

## FOOD PANTRY LEAVES A LEGACY

The Food Pantry @ Court Street is now closed. During our six years of operation, we had acquired several large items we no longer need. Fortunately, a new Open Table food kitchen program is opening and they happily accepted our donation of an old cooler, freezer, and shelving. Many thanks to White Moving and Storage for transporting the items to their new home at the Harris Community Center. We wish the Open Table much success.



## TRIVIA NIGHT WINNERS

Trivia players from Court Street UMC did well at the Kingdom of Callaway Historical Society's 10th annual President's Day Trivia Night on Saturday, February 25th. Two teams were entered and one of them, the Holy Rollers, took the 3rd place prize. The other team, Wesley's Whiz Kids, were only a few points behind them. Congratulations to both teams for representing CSUMC so well.



1.

**1:** The Holy Rollers team of Jacque & Karen Cowherd, Rev. Clayton Peak, & Linda & Bobby Mealy. (Nancy & Charlie Riley also played but were unavailable for the photo.)



2.

**2:** Wesley's Whiz Kids team of Linda & John Rootes, Harold & Janis Duryea, & Les & Deanna Hudson.

### IMPORTANT NOTES

- March Birthday people will be honored on March 12th after worship.
- A team is sorting hymnals and Bibles, many with nameplates identifying 'in memory of' a church member. If you think you may have claim to such a book, please let Jan Finke know.
- Mini Pies will not be done this year.

### Baby Grace

*Linda Mealy, Coordinator*

#### February 2023 Report

Families served: 8 families plus supplies for our Afghan neighbors

Diaper packages provided: 155

Individual diapers provided: 7,750

### Wiley House Update

*Mary Ann Echelmeier,  
Coordinator*

We served the Wiley House meal on Friday, February 24. This month we served George Washington Vegetable Soup, Abe Lincoln Muffins, and Valentine's Day Cookies. Thank you to Jan and Alan Finke, Mona Bartley, and Maurine Long for helping to prepare and deliver the meal in February.

We also delivered blankets donated by Linda Hogan, and paper plates and bathroom tissue donated by Linda and Bobby Mealy. Wiley House appreciates your generosity.

... an imperfect people learning to love perfectly, discovering with our neighbors hope and wholeness through Jesus Christ.

### R<sup>2</sup> Note ...

I've always marveled at creation. Indeed, that is the one characteristic of God that leads me to awe more than others.

The very idea of God birthing creation while playing in the sandbox of chaos, like a child entirely engrossed in crafting the perfect mud pie, brings a smile to my face. Joy floods my soul as I imagine God thoroughly enjoying God's very self, delighting in, and calling good every new thing born. I imagine God sifting through the chaos, and where we would see dead ends and heaps of junk, God sees potential and possibilities. As the images from the James Webb Space Telescope are released to the public we get not only a glimpse of the cosmos but a closer look at God's stunning creativity. What God won't do with the dregs, the dust, the debris! On Ash Wednesday, as we were smudged with the holy combinations of ashes and oil we heard the refrain, "From dust you came and to dust you shall return." We ourselves have been formed from God's sandbox and will return only to become the building block for something new that God has in God's creative imagination. Life. Death. New Life. This same cycle plays itself out in the seasons: Summer, Autumn, Winter, and Spring. Life. Death. New Life. It's the cycle of renewal and resurrection.

The Mexican Proverb, pictured, has been painted on placards in the protest movements from DACA to those in Iguala,

Mexico in 2013 in support of the 43 students who were disappeared as well as other political protests. The proverb originated in the Greek poetry of Dinos Christianopoulos, meaning "the son of Christ." Though this was not the author's given name, much of his poetry reflects Christian themes. No doubt those who carry the placards have a particular

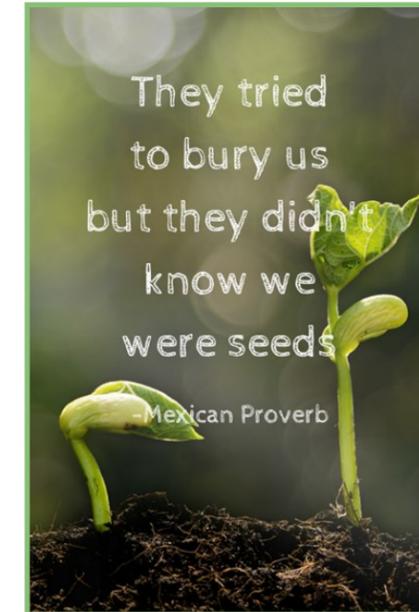
notion of the identity of "they." In reality, "they" could easily be a person, people, or even a set of circumstances. We might then interpret the proverb to mean that no matter how challenging the circumstances that appear to bury us we, in fact, are seeds that will spring to new life. The proverb is a harbinger of hope—a hope that exists even in the challenge and its accompanying emotional turmoil. Life. Death. New Life.

Friends, the time is upon us to decide upon Court Street UMC's 3rd century of ministry. Since the summer of 2022 the Administrative Board has studied and gathered

diagnostic information reviewing our history and our present, we've gathered for Table Talks with both members and friends, we've explored various options, and we continue to spend time in discernment. Those of you who are voting members will receive a separate letter with information related to our church conference at 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, March 28. We invite our friends to be present with us in prayer. Until that time, may we all continue in a spirit of discernment that we might both know and do the will of God, trusting in God's holy cycle of life, death, and new life. Until we meet again,

May God's grace and peace enfold your spirit,

R2



## BEYOND CONFERENCE REPORT

Rev. Rebecca, Rev. Jim, Linda Mealy, and Linda Rootes attended the BEYOND Conference from February 27-28 at The Gathering: McCausland in St. Louis. Their lead pastor, Matt Miofsky, welcomed the 200 pastors and church leaders from 19 different states with a call for us to return to our evangelical roots with a progressive understanding of inclusion. The messages of the other authors and pastors, including Bishop Bob Farr, spelled out how our churches must become invitational, relational, Christological (a fancy way of saying focused on Jesus), transformational, incarnational, and missional.

Bishop Farr reminded us that we are each called to be missionaries in our own setting, carrying the message of God's love BEYOND the walls of our churches. That requires us to spend time in places and with folks we do not yet know. Making new friends makes connections and builds community. Everyone has spiritual questions, and they are looking for someone they trust to talk to. Our challenge at the end of the first day was to practice making new friends during supper at The City Foundry.

We met and talked extensively with Alfredo, the manager of three of restaurants at The City Foundry. We talked about hospitality, his passions, what brings him joy, the delight of his new marriage of one year and the beautiful 2-month-old daughter waiting for him when he gets home, along with the wonders of food from southern Mexico as opposed to Mexico City, his hometown. When Rev. Jim took this picture he instructed us to say, "Cheese!" Alfredo responded with "Queso" which, obviously tickled Rev. Rebecca's funny bone. There's no doubt that this episode prompted our discussion about the difference between queso and cheese dip. Queso is either sliced or crumbled cheese but it is NOT a dip. The more you know!

If you would like to know more about BEYOND, a network, download the APP and follow along. The next conference will be at the end of February 2024!



## CHURCH WORLD SERVICE PROJECT

MARY ANN ECHELMEIER, CO-CHAIR MISSIONS COMMITTEE



**CHURCH WORLD SERVICE**

Your Missions Committee is working on our Church World Service project for this year. We have decided that a "Blanket" mission would be most appropriate at this time. I called the Conference to get details, and they said they would appreciate monetary donations in order to buy the kind of blankets they need. There will be a collection box for those donations in the Narthex. Please make checks payable to CWS.

## ADMINISTRATIVE BOARD MEETING

Board members met on February 15, 2023 to review current church business.

### A partial recap:

- Our 6-mo stewardship campaign was successful and provides funding through June 30.
- Our 2022 apportionments were paid in full; 2023 apportionments are being held for now
- We received very strong year-end gifts
- The balance on the roof loan has been paid off
- Rev Rebecca will be on a Spiritual Renewal retreat sometime in May or June
- There is a Time Capsule buried on the North side of the message sign in front of the Education building - - don't want it to be forgotten.
- The Special called Church Conference is set for Tuesday, March 28 at 5:30 p.m.

### Letters from Our Community

*Dear Friends at Court Street,*

*Thank you so much for the Valentines and notes. I enjoy them so very much. It is always great to hear from you. Thank you for your friendship, love, and support over the past 50+ years.*

*Love to all,*

*Mary Beth Wimp*

*Dear Church Family,*

*Thank you so much for the cards and the bible! I am enjoying them so much!*

*Carolyn Rankin*

*Dear CSUMC Food Pantry,*

*On behalf of the Board of Directors of Open Table, I want to thank you for your generous donation of an upright freezer, refrigerator, and four shelving units! Your donation is invaluable as we work to prepare the kitchen at the John L. Harris Community Center for preparing meals for those experiencing food insecurity. Your donations will have a lasting affect on the success of Open Table, and have saved us from having to purchase some really expensive items! We thank you from the bottom of our hearts—we are so blessed by your support!*

*Sincerely,*

*Shirley Dixon*

## CHURCH CONFERENCE MARCH 28, 2023 TO DETERMINE FUTURE

The United Methodist folks who gather at 719 Court Street in Fulton, Missouri, are on a journey of discernment and discovery about our way forward. The road has sometimes been curvy and hilly, bumpy and potholed. We have virtually visited large churches and small, collecting souvenirs to ponder later. We have prayed and read and talked together.

The next step is a Called Church Conference at **5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, March 28**. The meeting will be convened by our District Superintendent Rev. Dr. Mi Hyeon Lee. The members of record in attendance that night will be presented with a question, or questions, for their vote. This is how a decision about the future of our congregation will be made final.

At this time, the Administrative Board is perfecting the questions with the prayer and counsel of Rev. Rebecca and the District Superintendent.

A letter of notice of the meeting and an explanation of each question is to be mailed to each official member of Court Street United Methodist Church at least ten days prior to the meeting. Be watching for that letter if you are listed on the church membership rolls.

Linda Rootes, Administrative Board Chair

## DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT VISIT



Approximately twenty members and guests were in attendance on Tuesday, February 7, 2023, to hear District Superintendent Rev. Dr. Mi Hyeon Lee discuss the future of Court Street UMC. Also in attendance was Rev. Dr. Mark Sheets, Director of Congregational Excellence of the Conference Office. Both enlightened the attendees on various options and discussed specific plans to take Court Street UMC forward. There is much to think about. See Church Conference article above for some of the outcomes.

## SCHOLARSHIPS DEADLINE REMINDER

All Court Street UMC scholarships and their management have now been moved to the Missouri United Methodist Foundation in Columbia.

Applications for next year are now being accepted by the Foundation and the deadline is **April 1, 2023**. Students may access the application forms online by searching: Missouri United Methodist Foundation scholarship application. You may also contact the Foundation office at 573-875-4168.



## EASTER CARD MINISTRY

LINDA WILLIAMS, CHAIR

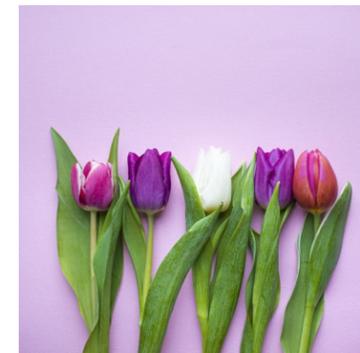
Let us celebrate the joys of Easter by sharing love with those who cannot join us in church.

There will be Easter bags and a list of names in the Narthex from now through April 2nd. Your Easter cards are welcomed and we will deliver them before Easter Sunday on the 9th. Please help us spread a message of hope and love as we are reminded of the joy of the Resurrection.

Romans 12:10., "Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves." Together we can reach out with an Easter greeting to show love for one another - - and honor God.



## IT'S TULIP TIME!



We are excited to be offering beautiful tulips for our Easter service on April 9. If you would like to honor/remember loved ones or just sponsor a tulip plant, please contact the church office (phone or email) or complete the Tulip Order Form found in the Narthex on Sundays.

Deadline to order is March 11th, cost is \$16 per tulip (mixed colors) and you may take the plant(s) home with you after the Easter service. Help us fill the altar with the beautiful and joyous colors of a myriad of tulips.

## LENTEN LUNCHEONS

After a hiatus of 2+ years, this beloved ecumenical ministry is back during the Lenten Season. Join in each Wednesday in March at noon (March 1, 8, 15, 22 & 29) at First Christian Church for a meal and talk. Each week a different faith leader will guide the group using *The Lord's Prayer: A Guide to Praying to our Father*, by Wesley Hill, as a focus.

Rev. Rebecca will lead the gathering on March 15 and our church will provide a lasagna meal. Contact Linda Mealy to help her with that meal, serving and cleanup.

### COMMUNITY LENTEN LUNCHEONS

*Join together with people of faith throughout the Lenten season for lunch, fellowship, and a talk.*

**EVERY WEDNESDAY IN MARCH AT 12:00 PM**  
HELD AT FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH  
6 E. 7TH ST. FULTON, MO 65251

Gathering over the lunch hour, we'll eat and hear from different faith leaders from around the community.

We will be reading *The Lord's Prayer: A Guide to Praying to Our Father* by Wesley Hill