

Community, Compassion, and Hope

July 9, 2019
Barnesville First United Methodist Church

Dear friend,

Thank you! You make it a joy to be part of Barnesville First United Methodist Church.

I'm not the only one that feels this way. As we waited for participants to gather for our summer arts camp, Camp Create, one of the moms described her child's excitement on Monday morning. He got up early, dressed with no help and ate breakfast with no complaints. He was so excited, and when they got into the car, exclaimed, **"I've been waiting all year for this!"**

As I write this, our youth are packing for their mission trip. I cannot imagine why anyone would be excited about working outside in the hot sun...except these young people know what it feels like to make a difference. They can't wait to repair homes damaged by hurricanes.

I also get excited about things like telephone bills and electric bills. Seriously. These make it possible for office volunteers to answer the calls from people wanting to know more about Ramps of Love. Some of our members have experienced the need for temporary ramps when they or their families were in rehab or hospice. The ramps may stay at a home for a month or two...**but there's no limit to the gratitude when someone knows God's love in this way.**

Thank you for giving to the church. A telephone bill. A classroom covered by insurance. You never know how God will use these!

Every year, a portion of your gifts go to the denomination, and have funded a variety of ministries, including lay servant leadership classes. Jan Sherwood participated fully in these, taking classes like Personal Prayer, Methodist History, and Preaching. Recently Jan was asked to serve as the preacher for the Marvin UMC and Milner UMC circuit. We have joked that



Ramps of Love has made a difference to 15 families.



Thank you to the 59 volunteers who invested in the lives of over 50 children at this year's Camp Create.



Every girl is a princess at the annual Dad / Daughter dance.



Fran does a happy dance!

After two years of chili cook-offs and fundraising, Fran Boggs and the Compassion team purchase a commercial refrigerator and freezer. What a difference this will make in preparing meals for those going through difficult times.

she has been training 20 years for this and didn't even know it. Aren't you proud of her? And aren't you proud of YOU, for giving in ways that equip those hearing God's call?

There's so much of which to be excited and proud. Friendships new and deepened while drinking lemonade under the trees. Conversation and faith deepened in small group studies and Sunday School.

Earlier this year, we asked you to give over your pledge or usual giving, as part of a debt reduction campaign. For several years, our expenses have been higher than giving. Over time, small annual deficits built up until we had a debt of about \$50,000.

A few leaders in the church challenged the congregation, volunteering to match your gifts, up to \$12,500. We prayed these gifts would be matched, as that would have cut the debt in half.

Financial Update: January—June 2019 Compared to Previous Five Years

Time Period	Gifts	Expenses	Surplus / Loss
January—June 2019	\$163,053	\$162,142	\$911
January—June Average for 2014-2018	\$160,659	\$174,854	(\$14,195)

In addition to strong support of the debt reduction campaign, you have continued to give to the operating budget of the church. For the first time in recent history, gifts made during the first half of the year were sufficient to cover the church's expenses. This is in part due to reducing costs, especially those of maintaining the building and grounds.

Welcome New Members



Our Confirmation Class:
Sharon Robinson, Sommer Donaldson, Lanie Smith, Reece Landress, and Faithlyn Dangar.

The response was overwhelming. Over 60 families responded with gifts or pledges, paying off 90% of the debt. We received gifts from as far as Saint Louis Missouri, Greenville South Carolina, Chapel Hill North Carolina, Augusta, Atlanta, Sandersville, Norcross, and Pine Mountain. The love from and of this church spreads far.

As you look through your financial statement, hear these words of thanks. Thank you for the ways that you show God's love, with kindness to one another, in ministry to our neighbors, and in your trusting faithfulness to the God who loves the world.

I'm glad you're here.
And I'm glad I'm here with you.
I love you, and I wish that everyone could be part of a church like ours.

Pastor Cyndi



Mike and Debra Ruffin



Susan Hendricks and
granddaughter Audrey Royl



Bob and Gay Wallace