



From the Pastor's Desk...

Over the years, I often reflect on how fortunate I am. Since entering ministry and being a pastor, I have always given thanks for the opportunities I have been gifted, such as the relationships I have made. I am beyond blessed to journey and walk alongside all of you in this thing we call life. And so, I celebrate the fellowship we share and how far we have come in my short time here.

For instance, have you noticed our church building looks significantly different? We have a wonderful adult Sunday school room with new cabinets and newly painted walls. I have heard some comments about how nice the room looks. I would agree with them. The room looks fantastic.

We also renovated the nursery. We removed the playhouse from the room across the hall, placed it in the nursery, and repainted it. This summer, we are planning a nursery shower. After the shower, it will look even better than it does now.

Also, we have a new conference room with enough space to host a large group. Of course, a lot of work went into turning it into a conference room. Chalkboards were removed from the walls, and the area where the boards were had to be sanded down so the walls could be repainted. And the large black storage closets were relocated to the room across the hall.

We now have one room designated for storage. So, if anyone needs something for an event, we only have to go to one room to look for supplies. By having only one storage room, we reduce the purchase of items we already have in stock.

We also purchased an industrial floor scrubber and an awning for our entrance to the fellowship hall. Also, the oil drill in our church yard was removed, giving us even more yard

to enjoy. Our front yard has an electronic sign with a freshly painted cross. Also, the old fence that was falling apart in the memorial garden is gone. We are in the process of installing a new fence. The church that is in the outside display case has been restored. These are just a few renovations that have occurred.

And so, I celebrate the transformations that are happening in our building. They allow us to practice hospitality, impacting the greater West Branch community. By making our building more accessible and welcoming, we create a fellowship space for all, not just church members, so that we can host social gatherings and outreach events that connect the church with the community.

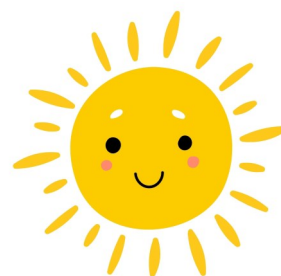
So, what renovation am I super stoked about? Yes, you guessed right, the restroom renovations! Why? Remodeling the bathrooms shows our hospitality by creating a more comfortable experience for worshippers and guests. It sends a positive message that we care about our visitors. So, I am excited that our well-designed, soon-to-be newly renovated restrooms will be more comfortable and accessible for individuals of all abilities, making them feel valued and respected.

Friends, I hope you are celebrating with me. I believe that our church building should be a space that reflects and glorifies God by how it is used and maintained. A church building that is well-maintained, where we worship God and a place where we host ministries that glorify God, is a witness to God's glory and a testament to our devotion to God. Glory be to God; we have the finances and people to make it happen.

There is another thing I am super excited about, too. I get another year to journey with all of you. I am incredibly blessed. WOO HOO! I hope you all know you make ministry a beautiful, life-giving experience. Thank you for that!

Yours in Christ,

Michelle Forsyth



FINANCE COMMITTEE COMMENTS AND EDUCATION

The Finance Committee would like to provide more information on the notation that appears in our monthly report in this STEEPLENOTES of the status of gains/losses in General Fund and the Gap Fund for the prior month and year to date, which is in this case, April, 2025.

The 2025 Budget, when created last fall, could not balance. We made sure that the revenues were accurate as predicted and that the expenditures were accurate, to the best of our knowledge. We found that we could not balance by \$6,354 and therefore put in a line item in Revenue noted as "Transfer to General Fund" of \$6,354. Our only thought at that time was if we could not come up with more revenues during the year of 2025 nor reduce some expenses in 2025, then we would have to transfer money from our Fund Balance into General Fund. This is not done very often as we generally try to balance the budget.

Every year, we have increases in payroll and payroll costs and other expenses. We are now experiencing increases in our supplies and this past winter's heating bills for the Church and the Parsonage were very high, as we all realize that in seeing our bills at home. That makes the situation of running at a loss this year more possible.

Therefore, in the monthly report in this Steeplenotes for the Status of General Fund, you will see the notation "LOSS WITHOUT BORROWING". In other words, referring to that schedule in this Steeplenotes, our year-to-date loss is (\$6,399).

At our recent meeting of the Finance Committee, we realized we should clarify this to the congregation and thus, we are doing so. We have a balanced annual budget of \$205,954, but only if we borrow \$6,399 at this point.

In General Fund, we have expenses that are fixed such as salaries/benefits/payroll taxes/office supplies/office equipment as well as Pension for Pastor, and Apportionments to the United Methodist Church and District. This accounts for **84% of our budget**. Therefore, **16%** is Utilities/education/worship and membership care, etc. In other words, we can try to control the 16%, but the 84% of our budget is not as flexible for change since it is "fixed". It is a very "real" challenge.

If you can find it in your means to provide more of a donation to the General Fund in your contributions, it will certainly help. The Finance Committee will continue to scrutinize

expenditures and make sure our revenues stay on track. Let me assure you that the Finance Committee looks at the revenue/expenditures very carefully and we hope not to “borrow” to balance the budget this year.

Another timely notation to make at this time: Soon you will hear (in case you have not yet) that the TRUSTEES COMMITTEE is working on enlarging the two bathrooms in the hallway to make them handicap accessible, which means making them larger. They have an architect’s drawing of the redesign and will be going forth on this project as Leadership Council approved moving forward last week.

You are now asking yourself “BUT!!! How can we afford it????” Good Question!!!

The Trustees Committee will use endowment funds for this project as it has been the long-held thought that the Church can use Endowment funds for improvements and upgrades to our infrastructure. The Endowment Committee looks at the project to make sure it meets their guidelines.

You might ask, why can’t we just dip into the Endowment Fund for our General Fund loss, if we have one??? Another good question!!! The General Fund handles our day-to-day expenses and it has always been the mindset of this Church, to balance the General Fund by any means as **the Endowment Fund should only be used for making changes/upgrades to our Infrastructure.**

We ask that you please read this carefully and if you have further questions, you can direct them to Maggie Robinson, Finance Chair, or to other members of the Finance Committee, being: Jim Macintyre, Don Lehman, Barb Hosmer, Arlene Martin and Gerrie Paulsen. This Committee wants to assure you that we work hard at trying to make sure this Church is run efficiently and productively as possible with as little money as possible!

Maggie Robinson
Finance Chair



Prayer Shawl Ministry

We will join in Christian fellowship to knit or crochet prayer shawls to be gifted to help spread the message of God's mercy, love and compassion.
All skill levels welcome!

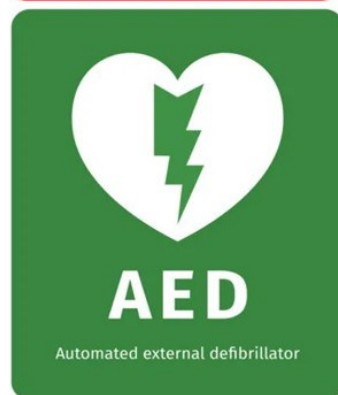


June 2nd & 16th
from 1-3 p.m.



CPR/AED Training

June 4th, @ 1pm



In fellowship hall

Questions contact Darlene Jones



COMMUNITY FREE FOOD GIVEAWAY

First United Methodist Church

2490 West State Rd, West Branch

Friday, June 6th, 2025

This will be a drive thru event
1 box per car



DISTRIBUTION STARTS AT 9:00 A.M. Until gone
Questions, call Lisa at 989-345-0381



Membership care team will
be hosting a Creative Card
making with Jane!

Wednesday, June 11th

Tuesday, June 17th

@ 1pm here at the church.

All supplies will be provided by Jane.



“Huddle Up!!!”

Men's Christian Study

**Saturday,
June 14th & 28th
at 9:30 a.m.
Here at the church.**

SUMMER

**United Methodist
Men's Breakfast**



**To Help Men Grow In
Christ,
So Others May Know
Christ.**



**Sunday,
June 15th
7:30 a.m.**

UNITED METHODIST





PRAYER CONCERNS

Please contact the office if you know of anyone that should be added to our Prayers. If you are listed below, and wish to be removed from our prayer concern list, call the Church Office: 989-345-0210 or

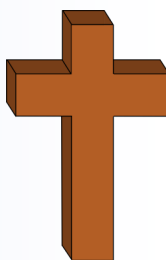
Email: office@westbranchfumc.org or drop a note. Thank you!

Prayer Concerns

Laura Prescott
Lanae Shields
Diane Pulaskey
Jeff Fagan
Ron Trombley

Military

Lt. William B. Mallory
Ricky Stachowski



Church

Trinity United Methodist
Church ~ Rose City

The Gilmore Family

FINANCIAL REPORT GENERAL FUND

April 2025

	<u>MONTH</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>
REVENUE	\$ 16,350	\$68,359
EXPENDITURES	<u>\$ 16,493</u>	<u>\$68,404</u>
GAIN/(LOSS)	<u>\$ (143)</u>	<u>\$ (45)</u>
LOSS WITHOUT BORROWING		<u>\$ (6,399)</u>

FINANCIAL REPORT GAP MINISTRIES

April 2025

	<u>MONTH</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>
REVENUE	\$ 499	\$ 689
EXPENDITURES	<u>\$ 82</u>	<u>\$ 148</u>
GAIN/(LOSS)	<u>\$ 417</u>	<u>\$ 541</u>



**Sign-up to Serve
for
Coffee Fellowship**



**Fellowship
After
Worship**

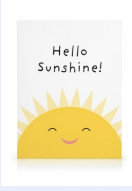
Don't think you need to do it alone because you don't! Ask a friend or two to help! Sign up sheets are on the bulletin board in the fellowship hall.

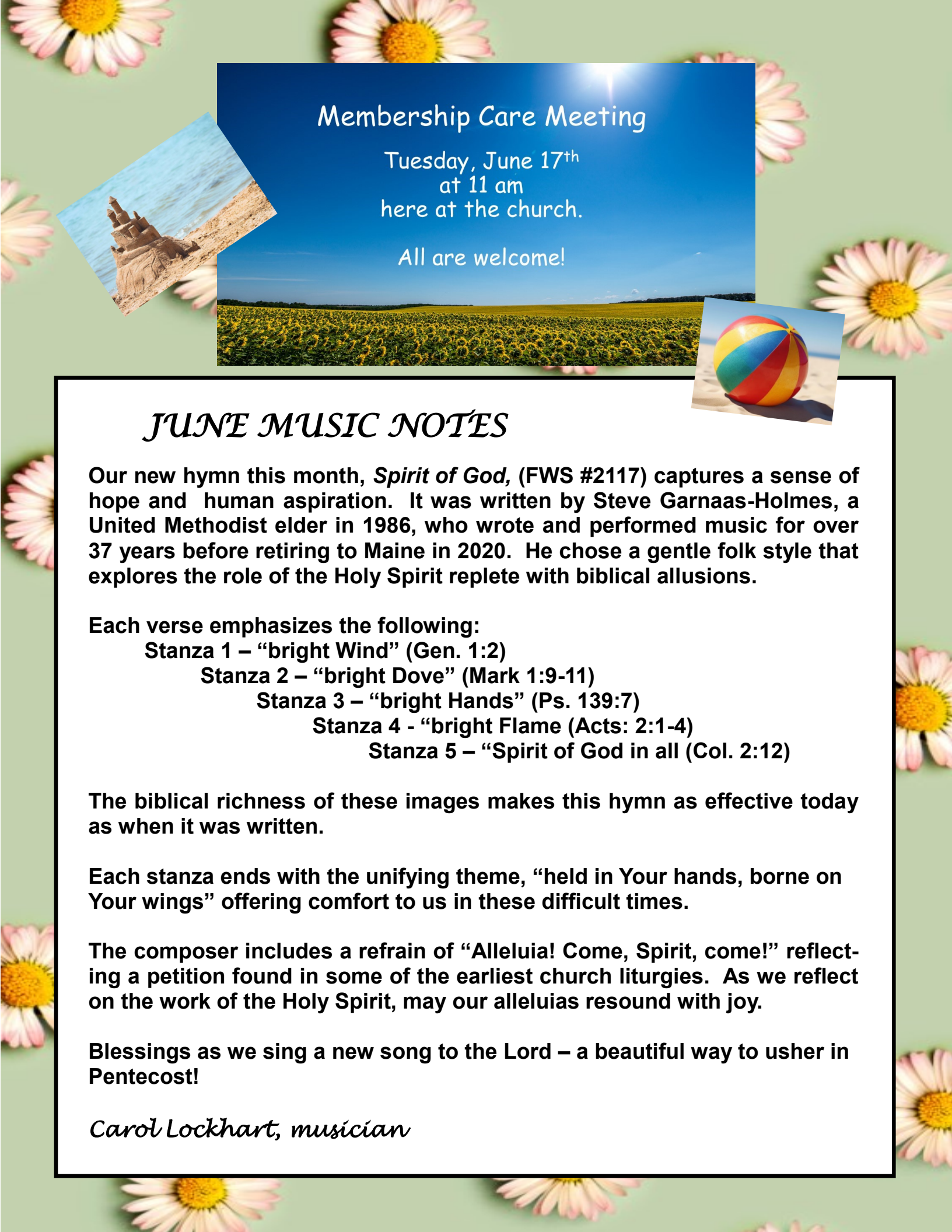
Nursery Care is available every Sunday morning during worship.



Volunteers are ready to serve, but could always use more volunteers!



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Calendar Subject to change						
1 Worship 10am	2 Prayer Shawl 1p Cub Scouts 6p BSA Troop 7p	3 Salvation Army 9a-noon BSA Cub Scouts 6p	4 Salvation Army 9a-noon CPR/AED Training 1p Choir 4p C.C. Choir 5p	5 Salvation Army 9a-noon Cardio Drumming 11:15a Line Dancing 1p	6 Free Food 9a	7
8 Worship 10am	9 Cub Scouts 6p BSA Troop 7p	10 Salvation Army 9a-noon Questers 10a Pack meeting 6p	11 Salvation Army 9a-noon Aktion noon Card Making 1p	12 Salvation Army 9a-noon Cardio Drumming 11:15a Line Dancing 1p	13 Private Party set-up	14 Huddle 9:30a Private Party 8a-7p
15 Father's Day UMM Breakfast 7:30a Worship 10am	16 Prayer Shawl 1p Cub Scouts 6p BSA Troop 7p	17 Salvation Army 9a-noon Membership Care 11a Card Making 1p BSA Cub Scouts 6p	18 Salvation Army 9a-noon	19 Salvation Army 9a-noon Cardio Drumming 11:15a Line Dancing 1p Emmaus Women 2p	20	21
22 Worship 10am	23 GAP 9a-4p Cub Scouts 6p BSA Troop 7p	24 GAP 9a-4p Salvation Army 9a-noon BSA Cub Scouts 6p	25 GAP 9a-4p Salvation Army 9a-noon	26 GAP 9a-4p Salvation Army 9a-noon	27 GAP 9a-12:30P	28 Huddle 9:30a
29 Worship 10am	30 GAP 9a-4p Cub Scouts 6p BSA Troop 7p					Calendar Subject to change



Membership Care Meeting

Tuesday, June 17th
at 11 am
here at the church.

All are welcome!



JUNE MUSIC NOTES

Our new hymn this month, *Spirit of God*, (FWS #2117) captures a sense of hope and human aspiration. It was written by Steve Garnaas-Holmes, a United Methodist elder in 1986, who wrote and performed music for over 37 years before retiring to Maine in 2020. He chose a gentle folk style that explores the role of the Holy Spirit replete with biblical allusions.

Each verse emphasizes the following:

Stanza 1 – “bright Wind” (Gen. 1:2)

Stanza 2 – “bright Dove” (Mark 1:9-11)

Stanza 3 – “bright Hands” (Ps. 139:7)

Stanza 4 - “bright Flame (Acts: 2:1-4)

Stanza 5 – “Spirit of God in all (Col. 2:12)

The biblical richness of these images makes this hymn as effective today as when it was written.

Each stanza ends with the unifying theme, “held in Your hands, borne on Your wings” offering comfort to us in these difficult times.

The composer includes a refrain of “Alleluia! Come, Spirit, come!” reflecting a petition found in some of the earliest church liturgies. As we reflect on the work of the Holy Spirit, may our alleluias resound with joy.

Blessings as we sing a new song to the Lord – a beautiful way to usher in Pentecost!

Carol Lockhart, musician



Happy Anniversary

Allen & Sherry Cascadden	6/13
Nicholas & Riley Retherford	6/15
Guy & Sherry Dean	6/18
Don & Jane Lehman	6/18
Kurt & Holly Lumley	6/20
Bob & Gail Matthews	6/23



Nikki Bragg	6/1
Christopher Nolan	6/3
Don Hosmer	6/4
Gary Hughey	6/6
Guy Dean	6/18
Joseph Clark	6/20
Jane Lehman	6/22
Mary Chrysler	6/27
Barb Hosmer	6/30

First United Methodist Church

2490 West State Rd
West Branch, MI 48661

989-345-0210
office@westbranchfumc.org

Website: westbranchfumc.org

Office hours: Tuesday through Friday -- 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Closed from noon to 1 p.m. for lunch

On Site Sunday Service: 10 a.m.
Adult Sunday School 8:30 a.m.
Children's Sunday School during worship service

Staff:

Pastor: Michelle Forsyth
reverendmichelleforsyth@gmail.com

Office Manager: Renee Guoan
office@westbranchfumc.org

Organist: Carol Lockhart

Custodian: Mark Page

Mission Statement

"Our mission is to make disciples of Jesus Christ who will know, love, and serve God."