



Bridgeport United Methodist Church

Steeple Talk

A note from your Senior Pastor ...

Dear Friends:

I was never any good at endurance races. When I was involved in track and field I ran the hurdles. Just watching friends of mine who ran longer endurance type events make me cringe. Many of them, however, were very good. They seemed to have developed the ability over time to make those long races seem easy. I know they were not easy. But they had such a steady pace, a real sense of rhythm, and great control of everything from their breathing to their stride, that it looked almost effortless. Of course, at the end they were exhausted, but it never changed their approach. They had trained for this. They had practiced the timing. They had run miles and miles and miles to develop this characteristic.

One of the things I have had to relearn is how difficult endurance can be. Throughout this pandemic season I have watched as folks' endurance began to falter. Endurance is not easy, especially when you are bombarded with suffering, difficulty, and disruption. The Apostle Paul in his letter to the Romans addressed the need for endurance:

"We rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us." (Romans 5: 3-5).

The times that we have been and still are facing, actually pale in comparison to the suffering that Paul refers to in this letter. The overt persecution, imprisonment, and punishment that the early Christians faced was severe. Paul's guidance was clear. These times that you are facing will produce endurance. If you allow endurance to build it will produce character and that will bring you hope that lasts forever. Some fell by the way in the Roman church. They were unable to endure. Some renounced the faith and others chose alternative directions for their living. Still others in the Roman church did endure and became, in the long run, faithful witnesses for Jesus Christ. Their witness, born of endurance and character, created a climate of hope for countless believers that is still being experienced by us today.

I know these times have not been easy for anyone. Your church has remained faithful to our mission to spread the good news of Jesus Christ and to reach the least, the last, the lonely, and the left out. We still have a good ways to go on this journey toward fully emerging from the pandemic, though there is truly light on the horizon. We desire your endurance, your continued patience, and your faithful witness. As my endurance race friends always said, "the last couple of laps are the hardest." God is faithful and God is good; He will continue to strengthen and see us through. Thank you for who you are and I pray God will continue to grow us toward the great hope that is ours in Christ Jesus. See you in church or online.

In Christ ,
Ken Ramsey

P.S. IF YOU HAVE NOT RENEWED YOUR MEMBERSHIP YET, PLEASE GO TO THE WEBSITE AND USE THE LINK TO UPDATE YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION.

SEE OUR BIBLE SCHOOL DAY CAMP INFORMATION ENCLOSED. We are teaming up with DaySpring, the mobile camp ministry of our United Methodist Church to provide this opportunity for children/youth K-6th grade (current grade). If you haven't signed up, do it now!! June 17-18, 2021. Two days! Together! Too Fun! 8:30 AM-3:00 PM each day.

Summer 2021

Website:

www.bridgeportumc.org

Email: info@bridgeportumc.org

Dr. Ken A. Ramsey,
Senior Pastor

Rev. Dr. Dan Kimble,
Pastoral Care & Outreach

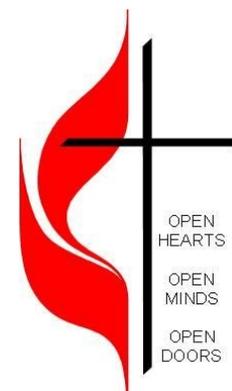
Rev. Ben Randolph,
Associate Minister

Rev. George Bramble,
Rev. Jim Lang
Pastoral Care

Sarah Carr Parsons,
Director of Music

Nathan Price,
*Leader of Children &
Youth Discipleship*

Tricia Price,
*Youth Ministry
Coordinator*



SUMMER SERMON SERIES: THE TOP 15 MIRACLES OF JESUS

THE MIRACLES OF JESUS

Beginning June 13 we will offer a sermon series called, "**The Top 15 Miracles of Jesus.**" These messages will highlight a different miracle of Jesus each week and explore the message of that miracle for our lives today. The signs and miracles of Christ transformed lives then and can transform us today. These miracles provide a witness for us today both as individual followers and as the church. Plan to attend one of our many worship services offered every week and grow your faith and commitment over the summer months. We know many are travelling and involved in various activities over the summer. This is another advantage of having multiple services from which to choose. Make the time for spiritual growth this summer! Titles will include: "When the Storms of Life Leave You Swamped," "If Only...", "Going to the Source," "The Church of Four Friends," and more. We look forward to seeing you.

NUMEROUS ONLINE OFFERINGS AND STUDIES STILL AVAILABLE

The ministers, staff, and numerous volunteers of our church have worked tirelessly to provide inspirational and uplifting materials through our website and YouTube channels. Visit the website regularly, bridgeportumc.org. and also navigate to our YouTube channels. Catalogued there are several Bible Studies including a Psalm study, Take Ten studies, and Doing a 180 with Dr. Ken, special services, and a host of musical offerings including the Virtual Choirs, and coming soon our most recent Children's Spring Musical. There is so much material for our spiritual growth contained there. Also be sure to register your email to receive twice weekly devotions from our pastoral team.

 **Bridgeport UMC**

 **@DrKenRam or
@Bridgeportumc**

 **Bridgeport_umc
drkenram**

 **YouTube**

**Dr.KenRam
BridgeportUnitedMethodistChurchWV**

Web Page: www.bridgeportumc.org

RELAUNCHING AND RETOOLING FOR THE FALL: IN PERSON OFFERINGS TO RETURN

As of right now we do plan to resume in person Sunday school, youth, and other offerings in the Fall. We are using this time to retool and reformat all that we are doing as a church in the area of spiritual growth. Our Second Thursday Worship will also return. So many people have been faithful to teach and lead in our Online Virtual Classes which have been going on consistently. Our volunteers and staff need a bit of renewal, which will happen as we pause for the Summer. Watch for all the information for a full restart in the Fall of our various ministry options. Pray that things continue to improve so that our plans will not be interrupted. Plan now to reengage with your church at every level!!

LAY PASTORS NETWORK AND YOU

A group of volunteers have been called forth to serve as Lay Pastors as we move into the future. Some 30 persons have been in consultation and training with our Senior Pastor for the past few months. As we move toward the Fall season they will begin to be a source of connection and communication for all of us. They will be charged with sending out inspirational messages, prayers, and links that will come directly from our pastors. We are seeking to get everyone re-connected at church and we are seeking to encourage everyone to reaffirm and keep their membership vows. We desire for every member to be an active member and we will evaluate this as we move forward together. We are so thankful for the opportunity that the Lord provides for us to love, serve, and be in community and connection together. **UPDATE YOUR MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL NOW.** If you haven't mailed in the card then go to our website, bridgeportumc.org, and click on "Contact Info Update." This is one way that we are staying current and keeping our membership roll as an active roll. Thank you for helping us!!



CHILDREN'S SPRING MUSICAL TO BE AVAILABLE ONLINE

Coming Soon...Be sure to view the outstanding Spring Musical that our children have put together. "Francis: Poor Little Man of God" explores the great message and witness of the life of St. Francis of Assisi. His message and his testimony presented in song and verse will inspire you in your own faith walk. Visit the website and click on Spring Musical.

Bible School Day Camp

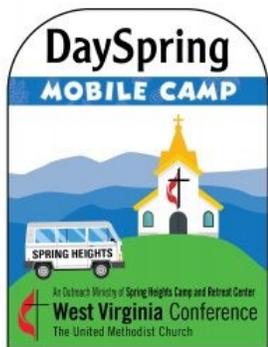
Two Days, Together, Too Fun!

Bible School Day Camp for K-6th grade. (grade completed in 2021)

We are teaming up with the DaySpring Mobile Camp Ministry of our United Methodist Conference Camping Program to provide this wonderful summer activity.

June 17 and 18 † 8:30 AM - 3 PM

Children and youth K-6th grade (grade completed in 2021)



What do campers at Dayspring?

Each day is filled with faith formation and a lot of fun! Potential activities include archery, gaga ball, nine square in the air, Bible study, crafts, water activities, and games. Our staff is creative, and each day contains something new and exciting. DaySpring campers build lasting friendships, grow in self confidence, and deepen their faith.

How is staff chosen and trained?

Our staff is selected to serve based on faith, experience with youth, maturity, and aptitude for building healthy relationships within the camp community. All staff members go through an application, interview, and thorough screening process (including a background check) before being hired. Once hired, they receive extensive training covering everything from First Aid/CPR, Christian leadership, and how to lead activities safely.

What do I bring to camp?

You can find a "What to bring to camp" checklist on the Spring Heights website at www.springheights.org/DaySpring-camp. Please note that we have a strict "no cell phone" policy.

Why can't my camper bring a cell phone? We do not allow cell phones for two reasons: 1. Privacy: Most cell phones have cameras and the capability to share images instantly over networks, with or without the permission of those in the photos. This is also a safety issue for any campers who may be involved in a custodial dispute. 2. Cell phones distract from all of the amazing camp activities: Camp is a time for your camper to be removed from the distractions of their everyday life and immerse themselves in strengthening their relationship with God while also developing friendships with other campers. We will NEVER tell you that you cannot communicate with your camper while they are at camp, and we are always willing to work with you to find the best way to communicate with your camper.

REGISTER NOW! PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE BRIDGEPORTUMC.ORG OR CONTACT NATHAN PRICE FOR ANY QUESTIONS: 304-625-1910.



RECOVERY MINISTRY IS MOVING FORWARD



REVIVE
A RECOVERY MINISTRY FOR ALL PEOPLE
AND ALL LIFE'S CHALLENGES
A MINISTRY OF BRIDGEPORT UMC

Our recovery ministry is now called, "REVIVE". This is a recovery ministry of Bridgeport United Methodist Church designed and based on the principles and practices that can lead us through all the challenges of life toward restoration and wholeness. We meet every Wednesday evening at 6:30 p.m. at the Johnson Avenue campus. There is a time of worship which includes music and an inspiring message or testimony related to the steps of recovery. There

are also small group breakout sessions following worship for those who desire a time to share, listen, and encourage. There are groups for men and for women. Childcare is provided in the annex just beside the church and is staffed by current and former educators who have a desire to help guide our children in faith and spiritual growth. We have expanded our REVIVE recovery ministry to include a van ministry that reached out to the Clarksburg Mission and helps connect them to these resources. For more information contact Rev. Ben Randolph.

NEW GUIDELINES FOR CONGREGATIONAL WORSHIP

Based upon our United Methodist Church requirements and CDC guidelines you will now see the following sign when you come to worship at all campuses:

- ~ Fully Vaccinated? Mask is optional.
- ~ Plan on Singing? Mask required.
- ~ Distancing will be maintained in consideration of all.

Love, Respect, and Kindness as we journey together.

This is one more step among many we have been taking over the past year or more. Everyone has been very kind and patient and this will continue to be the way forward for us. There are those who are fully vaccinated that will still wear a mask; anyone wishing to sing congregationally and our own song leaders will still require a mask; because there are younger persons and children among us who are yet to be vaccinated we will maintain distancing for a season in consideration of all ages and stages of people. We anticipate everyone being honorable and respectful as our church has always been. We will love one another in all things and through all things. This is a welcome step for many; an anxiety ridden step for others. Together we are the Body of Christ called to reflect Him to others. Thank you for being here and thank you for being the church.

Summer Sermon Series

UPCOMING TITLES IN THE SUMMER SERMON SERIES:

THE TOP 15 MIRACLES OF JESUS

June 12-13: "Going to the Source" Rev. Dr. Ken Ramsey

June 19-20: "When the Storms of Life Leave You Swamped" Rev. Dr. Ken Ramsey

June 26-27: "Just One Touch" Rev. Ben Randolph

July 3-4: "The Difference Between Withering and Weathering" Rev. Dr. Ken Ramsey

See you in church!