

Sowing & Reaping

The Monthly Newsletter for Ashley and Kilbourne United Methodist Churches

Empowered by God's Spirit, our mission is to invite everyone to join us in following Jesus, as we love, teach and serve.

November 2017

Bringing All to Jesus and Bringing Compassion to All

As Jesus came to Jericho, a certain blind man was sitting beside the road begging. The blind man shouted, "Jesus, Son of David, show me mercy." Jesus stopped and called for the man to be brought to him. Luke 18: 35, 37, 40

One of my favorite bible stories comes from the Gospel of Luke. Jesus and a large crowd are traveling to Jericho and there is a blind man sitting on the side of the road. This is a pretty simple description because roads in that time were typically raised so it is more descriptive to tell you that this man is sitting in a ditch on the side of the road. Take a minute to think about that. A person who cannot contribute to society, in this case because of his disability, is cast out by a group of people who do not wish to support him. He can't work, he can't pay his way, he is just dead weight. So, Jesus is coming down the road with this crowd and the outer edges of this group is reaching the blind man.

It is easy to imagine that the blind man hears all of this commotion. Hearing a large group coming down the side of the road, he has to ask what is going on. Once he hears that this is Jesus coming to Jericho, this man goes bananas. He cries for Jesus to have mercy on him and to cure his blindness. Wouldn't we all? If someone could remove the one thing holding us back, the one thing that could restore our lives to normal, wouldn't we all lose our minds trying to get the attention of Jesus?

The crowd Jesus is with is having none of it. They're telling him to sit down and shut up. I can imagine they said things like: "You're a blind beggar in the ditch, we are too important for you to waste our time." Ironically, the people who are literally closer to Jesus have completely lost the plot!

Fortunately, Jesus hears the blind man's cries. Jesus isn't just listening to the questions of the self-proclaimed important people he is with. Jesus also hears the blind man. What happens next is why this story is my favorite. Instead of parting the crowd like a sea and walking towards the blind man, Jesus commands the crowd to bring the man to him. Jesus forces the crowd to see the man crying out in a ditch on the side of the road. Because of Jesus, the crowd can no longer ignore the person in pain. The crowd is called to reach out, and bring the man to Jesus.

I think that we expect God to be doing all of the dirty work when it comes to the restoration of the world while we get to keep our hands clean. Just like Jesus calls the crowd, God is constantly inviting us to participate, to find the lost people and bring them to God. While God is moving throughout the world, God invites us to participate and collaborate in the restoration of all things. One of the ways we do this is by reaching out to those that have been cast aside by society and bringing them to the Christ that hears their cries.

Now Thanksgiving is just around the corner. Soon we will be gathering with those dear to us and remember just how thankful we really are. My prayer is that as we grow together, our community will be thankful for us. Not because we sent money and other precious resources, but because we heard the cries of the broken in our community and we partnered with God to make them whole.

Preston Watkins

CHRISTMAS CRAFT SHOW

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2017 from 9:00AM-2:00PM

It is hard to believe but it's time to think about the Christmas Craft Show! This year we have the exciting addition of Santa joining us for part of the morning!

We already have some vendors signed up already but there is still space available. Share the word with all your friends and families who make crafts!

In order to make this day a success, we need some help from the congregation. Soon there will be a sign up for food donations. On December 2nd, we could use help in the kitchen or with hospitality. We also need help getting the word out— tell all your family and friends about it!! And, if you know a place that will hang a flier, please contact the church office.

Email the church at kumcl@frontier.com if you are able to volunteer some of your time or if you are interested in other ways you can help.

Christmas in Ashley

Join together with the Ashley community on Dec 2 for an amazing evening. Starting at 6:00PM we will see Ashley transformed into a holiday haven.

A Christmas Village, hundreds of luminaries, and a parade that will bring Santa to Ashley UMC are just a few of the highlights. Ashley UMC will be open all night and delight visitors with music. A scavenger hunt through town will highlight some of the holiday festivities. Stop in the library for a cocoa or the bank to check out the Christmas Village. Returning this year, 5 houses will be open for viewing!

If you live in Ashley decorate your house for a chance to win a prize. Don't live in Ashley— come check it out!

Come one and come all! This is a family-friendly event.



Please pray for...

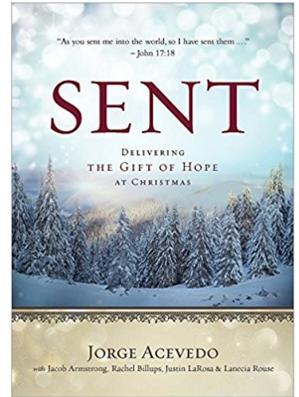
Gordon Walker, Dick Dawson, Ann Kortz, Louise Henry, Fred Wicker, Bill Clase, Faye Kaelber, Joann Hein, Madge Conklin, Marilyn Hedrick, Martha Porter, Susan Young,

It's a Party

Aunt Ruth, aka Ruth Milstead, is having a party and all are invited. Family and friends will join together on November 11 to celebrate Aunt Ruth's 90th birthday. The party will be at the Concord Township from 2:00PM-5:00Pm

Advent Bible Studies

Advent is approaching fast and as we prepare for Christmas in other ways, we also should be preparing our hearts and souls for the birth of Christ. One way to do that is to join in with others for a Advent Bible Study. This year we are using the curriculum *Sent: Delivering the Gift of Hope at Christmas*.



We will be offering this study at several different times. Different classes will be led by Amy Ruggles, Preston Watkins and Pastor Beth. Any one is welcome to attend. If you miss a session at your regular time, you can always attend another class! Below is a full list of classes including locations and dates.

Sunday at 9:30AM, Kilbourne: Nov 19, Nov 26, Dec 3, Dec 10, Dec 17

Sunday at 10:00AM, Ashley: Nov 19, Nov 26, Dec 3, Dec 10, Dec 17

Wednesday at 6:00PM, Kilbourne: Nov 15, Nov 29, Dec 6, Dec 13, Dec 20

Thursday at 1:00PM, Kilbourne: Nov 9, Nov 16, Nov 30, Dec 7, Dec 14

PIN Christmas Gifts

In years past, People in Need has made available families for congregations to support with gifts at Christmas. This year they have ended that program and are focusing on their growing Christmas Clearing House. We will be collecting new unwrapped items, toys and clothes to send. Dates will be shared soon!

Beans for Benevolence

The harvest is in! Ashley's annual fundraiser for benevolence funds is drawing to a close and it is another year of celebrating what a little seed, and a lot of work can do.



Over \$8000 was presented to the church as proceeds from this ministry! This is such an amazing blessing to all who will benefit from the fund— our neighbors known and unknown. A case of the hands and feet of Christ at its best.

Thank you all who gave seed money and to all those who generously gave of their labor, skill and time.

Office Hours

We are making adjustments to office hours. On Tuesdays, office hours will be 9AM-12PM at Kilbourne and 1PM-4PM at Ashley. Thursdays, office hours will be from 9AM-12PM at Kilbourne.

Please always call before coming in case there has been changes. Meetings and pastoral care can impact hours week to week.

There will be no formal office hours the week of Thanksgiving but Pastor Beth is available by cell phone.

There will be no office hours at Kilbourne on any day with an election.

Harvest Meal

Every year in November the Kilbourne congregation hosts the biggest, most delicious potluck of the season. We join together to celebrate the harvest and rejoice in all we have to be thankful for on November 12. Turkey is provided and all are invited to bring sides.



The Kilbourne congregation invites the Ashley congregation to join with us this year. The dinner starts about 11:45AM giving you time to make it to Kilbourne following Sunday School at Ashley. Please come that we may eat, laugh, and rejoice together!

Holiday Script

Many of us have use for gift cards in the holiday season. We buy gifts with them, eat out on them, and give them as gifts. As you consider your gift card needs this year, please consider buying them from the Script program.



Script is a program that both Ashley and Kilbourne churches participate in. From Script you can order a wide array of gift cards and a portion of what you spend is given back to the church. This is an easy way to give a little extra to the church this year!

Orders may take a few weeks to receive so plan ahead. Beth Bennington and Ruth Milstead organize the Script program for Ashley and Kilbourne respectively. Questions can be directed towards Pastor Beth if needed.

Party at the Parsonage



Being in community as a congregation means many things. And sometimes it means having a party! Annually, Pastor Beth and Felix host holiday parties in order that we can have time of fellowship and fun. It also gives time for conversations that don't happen on busy Sundays and is an opportunity for the Kilbourne and Ashley members to mingle together!

There will be three dates to choose from since the parsonage cannot hold everyone at once (and there are only so many places to sit!). On Tuesday, Dec 5th and Thursday, Dec 7th dinner will be served at 6:00PM-ish. On Wednesday, Dec 6th, lunch will be served around noon.

Sign ups will be available in church or you can email Pastor Beth. Sign up with your friends and family or pick a random one and see who shows up! Each time will include at least one gluten-free and one vegetarian option. If you have dietary needs besides those, just let Pastor Beth know. There is no set agenda unless you count a Christmas game! If you are able, bring a wrapped gift that costs less than \$5.00

Let's take time as we move into the busy holiday season to take a breathe and enjoy time together.