

DeBows Crows

The Monthly Newsletter of DeBows UMC



April 2016

DeBows UMC

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debowsumc.org
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Worship ~ Grow ~ Serve

Sunday Worship Schedule

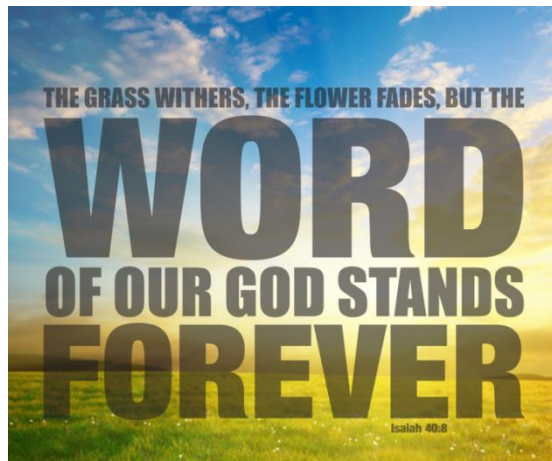
Bible Study	9:45 – 10:45 AM
Worship Service	11:00 AM
Sunday School	11:00 AM
Fellowship Time	After Worship Service
Choir Practice	12:30 PM

Study of God's Word

Women's Bible Study - This group meets in Fellowship Hall. – Sunday's at 9:45 AM

Adult Bible Study - This group meets in the class room downstairs. – Sunday's at 9:45 AM

Mid-Week Bible Study – This group meets on Wednesday's at 11:30 AM.



Prayer List



Please keep the following people in Prayer

Madhavi Badey	Debra Quinn
Chris Bitondo	Joe Huber
Tina Clark	Dean Sparling
Karen Hornak	Jim West
Rudy & Jean Iannacone	Helen Kramer
Betty Barrentine	Bert Pitcher
Skylar Ridge	Jim Gromer
Scott Timberman	George Crews
Rose Teepe	Sean
Diane Hinze	Allie Juliano
Ruth Kyle	Dave Pierceall
Eddie Covert	The Homeless

Those who are "un" & "under" employed
Those who struggle with various addictions
Those who serve and support the
DeBows Community Food Pantry

NOTE: Please inform the Pastor when a name should be added or removed from the Prayer List. Also, contact the church office in the event of a pastoral care situation that might need Ernie's attention or response. Thank You.

A Word From the Pastor

Dear Friends,

As I write this, our congregation is moving through Holy Week towards the joyous celebration of Easter. There is always something special about this journey for me. We move from the excitement of Palm Sunday through the solemn shadows of Holy Week into the glorious light of Easter. It has become for me an annual pilgrimage that holds both mystery and renewal.

You may have heard about our decision as a congregation to form a Ministry Action Plan (MAP). I want to encourage you to be part of that if it is at all possible. The leadership of our church joins me in encouraging wide participation – or, to use the language I have been using, to bring more voices to the table. The need for this is quite obvious to anyone who gathers with us week by week. We will consider where we are now – but also where we want to be as a church. All groups and organizations benefit from such a period of review.

That is also what our Annual Conference does from time to time. We look at where United Methodism is headed in the future. A while back the clergy met with the Bishop to talk about where we are in the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference and where we might be headed. The news wasn't great.

In the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference there are:

- 597 Churches.
- 20% of total average attendance is found in the 20 largest congregations.
- 20% of total average attendance is found in 306 of the smallest congregations (51% of all churches).

- Our largest 20 churches grow at a rate of 2.5% per year.
- Our smallest 306 church decline at a rate of 7% per year.
- In 1965 Methodists represented approximately 6.5% of New Jersey's population.
- In 2010 United Methodists represent approximately 1.2% of New Jersey's population.
- The average age of GNJAC members is approximately 57.
- The average age of a New Jerseyan is approximately 37.
- In many churches persons in their fifties are among the youngest members.
- Over the last forty years the number of Methodists in GNJAC has declined by over 100,000.
- Over the last forty years the population of New Jersey alone has increased by over 3 million.
- There are about 65 fewer churches in GNJAC than 40 years ago.

The question the Bishop asked was *"Where did all the people go?"* Our Bishop shared the response of Bishop Robert Schnase from his book, *Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations*. *"They didn't all get mad and leave; they just grew old and died, and no one took their place. The decline [in our denomination] has not been a backdoor problem but a front-door problem. We've failed to bring new people into our churches, and we've done poorly at passing along the faith to the next generation."*

Not passing on the faith to the next generation is a problem we need to be concerned about. We must recall some of our own history and employ it in this present age. Susanna Wesley was concerned to pass her faith on to her children. It was said of Susanna Wesley that *“she was always most anxious for the spiritual welfare of her children. It was her habit to have one or more of them in her room each evening for a quiet talk and prayer. ‘On Thursday I talk with Jacky, and on Saturday with Charles.’ The children loved these quiet times with mother.”*¹

As United Methodists we come from a tradition where home and church partnered to help people grow in faith and discipleship. We need that partnership to help us head into a future where children and youth are growing in faith and becoming committed disciples. They are the church that will carry us into the future.

1. Copied by Stephen Ross for WholesomeWords.org from *Bright Talks on Favourite Hymns...* by J.M.K. London: The Religious Tract Society; Chicago: John C. Winston Co., [1916?].

Shalom!



Church Humor



Connect with DeBows Online

Visit DeBows UMC online at:

www.debowsumc.org

or

www.facebook.com/debowsumc

You can visit now on your smart phone by scanning the below QR Codes.

DeBows Website



DeBows Facebook



On the website you can access the latest information concerning schedules, events and activities, as well as current blog posts and general information about the church.

Emails can be sent to church staff via the “Contact Us” page. Also, alert notices and weather related cancellations will also be displayed on the website as needed. Visit often for the latest information.



Inside the church you can connect to the WiFi service using the instructions found on the bulletin board outside Fellowship Hall.

Upcoming Events

APRIL 2016						
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9 Church Town Hall
10	11 Food Pantry	12	13	14	15	16
17 Church Town Hall	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25 Food Pantry	26	27	28	29	30

Sunday, April 3

Bible Study	9:45 AM
Worship Service & Sunday School	11:00 AM
Choir Practice	12:30 PM

Wednesday, April 6

Prayer Time	11:15 AM
Bible Study	11:30 AM

Saturday, April 9

Church Town Hall - MAP	9:00 AM
Contemporary Worship Service	6:30 PM

Sunday, April 10

Bible Study	9:45 AM
Worship Service & Sunday School	11:00 AM

Monday, April 11

Food Pantry Open	6:30 PM
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Wednesday, April 13

Prayer Time	11:15 AM
Bible Study	11:30 AM

Thursday, April 14

Wesley Club	6:00 PM
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Saturday, April 16

Church Cleanup Day	9:00-Noon
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Sunday, April 17

Bible Study	9:45 AM
Worship Service & Sunday School	11:00 AM
Choir Practice	12:30 PM
Church Town Hall - MAP	12:30 PM

Wednesday, April 20

Prayer Time	11:15 AM
Bible Study	11:30 AM

Sunday, April 24

Bible Study	9:45 AM
Worship Service & Sunday School	11:00 AM
Choir Practice	12:30 PM

Monday, April 25

Food Pantry Open	6:30 PM
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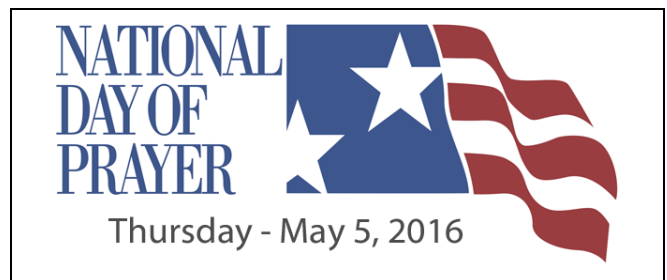
Wednesday, April 27

Prayer Time	11:15 AM
Bible Study	11:30 AM

Thursday, April 28

Wesley Club	6:00 PM
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NOTE: Please visit www.debowsumc.org for the latest schedule & event information.



The National Day of Prayer will be observed on Thursday, May 5th. There will be an inter-faith prayer service in the Jackson Town Hall Main Meeting Room starting at 6:00 PM. Everyone is invited and encouraged to attend.

Hymn Story

“Hymn of Promise”

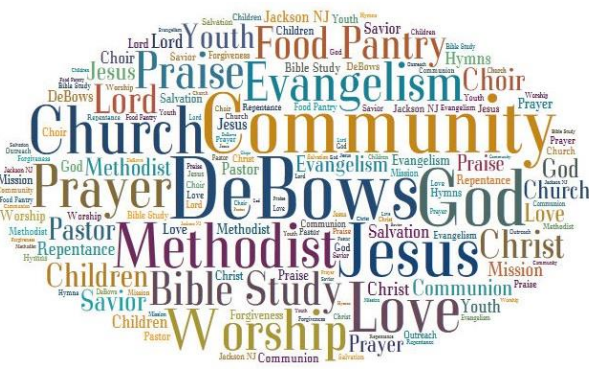
Natalie A. Sleeth - UMH # 707

“Hymn of Promise” is one of the newest hymns found in the UM Hymnal. It is a beautiful hymn that is very appropriate for the seasons of Easter and Spring.

Natalie A. Sleeth was a Methodist composer of choral anthems and hymns, and was married to Ronald Sleeth, a Methodist pastor and professor of homiletics at Perkins School of Theology, Southern Methodist University. She wrote this selection in February 1985 as a choral anthem and later adapted it as a hymn. She wrote that she was:

“...pondering the death of a friend (life and death, death and resurrection), pondering winter and spring (seeming opposites), and a T. S. Eliot poem which had the phrase, ‘In our end is our beginning.’ These seemingly contradictory ‘pairs’ led to the thesis of the song and the hopeful message that out of one will come the other whenever God chooses to bring that about.”

The hymn was played at Ronald Sleeth’s funeral by his request and has since become a popular funeral hymn. It also reminds us about the theme of rebirth found in Easter and the season of Spring.



Spring Word Search



Find 12 words associated with Spring.
Up, down, diagonally, forward or backwards.
All words are in a straight line.

Flowers	Easter	April	Seeds
New	Warmth	May	Birds
Bulbs	Bloom	Green	Garden

F	O	B	N	G	R	E	E	N
F	L	L	V	B	M	T	Y	L
W	B	O	R	R	I	S	I	K
A	S	O	W	E	N	R	T	T
R	Z	M	F	E	P	P	D	E
M	I	M	D	A	R	D	T	S
T	F	R	Y	S	L	S	K	N
H	A	W	M	T	T	E	A	C
G	L	X	W	E	N	E	W	H
A	M	A	Y	R	R	D	I	R
C	G	B	U	L	B	S	J	D
N	T	R	L	B	U	L	R	O

Thank You !

MUSICMINISTRY

Thanks to Grayce Armstrong, DeBows UMC Music Director, and all those who participated in the inspiring Easter Cantata, which was performed on Palm Sunday.

Also, thanks to Marilyn Allerton for obtaining flowers and Erica Williams for the special altar arrangement on Easter Sunday.



DeBows UMC Website Update



The DeBows UMC church website will undergo an update in the near future. Initially the basic informational content will be the same, but the “look & feel” of the website will be significantly different. The update is being implemented for two reasons. First, to improve the general aesthetics and make navigation of the website more intuitive; and second to incorporate some technical capabilities to facilitate adding new features to the website in the future.

Go live for the “new” website will be sometime in mid-April. An email notification will go out to announce this event. As always, your feedback and comments are always welcome.

Online Resource Links

BibleGateway Scripture passage lookup & audio
www.biblegateway.com
United Methodist Handbook
www.nxtbook.com/nxtbooks/unitedmethodist/handbook
Greater New Jersey Conference Website
www.gnjumc.org
Official United Methodist Church Website
www.umc.org
Chuck Knows Church Short videos about church objects, symbols and terms
www.chuckknowschurch.com

Town Hall Events for MAP



By now you have heard of the pending Town Hall events to discuss our Ministry Action Plan (MAP). These events are scheduled for:

Saturday, April 9 at 9:00 AM (Breakfast)

Sunday, April 17 at 12:30 PM (Lunch)

Earlier in this newsletter, Pastor Ernie shared some information that presented a sobering view of the general state of the UMC. While we cannot solve all of those problems (nor should we try), what we can do is focus on items that will help DeBows reach its full potential as a church.

The Town Hall events are opportunities for us to gather as a church to collectively discover how we can make that happen. This is your chance to influence the MAP process and let your voice be heard.

The purpose of the MAP process is to define a specific list of goals, which if successfully completed will improve our church. The MAP will be published and included as part of our annual Church Conference reporting. While DeBows will be responsible for the details and implementation of the goals, Conference will ask two high level questions:

1. Are the goals SMART goals, where SMART is an acronym that stand for:

Specific
Measurable
Attainable
Relevant
Time-Framed

2. Do the goals address one or more of the five key growth factors of Vital Congregations:

- Profession of Faith
- Worship Attendance
- Development of Small Groups
- Engagement in Outreach Ministry
- Generosity to Mission

These items and other elements of the MAP process will be discussed in more detail during the Town Hall, but most of all we want to hear your thoughts, ideas and concerns.

Your attendance at one of the two Town Hall events is strongly encouraged. Sign-up sheets are posted outside of Fellowship Hall for these events. We look forward to seeing you there as we work together to make DeBows the best church possible.

*Commit to the Lord whatever you do,
and he will establish your plans.*

~ Proverbs 16:3

*In their hearts humans plan their course,
but the Lord establishes their steps.*

~ Proverbs 16:9

*For I know the plans I have for you, declares the
Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you,
plans to give you hope and a future.*

~ Jeremiah 29:11

Did You Know?

- ✓ The Parents Once Again Blog is now part of the church website.
- ✓ The next Contemporary Worship Service is scheduled for Saturday, April 9th at 6:30 PM.
- ✓ You can submit questions, feedback or suggestions by visiting the "Contact Us" page on the church website. Select the desired recipient from the pull down list and compose/send the email.
- ✓ The church Flea Market, Bake Sale and Car Wash is scheduled for Saturday, June 11th.
- ✓ Large print hymnals are available for those that need them. Just ask an usher.
- ✓ There is now a dedicated Prayer Time each Wednesday at 11:15 AM in the sanctuary, prior to the Wednesday morning bible study at 11:30 AM.
- ✓ You can access multiple daily devotionals online by visiting www.debowsumc.org and selecting the "Daily Devotionals" page found under the Resources / Worship-Bible menu item.
- ✓ The white stone cross on the outside wall of Fellowship Hall now as spotlights that illuminate it at night.



The Road to Emmaus



"The Road to Emmaus," an 1877 painting by Robert Zund.
(Public Domain)

Luke: 24:13-35 is the only detailed account of **Jesus' post-resurrection walk to Emmaus**. The risen Christ travels about seven miles from Jerusalem alongside two grieving disciples (possibly a husband and wife returning from Jerusalem). The two already know the testimony of the women at the empty tomb, but they fail to recognize their teacher until he joins them for a meal.

Of the multiple post-resurrection accounts found in Scripture, which include over five hundred believers experiencing the risen Christ, the Road to Emmaus story is perhaps the most dramatic of all Jesus' post-resurrection appearances.

It is also the passage of Scripture that inspired the UpperRoom ministry "Walk to Emmaus": a three day spiritual retreat. You can read more about this ministry at emmaus.upperroom.org.

