



Hello, Neighbors!

Our Vision Statement-
To be a welcoming neighborhood so that all may experience God's love and grace.

Our Mission Statement-
To meet new neighbors, nurture their relationship with Christ, and transform the world together.

Marble Memorial United Methodist Church • February 2023

In The Neighborhood:

Marble Memorial UMC PRESENTS

FIRST ANNUAL SOUP COMPETITION

This is a Fundraiser for Community Needs. Vote for the Pastor to be the "Soup Champion!"

8 Park Lane - downtown Milan At the traffic triangle

SATURDAY - FEBRUARY 18 - 5:00PM - 7:00PM

THE MEAL IS FREE -AND- there's a "twist!"
Local pastors will be competing for your vote for "Best Soup".
All voting is by donations.
Funds will go toward community needs.

LENT BEGINS

February 22, 2023
Ash Wednesday
Worship Service
7:00 pm



The 7pm Ash Wednesday Service will include the Imposition of Ashes. Other opportunities to receive ashes to be shared soon.

Marble Memorial United Methodist Church

Matt West, Pastor

8 Park Lane, Milan, Michigan 48160

10:00 am Hymn Sing

10:30 a.m. Worship In-person and Facebook

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 am - 3 pm

(closed holidays)

Facebook: "Marble Memorial UMC"

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Neighborhood Notes from the Pastor's Desk

Hello, neighbors!

What does it mean to be a member? At Marble, we have started to use the term neighbor, and other churches use words like partner. Regardless of what term or phrase a church uses, there must be meaning behind the word we use. Member or membership has become a word easily misinterpreted in the church. Membership in the body of Christ is not the same as my Sam's Club or gym membership. Periodically, I will use different resources to speak to who we are as United Methodists. This month, I am using an article from *Ask the UMC*, a ministry of United Methodist Communications, to answer the question. Be aware that I will switch out some words in the piece to speak to our mission and vision.

So, back to the question, what does it mean to be a neighbor?

From *Ask the UMC*...

The Christian faith was never intended to be a solo journey. The first followers of Jesus came together for teaching, meals, prayers, and more (Acts 2:42).

Our understanding of what it means to be a neighbor is deeply rooted in our understanding of baptism.

Being a neighbor means becoming as much a part of the church, the body of Christ, as our limbs are members of our own physical bodies. Just as our bodies are formed in the waters of the womb, so we become part of the body of Christ through the waters of baptism.

From the beginning, baptism has been a sign of new birth, the door through which one enters the church. To become Christian is to receive a new identity in Christ. Baptism marks our becoming that new person.

We are made new people, pledged to live in a new way, "re-membered" into the fellowship of those who are committed to growing in faith.

Baptism begins our lifelong journey of faith. It makes no difference whether we are baptized as an adult or as a child; we all start on that journey at baptism. At baptism, we are all "babes in Christ," whatever our physical age.

The meaning of being part of the neighborhood is also deeply rooted in our Methodist heritage. John Wesley was clear that Christianity is a social religion and that our growth in holiness of heart and life is deeply dependent on being in face-to-face community with others who are watching over us (and we over them) in love. Through these face-to-face relationships, we experience what it means to be the body of Christ in the world.

For United Methodists, being neighbors requires active participation in a local congregation. When we become neighbors, we profess our faith in God, our desire to live as disciples of Jesus Christ and commit to join with our church community to keep the vows made at baptism. The vows we make include promises to faithfully participate in the life and ministries of our local congregation through our prayers, presence, gifts, service, and witness.

Throughout our life, as we pray, study the scriptures, worship, and share in fellowship with other Christians, we deepen our knowledge of and love for God. As we respond with compassion to human needs and work for justice in our communities, we strengthen our capacity to love our neighbors. We confess and repent of our sins, ways in which we fall short of God's way. In this way, our inner thoughts and motives, as well as our outer actions and behavior, are aligned with God's will and testify to our union with God.

(continued)

Neighborhood Notes continued...

Rev. Mark W. Stamm explains, "What are the benefits of such a commitment? The primary benefit is the presence of the living Christ. Indeed, he promises that we will greet him in the midst of the faithful — '... where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them' (Matthew 18:20). The church continues to insist that our hearts are warmed as we hear the Scriptures read and proclaimed (Luke 24: 32), that the Risen Christ is known in the breaking of the bread (Luke 24: 35). Indeed, the mystery of the Risen Christ is present in the midst of my neighbors. They hear my confession and proclaim God's forgiveness. They embrace me, laugh and cry with me, and God heals me in and through all of that. My neighbors know my shortcomings, and so they keep me honest, but they also know my potential, and so they call forth my gifts. They share their heritage and their wisdom and give me people to teach. I need their commitment to me, and they need me as well."

This piece is not intended to help drive up neighborhood (membership) numbers. I want to share this with all my neighbors to remind some of them of the vows they made and for others to understand better who we are as United Methodists. Two of the parts that stood out for me are when they talk about being a face-to-face community and the vows we make include promises to faithfully participate in the life and ministries of our local congregation. Maybe this piece will bring up some other questions for you. If so, please come and talk with me or feel free to speak with those who have taken these vows. Whether you have become a full-fledged neighbor or are a visiting neighbor, we are doing great things here at Marble. Sometimes it is helpful to go back and look at the heritage of the United Methodist Church and why we are trying to be good neighbors.

Peace be with you. Pastor Matt

Outreach Volunteer Opportunities

Monthly Free Community Meal:

Our next meal is Saturday, February 18. Serving time 5-7:00 pm

Volunteers Are Needed For: Set Up, Dining Room, Clean Up.

Sign up on the clipboard outside the office, or by emailing Brian Foster: bdfoster1989@gmail.com

Nursery Programming:

Everyone in the neighborhood loves to see and hear all the little children. Having more little ones means that it's time to offer nursery programming each Sunday morning during worship. Staffing for the space requires two adults with Safe Gathering Certification. If you are concerned with lifting restrictions, talk to our coordinator to pair you with someone who has that ability.

To sign up for a Sunday: contact the church office directly or, contact our scheduling coordinator, Danielle Peladeau: 734-476-4852.

To take the training, see details on page 5.

Youth Ministry:

Young neighbors, who are attending Neighborhood Kidz programming during Sunday Morning Worship, are also in **need of more adults to sign up to help** guide them on their faith journey. Two adults are needed each Sunday to share the lessons that are provided to the volunteers. This volunteer opportunity also requires the Safe Gathering Training as explained on page 5.

Our coordinator is Joy Whitenburg: joylandinhabited@gmail.com

Neighborhood Groups: Group coordinators listed

Sundays:

Worship Team: Music, Technology, Kidz Zone, Nursery.

Contact: Pastor Matt pastormattwest@gmail.com

Hospitality Team: Greeters, Ushers, Coffee Fellowship

Contacts: (greeters) Tammy Balk coachbolz@gmail.com

(coffee fellowship) Rose Timbers rotimbers@aol.com

Neighborhood Study: "Christianity and World Religions" study starts on February 5th and meets at 9am in room #25 (upstairs toward the sanctuary). Books provided. Contact: Rod Hill rhill@provide.net

New Book Study: "The Great Sex Rescue" is a continuation of his message at the end of 2022.

Sundays, 9-10am. Sign up (so we can order books) by contacting the office: office@marbleumc.org

Mondays:

Sassy Sisters Women's Group: Mondays at 7:00 pm at The Owl on Main Street. This group took a short break from studies and will meet weekly again starting February 13th. [Join the discussion anytime.](#)

Led by Melissa West: mdwest 622@gmail.com

Tuesdays:

Beer & Bibles Men's Group: Meeting 2nd and 4th Tuesdays at Original Gravity brewery on County Street.

**Beer not required.* Dates in February: 14th and 28th. Bring your own Bible.

Led by Brian Foster: bdfoster1989@gmail.com and Jim Nagle: jinnagle@comcast.net

Neighborhood Coffee Talk with Pastor Matt: You will find Pastor Matt at The Owl on Tuesdays at 10a-11:30a or, if you prefer, you can make an appointment for a different time. Pastor Matt:

pastormattwest@gmail.com

Wednesdays:

Neighborhood Coffee Talk with Pastor Matt: Find Pastor Matt at Bobby's Kitchen at 9a - 10:30a on Wednesdays or, if you prefer, you can make an appointment. Pastor Matt: pastormattwest@gmail.com

Fridays:

Game Night @ Marble: February 3rd, 7-9pm in the Lounge.

Young Family Group: 2nd and 4th Fridays, Feb 10 and 24th. 6-8:00pm. Childcare provided.

Contact Pastor Matt for both Friday activities: pastormattwest@gmail.com

Meetings @ Marble

Leadership Team Meeting:

Wed, Feb. 15 7:00 pm (in person)

Outreach: Wed, Feb. 21, 7pm (in person)

United Women of Faith:

Tues, Feb 14, 1:00 pm @ MMUMC

Program plus refreshments.

UWF has Homemade Noodles for Sale!

Catch them on Sunday mornings or stop by the church office. Bags are \$3.00 each (8 ounce bag.)

Looking toward Easter:

We are hosting our 2nd Annual Eggstravaganza on April 1st to include craft stations and an Egg Hunt. In 2022 we had close to 50 kids and hope to have even more in 2023!

Watch for more info and ways you can help!



Moving On – Rod Hill

“We move from where we stand” is a favorite expression of mine from a favorite author, Ellis Peters. It comes in handy in times when I find myself in a tight spot, don’t know what to do, and wish I were somebody or somewhere else. A lot of us have felt this way these last few years; globally, nationally, locally and certainly in our church home and neighborhood. The presence of mind to know we must change, choosing the right path, and having the grace to help each other to move doesn’t come all at once. And it doesn’t come easy.

Marble’s Leadership Team has taken the first steps in our first ever Simplified Accountability Structure model for governance. It’s not going to be easy because the model is based on a different way of leading than any of us is used to. There will be missteps and, no doubt, apologies along the way. Even the strongest among us admit that we don’t always get it right the first time. The best leaders falter, recover, admit mistakes, and move on.

Being able to move is an act of resolution when inaction is the easier path. Inaction can dodge a bullet but it’s no way to get anywhere. We all have learned about that during these past several seasons. And we know that we’re not out of the woods yet. Globally, nationally and locally there is still a lot to be dealt with. Most of it is confusing, much of it hard and all of it will take us out of our comfort zones.

That being said, due to the actions and missteps we’ve taken so far, the ground we’re standing on right now is a lot more solid than it’s been for a good long while.

— **Praise God!**

A Note of Gratitude – Sam Brabant

Thank you for volunteering your time to help with the Salvation Army’s Red Kettle Campaign this past Christmas. We were able to raise over \$94,600, short of our goal, but a wonderful accomplishment. In particular, you helped raise \$2,925.04. Because of your support, we can help make sure our friends and neighbors in Washtenaw County will experience Love Beyond Difficulties in 2023 with help with food, rent, utilities and more from these funds. These funds also help provide shelter for unhoused veterans.

Friends like you, who make the extra effort to share with those who have very little, make our community a great place to live. Thank you for playing an active part in relieving the burdens of struggling families and individuals.

May God Bless you, we hope you volunteer again in 2023.

Safe Gatherings Training:

Every adult who works with children or vulnerable adults (including our home-bound, those in the hospital and care facilities, and people asking for special assistance) must take the Safe Gathering’s Certification.

Why?

Taking the certification is a message to our neighbors that we care about their well-being, their safety and we care for them.

There is a cost to take the training.

If you are concerned about the cost, please contact the church office or Pastor Matt.

Once your certification is complete, please turn in a copy of your certificate to Pastor Matt.

<https://safegatherings.com/app/registration>

Questions? Please see Pastor Matt.

Looking Ahead:

Sermon Series for Lent:
“Drink from the Fountain of Grace”

