

DeBows Crows

The Monthly Newsletter of DeBows UMC

April 2018

509 Monmouth Road - Jackson, NJ 08527 - 732-928-4475

Rev. Lawrence "Wren" Hillis, Pastor

pastor@debowsumc.org - debowsumc.org - facebook.com/debowsumc



Christ is Risen, He is Risen Indeed!

Please join us Easter Sunday, April 1st, at 10:00AM for our Resurrection Service. Communion will be celebrated during this service.

DeBows UMC Online

www.debowsumc.org

www.facebook.com/debowsumc

Visit often for the latest information concerning church activities and events.

DeBows Website



DeBows Facebook



April Prayer List



Anthony Giarratano	Jamie Gray
Chris Bitondo	Chase McKinney
Edith Gutwein	Dean Sparling
Rudy Iannacone	Jon Brysceynski
Jane Mills	Janet Kittstein
Ruth Hammond	Barry Odell
Susan Turner	Jim Armstrong
Ron Calub	Betty Barrentine
Paul Bartek	Faith Tyler
Jim West	Joan Macrina
Jackie Zimmerman	Guy Raymond
Dottie Weeks	Harold
Kara	Dawn
The Ministries of DeBows UMC	

NOTE: Please help keep the prayer list current by informing Pastor Wren when a name should be added or removed from the Prayer List.

--- Thank You



There are many ways people can serve in the life of the church. These are a few of them:

Lay Reader or Usher – if you are interested in participating in the worship service as either a Lay Reader or Usher, please speak with Pastor Wren or Guy Raymond.

Fellowship Time – this is our weekly time of informal gathering to greet each other and visitors, and to share some light refreshments. It is conducted after the 10:00am worship service. If you would like to host Fellowship Time on any given week, please see the sign-up sheet, with guidelines, outside of Fellowship Hall. Fellowship Time depends on volunteers and your support of this ministry is greatly appreciated.

(NEW) Altar Guild - There are many small jobs that need to be done to keep our church looking good. Most visitors will look at the altar and chancel area of the sanctuary as soon as they enter. **We want to form an Altar Guild so that we can honor the Lord and be a more welcoming and inspiring church.**

It does not involve a lot of time or work. It's changing the colors of the paraments (cloths on the pulpit & lectern), replacing the altar candles when they burn down, tending the plants on the altar if there are any, etc. It would mean coming to church a few minutes early to do this. If enough volunteers come forward, we could rotate and be on call every few weeks or for one month of the year, whichever suits you. Please consider serving the Lord in this way. For more information, please contact Anita at:

848-373-9340 or
anitachichester@gmail.com

DeBows Music Ministry



~ **Music Practice Times** ~
Choir on Wednesday's at 5:00pm
Band on Friday's at 6:00pm

THANK YOU to our music director, Grayce Armstrong, Pastor Wren, choir members, soloists, and musicians for the inspiring Easter Cantata presented on Palm Sunday. We are very appreciative of those who share their gift of music to glorify the Lord. If you would like to participate in the DeBows music ministry (instrumental or vocal), please contact Grayce at music@debowsunc.org.

Upcoming Events

2018 APRIL						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 Easter Sunday Communion						7 Spring Clean-up MAP
8	9 Food Pantry	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22 Earth Day	23 Food Pantry	24	25	26	27	28
29 Luncheon & Town Hall	30					

Every Sunday

Women's Sunday School 9:00am
Worship Service 10:00am
Fellowship Time 11:00am

Easter Sunday, April 1

Communion 10:00am

Wednesday, April 4

Bible Study 11:30am
Choir Practice 5:00pm

Friday, April 6

Band Practice 6:00pm

Saturday, April 7

Spring Clean-up Day 9:00am
MAP Review w/pizza 12:00pm

Monday, April 9

Food Pantry Open 6:00pm

Wednesday, April 11

Bible Study 11:30am
Choir Practice 5:00pm

Friday, April 13

Band Practice 6:00pm

Wednesday, April 18

Bible Study 11:30am
Choir Practice 5:00pm

Friday, April 20

Band Practice 6:00pm

Sunday, April 22

EarthDay

Monday, April 23

Food Pantry Open 6:00pm

Wednesday, April 25

Bible Study 11:30am
Choir Practice 5:00pm

Friday, April 27

Band Practice 6:00pm

Sunday, April 29

5th Sunday Luncheon 11:00am
& Town Hall

**Check church activity calendar
for the most up-to date information.**

Coming in May

Sunday, May 6

SPRC & Trustee Meetings

Sunday, May 13

Mother's Day
Finance & Outreach Meetings

Pentecost Sunday, May 20

Worship Meeting

Sunday, May 27

Church Council Meeting

DeBows Mission Activity

DeBows UMC



"For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in."

~ Matthew 25:35 ~

The Food Pantry is DeBows UMC flagship outreach ministry. It is open the 2nd & 4th Monday each month from 6:00-8:00pm. You can also help with inventory stocking on the 2nd Monday each month at 11am.

The DeBows Food Pantry is a tangible and meaningful way we share God's love with our community. If you would like to volunteer time to support this ministry, please see the sign-up sheet outside of Fellowship Hall. You may contact Deb Cregle for more information.

Box Tops for Education

We continue to collect Box Tops for Education to support The *Red Bird Missionary Conference*. They will be able to use these box tops to purchase needed items for the school they run (pre-school to high school). A collection jar and a list of products that carry these box tops are available on the table outside of Fellowship Hall.

Greeting Cards for St. Jude's

This mission, based on recycling old greeting cards, supports St. Jude's entrepreneurial teen-run job training program. *Only the front of the card is used*, so any donated cards must not have writing on the back of the front picture. Please note: they do not accept Hallmark, Disney or American Greeting Cards. There is a collection box outside of Fellowship Hall.

Hats for Chemo Patients

Many chemotherapy patients experience significant hair loss. In response, we will be making chemo hats. Anyone who has a serger or zigzag sewing machine can easily make these hats. For more information and instructions, you can talk to Anita at 848-373-9304. Finished hats can be placed in the box outside of Fellowship Hall.



There is still time to support Noah Carmichael's Habitat for Humanity mission trip. Noah was a former member of Group Work Camps with our youth group and a member of Allentown UMC. Noah recently moved to North Carolina to work with Habitat for Humanity and now plans to go on a mission trip with Habitat to El Salvador. If you would like to financially support Noah in this mission work, you may click on the following link:

<https://www.gofundme.com/rd8gu2-el-salvador-trip>

Hygiene Kits for UMCOR



Hygiene Kits for UMCOR are a current, year-round project for our church. Disasters can happen anytime when these kits are needed desperately. Please continue to collect the items needed to make up the kits. A box for completed kits and instructions on how to put it all together is outside the Fellowship Hall. Let's fill that box!

Hints for collecting hygiene kit items:

When you are grocery shopping, see soap on sale and have a coupon, throw a bar or two into your basket and bring them to church for the kits. Please leave the wrapper on. When you go to the dentist and receive your "goody bag" with a toothbrush in it, and you use an electric toothbrush, bring that toothbrush to church for the kits. The nail clippers? The comb? The dollar stores are good for several needed items. Once we have a batch of the items needed, we will have a "Kit Party" and complete the kits.

If you cannot make up a kit but wish to donate, please make checks payable to the church with UMCOR/kits in the memo spot.

More detailed information about the UMCOR hygiene kits can be found online at <http://www.umcor.org/UMCOR/Relief-Supplies/Relief-Supply-Kits/hygiene>.

Small Group Activities

Sewing Classes

Classes take place from 10:00am - noon every Saturday. This is for beginner sewers who wish to learn to master their sewing machines. If you have any questions, please call Barbara (732-446-5639) or Anita (848-373-9304). A sign-up sheet is on the table outside of Fellowship Hall.

Mid-Week Bible Study

A Bible Study meets every Wednesday from 11:30am – 1:00pm. Some class members meet prior to class at 11:15am in the sanctuary for Prayer Time. Everyone is welcome to join us in this time of study and fellowship.



DeBows Pathfinders

The DeBows Pathfinders enjoy nature and fellowship by going on hikes and nature walks. Participants normally meet at the church and then carpool to the hiking destination. Events can be anything from casual nature walks to more challenging hikes. See the church activity calendar for the next hiking event. It will probably be a trip to Washington Crossing State Park in Pennsylvania. You can see pictures from previous hikes on the church blog.

Fundraising Programs

Grocery Shopping Cards



Every week during Fellowship Time, you have the opportunity to purchase grocery store shopping cards for either Shoprite or Stop & Shop. This is a convenient way to pay for the food you buy at the grocery store and support the ministries of DeBows UMC at the same time. The church makes 5% of all shopping cards sold. You may see Sue Hayward or Marilyn Allerton to purchase the shopping cards on any Sunday.

Scrip Gift Card Program



What is Scrip Fundraising? You purchase gift cards at face value to do your everyday shopping or to give as gifts and the church will realize a percentage of the total amount. The complete list of retailers can be seen on the order forms located on the church sign-up table. Please note that Shoprite and Stop & Shop grocery cards should continue to be bought directly from Sue Hayward.

For these grocery cards, we realize a higher percentage rebate than with Scrip and turn around time is much less.

All order forms and checks must be given to Dena Kaiser by the order dates posted below. All checks should be made out to "DeBows UMC". For more information, you may contact Dena at 732-833-9363 or theluckyone@verizon.net.

Upcoming Scrip order dates:

Sunday, April 22nd

*delivered by May 6th - before Mother's Day

Sunday, May 20th

*delivered by June 3rd – before Father's Day and/or Graduations



You may support the ministries of DeBows UMC by using our online giving option found on the church website at www.debowsumc.org. Clicking on the "Online Giving" button found in the church website footer will permit you to donate online using the church's secure PayPal account and your credit card. You do not need to have a personal PayPal account to participate. As always, donations to the church are tax deductible and will be reflected in your year-end giving statement from DeBows UMC.

Spring Word Search



Find the 12 words below associated with the season of Spring. Words can be up, down, diagonally, forward or backwards. All words are in a straight line.

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

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

Did You Know?

- ❖ Sunday, April 22nd is Earth Day. The first Earth Day was celebrated in America on this date in 1970 and is credited with raising awareness of environmental issues globally. Today, over 1 billion people in 196 countries observe Earth Day each year, making it the largest civic observance in the world. Let us take time and look for ways to care for God's creation.
- ❖ You can subscribe, using the links below, to the digital newsletters of the Greater New Jersey Conference and/or the Capital District. These newsletters are the easiest way to stay informed about conference and/or district news, announcements, upcoming events, and messages from Bishop Schol or our DS, Frank Davis.

<https://www.gnjumc.org/the-gnj-digest/newsletter-signup/>
<https://www.gnjumc.org/district/capital/district-newsletter/>
- ❖ Using the "CONTACT US/Send Us Email" menu item from the main menu on the church website, you will be able to send email to the Pastor, Music Director, Website Admin, Newsletter Editor, or submit a Prayer Request (goes directly to the Pastor).

Hymn Story



"Hymn of Promise"

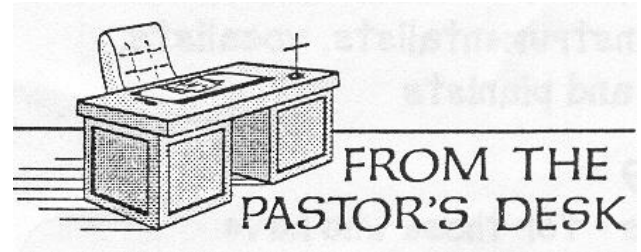
Natalie A. Sleeth - UMH # 707

"Hymn of Promise" is one of the newer hymns found in the United Methodist Hymnal. 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 beautifully illuminates the theme of rebirth found in Easter and the season of Spring.

Pastoral Address



Dearest Saints of the Church,

I write to you with great joy and simultaneously a downcast spirit. This season of Lent has been both an extraordinary time of transformation, and yet also a time of exceptionally dreary weather. As I had shared several weeks ago, I find that I have not been singing lately, and yet that is precisely why I must commit to doing so. Choosing joy is as powerful a spiritual discipline as any I have yet encountered. I hope that you too will choose joy during this season and find/create opportunities to lift your voice in song as a proclamation of faith in the midst of suffering.

Throughout the last few months, my attention has been governed by several driving themes: Discipleship, Mission, and Existential Resentment. These may be common words which we talk about in our Christianese dialect (at least for discipleship and mission), and yet I believe that all of them require a more capacious content. Each year I discover that discipleship and mission demand ever more and more again of me. Each year I am required to discover anew that God is calling me to search higher,

deeper, wider, and more thoroughly for a greater understanding of why we do church. This sorely needed depth arises for two reasons.

Firstly, there is the first-order consideration of our context as a congregation: What does discipleship look like for folk who face such extraordinary opposition in our daily walk? What does it look like for us to bear our particular crosses with grace – what does it look like to come alongside one another in our variegated sufferings? What does mission look like in our location and demographic? What will it take to reconnect with the community we are located in? But there are deeper questions to be asked as well: What task is God calling you to individually? Some have already answered this question by stepping up into leadership positions within the congregation – but it might also be asked of our individual vocations or even our stewardship commitments. Similarly onerous: How might a rich understanding of mission impact not only our outreach but how we understand the purpose and function of the church more fundamentally? Why do we gather and to what purpose? What is the heart of the Gospel message; and what are we doing as a body to address God's calling? These are questions which we must continue to ponder in private, in compassionate company, and corporately as a community.

My hope is that we – like every person and people on the planet – can do our best to grapple with resentment throughout this

season. Traditional concepts of sin are too often boiled down to a deontological excursus on personal actions: individualistic behaviors and duties which demonstrate our iniquity through acts of commission and omission. Existential resentment, on the other hand, is a more nuanced concept which speaks more to the hardening of one's heart; to the affective and emotive dimensions of bitterness which poison relationships and communities. Like Pharaoh and the Pharisees, it is too easy to give into a sense of self-righteousness and pride evoked through the purity of our behaviors (following the law). Meanwhile, we may find that our hearts have been turned to stones that, poetically, we often use to stone others.

In this period of self-reflection, self-denial, and self-discipline I ask you to join me in contemplating these theological concepts. As John Wesley would say, "How is it with your soul?" I encourage to reach out to others – and to reach out to me. I'd love to hear more about how Lent is treating you, and how you are treating Lent!

Shalom in Christ,
Rev. Lawrence E. Hillis



<<< **IMPORTANT NOTICE** >>>

NEW NEWSLETTER FORMAT

This edition of the DeBows UMC newsletter is the last one using a PDF file as an email attachment method.

Future DeBows UMC newsletters will be sent based on a subscription email list. The newsletter content will be imbedded directly in the body of the email. The new digital format will begin on May 2nd. It will be sent out every 2 weeks from that date forward.

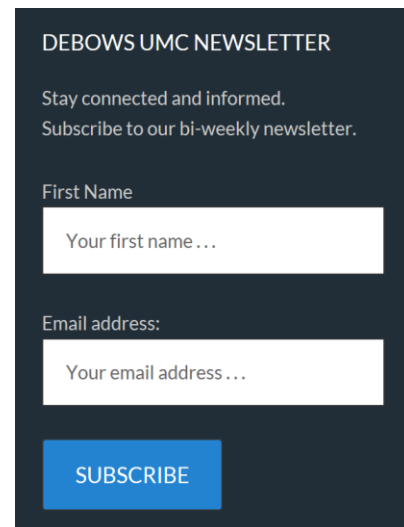
Some of the benefits of the new bi-weekly format include:

- Wider distribution and promotion of the calendar, blog, and informational content on the church website.
- Better utilization of current technology and bulk email best practices.
- Will facilitate more timely information.
- Will reduce postage & printing costs.
- The underlying email delivery service technology provides a platform that will streamline the newsletter production process, help us to better manage our mailing lists, and allow for potential new features, such as interactive surveys.

To receive the DeBows UMC newsletter going forward, you MUST subscribe using the sign-up form located on the church website. To ensure you do not miss any newsletters, please subscribe no later than April 30, 2018.

The process to subscribe is a simple, one-time operation and can be done from any computer, laptop, or smartphone. The process is as follows:

1. Go to the church website at www.debowsumc.org. The subscription form is located in the bottom right-hand corner of every web page.

A screenshot of a dark-themed subscription form titled "DEBOWS UMC NEWSLETTER". Below the title, it says "Stay connected and informed. Subscribe to our bi-weekly newsletter." There are two input fields: "First Name" with a placeholder "Your first name ..." and "Email address:" with a placeholder "Your email address ...". At the bottom is a blue button labeled "SUBSCRIBE".

2. In the subscription form, just enter your first name and email address and then click the Subscribe button.
3. Within a few minutes you will receive a confirmation email in the inbox of the email address you provided. (no email – check junk folder!) **You must click on the confirmation link in that email to complete the subscription process.**
4. Shortly after you confirm your subscription, you will receive a welcome email from DeBows UMC stating that you have successfully subscribed.

We thank you for being a current reader of our newsletter and hope to see you on our new subscription list. Subscribe today!