Lutes, carollutes@gmail.com

Contact persons: Karen Hayworth, karenahayworth@gmail.com and Linda Cargo, cargoph@aol.com

Hearts2Hands Ministry is proud to support Knit The Rainbow

Year-round, the UWF Hearts2Hands Ministry provides handmade prayer shawls for persons in need of prayer and support during illness or difficult time.

But every fall they also craft, collect and send winter wear such as hats, scarves, cowls, mittens and socks to Knit The Rainbow in New York City which in turn will distribute them to homeless and at risk LGBTQ+ youth throughout the Metropolitan area. In December this year they sent 31 hats, 14 scarves, 4 cowls, and 2 pairs of mittens!

At least 40% of the homeless youth in New York City identify as LGBTQ+. Knit The Rainbow was founded in 2020 to empower and protect these youth by providing them with handmade knit and crochet winter clothing accessories. These items are made with love and placed right in the hands of those in need.

The Hearts2Hands Ministry invites anyone to join them when they meet on the fourth Tuesday of every month in the Youth Room from 7:00 to 9:00pm. Come to knit, crochet and pray. Come to learn a new skill - we have yarn, tools and knowledge to share. It's fun. It's art. It's community. For more information please contact Linda Cargo at cargoph@aol.com



Save The Date!! Yoga Hike with Amanda Modale

What Does Faith Feel Like to You? Saturday, May 10th, 10:00 am to 12 pm. Watch for sign up details.



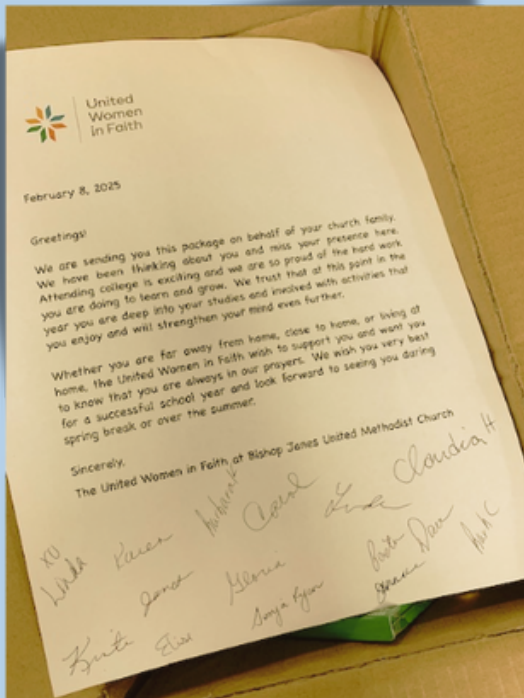
Thank You! College Care Packages

Thanks to all for the generous donations of items for the college student care packages that were assembled on February 8th by United Women in Faith.

7 packages were sent from the Basking Ridge Post Office that afternoon, each one packed to the brim with snacks, hot chocolate, instant oatmeal, ramen, chapstick, tissues, socks, party favors and valentines.

Here are some of the responses we received:

- "Just got the package from church - perfect timing and so sweet!"
- "I received the church box full of snacks and candy and I would like to say thank you to everyone for that! It gives me something delicious to snack on while studying! Please tell the women at church I say thank you!!"
- "I just got the package from United Women in Faith and wanted to say thank you so much for the thoughtful gift! I really appreciated it."
- "Thank you for the thoughtful care package! I just got it in the mail yesterday and I look forward to enjoying what's inside. Thank you for thinking of me, and I hope you are all doing well."
- "Thank you so much for the thoughtful note and care package! Have a blessed Valentine's Day."



Tower Club Continues a 73 Year Streak of Tree Sales!

Hello Bishop Janes Family,

The Tower Club thanks you for all the support during the 2024 Christmas Tree sales campaign. It marked the 73rd year that Bishop Janes UM Church sold Christmas trees to raise money for missions and social concerns, along with creating good cheer and feelings in the center of Basking Ridge.

The Bishop Janes community invests hundreds of hours every year to pull off the Christmas tree sales, and the Tower Club can't do it without the beautiful BJUMC community.

For the 2024 season, we are blessed to give away \$39,000, and contribute \$4,000 to the church budget to offset some of the costs of using our fantastic facility. Missions & Social Concerns is tasked with identifying charities here and worldwide, that receive the funds, but some of the worthy organizations receiving these funds in past years include:

- Market Street Mission, providing comprehensive support including shelter, counseling, and job training for individuals struggling with homelessness and addiction
- Good News Home for Women, transforming women's lives through faith-based treatment and support for addiction, mental health, and trauma recovery
- C.A.M.P. YDP, a Hope Center in Paterson providing dynamic after-school and summer programs for children and families for over 60 years



- United Methodist Communities, offering compassionate care and services to seniors with a focus on independence and dignity
- God's Co-op Food Pantry, serving over 200 families in the Bernardsville, Basking Ridge, and Peapack-Gladstone areas
- UMCOR (United Methodist Committee on Relief), which has provided critical assistance to flood victims across the United States in 2024 while supporting migration, health, and sustainability programs
- Rice and Beans Ministry, bringing hope to children living in poverty in Costa Rica, Brazil, and the United States through small acts of kindness

I personally want to thank the Tower Club and Bishop Janes for the privilege of participating in this amazing activity.

We have many activities associated with the sale, and you can help even if you are allergic to pine trees or can't lift a tree. The Christmas tree sales gives way more than it takes!

Looking forward to the Christmas 2025 sale.

Craig Morris,
Tower Club President

Mark your Calendar for

BJUMC

Game Night

5 pm on Saturday, April 5, 2025

at the Hanfts' home • 87 Bernard Drive, Basking Ridge

Games! • Fun! • Pizza! • All are welcome!

Please RSVP by March 29 to office@bjumc.org

Watch for details in The Midweek Minute
Hosted by your Membership Care Team

We'll have tons of fun...don't miss it!