



Marble Memorial United Methodist Church

Love. Grow. Serve.

Starting Fresh: January 2021

Caring for Our Neighbors

Updates on Christmas Giving for Aid in Milan and Ringing the Bell for Salvation Army are on Page 3

Current Pantry Needs for Aid in Milan: ramen-style noodles, cereal, peanut butter, jelly, sliced bread. Larger sized diapers and pull ups are always in need.

Volunteer Opportunity: Greeter Coordinator Needed

While we are not gathering in person yet, we are preparing for the time when we will be able to. An important role Marble is looking to fill is that of "Greeter Coordinator". This volunteer contacts and schedules greeters who help us at our doorways and in the sanctuary for Sundays.

Interested? Please consider prayerfully if you are available to step in as Greeter Coordinator. Contact Pastor Matt at: pastormattwest@gmail.com or the church office: office@marbleumc.org.

Virtual Prayer Services: Currently there are no virtual prayer services on the schedule. We will email any updates or dates as they become available.



Marble Memorial
United Methodist Church
Rev. Matt West, Pastor
8 Park Lane, Milan, Michigan 48160

Church Phone: 734-439-2421

Pastor's Emergency Number: 269-967-4444

Church Website: marbleumc.org

Church E-mail: office@marbleumc.org

Church Office Hours: Mon-Thu, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.
(closed holidays)

Facebook: "Marble Memorial UMC"

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Goodbye 2020 and Hello 2021! *Pastor Matt West*

Hello, neighbors! This last year has been something else, to say the least. I do not know about all of you, but I am ready to be done with 2020. Although this year has been difficult, dealing with all the changes caused by the pandemic, I believe that a lot of good has happened, too. Let me take some time to reflect back on these last few months. Then we can talk about what is to come in 2021.

Since my arrival in July, we were able to worship together outside all summer long. Marble has added some new technology to enhance our worship experience. Vicki Charter and Tim Kartje have blessed us with sharing the Word on Sundays while I was gone. The Outreach Team sent cards of encouragement to the teachers at Paddock Elementary School. The people of Marble assisted the team by donating \$775 in gift cards to Aid in Milan. We weren't able to hold our annual Goodie Sale, but instead, had a Bake-less Bake Sale that raised just over \$3,100. I feel blessed being appointed here and having the opportunity to serve our neighbors despite the obstacles of 2020.

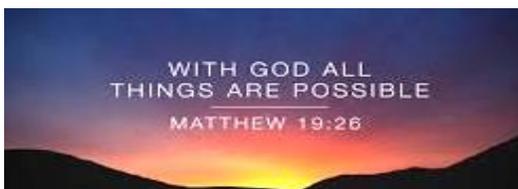
Looking forward to 2021, I see an open road in front of us to take and see where God leads us. Yes, what lies ahead may include some more changes to Marble. We need to prepare for what is next when we can open the doors of our building again. The beginning of this next year is the gateway to allow us to turn things around in the neighborhood. I realize these might be difficult things to hear after all that has taken place here in the last few years. Also, I know some are hesitant to follow a new pastor knowing there are no guarantees on how long they will be around. Regardless, we need to unite and reignite our fire for God in order to move forward. Will you join me in making 2021 a great year?

In the next couple of weeks, I want to share more details of my vision for this next year and the future of Marble. As for how I will share this information, I would like to discuss things on Sundays, via Zoom meetings, or individual visits if needed. Please understand that parts of this plan will feel like sprints and other will be more like a marathon. On average, it takes four to seven years to make real change happen. May we be of one heart and mind as God leads us to serve our neighbors. May we represent Christ in all that we do. May everyone around us know that they are loved and valued. Does this sound like a something you could be a part of? I pray that it is and ask you to pray on it, too.

Realistically, the start of 2021 is not going to be that different from 2020. My hope is that this next year ends even better, and that Marble grows from this experience. The key is that we maintain hope and let our faith be bigger than our fear. Happy New Year!

Peace be with you, neighbors.

Pastor Matt



Pastor Matt and the "Good News Gang":

WATCH Marble's Facebook page for more insightful and fun "Good News Gang" videos each week on Thursdays at 7 p.m. in the New Year!

Want to know who is in "the gang" with Pastor Matt?

Pastor Curtis Clark, Marysville UMC

Pastor Kim Metzger-Hope, Hastings UMC

Pastor Matt Osborne, Ishpeming Wesley UMC

Pastor Jackie Raineri, Clare UMC

Serving our Neighbors this Christmas

Support for Local Families – Laurie Williams

Thank you to our Marble neighbors for your support of local families this Christmas. Aid in Milan put out the need for gift cards to give to local families and you responded.

Marble collected and was able to donate a total of 31 gift cards totaling \$775!! In addition, we know others dropped gift cards off directly at AIM offices. The director was so thrilled to receive this aid for our neighbors. She said that she will send Marble details on how the cards were used towards helping families. We'll be on the lookout to receive that news over the next few weeks.

Stepping up for Salvation Army - Sam Brabant

For the 2020 Christmas Holiday season many members of Marble gave of their time to support the Salvation Army's Red Kettle Drive at the Milan Kroger. Our church's volunteers rang on Dec. 11 and 12. They experienced the best two day total for the collection season. Those who rang said it was a very rewarding experience and look forward to doing it again. We encourage everyone to consider volunteering in 2021 and take the opportunity to experience this way to care for others at Christmas time.

Cookies for local workers: The Outreach Team handed out cookie tins to workers at local businesses open on Christmas Eve again this year – thank you to Outreach and Brian Foster.

Outreach @ Marble

If you have an idea for an outreach or service project, fundraising for mission, or any activity for the community, pick up or print up a **"Marble Outreach Request Form"**. The forms are available in hard-copy from the church office, or you can download a copy from your computer by following this link:

<https://documentcloud.adobe.com/link/track?uri=urn:aaaid:scds:US:b85911e5-8382-40d4-9c8a-34722b9b3af9>

Instructions are on the form. Questions?
Brian Foster is the Outreach Team Lead:
bdfoster1989@gmail.com

Reaching Neighbors

In the December newsletter we talked about things we could all do during the latest return to "virtual only" worship.

We were asked:

"How can we serve best?"

"How can we stay connected?"

Marble friends stepped up in one key way: **Connecting!**

Our Marble friends have made it a mission to make phone calls and to send note cards to say... "We are praying for you" to ask... "Is there anything you need?" to remind... "God is with you".

Here we go into 2021 and so, as neighbors, we will continue to call and reach out to each other.

When you do, you gain just as much as you give.

If you find a neighbor in need and the church can lend a hand, please contact Pastor Matt or the office.

Marble Meetings

Finance Committee: Tue, Jan 5, 7 p (ZOOM)

SPRC Committee: Tue, Jan 12, 7 p (ZOOM)

Trustee Committee: No Meeting in January

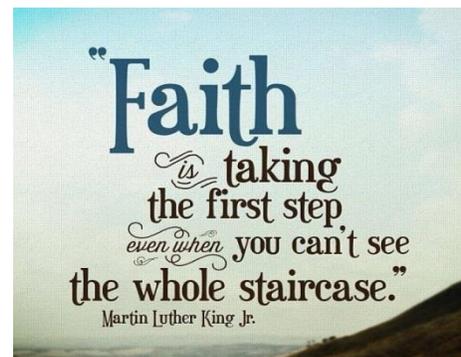
Church Council: Thu, Jan 28, 7 p (ZOOM)

UMW Circles:

Sarah Ruth Circle: no meeting in January

Sister's Aglow Circle: Mon, Jan 11, 7 p (ZOOM)

Susanna Wesley Circle: Mon, Jan 18, 7p (info TBA)



Turning the Page – Rod Hill

One of the blessings of this year for me has been a rediscovery of reading for pleasure. For many years now, my principle work has included editing technical material and writing a few short stories but I haven't been able to enjoy a whole book for quite some time. I'm reminded that there's an interesting transition that takes place at the end of every chapter. On the last full right-facing page there's often a tension of how that chapter is going to end. I can sense that it's coming and I often will peek ahead to see just how much more chapter there will be.

This chapter has been a challenge. That's an understatement. There is always pain and loss, but this year, so much more. We've said goodbye to beloved friends but we've also met new faces and new neighbors to love. We've shut down and locked our doors but we've also tried new things. When it was unsafe to gather indoors, we discovered the beauty of our garden. In confronting the list of things we couldn't do, we made a new list of what we can. Praise God!

This is where we all are, I think. We are preparing to turn the page on this year but there's still more ahead. As much as the next chapter compels us we're not yet ready to turn that page. Wherever our expectations might be going forward, the path forward is not clear. So be it.

It turns out that, like all the other chapters in this book of our lives, we have nothing to fear. God with us, Emanuel, is what comes next. It's what we have, what we've always had, and what we're waiting for. Whatever else comes next, this much continues to be true. Hallelujah!

Wishing you Peace and Joy!

Finance Update

The Finance Committee will hold its first meeting of 2021 on Tuesday, January 5 at 7 p.m. by ZOOM.

Kevin Jarema will become the new Chair of Finance. The Finance Committee, your Treasurer David Ludwig, Pastor Matt and all of Marble Leadership appreciate your support and confidence.

Please continue to prayerfully consider your tithes and offerings as we begin a new journey into a fresh year with new beginnings.

Great thanks and God's Blessings to Brenda Kempher, our outgoing chair, for her hard work and dedication to the success of Marble.



Mission and Service: 2021

As we say goodbye to a challenging year, there is hope and promise for renewed opportunities in mission and service in the new one.

Habitat for Humanity Good News House Project turned into a very successful effort. The Marble work team, led by Rod Hill, filled work date commitments, adjusted to the new requirements, managed the heat and even took on extra work as the project season wrapped up.

Thank you to these volunteers and to everyone who made a donation to support this important local area mission. Watch for opportunities to serve on the 2021 project home.

Youth Service Project: The 2020 team trip was cancelled amid concerns for the health and safety of our youth and adult leadership. Henderson Settlement suffered also, as many work teams decided to cancel. **Looking ahead to 2021:** Our Marble YSP Team is hoping to make the trip this summer to Kentucky to serve and support our brothers and sisters in Christ in Appalachia.

If you have questions or if you know a youth 8th – 12th grade, who may be interested, contact Kevin Jarema: kevin.jarema@dundee.k12.mi.us