



A Note From Pastor Julie



LITCHFIELD UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

ILLUMINATIONS

“Let God grant what is in your heart and fulfill all your plans.” Psalm 20:4

Here we are at the end of 2014 and the beginning of 2015. It's amazing how God has been faithful and worked through us as a congregation over the last year. We held two sessions of Good Stuff Club in the spring and fall for children in Kindergarten through Sixth Grade. We had another successful Easter egg hunt and distributed treats at Halloween. We honored several high school graduates at the end of May and then in August had a wonderful week of Vacation Bible School in partnership with the Litchfield Congregational Church, reaching many more children in our community than in the previous year. We also resurrected a youth group that meets twice a month. Our food pantry continues to serve many families in our community and county. Christmas baskets were distributed to several families in our community, thanks to enormous support from members and friends at our chili supper and pie auction. As a congregation we even raised the necessary funds for a new sound system in which a new soundboard and microphones have already been installed. Four new members joined the church this year – one by transfer and three by profession of faith!!! We even paid 100% of our Ministry Shares, which connects us in mission to other United Methodists locally and globally!! New initiatives were distributing goodie boxes to our local farmers during harvest, then to our local school staff right before Christmas, and to local workers on Christmas Eve. There is so much more that could be listed. God has truly been working through our congregation!!

It has been quite a year, and we have much to look forward to in the year to come. God continues to call us to be faithful not only in working on our own spiritual growth, but also in reaching out and witnessing to our faith in our community. How wonderful it would be to continue these seasoned and newer opportunities, as well as to discern how else God is calling us to communicate God's love to those around us!! Additionally, how can we get more and more people inside and outside the congregation involved with these ministries?? Reflecting over the last year and looking ahead to the possibility makes me even more excited and blessed to be your pastor at this time. There is so much hope for our future!

May our prayer throughout this year be one of petition that God would show us how God would have us continue to live and serve faithfully.

God's Blessings,

Rev. Julie Yoder Elmore

New Sermon Series @ LUMC ~ Bread, Bath & Beyond

January 4 through February 15

The new year always brings opportunity to move beyond our limitations to find new beginnings and be better than we were before. We use this cultural word-play in our series title to remember that the most basic transforming experiences of our faith – communion and baptism – are the starting points for life “beyond” our limitations. Below are our weekly themes:

January 4 ~ Bread (Communion) ~ Matthew 26:26 & Revelation 21:1-6a

January 11 ~ Bath (Baptism) ~ Mark 1:8 & Acts 19:1-7

January 18 ~ Beyond Belief ~ John 6:42 & John 1:43-51

January 25 ~ Beyond the Horizon ~ Matthew 4:18 & Mark 1:14-20

February 1 ~ Beyond Boundaries ~ Psalm 51:10 & Mark 1:21-28

February 8 ~ Beyond Chaos ~ Mark 5:24 & Mark 1:29-39

February 15 ~ Beyond the Fear ~ Mark 10:32a & Mark 9:2-9

Through this series, let’s make this year one of amazing transformations – for our lives, our community, and our world!

Coffee with the Pastor ~ Saturday, January 17, at 10:30 am



Have you begun attending Litchfield UMC over the last several months and want to know more about the life and ministries of Litchfield UMC?? Are you thinking about becoming a member of Litchfield UMC?? If you answered yes to one or both of these questions, do we have an invitation for you! While enjoying a warm beverage and other refreshments, those who are gathered will learn and discuss the history of the United Methodist Church, who we are as a denomination, what our local church is all about, and how our church continues to be a place to grow in faith in Jesus Christ. If you are interested in attending, please call or text Pastor Julie at 517-607-6977. Looking forward to seeing you there!

Food Pantry News

Happy New Year!! The Litchfield Food Pantry got a welcome infusion of cash in its account at the South Central Michigan Food Bank in Battle Creek after a grant submitted to the Hillsdale Community Foundation on October 31, 2014 was approved in early December 2014 for \$2,500. We are ever so grateful for this support which allows us to continue to purchase foods from the Food Bank and serve our county’s families.

Other good news: The Food Pantry received a check for \$400.32 from the Fire Department, proceeds from their pancake supper on December 6, when the city celebrated the lighting of the Christmas Lights in the park. It is heart-warming to know that our community supports the good work of the Litchfield Food Pantry. We are ever so appreciative.



Throughout 2014 other donors presented donations of canned, boxed and garden fresh foods, meats, gently used clothing, magazines, homemade laundry soap, toothbrushes, personal hygiene products, and various other items, as well as money to the Food Pantry. **To every single person who heard our prayer and knows our intention to help those in need, we are grateful and we give thanks.**

Special thanks are extended to the many volunteers who perform various tasks within and for the food pantry. Without these fine and selfless people, it would be impossible to continue to serve those in need.

“You must actively help the hungry and feed the oppressed. Then your light will dispel the darkness, and your darkness will be transformed into noonday.” Isaiah 58:10.

Inventory



*Let's Start
the
New Year
Right!*

Beginning a new calendar year brings the countdown. However, there is more than the counting down to midnight on December 31, to welcome in the new year. It's inventory time for companies and retailers. They want to know how well the year went, sometimes down to the buttons on the rack!

It certainly is a good way to gauge the wheres, hows, and whats of pulling 12 months together. Many people will take on some new challenges for the start of 2015. But how does one know where to begin? This is a good time to take a look at one's personal inventory.

*"Continue to build lives on the foundation of your holy faith
and continue to pray as you are directed by the Holy Spirit."
Jude 1:20*

Each one of us has a list worth going over. Knowing the wheres, hows, and whats will help us build upon our strengths for days leading through the 12 months ahead.

*"Are you called to help others? Do it with all the strength and energy that God supplies."
1 Peter 4:11*

In order to take inventory, time is set aside from usual routines. Some businesses actually close to make that count happen. It is planned, then utilized in a timely manner.

In our year-end inventory we may find a few uncounted buttons. But what about all those daily encounters bringing God's word to life? The counted buttons.

Keep counting! The store clerk? The co-worker? The good service you received? The 'go-ahead' in line? The door? The smile you gave? Doing an inventory list could use time set aside just for that reason. We may need an extended time, as some stores do, or possibly quiet time without distraction on a bike ride, treadmill, or walk.

"Draw close to God, and God will draw close to you." James 4:8

Let's move Him to the top of our list for the year ahead. 2013, 2014, 2015

Count on Him! Ron Giacobassi

LUMC LEADERSHIP 2015

STAFF PARISH RELATIONS TEAM

Team Leader: Tom Beckner 2015 – Janice Teller, Brett Smith
2016 – Betty Peiffer, Doug Thompson (also Lay Leader) 2017 – Tom Beckner, Barb Miller
(Joint: Doug Thompson, Tom Beckner, Janice Teller, Betty Peiffer, Brett Smith, Barb Miller)

TRUSTEES TEAM

Team Leader: TBA
2015 – Michael Ireland, Art Clark
2017 – Frank Hiser, Janice Teller
Parsonage Trustee: Betty Peiffer
2016 – Betty Peiffer, Al Gaige, Tim Chilson

NURTURE TEAM

Team Leader: Sharon Thompson Members: Cheryl Sykes, Val Roberts, Sue Houchen, Doug Thompson, Ron Giacobassi, Emily Roberts, Lorie Dickinson
Older Adult: Marcia Ferry & Betty Peiffer Children's Ministry Leader: TBA
Youth Ministry Leader: Zach Hiser Lead Usher: Michael Ireland

OUTREACH TEAM

Team Leader: Sheila Gary Members: Ella Hamrick, Thomas Jones, Yesica Jones, Becky Sramek, Henry Sramek, Janice Teller, Annie Wolfe
Food Pantry Director: Kathy Blonde Assistant Food Pantry Director: Laura Cierpilowski
Food Pantry Inventory & Food Stocking: Brett Smith

NOMINATIONS & LAY LEADERSHIP TEAM

Team Leaders: Rev. Julie Elmore & Janice Teller Lay Leader: Doug Thompson
2015 – Janice Teller, Ella Hamrick 2016 – Millie Clark, Pat Smith 2017 – Mary McMillen, Mary Wendorf

FINANCE TEAM

Team Leader: Jack Smith Financial Secretary: Valery Roberts Lay Leader: Doug Thompson
Treasurer: Carol Ireland Trustee: Frank Hiser SPRC Chair: Tom Beckner

MEMORIAL TEAM: Clara Dawson and Eleanor Wildt

COMMUNION TEAM: Betty Peiffer and Janice Teller

ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL: Team Leader: Carol Ireland

Lay Leader and Lay Member to Annual Conference: Doug Thompson

Pastor: Rev. Julie Elmore

Recording Secretary: Velvet Evans-Giacobassi

Staff Parish Relations Chair: Tom Beckner

Trustee Chair: TBD

Finance Team and Stewardship Chair: Jack Smith

Financial Secretary: Valery Roberts

Church Treasurer: Carol Ireland

Communications: TBD

Lay-Leadership Chairs: Pastor Julie Elmore & Janice Teller

Nurture/Witness Team Chair: Sharon Thompson

Outreach Team Chair: Sheila Gary

Church Historian: Eleanor Wildt

Membership Secretary: Cheryl Sykes

Memorial Team Chair: TBD

At-Large Members: Nancy Gaige and Henry Sramek



Christmas Gift to LUMC

To: The People of Litchfield LUMC

From: Rev. Julie Yoder Elmore

A gift was given to Imagine No Malaria in your honor on Giving Tuesday (December 2). Through this gift insecticide-treated nets are being distributed; lifesaving messages are being delivered via radio; diagnosis, case management and access to medication is being improved; and a grassroots network of community health workers are being trained! Merry Christmas!



Thank You

Dear Members of the Litchfield United Methodist Church,

Thank you for the Christmas love offering presented to me by Tom Beckner during worship on Sunday, December 28. Not only is it a joy to be your pastor, but it is also a blessing and privilege. I have enjoyed being in ministry with each of you over the last year and a half and look forward to serving God together into the future! May God bless you always.

Grace & Peace,

Rev. Julie Yoder Elmore

Liturgy and Refreshment Schedule

LITURGIST

January 4: Tim Chilson

January 11: Zach Hiser

January 18: Frank Hiser

January 25: Cheryl Sykes



COFFEE HOUR

January 4: Carl and Cheryl Sykes

January 11: Al and Nancy Gaige

January 18: Marcia Ferry and Lois Miller

January 25: Mike and Carol Ireland



HOLD THESE DATES FOR 2015!



January 12: Bishop Deborah L. Kiesey would like to continue a conversation with the people of the Michigan Area, which she began more than two years ago by hosting a series of conversation events across the area. These events began in November and will be held in five United Methodist Churches. These events are open to any and all United Methodists who would like to enter into this dialogue about the creation of a new conference for the Michigan Area. Bishop Deb will come prepared to share her thinking around this possibility but wants you to know that she really wants to hear from you: your concerns, your hopes, your dreams. If we were to start from scratch and design a new conference to enable churches from across the area to make disciples for Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world, what might be some of the things you would like to include? What might we want to do differently from the ways we have always done them? What strengths do we, as an annual conference, bring to the table?

This is your chance to speak with and hear from our Episcopal leader. Please let Pastor Julie know if you are interested in participating in this event. The event closest to us is on January 12, in Grand Rapids at Cornerstone UMC from 6:30 until 8:00 pm. A webinar for this session is also in the works which means that we will not have to travel to Grand Rapids to participate. Details to follow.

February 7: District Training Day & Conference. It is time to register for the Albion District Day & District Conference at Marshall United Methodist Church on Saturday, February 7. Doors open at 8:30 am and the official start to the day is 9:00 am. The day will conclude after District Conference about 3:30 pm. The theme for the event is “GETTING BETTER TOGETHER” – strengthening our local congregation and strengthening connections between local congregations. Our keynote speaker will be Rev. Benton Heisler, Director of Connectional Ministries for our West Michigan Conference.

Once again youth (6th-12th) will have their own youth day downstairs (during the same time as the adults are upstairs, so that the adults can transport you to and from their home community).

Childcare will be provided (nursery and K-5) but only if you pre-register for it!

A box lunch from Subway will be offered to those who register for it. A free-will offering will be taken for lunch but you must register ahead of time for it.

If you are interested in attending the Albion District Conference, please contact Carolyn in the church office at 542-3366 by January 26, so that she can register you.

April 17-18: Lay Servant Training class weekend at Wesley Woods Camp (Dowling). All welcome. First-timers take the “Basic” class. Others take any other class being offered. More information to come.

An announcement will be placed in the district eNewsletter when the online registration is ready.

June 4-7: Annual Conference at Calvin College. This year’s delegate from the Litchfield-Quincy charge is Anne Rumsey from Quincy.

HANDING OUT CHRISTMAS BLESSINGS



**Tom Masarik
Janice Teller and
Frank Hiser**
*Cheerfully handing out Christmas
boxes for those in need.*

**Sheila Gary,
Head of our
Outreach Team,
Joins in on the fun!**



United Methodist Women

Our meeting for January 2015 will be held on Wednesday, January 28, at 1:00 p.m. ***at Pat Smith's house***, along with Eleanor Wildt as hostesses. Please invite another lady to join us at the meeting.

Pantry Item: soap.

Happy New Year. For our December meeting we did cookie tins for 10 shut-ins and 11 fruit baskets and 3 plants for staff.

Carol Ireland, President

Remember to pray for...



In nursing homes and assisted living:

Elnora Beckner, Geri Bennett, Willie Hinkle, Lorene Ladd, and Wes Sutton.

Debbie Kurtz	Patty Johnson	Jason Hill	Garland Chapman
Bambi Lambright	Ruth Hamilton	Dick Kaleida	Dora Villarreal
Betty Peiffer	Mindy Zigler	Monique Yoder	Jeff Warren
Pat Smith	Isabelle Russell	Rolland Hankey	Glenn Hackworth
Bill Berry	Hazel Rice	Taylor Nelson	Shelby Gonser
Amy Haroff (on mission field in Honduras)		Damian Ridenour (being deployed)	

Pray for Paul Webster, our missionary in Africa.

Pray for those seeking transformation in the next year.

Pray for our church as we continually seek to serve God into the future.

Human Relations Day – Sunday, January 18

A CHURCHWIDE SPECIAL SUNDAY FOR THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

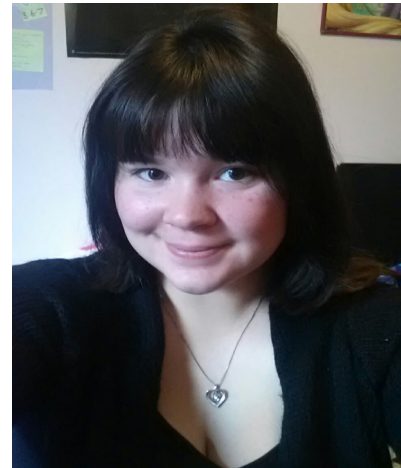
Your choice to give to this special offering benefits neighborhood ministries through Community Developers, community advocacy through United Methodist Voluntary Services and work with at-risk teens through the Youth Offender Rehabilitation Program.



RECEIVING OF NEW MEMBERS



Thomas and Yesica Jones



Becca Roberts

Congratulations to Thomas and Yesica Jones and Becca Roberts for becoming official members of the Litchfield United Methodist Church.
You are all a blessing from God to our church family.

THANK YOU'S



Dear Church Friends, Thank you for the treat box. Everyone enjoyed it a lot.

Evans Dairy Farm

Dear 'Work' Church Family,

I would like to thank you for the many Christmas gifts that I have received. It is a **JOY** to be able to serve alongside of you, and I look forward to what the Lord has in store for LUMC in 2015!

Carolyn Nafziger

Baptisms



**Jacob Matthew
Pinter**

Son of J. J. and Laura
Pinter

Grandson of
John and Ruth Pinter

Welcome to God's Family. You are children of blessing. We look forward to watching you grow.

**Addison Mae
Prater**

Daughter of Bobby and
Katie Prater

Granddaughter of
John and Ruth Pinter



2014

JANUARY

L-Litchfield Q-Quincy



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Please check the weekly bulletins for changes, updates, & locations.				1 	1	3
4 9 am Q Worship 10:30 am Q S.S. 9:45 L Adult S.S. 11 am L Worship 5-7 pm L Youth Group	5 Noon L Rotary 3 pm L Knit & Craft 5:30 pm L Boy Scouts 7 pm L Bible Study	6 10 am L Bible Study 6 pm L Trustees 7 pm L Outreach	7 6 am L Prayer Time 9:30 am Q Bible Study Noon-5:45 pm L—Blood Drive 6 pm Q Guys Night Out.	8 1:30 pm Q Quilters 3:30 pm Q Prayer	9	10 L-Gaige/Dailey Family Christmas in Fellowship Hall
11 9 am Q Worship 10:30 am Q S.S. 9:45 L Adult S.S. 11 am L Worship 12:15 am L—Take down Christmas Decorations	12 Noon L Rotary 3 pm L Knit & Craft 5:30 pm L Boy Scouts 7 pm L Bible Study	13 10 am L Bible Study 7 pm Q Trustees 7:30 pm Q Ad. Council	14 6 am L Prayer Time 9:30 am Q Bible Study 7 pm L Nurture/Witness Team	15 1:30 pm Q Quilters 3:30 pm Q Prayer	16	17 10 a.m. L Coffee with Pastor 1 pm L Girl Scouts
18 9 am Q Worship 10:30 am Q S.S. 9:45 L Adult S.S. 11 am L Worship 5-7 pm L Youth Group	19 Noon L Rotary 3 pm L Knit & Craft 5:30 pm L Boy Scouts 7 pm L Bible Study	20 10 am L Bible Study	21 6 am L Prayer Time 9:30 am Q Bible Study 6 pm L Finance Team 7 pm L Ad Council	22 1:30 pm Q Quilters 3:30 pm Q Prayer	23	24 1 pm L-Girl Scouts
----- <i>Week of Prayer for Christian Unity—January 18-25</i> -----						
25 9 am Q Worship 10:30 am Q S.S. 9:45 L Adult S.S. 11 am L Worship	26 Noon L Rotary 3 pm L Knit & Craft 5:30 pm L Boy Scouts 7 pm L Bible Study	28 10 am L Bible Study	29 6 am L Prayer Time 9:30 am Q Bible Study 1 pm L UMW @ Pat Smith's house.	29 1:30 pm Q Quilters 3:30 pm Q Prayer	30	31 1 pm L-Girl Scouts

January Birthdays

4-Laura Cierpilowski
6-Hazel Rice
10-Clara Dawson
13-Toni Sharp
14-Dan Pitts
20-James Wildt
20-Larry Reasoner

Anniversary

26- Dan & Deborah Smith

25-David Pitts
26- Cathy Crater
27-Ruth Reinhart





LITCHFIELD UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

**160 Marshall St
P O Box 472
Litchfield, MI 49252**

517-542-3366

E-mail: umclitchfield@gmail.com

Website: umclitchfield.org

Find us on Facebook: [facebook.com/litchfieldumc](https://www.facebook.com/litchfieldumc)

Pastor: Julie Yoder Elmore

E-Mail: jyelmore@gmail.com

Cell Number: (517)607-6977 (Text and Call Friendly)

517-542-3775 (Parsonage)

Office Hours

M-W-TH 9:00-3:00

Food Pantry Hours

M and TH 9:00 a.m.—3:00 p.m.

JANUARY NEWSLETTER 2015

*Sunday School 9:45 a.m.
Worship 11:00 a.m.*

*Youth Group
1st, 3rd, & 5th Sunday
@ 5:00 p.m.*