


A COVENANT OF BELOVED COMMUNITY

On this Seventh Sunday of Easter, our last observance of being Easter People, let us tarry in the hope and joy of being, A Beloved Community.

Martin Luther King's term, "Beloved Community," points to our potential for living together with love, justice and respect.

"Beloved Community is a global vision in which all people can share in the wealth of the earth. In the Beloved Community, poverty, hunger and homelessness will not be tolerated because international standards of human decency will not allow it. Racism and all forms of discrimination, bigotry and prejudice will be replaced by an all-inclusive spirit of sisterhood and brotherhood." – the King Center.

An illustration showing several hands of different colors (red, blue, yellow, purple) cupping a globe. The hands are rendered in a stylized, blocky manner. The background is a light blue gradient.

Beloved community is formed not by the eradication of difference but by its affirmation, by each of us claiming the identities and cultural legacies that shape who we are and how we live in the world.

bell hooks

We want a world where community is a common and enduring enterprise – where everyone can come together amid their differences to solve the complex challenges that affect us all. Sacred space is where our journeys intersect, the journeys of our minds and hearts that each day take us on different paths in different directions, yet lead us back again and again to faces we know and lives we are privileged to share. The community we seek originates in that meeting of minds and hearts, where the questions we ask of life and death command our attention, engage our emotion, and challenge our understanding:

It is a place of welcome,

- where no one is excluded,
- where differences of all kinds are respected and affirmed.

It is a place of safety,

- where views and values can be questioned honestly and without fear,
- where the free mind of each individual is the ultimate authority.

It is a place of encounter,

- where new truths can be found in the lives we share,
- where a dialogue of words and deeds emerges from our deepest experience and our truest selves.

It is a place of relationship,

- where service to the common good links each to all,
- where the human family is renewed and enlarged by the talk we walk, the values we embody.

Finally, the community we seek is a place of wholeness:

- here we can acknowledge the full complexity of our lives, our certainties and our uncertainties, our hopes and our fears, our joys and our sorrows;
- here in fact, we can be who we truly are with those we trust to do the same, those we trust to support and respect our honesty, our diversity, our capacity to learn from each other and to change.

Dr. King's beloved community exhibits agape love, which, as the love of God operating in the human heart, seeks to "preserve and create community." Christ's mature followers love each other as well as those who persecute or do evil against them. Christians confront hate with love because agape love derives its essence from the cross of Christ, which brings redemptive power. This love does not accept injustice or evil. Rather, it loves by way of justice, which ensures

equity in access, participation, and flourishing for everyone. What would The United Methodist Church look like, feel like, and be like if the Beloved Community became real for us? What would Fifth Ave. UMC be like?

The beloved community manifests and protects agape love as its guiding principle and is expressed in the following ways:

- Offers radical hospitality to everyone; an inclusive family rather than exclusive club;
- Recognizes and honors the image of God in every human being;
- Exhibits personal authenticity, true respect, and validation of others;
- Recognition and affirmation, not eradication, of differences;
- Listens emotionally (i.e., with the heart) – fosters empathy and compassion for others;
- Tolerates ambiguity (doubt) – realizes that sometimes a clear-cut answer is not readily available;
- Builds increasing levels of trust and works to avoid fear of difference and others;
- Acknowledges limitations, lack of knowledge, or understanding – and seeks to learn;
- Acknowledges conflict or pain in order to work on difficult issues;
- Speaks truth in love, always considering ways to be compassionate with one another;
- Avoids physical aggression and verbal abuse;
- Resolves conflicts peacefully, without violence, recognizing that peacefully doesn't always mean comfortably for everybody;
- Releases resentment and bitterness through self-purification (i.e., avoidance of internal violence through spiritual, physical, and psychological care);
- Focuses energy on removing evil forces (unjust systems), not destroying persons;
- Unyielding persistence and unwavering commitment to justice;
- Achieves friendship and understanding through negotiation, compromise, or consensus – considering each circumstance to discern which will be most helpful;
- Righteously opposes and takes direct action against poverty, hunger, and homelessness;);
- Blends faith and action to generate a commitment to defeating injustice (not forgetting that injustice can also be found within the Church);
- Encourages and embraces artistic expressions of faith from diverse perspectives;
- Fosters dynamic and active spirituality – recognizes that we serve a dynamic God who is not left behind by a changing world or people, and that a passive approach will not work;
- Gathers together regularly for table fellowship, and meets the needs of everyone in the community;
- Relies on scripture reading, prayer, and corporate worship for inner strength;
- Promotes human rights and works to create a non-racist society;
- Shares power and acknowledges the inescapable network of mutuality among the human family.



With God as our Leader, may we be prepared to live another year under His guidance.

How can we pray for you today?

- We grieve the passing of our beloved Wesleyan butterfly, Ms. Betsy Winqvist who passed away on Saturday, 21 May 2022. Celebration of Life Service is pending.
- We extend our prayers of miraculous healing for Ms. Jeri Barnett, sister of Mr. Brett (Ms. Mary) Barnett who is experiencing several medical concerns. “Lord, look upon Ms. Jeri with eyes of mercy. May Your healing hand rest upon her, may Your life-giving powers flow into every cell of her body; cleansing, purifying, restoring her to wholeness and strength for service in Your Kin-dom. Cards and notes of support and care can be mailed to: Ms. Jerri Barnett, C/O Mr. Brett and Ms. Mary Barnett, 932 Hillcrest St., WB 53095.
- Bro. Richard Slade fell and bruised several ribs. Please send your love and encouragement to: Mr. Richard Slade, 741 Summit Court, West Bend, WI 53095.
- We extend our healing prayers to Mr. Tom Calenberg, who had hip replacement on May 4. He is home and doing well. Cards may be sent to: Mr. Tom Calenberg, 617 S. 16th Ave., West Bend 53095.
- **Fifth Ave. United Methodist Church, we are in desperate and wanting need for you to step-up and serve on the Accountable Leadership Board (ALB). Your church is in grave and urgent need for fresh, creative and innovative leadership. All positions of the board are open. Please, please contact Pastor Clarissa (847.721.1826) to discern God’s call for you to serve your church. You may not think you have the gift, talent, and/or time to serve, however, “If you listen to the word, but do not put it into practice you are like people who look in a mirror and see themselves as they are. They take a good look at themselves and then go away and at once forget what they look like. But if you look closely into the perfect law that sets people free, and keep on paying attention to it but put it into practice—you will be blessed by God in what you do.” (James 1:23-25) Good is calling you; inviting you to step forward and serve God’s church and God’s people. Will you say. “Yes?” We need you!**
- “I found I had less and less to say, until finally, I became silent, and began to listen. I discovered in the silence, the voice of God.” Soren Kierkegaard
Base on many forms of church data, many churches will not exist in the next few years. FAUMC leadership has gone as far as to project that our church has only six to ten years of life left. As your devotedly committed and passionate Pastor and Spiritual Leader, I rebuke this death sentence. I have been eagerly attempting to energize the church (the people) and engage our members in a vital and relevant faith journey and discipleship. It all begins with serving (volunteering) God’s church and God’s people. Where are you being called to serve? How can you take the light of Christ into the dark and hurting world? Please join me as we lead revitalized ministries, programs, and outreach as we’re willing open to looking inward in order to have an outward influence that makes a difference to our community and the world. Come, where are you going to serve?
- We extend our loving prayers to Ms. Carol Flanders who fell and broke her femur. She is enjoying a season of respite at Cedar Bay East. Notes and cards can be mailed to: Ms. Carol Flanders, 107 Cedar Ridge Drive #N122, West Bend WI 53095
- Our beloved Christian Sister, Ms. June Knowlton-Sengpiel has transferred to The Pavilion in Slinger. Cards and notes can be mailed to: Ms. June Knowlton-Sengpiel, Pavilion at Glacier Valley, 1900 American Eagle Dr., #415B, Slinger, WI 53086
- Bro. Bob Krell, prayers for strength and continued healing. Please mail cards and notes of prayer and encouragement to: Bro. Bob and Ms. Jean Krell, 804 Lenora Drive, West Bend, WI 53090
- We extend passionate love and support to Mr. John Abuya on his recent diagnosis of pancreatic cancer. Card of love and support can be sent to: Mr. John Abuya, 328 East Washington Street, #1, Slinger, WI 53086.
- Many of our church family members and friends are experiencing health concerns. Please join me in praying for their healing and restoration: “loving God, I pray that you will comfort us in our suffering, lend skill to the hands of the healers, and bless the means used for to cure. Give each of us such confidence in the power of your grace, that even when we are afraid, I may put my whole trust in you; through our Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.”

- Thank you, Fifth Ave. Family, for your wonderful financial support of the late Rev. J. Paul Singh's family through the Easter Offering. Rev. Paul brought a special love and joy to us in his short stay. He will truly be missed.
- Mr. Walter Teague sends his appreciation for your cards and prayers during this medical crisis. Cards and notes can be mailed to: Mr. Walter and Ms. Joan Teague, 1144 West Washington Street, West Bend, WI 53095.
- Lord, you have taught us that faith as small as a mustard seed, can grow into an amazing tree. We continue to share our seed of faith to Ms. Lora Santiago, daughter of Mr. Peter and Ms. Katie Glaser, who was diagnosed with melanoma cancer. She is presently going through immunotherapy for her cancer. Ms. Lora is so appreciative of your continued prayers and support. Your seeds of faith through cards and notes can be mailed to: Ms. Lora Santiago, C/O Ms. Katie Glaser, N166 W21211 Glencoe Lane, Jackson, WI 53037.
- We send our prayers and support to Ms. Sandy Wamser. She has returned to Wisconsin. Cards and notes of continued healing and restoration can be mailed to: Ms. Sandy Wamser, 3742 Pleasant Valley Road, West Bend, WI 53095.
- We ask for your continued prayers of healing and restoration for Rev. Jean Bartlett. She will move to a nursing facility where she will start both radiation and chemotherapy on 21 March 2022. We're also praying for Rev. Jon Bartlett for strength and courage. Cards and emails of comfort, healing and care can be sent to: Rev. Jean and Rev. Jon Bartlett, 813 Seymour Street, Waupun, WI 53963. Email address: bilojon@gmail.com
- Thank you for your support and care of the family of Mr. Ted Meilahn on 7 March 2022 as we remembered him in love. Fair Winds and Following Seas, dear Shipmate.
- Mr. William (Bill) & Mrs. Ginger Hornung would love to hear from you! Cards or notes of encouragement or "just thinking of you" can be mailed to: W194N16744 Eagle Dr. Room 3, Jackson, WI 53037
- Mrs. Janice Liepert-Kempf, continued prayers for healing and strength as she continues to struggle with illness. You can send emails of prayers and support to: alankempf33@gmail.com; or cards and notes to Ms. Janice Liepert-Kempf, 414B. South Pleasantview Road, Plymouth, WI 53073; phone number: 920.838.1830.
- Ms. Annie Griffin, Aunt of Pastor Clarissa (Bro. Martin), still request your prayers of healing and courage. Cards and notes for promises of healing, restoration and encouragement and can be mailed to: Ms. Annie Griffin, 1122 Hutchinson Ferry Road, Bainbridge, GA 39819
- Ms. Linda Green, sister of Ms. Debra Matthies, thank you for your continued prayers for strength and courage as her cancer has returned. Cards and notes can be mailed to: Ms. Linda Green, c/o Ms. Debra Matthies, 1466 North 12th Avenue, West Bend, WI 53090.
- Mr. Len McGinnis, Jr., continues to face medical concern. Your cards and notes of support and well wishes for Mr. Len and Ms. Shelia McGinnis can be mailed to: 1230 Vogt Drive, West Bend, WI 53095
- Ms. Trisha Funke, daughter of Mr. Ralph & Ms. Bonnie Hensel. Cards of encouragement and prayers for continued healing and diagnosis can be sent to her parents: Mr. Ralph & Ms. Bonnie Hensel, 629 Highland View Drive, West Bend WI 53095
- Mr. Roger and Mrs. Nobi Sacia, are grateful for your prayers and cards of encouragement. Mr. Roger and Ms. Nobi, 1626 Jefferson Street, Madison WI 53711
- Mr. Phil Heimerl, son-in-law of Mike & Fay Lewis. He was diagnosed with ALS and continues to request your prayers of healing.

Dear God, please give me strength when I am weak, love when I feel forsaken, courage when I am afraid, wisdom when I feel foolish, comfort when I am alone, hope when I feel rejected, and peace when I am in turmoil. Amen.

Your humble Pastor & Servant Leaders:
Pastor Clarissa & Bro. Martin