



belong

A United Methodist Resource

GOD'S  
LOVE  
IN ACTION

Jesus Changes Everything

**STARTING  
JANUARY 1,  
2025:**

**"belong"  
Series  
Membership  
& Confirma-  
tion Classes  
for Youth and  
Adults**

(with Pastor  
Greg and others.  
All materials  
provided.)

**Wednesdays:**

**ZOOM**

**6:30 – 7:30 pm**

January 1, 8,  
15, 22, 2025  
(email or text  
Pastor Greg for  
link)

**Thursday  
(lounge)**

**4 pm – 5 pm**

January 2, 9, 16,  
23, 2025

***"2025 Belong" Series – January 5 - 26***

Theme: We are doing Jesus work together.

Jan. 5 – "2025 Belong: The Meaning of  
Holy Communion"

Jan. 12 – "2025 Belong: The Meaning of  
Baptism"

Jan. 19 – "2025 Belong: Our Membership Vows"

Jan. 26 – "2025 Belong: Why Belong To  
Belleville First UMC (Mission/Vision)"

***"God's Love in Action" Missions Series – February  
2 – February 23***

Theme: This is what we do best for God and for  
one another together.

Feb. 2 – "God's Love in Action: Locally"

Feb. 9 – "God's Love in Action: Nationally"

Feb. 16 – "God's Love in Action: Globally"

Feb. 23 – "God Love in Action: Liberia"

***"Jesus Changes Everything" Lent/Easter Series -  
March 2 to April 20 (Easter)***

Theme: Because Jesus is everything, Jesus  
changes everything.

Mar. 2 – "Jesus Changed Himself for Us"

Mar. 5 (Ash Wednesday) – 7 p.m.

"Jesus Gives Us the Opportunity to Change"

Mar. 9 – "Jesus Was Not Changed by Satan"

Mar. 16 – "Jesus Wishes Israel Would Change"

Mar. 23 – "Jesus Wishes We Would Change"

Mar. 30 – "Jesus Changed the Lost Son's Heart"

Apr. 6 – "Jesus' Anointing Changed Hearts"

Apr. 13 – "Jesus' Entry Changed Hearts and  
Minds"

Apr. 17 (Maundy Thursday) – 7 p.m.

"Jesus Knew Betray Changes Everything"

Apr. 18 (Good Friday) – 7 p.m.

"The Full Cross Changed Everything"

Apr. 20 – (Easter Sunday) – Jesus Changes  
Everything"

*Pastor's  
Page  
through  
April 2025*

"Pastor Greg"  
Buchner

o: 734-697-9288

c: 734-252-9110

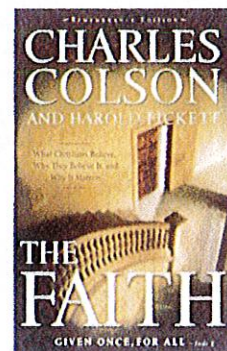
pastorgreg.ncd  
@gmail.com

Please add me  
to your contacts  
so you'll know  
that it's me.

**Next Sunday  
Series:**

**"The Faith:  
Given Once For  
All" Series**

**April 27 - June 1**





This is from Marilyn;

On Monday, Dec. 16, I received a phone call from a Food Closet client. She had been receiving home delivery for a while, but in November, she said she no longer needed help. She was very grateful for all she had received. From the very beginning she was embarrassed at having to ask for help. She is a senior, a former veteran, and has no car.. On Monday her circumstances had changed and she was in need of help but again very embarrassed to ask. We delivered her food on the 17th along with a \$15 gift card. She called me that afternoon and was so grateful for the gift card. It meant so, so much to her! Her thankfulness melted my heart!

That same afternoon Terri took a call about two people, one who was ill and the other who had mental health issues, who needed food. They are living in Red Oak motel on the service drive, next to Wendy's. The rooms have a microwave and a small frig. We boxed up food that had flip off tops; cereal, peanut butter, jelly, bread, lunch meat, cheese, a box of Swiss Miss hot chocolate, plastic silverware, two towels, and a microwave bowl. I stopped at Dollar Tree and picked up a few more food items, a can opener, knives, paper plates, microwaveable plates, plastic bowls, and some dish soap. I tried calling to let them know I was on my way but no answer. I called the other number given. She answered and I shared my plight that no one answered the phone. She said she would call them and have them call me. As I pulled into the motel, Ted called and told me how to find his room. He was standing in the doorway, holding the phone, wearing an undershirt and long pants and looking a bit disheveled. It was 3:30 p.m.. I parked and began to carry in the boxes and bags. The room was a mess with stuff everywhere. There were two queen beds with stained and dirty sheets. He had walked to the sink and looked to be shaving, the TV was blaring, a little dog was barking, and there was a big lump in the farthest bed. The dog was going in and out from under the sheet. Suddenly a head popped out. It was an older woman on oxygen. There was a big tank next to the door. I told them what was in the boxes and bags and she was thankful. I asked if they had a car. She said no. I didn't bring gift cards for I didn't know how they would be able to get to Meijer to spend them. I said we would be back on January 7. As I closed the door and walked out, I thought how these two needed to be in assisted living where help and supervision is available. I also felt how BLESSED I am to be part of a church who makes it their mission to HELP so many who are in NEED. We ARE doing God's work to help feed the hungry and help those in need! Thanks to everyone who has and is contributing to support this mission!

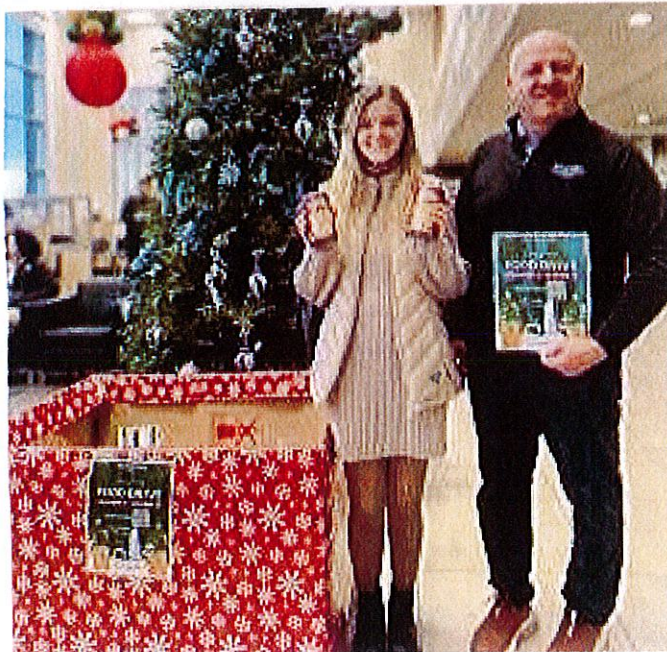




The Emergency Food Closet would like to welcome its newest volunteer, Rev. Dr. Kelvin Brooks. He is Senior Pastor of Fellowship Community Church in Detroit and lives in Belleville. At one time, he worked for Delta Airlines and donated leftover water and food from the airline to the Food Closet. Recently, he stopped in to see if he could volunteer. His first day on the job was Tuesday, December 17. He observed the Food Closet in high gear for we passed out 57 bags and frig items in 3 hours! He learned to pack bags and run the dumb waiter. Along with Ayla Mack, daughter of volunteer, Simone Mack, who was home from college for the holidays the two of them packed 48 bags and brought them up to the bell room. Before they could pack the 48, they had to bring up 36 bags that were already downstairs. Dr Kelvin has become a pro at using the dumb waiter! He also learned how to restock the Free Little Food Pantry. We are happy to have him on board and look forward to working with him in the New Year!



Our Emergency Food Closet was blessed many times Over by the Belleville, Sumpter, Van Buren communities. Atchinson Ford held their Annual Food Drive. This year, For every food item donated the donor got a ticket. On Dec 20 a drawing was held, prizes included a Playstation and several Ford dealer services. On Dec 27<sup>th</sup> Medina Atchinson and Luke Simon delivered 700 food items.



#### January and February Birthdays

Sandy Wilson Jan 1

Carl Marosi Jan 2

Darryl Raymond Jan 3

Chris Anderson Jan 10

Cindy Schloesser Jan 15

Mike Skelton Jan 23

Ian Simmons Jan 24

Jane Cook Jan 31

Kim Paris Feb 5

Anne Jones Marosi Feb 6

Donna Gotts Feb 12

Linda Lewis Feb 15

Vern Carlson Feb 18

Marilyn Wood Feb 21

Tara Cleveland Feb 24



**Our Mission:** to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

**Our Vision:** with Christ as our center, we are His extended family, compassionately sharing Jesus' love with all people. Our congregation is on a life long journey of discipleship to become more like Christ.

### Ministry Teams

#### **Christian Education**

Our children's ministry is available each Sunday just after the first praise song. See Terri if you're interested in finding out more or perhaps to volunteer. Starting in January we're going to be having our "Belong" Series Classes (with Pastor Greg and others – all materials provided.) Membership & Confirmation Classes for Youth and Adults on Wednesdays and Thursdays. Wednesday ZOOM / 6:30 pm–7:30 pm / January 1, 8, 15, 22, 2025 (see PG for link) Thursday (lounge) / 4 pm – 5 pm / January 2, 9, 16, 23, 2025. See Pastor Greg for questions.

#### **Missions**

**CHRISTMAS OFFERING-** For our Christmas Offering this year, we are inviting everyone, to support these important ministries, over and above our general, unified fund giving.

1) "BED AND BREAD" - The Salvation Army "Bed and Bread Club" ministry is vital. As is the case in many cities across America, Detroit has its share of economically depressed areas, making access to quality food and shelter more difficult. The Bed & Bread Club is just one of many ways in which The Salvation Army strives to provide support for these Detroit communities. Each day the Salvation Army Bed & Bread Club truck drivers make their way through Detroit, traveling multiple routes and making 60 stops to feed the hungry. That includes holidays and days when the weather may prove dangerous, because they understand that hunger doesn't take any days off. On days so cold that schools and businesses must close and even the postal service can't deliver mail, their trucks deliver hundreds of meals to people who otherwise would not eat at all.

2) "CLEANING KITS" – The United Methodist Committee on Relief is using these cleaning kits for those who are affected by natural disasters. Enabling those affected by floods, hurricanes and tornadoes to begin the overwhelming job of cleaning up, these premade buckets are filled with all the necessities that are not often available during or immediately after emergencies. The UMCOR Relief Supply Network has distributed thousands of cleaning buckets to those affected, but it has left warehouses depleted. UMCOR is asking for our help to restock. Monies given will be used to make these kits, so that they will be ready for the next emergency or natural disaster.

## **FOOD CLOSET**

January 1 - November 30, 2024: 2,132 bags distributed bi-monthly, 194 new clients

January 1 - November 30, 2024: 2,724 bags distributed weekly, 177 new clients

November 2024 – 249 bags distributed, 35 new clients;

**the highest number in both categories this year**

### ***Food Expenses through October, 2024:***

Holiday Market (soup on sale)	\$ 147.84
Meijer	\$ 37,317.69
Aldi	\$ 3,304.61
Walmart	\$ 4,426.91
Dollar Tree (toilet paper)	\$ 1,585.00
200x\$15 Food Only Meijer Gift Cards for Christmas	\$ 2,927.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 49,709.05</b>
Office Supplies (stamps) & Independent Ad	\$ 417.60
Michigan Poly – bags for food	\$ 598.76
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 50,725.41</b>

Due to the high number of clients receiving food on Tuesdays, I've had to shop after we close to provide enough refrigerator food for clients on Wednesdays. When I shopped on Tuesday, December 3, at the Belleville Meijer store, a dozen of Meijer Penny Smart eggs were \$3.59. The price jumped 60 cents a dozen from the week before!

Also, signs are posted on the doors where the eggs are:

*Attention Meijer Customers - Effective Jan. 1, 2025, Michigan law states that retailers can only sell cage-free eggs. You will notice this change in our stores throughout December as we remove conventional eggs from our assortment. The items include Penny Smart and Caged Egglands Best, to ensure we are compliant with the new law.*

**Who knows what this will do to the price of a dozen eggs!**

- The Food Closet received a check for \$21,167 from a non-BFUMC member, but a community resident. What a blessing!
- Westlake Apartments held a food drive and Terri picked it up and delivered it to the church on Tuesday, November 26.
- Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts troops packed 24 week 3 bags on Tuesday, November 12.
- Boy Scouts held a food drive and delivered over 240 bags of food on Saturday, November 9.  
Thanks to everyone who helped sort, date check, and shelve the food.
- Clients will receive one \$15 Meijer Food Only gift card in December to purchase a holiday meat.
- We are currently making home deliveries to eight clients who are homebound. We were doing ten but one moved last weekend, and the other client never followed through and got a referral or would fill out an Intake Sheet.



## **Finance**

As we come to this year-end close, we are extremely grateful for the generosity of our congregation shown first to God and then to one another. Gifts for 2024 can still be made through December 31, 2024. As of October 2024, we have a checkbook balance of \$41,679, \$134,894 in our designated funds (before making our final payment of \$47,000 for the roof repair), and in our United Methodist Foundation Funds (our long-term savings) we have \$128,225. In our unified funds, we have spent \$44,051 more in expenses than we've taken in income, but last month we did take in more than we spent! Thank you again.

## **Nominations and Leadership Development**

As we begin a new year, we are thankful for all of our leaders for their commitment to Christ and to Belleville First UMC. If you are interested in serving, please contact Pastor Greg. Belleville First UMC is blessed to have hard-working, mission-minded, disciples of Jesus Christ who love God with all their heart, soul, mind, and strength, and who love others.

## **Staff-Parish Relations Committee**

Please be sure that say thank-you to anyone who serves at Belleville First UMC. We are thankful for ALL of our staff, who get so many things done in so many different ways! Whether volunteer or paid, they work incredibly hard to make sure that Christ is lifted up in so many powerful ways.

## **Trustees**

Thanks to all of our generous folks, the roof on the Education Wing now 99.9% complete. The remaining piece of perimeter flashing will be installed after the new electrical service has been completed soon. Please continue to pray for God's guidance as we raise funds for the elevator next. Our latest current estimate was \$400,000. Gifts (over and above giving to the unified general fund) can be given to "Belleville First UMC - Elevator Fund."