

# The Bell Ringer

April 2021 Newsletter



A few years back I heard the phrase, "thin spaces." That phrase means a space between heaven and earth where our separation from God is especially thin. In certain Christian circles it is described as a place where people experience God with more intimacy and immediacy. In thin spaces we are jolted out of old ways of experiencing this world. Here the distance between heaven and earth collapses and we're able to see a glimpse of God.

These spaces may not be grandiose spiritual breakthroughs but they distort life as we know it, confuse our minds and unmask us. Thin spaces change us for the better.

## **Why isn't the whole world thin?**

Perhaps it's because we are too thick to recognize God everywhere. We need to become aware of His presence. Jesus was the ultimate thin space. As He moved about, God was exceptionally present. God wants each of us to have many thin spaces. What is that place for you? When was the last time you went to your thin space?

Since sin's entrance into this world, the separation between God and His people has been very wide. On Good Friday, it appears, Jesus is gone for good. In a couple of short days Easter comes and everything changes. Suddenly Jesus could be present everywhere and create non-stop thin spaces. Easter Sunday is a thin space. Clearly nothing could take Him out of our orbit. As COVID 19 goes on, can you find this horrendous year to be a thin space?

God wants every Christ follower to be a thin space for someone else. We have just the opportunity for you! On Easter Sunday, April 4<sup>th</sup>, I would love to see all of you together in the same place. I would just like to forget COVID 19. **Jesus is Alive!** Actually, we can be together through Facebook Live, on our web page and in person. I don't need to tell anyone that this last year has been more a drag than a thin space.

## ***Anxious for Nothing***

On Easter we proclaim the most cosmic thin space of all times. Though life is tough we can move forward. This Easter we begin a new month-long message series on **anxiety**. This series reminds us that despite the uncertainty of the world and the pressure we place on ourselves, Scripture directs us to release that anxiety to God. We don't need to bury the anxiety but to give it to the Risen One. When we do, we don't have to lie awake at night. Our shortness of breath can be replaced by life-giving rest. We can feel a peace that goes beyond all understanding. We will be challenged to be open about our insecurities and recognize that we all suffer from them.

This Easter I have several challenges for you:

- **Participate** in Easter worship in some form wherever you might be.
- **Invite** a friend or family member to join us virtually or in person service.
- **Pray** that Easter will be an especially thin space this year.

**Give** to our Easter offering in a way that helps you celebrate.

If you know someone who is anxious and desperate to find a thin space bring them along with you this Easter!

***Pastor Scott***



Palm Sunday Worship: *8am - Chapel / 9am - Fellowship Hall / 10:30am - Sanctuary*

Maundy Thursday: **Worship at 7:00pm - Sanctuary**

Good Friday: **Self guided prayer tour in Chapel open 12:00pm-3:00pm**

Easter Sunday:  
**8am - Sanctuary | 9am - Fellowship Hall | 10:30am - Sanctuary**

## Gleaners



We have made one delivery of 104# Gleaners so far this year. Thank you for your support. The need is very great with all the consequences of the Covid Pandemic. Please bring your donations to the box in the hallway by Lawson Hall OR add a financial contribution for Gleaners to your offering. Your help is greatly appreciated. New option is to make a donation via the online giving that will be designated directly to Gleaners through our website.

Basil Bloss, Deliveries to Gleaners

## UMW April 2021

Hello everyone! I hope that many of you have been able to get your Covid-19 vaccine. I found it frustrating at times trying to get an appointment. Our circles are slowly attempting to get together in a safe manner. We are noticing some church activities returning as well. There is HOPE. Please stay safe and come back to church when you feel it is right for you. We miss you all!

Janet Adams, UMW President



## Spring General Meeting

The executive board has been looking at different dates as to when we thought it would be safe to hold the Spring General Meeting. It has been decided the meeting will be June 14, 2021 at 7:00 PM outdoors at the church. Everyone is to bring their own chairs. There will be no meeting this will be a social event to catch up with everyone. More information to follow.

## CIRCLES:

Dorcas/Mary-Martha: no meetings at this time

Faith: no meeting in April

Grace: Thursday, April 8th at 7:00 PM in the Parlor.

Mary-Elizabeth: Thursday, April 22 at 7:00 PM - TBD

Ruth: Wednesday, April 21 at 1:00 PM outside at the church. To be located in the NW corner of the parking lot under the trees. This will be a social time for those comfortable. Please bring your own chair.



**To my church family -  
I sincerely want to thank everyone for your prayers,  
the many cards, phone calls and visits. It certainly  
proves the power of prayer. Thanks to ALL!**

**Blessings,  
Judy White**

# Stephen Ministry

It's been over a year now since we've heard the daily use of the word 'pandemic'. It was a word we had heard referenced before, but then we found ourselves overwhelmed by the word and it has affected us all differently.

I read recently about a condition referring to what some call pandemic fatigue. I can't think of anyone who is not possibly experiencing this. Fear, devastation, loss, loneliness, multiple changes in our social life, schools....well, there isn't any aspects of our lives that haven't been touched and there are so many who have experienced more devastation than others. Where do we go? Who do we trust? How do we react? Where can we find hope? How can we rid ourselves of so much fear? What would God have us do?

Psalm 9: 9-10. The Lord is a refuge for the oppressed, a stronghold in times of trouble.

Psalm 34:10b. Those who seek the Lord lack no good thing.

2 Corinthians 5:7. For we walk by faith, not by sight.

And you know that there are multiple scriptures that tell us, God does not want us to lose hope; we should not live in fear; He is our strength and shield.

I have not escaped the horror of what this pandemic can do. I lost my big brother, Larry. Isolation, distance, fear, and worry could have and tried to take over my thoughts. However, I held tightly to hope, and placed my full trust in the God I love. I had to relinquish my attempts to try to control the outcome. I could only pray, give it all to God, my Savior, and believe that God remains in control. I know I'm not alone. I was and am so grateful for the support I received from friends and extended family who prayed with me and for me, who offered words of encouragement, who sent words of sympathy, and provided scripture to help ease me through that difficult time.

That is what a Stephen Minister does. Don't deny yourself the help of a Christian friend should you find yourself struggling during these difficult days. Seek God's healing power and hope. Don't face difficult times alone.

May God's love for His children be evident in your lives, now and in the days ahead.



*Patti Van Loo for the Stephen Ministry Team of Howell FUMC*

## MARCH

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

**Mar 22 | \$50 Camp Deposit & Registration Due**  
**Mar 28 | Palm Sunday Worship Service**  
**Mar 28 – Apr 4 | Spring Break, No Youth Events**

Sara's B'day | **Mar 10**  
 Garrett's B'day | **Mar 11**  
 Sophia's B'day | **Mar 23**

**Save the Date: July 12-15**



## APRIL

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	1

**Apr 4 | Easter, No Youth Events**  
**Apr | Summer Camp Giving Fundraiser.** Dates to be determined. Stay tuned on Sunday mornings and on our church website to see how you can be involved or support our youth.

Evan's B'day | **Apr 29**

**April: Camp Fundraiser**



## MAY

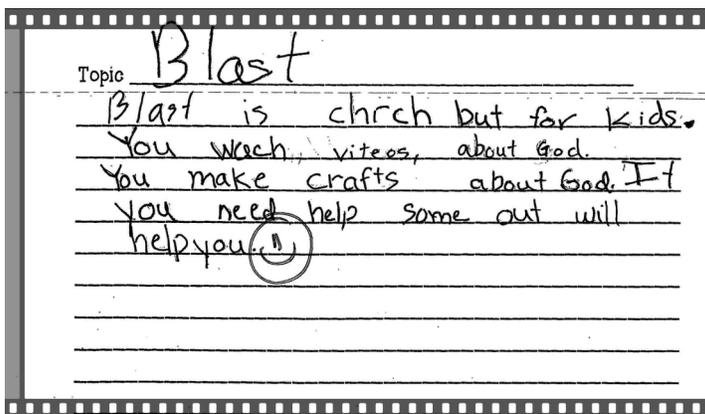
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23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

**May 9 | Mother's Day, No Youth Events**  
**May 15 | Tie Blankets Service Project**  
**May 27 | Last Day of School for Howell**  
**May 31 | Memorial Day, No Youth Events**

Ellie's B'day | **May 25**  
 Erik's B'day | **May 31**

**FIND OUT MORE:**

[www.howellfumcyouth.com](http://www.howellfumcyouth.com)  
[danielle@howellfumc.com](mailto:danielle@howellfumc.com)



# Discipleship Ministries

## April, 2021



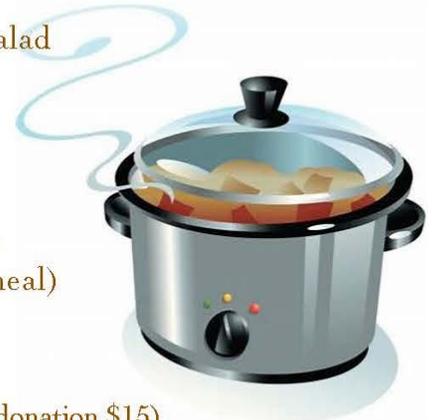
### Maundy Thursday Bread Sale Hot Cross Buns!!

Proceeds from all April food sales will benefit the *Faithfully Fit* Fitness Program

**Thursday, April 1** (NOT Wednesday) – 5-7 PM Pickup (drive-through or walk-in)  
Buy this traditional Good Friday treat in 1/2 dozen packages between 5-7 PM  
Stay around to attend 7 PM Worship Service  
Free-Will offerings gratefully accepted

**Wednesday, April 14** – 4-6 PM Pickup (drive-through or walk-in)  
White OR Whole Wheat Bread (small loaf) and a 6-Serving Greek Salad  
Free-will offering gratefully accepted.

**Wednesday, April 28** - Take home a meal to place in your  
Crock Pot, Instant Pot, OR freezer to cook later.  
Drive-thru or Walk-In pickup Wednesday, April 28, 10 AM-12 Noon  
(for same-day cook and serve) AND 4-6 PM (for a next-day meal)  
Each low-fat crock-pot meal serves 6-8.  
Dairy-free, keto-friendly & gluten-free options are available.



Soup Options (suggested donation \$10)    Meal Options (suggested donation \$15)

- |                                |                    |
|--------------------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Turkey, White Bean and Kale | 1. Chicken Fajitas |
| 2. Spring Chicken              | 2. Pulled Pork     |

~Pre-orders appreciated~  
See Diane for order forms

*Faithfully Fit* Fitness Program normally contributes \$200/month to the church (this is actually 20% of our annual budget) in appreciation for use of the building and utilities. We have been unable to pay this for 5 months due to the pandemic, but have continued to pay our instructors for both virtual and in-person classes. We made the switch to all virtual very quickly last April and then held outdoor classes from June through October. Your generous donations will help rebuild our reserves (\$5000 a year ago, now depleted) and repay the church.

### Ministries for Children and Youth

**Youth Groups:** Wednesdays 6-7:30 PM (Grades 6-8) and Sundays, 6-8 PM (Grades 9-12)  
-Rooms 13-14-15

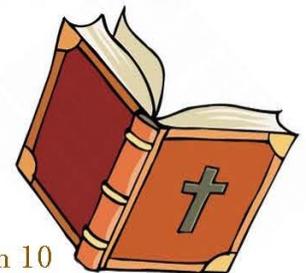
**Youth Bible Study:** Sundays, 10:30 AM (Grades 6-12)  
-Rooms 13-14-15

**Children's Worship and Faith Factory:** Sundays 9 and 10:30 AM (Ages 3 years-5<sup>th</sup> Grade)  
-Meet in Room 10, Pick up in Rooms 8 and 12

**BLAST (Believers Living & Serving Together):** Wednesdays 6-7 PM (Grades K-5)  
-Rooms 11-12

### Adult Bible Studies

**Wednesday Weekly Bible Study:** Wednesdays, 4 PM, led by Sue Rice in Room 10  
**Sisters Bible Study:** Thursdays, 10 AM, led by Diane Griffin in the Parlor



## Howell FUMC Financial Summary

01-01-2021 thru 02-28-2021

### Income

	2021 Actual	2021 Target	Amt Over/ (Under)	Actual/ Target	Y-T-D expected	Actual to Expected Percentage Over/(Under)
General - pledged	78,747.35	310,697.00	(231,949.65)	25.35	16.12	9.23
General - non-pledged	20,787.00	251,880.16	(231,093.16)	8.25	16.12	(7.87)
Loose Plate	483.00	8,000.00	(7,517.00)	6.04	16.12	(10.08)
Other	182.29	7,027.00	(6,844.71)	2.59	16.12	(13.53)
<b>Total</b>	<b>100,199.64</b>	<b>577,604.16</b>	<b>(477,404.52)</b>	<b>17.35</b>	<b>16.12</b>	<b>1.23</b>

### Expenses

Budget split	Actual	Budget	Amt Over/ (Under)	Actual/ Budget	Y-T-D expected	Actual to Expected Percentage Over/(Under)
21.16 1.0 Operating expenses	20,852.15	122,243.52	-101,391.37	17.06	16.12	0.94
9.36 2.0 Program expenses	6,443.37	54,085.00	-47,641.63	11.91	16.12	(4.21)
10.83 3.0 Ministry Shares	11,816.00	62,547.00	-50,731.00	18.89	16.12	2.77
58.56 4.0 Staff Salaries	60,260.82	338,228.64	-277,967.82	17.82	16.12	1.70
0.09 Payroll expenses	831.74	500.00	331.74	166.35	16.12	150.23
<b>100.00 Total</b>	<b>100,204.08</b>	<b>577,604.16</b>	<b>-477,400.08</b>	<b>17.35</b>	<b>16.12</b>	<b>1.23</b>

Income Overage/(Shortfall) \$ (4.44)

As you can see above, we are breaking even so far for the year. This is a little deceiving since there are number of people that have paid their yearly pledge in full. However, we have already had a 3-pay month so the expense side is a little higher than normal also.

Thank you for your faithful giving!!!



Volunteer to visit with Shut-ins today!

Contact Jenn in the Office for a list to CALL or Visit when SAFE



American Red Cross

APRIL 5<sup>th</sup>  
1pm-7pm

BLOOD  
DRIVE

Fellowship Hall

# April 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				Maundy Thursday 10am Sisters 5-7 <sup>pm</sup> Hot Cross Bun Sale 7pm Worship	Good Friday <u>OFFICE CLOSED</u> 12-3pm Self-guided prayer - Chapel	
Easter Sunday 8am Sanctuary 9am Fellowship Hall 10 <sup>30</sup> Sanctuary	4 8am Fitness 1pm Blood Drive	5	6 10am Staff Mtg	7 Pastor Scott Birthday 10am Sisters 7pm Finance	8	9 10am Sisters
8am Chapel 9am Fellowship Hall 10 <sup>30</sup> Sanctuary	11 7pm UMW Exec. Mtg	12 9am Health Ministry	13 4-6pm Bread Sale	14 10am Sisters	15	16 10am Sisters
SPECIAL SUNDAY * 8am Chapel 9am Fellowship Hall 10 <sup>30</sup> Sanctuary	18 7pm Stephen Ministry	19 7pm SPRC	20 10am Staff Mtg 1pm Ruth Cir outside	21 EARTH DAY 10am Sisters 7pm Council	22	23 10am Sisters
8am Chapel 9am Fellowship Hall 10 <sup>30</sup> Sanctuary	25	26 Crock-Pot Meal Sale 10-noon & 4-6pm	27 10am Sisters	28 10am Sisters	29	30

## Sunday

- 8am – Worship / Chapel
- 9am – Worship / Fellowship Hall
- Faith Factory & Children's Worship
- 10<sup>30</sup>am – Worship / Sanctuary
- Faith Factory & Children's Worship
- Youth Bible Study
- 6pm - Ignite

## AA Group – Room #6

- 7am - Sun – Sat
- 12pm – Mon-Fri
- 7<sup>30</sup>pm - Mon

## Faithfully Fit

- 8am - Mon, Wed, Fri
- 9am – Tue, Thur, Sat
- 4<sup>15</sup>pm – Mon, Thur
- 5pm – Tue, Thurs
- 7pm - Tue

## Wednesday

- 10am – Lady Bible Study Zoom
- 4pm – WW Bible Study w/ Sue
- 6pm – Bell Practice
- 6pm – Blast & Spark
- 7pm – Band Practice