



**Easter Sunday at BUMC**  
**Sunday, April 4th**

**6:30 am Sunrise Service (Outdoor)**  
(Amphitheatre — beside Brooklyn Middle School)

**9am Traditional Service— Sanctuary**  
Please pre-register at <https://signup.com/go/XgmrGPo>  
Social distance — Masks — health screening

**11:30am African Contemporary—Sanctuary**  
Please pre-register at <https://signup.com/go/iZQQiAu>  
Social distance — Masks — health screening

**Digital Service** — all our Digital Platforms

Dear friends and family of BUMC,

As we emerge from these pandemic times, with more and more of us receiving a vaccination, with our trustees team doing so much hard work to prepare our church for pandemic and post-pandemic days, as in-person worship re-gathers and our digital service grows, I felt it was time to lay out a vision for BUMC from my perspective as Senior Pastor, on how we emerge from this Pandemic and these trying times of racial injustice. In this newsletter, you will read about the creation of a digital campus through the transformation of our encounter service; the growth of our food pantry and Loaves & Fishes ministry; in-person worship challenges over the next few months; MCCI progress; the work of racial reconciliation and how we become a church for everyone; how we strive to become a faithful and inclusive church; the future of Children & Family Ministry as well as Youth Ministry. Please take the time to read through these articles as we attempt to follow Christ through these pandemic times.

Pastor Rich Zeck



Our **Biblical Imperatives** and **Vision** for BUMC remains the same: before, during and post pandemic. We will strive to be the Heart of the Brooklyns, the Heart of the Metro by ...

**Loving God and Neighbor**  
**Healing a Broken World**  
**Reaching New People**  
**Becoming a Church for Everyone**

As we strive to fulfill this Vision, the pandemic and social justice protests of the summer have challenged how we "do business." We talk now about "*returning to normal*" when the fact is "*normal*" will not return.

Throughout these challenging times, the church has had to adapt how it follows God into a chaotic and difficult world. The old ways, the "normal," will no longer work.

So how do we, the church, respond to the Spirit of God, who is still calling us to love God and neighbor?

To heal a broken world? To reach new people? To become a church for everyone?

The pandemic has changed us. The summer of social justice has changed the metro. And I feel the answer to how we live out our mission and vision is simple:

**Get smaller to accomplish our bigger calling.**

I do not mean we get smaller as a church, I mean get smaller in the ways we do things. Each person, each member, each friend of BUMC develops a personal mission plan to implement our Biblical Imperatives.

Each person, supported by the whole church, do his/her/their part to become the Heart of the Metro.

How do we as a Church support you as a person to love God and Neighbor, to heal a broken world, to reach new people and to help us become a church for everyone?

Another way of putting it, how do each one of us become a piece of glass in the Stained Glass window God calls Brooklyn UMC and reflect the light of Christ into this world?

## A Partnership with our Mother Church.

Our church history tells us that over 165 years ago a group of women from North UMC ventured out to the corner of Noble and Brooklyn Blvd and began Methodist class meetings that eventually led to the founding of Brooklyn UMC. Today, it is time to return to that partnership and start a new ministry once again.

Brooklyn UMC and North UMC have begun working on developing a ministry partnership. You may have seen Pastor Malachi preaching our digital and in-person services. I (Pastor Rich) have joined the leadership team of North UMC giving them some guidance and direction; Pastor Henry and Pastor Malachi are entering a coaching arrangement to help them focus on outreach specific to North UMC; the Partnership applied and received a grant and training from the Minnesota Annual Conference on starting a Digital Campus; our Trustees, Finance and Stewardship teams are going to explore ways to work together; our Care Ministry is expanding to include members and friends of North UMC; and we are looking at ways our encounter service can begin in-person services, possibly at North UMC.

All this is to focus on one of our Biblical Imperatives: **Reach New People.**

How do we effectively reach the people of the North Metro? Throughout our history, BUMC and North UMC have been a vital presence of the Methodist Way on the north side. But in the last few decades, North UMC has declined and the Methodist Way of loving God and Neighbor has lost its vitality. Can a partnership between North UMC and BUMC help bring back our vitality? Can a focus on social justice the Methodist Way help us reach new people for the ministry and mission of Jesus Christ? Can North UMC be re-vitalized with the help of BUMC to become a thriving community of faith in the heart of the North Metro? This is the purpose and challenge of this partnership. It is BUMC coming home in a way to be alongside our “mother” church and together, restore our vitality on the north side.



## encounter

Just before the pandemic restrictions, our contemporary worship service (encounter) was just starting to take off and reach new people. It had done the

hard work of transformation into a service that could reach new people and was just showing the promise of that hard work. Then the pandemic restrictions!

Since then, and because of the restrictions, we have not been able to bring encounter back to in-person worship. The main reason is that we are required to have about 2 hours between our worship services to “clean” our air in our facility. A service had to be excluded from our in-person offerings and encounter, being the smallest of our services, was the one to not restart. Because of that we decided encounter accept the challenge of reaching new people in two vital and exciting ways:

- 1) It becomes our Digital Campus for BUMC and North UMC.
- 2) When North UMC is ready to return to in-person worship we regather encounter at North’s facility.

This allows encounter to regather in-person in a safe environment; it gives BUMC and North UMC a Digital Campus for worship, discipleship and service; it allows us to focus on reaching the north side of the Metro and revitalize our ministries; it allows us to give a focus to our racial justice ministries.

Lexi Bergevin, our encounter worship coordinator, will continue leading the encounter team as well as lead the new digital campus team that has begun their work. Please keep encounter in your prayers and if you were a regular encounter worshipper, keep watching for updates on when the in-person service will re-gather. Also read the article on the need for a Digital Campus as part of our ministry as we come through these pandemic times and build a new ministry to reach new people.



The pandemic has created challenges for our Care Ministry but it must be said, the ministry of our Care Coordinator and her team have risen to the challenge. With pandemic restrictions we have not been able to make hospital, in-home or facility care visits. We have all experienced isolation and loneliness, but through it all, Mim Campbell and her team have kept us in contact and made regular visits as best we can throughout the pandemic. Hopefully with the onset of vaccinations we will be able to return to in-person care visits soon. Through our Care Ministry we have added our **Phone Service Ministry**, providing a Sunday Morning worship experience for those who are not digital, and at 10am Monday-Saturday we share the Upper Room Devotional as well. Our new summer Intern, Hannah, is starting to make some care visits and calls as well. Please greet her and help her learn how care ministry makes such a huge difference in so many lives.

If you did not know, Mim splits her time between Youth Ministry and Care Ministry. In the future we would like to separate these two positions dedicating more time to each individually. To make this possible, we are asking that all members and friends of BUMC consider three options in your future giving: 1) Make a special gift to our Care Ministry to fund our Care Coordinator position; 2) Add to your Will and Estate Plan an end of life gift to the Care Ministry of BUMC; and 3) Dedicate you or your loved one's memorials to the Care Ministry of BUMC. Our goal will be to fully fund a 32-hour per week Care Coordinator by these three giving options and separating it out from our Youth Ministry. Our Care Coordination position was added to our Ministry because of the generosity of special gifts from two donors, but it is now time to expand our funding of this position which is a vital part of our future ministries.

### Hannah Lahai-Johnson

We would like to welcome Hannah to our BUMC staff. She is a summer intern from Bethel Seminary and will be spending around 300 hours with us through August.



Hannah is finishing up her Masters of Divinity Degree at Bethel Seminary where she has specialized on Pastoral Care. She also works full-time at North Memorial Hospital so is a busy women with work, school and an internship.

At BUMC she is going to get a broad range of ministry experience under Pastor Rich as her supervisor. She has to write a number of reflection papers on her ministry experiences with us and many meetings with Pastor Rich to review and learn from her experiences. We are going to get her involved in worship and preaching, care ministries, Youth, Children, & Family ministries, as well as lead some Bible studies and even get some administrative experience. Our role is to welcome her into BUMC and give her a broad range of pastoral experience. She will be our in-person preacher on Sunday, April 11th and lead a Bible Study on Zoom and Facebook Live that evening at 7pm. We're sure she'd love to meet you!

Zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84191663739> Passcode: 7200





The pandemic has brought one thing into clear focus for the church — Digital Church is here to stay! Many have gotten used to digital worship and are making no plans to return to in-person worship. Churches that want to remain vital after the pandemic must have a digital presence long after the pandemic is over. As part of our North UMC/ BUMC partnership, we are launching **encounter** as our digital campus. **encounter**, through training and support of the Minnesota Annual Conference, launched in March. We will take a few months to experiment and try new things, but it will remain a vital part of not only our worship options but service and discipleship as well.

When we talk worship at BUMC we will have 4 vital options for us to love God:

- 1) our traditional service at 9:00 am
- 2) 10:00 am phone service worship
- 3) our African contemporary service at 11:30 am
- 4) encounter digital worship

If and when encounter is ready for an in-person worship experience, we plan on its regathering at North UMC as another in-person option for worship while remaining as our digital worship.

We will also work on Facebook Live options for our 9:00 am and 11:30 am in-person worship services, but we are facing some technical and staffing difficulties that have to be overcome to make this possible.



The safest way for in-person worship is to have it outdoors! Last summer we held an outdoor service as long into the fall as we could. This summer we plan on doing the same.

As soon as weather permits we will add a **10am Outdoor Worship** experience to our Sunday morning line-up. Hoping for a May start so plan on bringing your chair and joining us.

We will continue to social distance and wear masks as long as the health department says we should, but hopefully be able to add some hymn singing outdoors! We will also set up our FM transmitter for those who would like to remain in their cars.

We will keep this service simple and safe, and of course not hold it if the weather does not cooperate. We will also keep our 9am and 11:30am in-person services in the sanctuary, and our phone service and digital worship service going as well.

Always dress for the weather but plan on worshipping outdoors with us at 10am as soon as the weather allows.



## WORSHIP BY PHONE

877.447.2862

Dial this number and the first time you call it you can choose to have messages sent to you automatically at 10am on Sunday mornings

with a brief version of our message and liturgy.

Also at 10am, Monday - Saturday, you will receive a call with our Upper Room Devotional.

## COURAGE

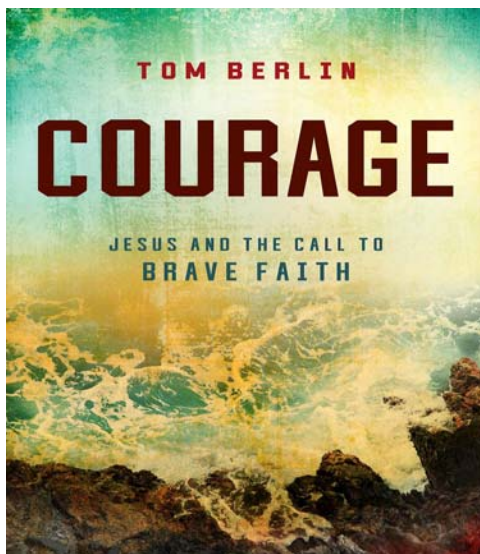
Starting Sunday, April 18th, we will begin a new worship and study series on courage. It is based on the book, ***Courage: Jesus and the Call to Brave Faith*** by author and UM preacher, Tom Berlin.

As part of this series, Pastor Rich will be leading a study on Zoom/Facebook Live at 7pm on Sunday evenings starting April 18th, walking through the chapters of ***Courage***. Our zoom link for this study is: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84191663739> and the passcode to get in is 7200.

If you would like to be part of the weekly study, order the book and begin reading. You do not have to be reading the book to be part of the study, though.

Pastor Rich will also be producing his weekly F@ith@Home study resource based on ***Courage*** for use in your home or a small gathering.

Together, let's begin to build a brave faith!



The United Methodist Church has been in chaos and turmoil over sexuality and inclusion of our LGBTQ+ members and friends into the life of the church. The Pandemic threw our General

Church into chaos and has postponed them from gathering here in Minneapolis until the summer of 2022 to make any policy. But now it seems some churches are leaving the denomination before the General Church can gather.

So what does this mean for BUMC? Do you have questions about the Bible and Sexuality? Need a safe space to explore the issues? Do you even understand what LGBTQ+ means? Join us for this important look at the Bible and Sexuality.

Sunday evenings starting April 18th from 6pm-6:55pm.

(Zoom participants are asked to sign in by 5:55pm)

Pastor Rich and some members of our Youth Group are going to lead a study called ***Faithful and Inclusive: The Bible, Sexuality, and The United Methodist Church*** on Zoom and Facebook page. Study guides will be mailed to those who want to participate in this study weekly.

Zoom Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88200823381>

Passcode: 7200

### Our Schedule and Nightly Topics:

Sunday, April 18 Session #1

How United Methodists Interpret Scripture

Sunday, April 25th Session #2

Old Testament Scripture

Sunday, May 2nd Session #3

The Influence of Culture on How We Read the Bible

Sunday, May 16th Session #4

New Testament Scripture

Sunday, June 6th Session #5

The Jesus Ethic: What Did Christ Say?

Sunday, June 13th Session #6

Where Does the United Methodist Church Go From Here?

I hope you decide to join us for this important study and remember this will be a safe space for reflection and dialogue.



## 2020 Financial Update

What a year 2020 was! We started with a church expense budget of over \$730,600 with an estimated income of \$680,800. We felt we were ready to grow our ministry and support our mission in new and exciting ways, but then the pandemic and racial unrest came over us all like a giant wave. Our leadership through Church Council, including chairs of PPRC, Trustees, Finance, Lay Leaders, and Pastors began to meet weekly to review our ministry, our facility, and our finances. Our first task was to oversee the shutdown of our facility and move to digital worship. Then we focused on a reduced, flexible budget, cutting

as many expenses as we possibly could to help us survive what we thought would be a few months. Move forward to summer when we could “return to normal” was our thinking. But normal did not return and the racial unrest in our Metro came to the forefront with the death of George Floyd.

The Finance Team, under the direction of our Church Council, applied for and received a PPP (Paycheck Protection Program) loan for \$60,000. This low-interest loan (since February 2021 now a grant) was to support our staff salaries and some benefits for 3 months, buying us time as we systematically reduced our expenses. Some examples of our reductions: let go our cleaning service and lawn service contracts; furloughed our contracted staff; church staff significantly reduced their program expenses; clergy staff donated their expense reimbursements; escrowing our apportionment payments. This allowed us to have cash flow throughout the year.

At the same time we were reducing expenses, the decision was made to make the West African Food Pantry a full-time ministry of BUMC and go to daily operations M-F, and helping Loaves & Fishes move to take-out meals M-W-F (they are currently serving about 75 meals/day). The Food Pantry through grants increased their storage capacity and laid down our wonderful flooring in the pantry room. To date, the pantry has serviced around 200 people per week!!

Our staff, along with some dedicated volunteers, went to work and became online specialists by expanding our digital worship capabilities with a digital service along with a phone service. We also added an ion air cleaning system to parts of our facility allowing us to have limited in-person worship.

With a lot of hard work, sacrifice, and diligent oversight, we ended 2020 with expenses of \$578,468. (If my math is right that is a reduction in expenses of almost \$153,000!). We want to personally thank our church leadership and staff for their willingness to make tough calls, sacrifices, and decisions that made our church viable in 2020.

Because of your faithful stewardship, we weathered the pandemic storm of 2020. Also, because of a miraculous December of giving, we ended the year with \$619,695! This allowed us to “pay back” some designated funds of our church, which had negative balances for over 25 years with a little over \$40,000. None of these figures include our Change4Change or Mission giving (we will report those totals soon), but suffice it to say, we survived a particularly challenging year. One could say we ended 2020 with a balance of \$0, with some of our long held designated funds in the black. We weathered the storm. Thank you!

George Bonnell  
Finance Team Chair

Pastor Rich Zeck  
Senior Pastor

Dave Kitelinger  
Council Chair

## The Challenge of 2021 has begun!

Though we ended the year of 2020 in good financial shape, in 2021 we are going to have to raise expenses as we bring more ministries online and open up our facility. January and February giving was slightly lacking. We also will be facing some capital needs (parking lots and elevator overall) in 2021. So please keep giving, and if possible make a special gift, maybe all or a tithe (10%) of your pandemic relief money, and together we shall face the challenge of 2021 together.



Acceptance ~ Belonging ~ Connection ~ Service  
Brooklyn United Methodist Church  
7200 Brooklyn Blvd.  
Brooklyn Center, MN 55429

NON-PROFIT ORG.  
PRSRT STD  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Twin Cities MN  
Permit #433

Return Service Requested



April 1st



April 2nd



April 3rd

### Facebook Live at 7pm with Pastor Rich

Join Pastor Rich on Facebook Live (BrooklynUMC) each night at 7pm for a scripture reading and short meditation on Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter Saturday.

Then plan on listening, streaming, or attending Easter Sunday services.

For Maundy (Holy) Thursday, you are welcome to have some bread and grape juice ready, for Pastor Rich will close his meditation that night with our communion liturgy.

Some may ask why online and not in-person. Under an abundance of caution because our church staff, including Pastor Rich, have yet to be fully vaccinated, and multiple consecutive nights of exposure is something we do not want to expose our staff to until they are vaccinated.