

# BROOK UMC NEWSLETTER

*WINTER, 2021*

## ***“And who is my neighbor?” – Luke 10:29***

This question was posed to Jesus by a certain lawyer two thousand years ago, and it remains for us one of our most pressing questions. After a year of a pandemic, national turmoil, and increased social media use, it is hard to know who is our neighbor. We might feel isolated, angry, or suspicious. Even more, we might feel that neighborliness, friendship, and peace are unrealistic goals in our current world.

Jesus responds to the lawyer’s question with one of his most well-known stories: the parable of the Good Samaritan. In the story, a man is left for dead on the side of the road, and a priest and a Levite pass by the beaten man neglecting to give him attention and care. In the end, a Samaritan man notices the near-dead man, goes to him, tends his wounds, and helps get him to an inn where he can recover. The catch of this story is two-fold. First, the lawyer hears about two people that are part of his group (the priest and the Levite), and he must admit that these people were not neighbors. Second, the hero of the story, the Samaritan, happens to be someone that was not part of his group, and Jesus makes the lawyer admit that this outsider was a true neighbor to the wounded man.

Jesus would have us remember that people that are part of our group are not always good neighbors, and people that we might even consider enemies can show exemplary acts of mercy. By doing so, Jesus is challenging many of our conventional understandings of being a neighbor, and he extends the boundaries of whom we might call a neighbor. Most of all, Jesus would have us follow the example of this one who showed mercy.

*Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?” He said, “The one who showed him mercy.”*

This kind of neighborliness cuts against the current grain of our society, and some might even consider this sort of neighborliness hopelessly naïve. Yet the more we learn to practice mercy and acknowledge the mercy of others, the more we are able to live out Jesus’s command to *love our neighbor as ourself*. Because, whether we like it or not, we are neighbors and we need each other, whether we live in the city or on a family farm, we align with this political party or that one, whether we live on this side of the border or that side, we are neighbors and we need each other. To believe otherwise is perhaps more hopelessly naïve than the goal of neighborliness.

In the end, Jesus never fully answers the lawyer’s question. Instead, he says to the lawyer and to us, *“Go and do likewise.”* Go, be merciful, and discover that you have more neighbors than you might think.



# WE are the Church!

By Meagan Cooper

2020 has been a year of challenges, but also blessings. When the governor imposed the statewide shutdown in March, we transitioned the community meal into a drive-through-only. Before the pandemic, the meal was averaging around 40-50 each week. Our first week serving out the kitchen door, we served 76 meals. The next week, we served 125. As the shutdown wore on, and more people struggled with the affects from it, our line grew longer each week. By summer, we were serving 250 each week. By fall, our average grew to 300+ each week.

We have had a steep learning curve and have had to learn to adapt our way of thinking to preparing such large quantities. Packing almost 300 carry-outs in 30 minutes and serving those, plus the eggs and bread we pass out weekly, in 1 hour has brought a new meaning to the word *efficient*. Over the course of the summer, we have had to purchase bigger pots, larger pans, a commercial can opener (Opening 10-20 gallon cans per week by hand was getting old!!) and a new serving cart.

We have been supported every step of the way by our wonderful church family and members of our community. We have a generous group of ladies that donate their time and ingredients every week to make all of our homemade desserts we serve. Our local businesses have been a tremendous help with everything from special orders, storing large quantities of frozen food, and monetary donations.

As the pandemic has changed so much about our church and suspended nearly all of the programs, ministries and services, this community meal and the community we have supporting us illustrates beautifully the fact that “the church” is not the building, but, indeed, the people. **WE** are the church. While our building may be closed, our church is thriving in this ministry, providing over 9100 hot meals in 40 weeks in 2020. This community provided Christmas gifts for 29 children, 2 live Christmas trees and 3 grocery bags full of food to 104 families at Christmas. Each week, Pastor Matt walks down the line of cars as they line Main Street (often stretching from the kitchen door to the gas station), praying with people and sharing the love of Jesus. As each car leaves each week, they have a hot meal and the assurance that God loves them and this church-the people, not the building-cares about them. In a year where many people’s connection to the outside world, and many times their family and friends, has been severed, they know they have a connection at BUMC.

We maintain a Brook community meals Facebook page if you would like to follow along with us each week. If you would like a little behind the scenes view of what we do each week, we have a short video on our page to give you a glimpse of this ministry that you are supporting.



This is a picture of all the food items each family received the week before Christmas, in addition to their hot meals. Each child received a bag with an activity book about the birth of Jesus, a box of crayons, pencil, and some candy. Each family received a New Testament and a gospel music CD. Rose Acres donated the eggs. Fair Oaks Dairy donated the cheese. Strack & Van Til gave us a deal on the milk and bread. Murphy’s gave us a deal on the spaghetti and spaghetti sauce. Church & community members donated much of the dry goods. This enabled us to give each family all of this food for just \$20 each! Then area businesses and individuals donated the funds to cover that \$20 expense! Thank you to all who donated and helped pack the bags!!!

# Birthdays

## January

- 3—Jerry Johnson
- 5—Ardis Lawrence
- 6—Maci Wirtz
- 7—Judy Wilson
- 9—Erin Cooper Denton
- 14—Christina Dye
- 15—Ryan Lawrence
- 16—Meagan Cooper
- 18—Marshall Whaley
- 19— Tom Anderson
- 27—Amy Wedding
- 27— Sharon Hiatt
- 30—Kristina Sanders

## February

- 1—Gene Beasley
- 1—Jessica Varys
- 4—Kelly Wedding
- 5—Joyce Antcliff
- 7—Reed Gazaway
- 11— Diana Elijah
- 14—Addilyn Lawrence
- 14—Mike Harper
- 16—Carrie Olthof
- 17—Dick Antcliff
- 19—Esther Barten
- 20—Rose Sell
- 20—Annelies Roggeveen
- 21—Emma Osowski
- 24—Judy Smith

## March

- 1—Becky Lyons
- 2—Sally Conn
- 3—Faye Gerts
- 4—Marvin Whaley
- 11—Lucille Smith
- 14—Susie Johnson
- 15—Carol Whaley
- 18—Everhett Beasley
- 20—Steve Kindig
- 24—Camryn King
- 25—Candace Armstrong
- 25—Rick Gerts
- 26—Leah Cooper

# Anniversaries

## January

- 4—WD & Tina Gazaway
- 22—Harry & Donna Basan

## February

- 9—Norman & Pauline Ekstrom
- 10—Mike & Candace Armstrong
- 14—Jim & Debbie Messer

## March

- 4—Rick & Carol Smith
- 7—Jack & Vi Strain
- 12—Dick & Joyce Antcliff
- 13—Steve & Kelly Smith

### United Methodist Women 2020 Missions/Giving

Lucille Raines Home, Indianapolis (helps people recovering from drug & alcohol abuse)	\$125.00
Bashor Children's Home	\$125.00
Indiana United Methodist Children's Home	\$125.00
Crisis Center, Rensselaer	\$125.00
Pans for kitchen	<u>\$482.77</u>
Total support given	\$982.77

**"At the end of the day people won't remember what you said or did, they will remember how you made them feel." —Maya Angelou**

Take a moment and send a card to those on the list above to make them feel special on their special day!

**Brook United Methodist Church**

**P.O. Box 214**

**Brook, Indiana 47922**

**Pastor Matt Baughman**

**Non-Profit Organization**

**U.S. Postage Paid**

**Permit #23**

**Brook, Indiana**

### **PRAYERS FOR BROOK UMC**

Prayers for the family of Lois Delay. Our dear friend Lois passed away on January 9 at George Ade. She will be dearly missed.

Prayers for Tanya Washburn, Don's sister, she is recovering from numerous treatments and has not had many good reports on her health. Pray that God be near her and her family.

Prayer for Ruth Hirschman, Matt Baughman's grandmother, who has covid.

Prayers for Dawn Thomas' mom who had surgery this week but there were some complications and had to have surgery again. Prayers for her family as no one can be with her at the hospital.