

# The Circuit—January 2018

## Evangelical United Methodist Church

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### A Message from Pastor Wendy:

During worship on the first Sunday of 2018 we will lift our voices and proclaim through song, “This is a day of new beginnings, time to remember and move on, time to believe what love is bringing, laying to rest the pain that’s gone.” God tells us something similar through the prophet Isaiah: “Do not dwell on the past. See! I am doing a new thing!” (43:18-20).

Isn't it awesome to worship a God of new beginnings? This does not mean we dismiss the past. It is important to process past pain, confess past sins, forgive past wrongs, learn from past mistakes ...but dwelling on it is not helpful. We live in the present, the place where God is saying, “Look! I am doing something new! Do you recognize it? I am making a way in the areas where you feel lost. I am providing sustenance in the circumstances that drain you.”

The past year was one of joys and challenges for our church family. We welcomed 19 (!) new members, served hundreds of families through the Free Store, provided food and hygiene items to couch-surfing teens, prayed for our kids, and loved one another through sickness, grief, and depression. We also argued, pointed fingers, and judged without trying to understand. We sometimes made sure our own needs were met and opinions made known without stopping to think about how others' needs and thoughts were being ignored. Many times, we offered abiding grace; other times, we refused to forgive.

My guess is that 2018 will hold much of the same. Our church will continue to face challenges related to the controversial election and consecration of Bishop Oliveto. At this phase in the process, we know that members of our church family feel differently about her election and what it means for our church. We know that despite study, conversation, and prayer, we are not likely changing anyone's mind to match our own. We also know that despite the differences, we have been able to worship, serve, and grow together as disciples of Jesus Christ. We know the Spirit continues to move and work in and through all of us. That's the lesson I hope and pray we take with us into the new year.

So as we move into 2018, we will continue to intentionally address the issues that face our denomination and our church. Know that the goal is not to come to a place of total agreement on the issues, but to make sure we have done our best to hear every voice, pray about and discern God's will for our church and ourselves, and come to a place in which we can agree that no matter what happens, God's Spirit is on the move in and through EUMC, and It is doing something new! We do too much good for God to forget that.



Here is one last verse we will sing together on Sunday, “Christ is alive, and goes before us to show and share what love can do. This is a day of new beginnings, our God is making all things new.” Christ is alive and on the move. See! He is doing a new thing ... and it will be GOOD.

## December Celebrations:

- 45 people attended Wednesday Night Church Night on Dec. 6!
- 167 people attended our Christmas Eve service; we were able to give \$300 to Broadwater School from that night's offering.
- The Free Store served a record number of families (83) and gave out brand new pjs to the kids (thanks for your donations!).
- The ladies hosted a Christmas gathering and enjoyed hearing stories from missionary Lyndsey Gray.
- Our singing adults & kids put on a wonderful Christmas cantata & program!
- Wednesday evening prayer & reflection for Advent
- Celebration of Life service for the inspiring and beloved Allegra Jolley
- Blessed by your generous tithes & offerings, the church was able to fully meet its budget goals for **2017**.



January 2018						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednes-	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
31	1	2	3	4	5	6
	9:30 am Journey Study 11am Discovery		Church Night 6:30 pm	Trustees Mtg 6:30 pm		FreeStore 9:30-12:30
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Worship/ Potluck Church Mtg	9:30 am Journey Study 11am Discovery	Happle Circle 1p Roukema 7pm	Youth Group 6:30pm Finance Comm. 10:30 am			
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Worship/ Sun School	9:30 am Journey Study 11am Discovery		Youth Group 6:30pm			FreeStore 9:30 am-12:30
21	22	23	24	25	26	
Worship/ Sun School	9:30 am Journey Study 11am Discovery		Young at Heart noon Youth Group 6:30 pm	6:30p Mission/ Evangelism		Youth Group Lockin 5:pm
28	29	30	31	1	2	3
Worship/ Sun School Potluck - SPRC	9:30 am Journey Study 11am Discovery					

## Looking Ahead:

- We will be reading and studying the life of Jesus through the Gospel of John. **Read along - one chapter a day!**
- Jan 8-13: Chapters 1-6
- Jan 15-20: Chapters 7-12
- Jan 22-27: Chapters 13-18
- Jan 29-31: Chapters 19-21
- The Youth will be leading worship on January 28th.
- The Youth are hosting a Superbowl Food Drive & Fundraiser Jan 28 & Feb 4th. Bring a food item for the Teen Pantry or donate money to the youth fund while cheering on your favorite Superbowl Team (Go Vikings! - you can't blame a MN girl for dreaming :) ).
- Leadership Teams will be meeting to plan for the coming year - be sure to check the calendar for meeting times.
- February Dates to Remember: Feb 7 @ 6:30 pm - Church Night, Feb 14 @ 6:30 pm- Ash Wednesday Service at Hope UMC (244 Wicks).

### *Building Up Our Church Family - Be a Prayer Partner!*

*We are updating our child-adult prayer partner list this month. Adult prayer partners build intentional relationships with one or more children of our church by praying for them on a daily basis and leaving notes of encouragement and/or small gifts in the child's "mailbox" at least once a month. Please let Pastor Wendy or the office know if you would like to continue praying for your assigned child/ren or if you would like to start praying for one of our kids.*

### Monthly Mission Opportunity:

Due to winter weather, the youth did not go caroling in December. They will be visiting our homebound & nursing home members to share a few traditional hymns and words of encouragement on Wednesday, January 24th. Meet at church at 6:30 pm if you'd like to join!

### Bible Verse of the Month:

*(Cut this out & hang it where you will see it every day)*



### Spiritual Practice of the Month:

Write down one thing you want to give to Jesus in the year ahead. Think of something from the past year you would like to change (ex) be more forgiving, accept myself as God made me, pray more and worry less) and ask God to do a new and wonderful thing with it in the year ahead! Pray daily, offering this gift to Jesus and asking him to do something new with it.



Prayer for Our Church in 2018:

*God, help us grow  
closer to you  
and  
to one another.*

### Stay Connected:

Find us on **Facebook**: Billings Evangelical United Methodist Church.

Follow our **blog** for witty stories and inspiring reflections: [actyourfaith.wordpress.com](http://actyourfaith.wordpress.com).

Get information and find our calendar on our **website**: [www.actyourfaith.org](http://www.actyourfaith.org)

## Church History Continued

2007 Pastor Ron Kapalka

This year marked the end of the Ladies' Friendship Circle. Originally, it was called, "Ladies' Aid Society". The name changed in 1985 with Carol Hanson Prewett suggesting the new name. Friendship Circle was a very strong group within the church being faithfully mission minded. The Friendship Circle, further, had been the mainstay of the work/fellowship activities of the church for many years.

An anonymous donor provided new white table cloths for the basement Fellowship Hall tables.

2008 Pastor Ron Kapalka

God gave EUM opportunities to express kindness and a feeling of warmth through Outreach and Missions. A new venture of Outreach that began was the Sandwich Program for the Homeless. The Happle and Roukema Circles were a very integral part of this Mission Outreach under the direction of Joyce Fink.

2009 Pastor Ron Kapalka

EUM continued to be faithful in the giving to various Missions, however, once again, EUM faced financial situations of concern. Decision was made to eliminate the secretarial position.

2010 Pastor Ron Kapalka and Jeremy Scott

With Pastor Ron's retirement, EUM welcomed Pastor Jeremy Scott who was fresh out of Seminary. Pastor Jeremy came to EUM with not only pastoral gifts, but also expertise in technology.

Two very special celebrations occurred this year. The first was celebrating long time member, Tillie Friesz' 100th birthday! Tillie's life of faith and Christ-like living touched so many people over the years. The second special occasion was sharing in George and Patt Anderson's 60th wedding anniversary.

Members helped to revamp the Sunday School program for the children.

2011 Pastor Jeremy Scott

A new Mission was created with the "FreeStore" under the direction of Leslie Idstrom. FreeStore was and is supported by the Billings Area United Methodist Churches. This is a Mission where people within the local community can shop for clothing and small household items at no cost.

Also, another new outreach program that began was the "Hands of Jesus" designated specifically for the EUM family members having a need. The startup fund for this ministry came from Esther Thornton's interest expressed in her will.

From Pastor Jeremy's sermon series on the Book of Acts. "Act Your Faith" became EUM's logo and statement.

— Submitted by Carol Vegge