Bergen Highlands United Methodist Church

The People of the United Methodist Church

- Open Hearts
- Open Minds
- Open Doors

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the HIGHLANDER

Volume 14 Issue 2

March/April 2023

Dear Bergen Highlands Family,

Welcome to the journey to the cross. Starting Ash Wednesday, we started our journey of Lent. Lent is the time to pray, meditate on the word of God, fast from negative things, and do more good to draw ourselves closer to God.

Especially, during this
Lenten season, the BHUMC
family is collecting special
offerings for UMCOR to help
the Syria/Turkey earthquake
recovery. Our little action of
faith brings a huge impact to
many lives. That is how we
bring God's kingdom on
earth each day. Please
spend time with God daily
during this Lenten season
and have a deeper
relationship with Him.

This Lenten journey will lead us not only to the cross where our Savior offered himself but also to Easter morning, when Jesus overcame the power of death through the power of resurrection.

1 Peter 1:3 says, "Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead."

During our life journey, God provides us with a new birth and a living hope through Jesus Christ. We can live each day with a fresh and hopeful heart because of Jesus who was resurrected from the dead.

I do not know what season of life you are living now. When things are not going the way you want/plan, do not be discouraged but trust God who provides a living hope and new birth. God truly leads us to the new day!



By walking with Jesus, day by day, I hope and pray that this Lenten journey guides you to deepen your faith in God to stand strong at all times.

When you need guidance and help, please open the Bible and listen to the voice of God who gives you wisdom.

I invite you all to Lenten bible study, starting March 7. We will read the gospel of Luke with the book "Luke" written by Adam Hamilton. On March 14, We will have a soup supper. Please join us to meditate the word of God and to have wonderful fellowship with one another.

After a long journey of Lent, we will celebrate Easter together! Hope you experience the power of Resurrection not only Easter morning but every day in your daily life! God is with you always! Trust in the Lord who loves you and empowers you!

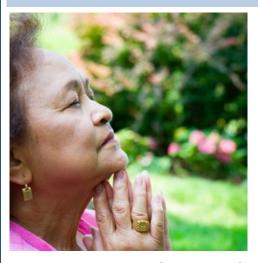
In Christ,
Pastor Miso



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The mysterious, connectional act of prayer.

By Crystal Caviness



For many, prayer is foundational to a person's faith. But do we understand it? In unraveling the complexity of prayer, we may learn to accept the mystery and seek a deeper connection with God. Photo by Canva.

When Linda Douty's friend died from a brain tumor, the event sent the lifelong United Methodist on a spiritual spiral as she sought to understand why the prayers of many failed to result in her friend's healing.

"She was fit, successful, all of the plusses in life you can imagine," Douty shares about her 50something-year-old friend. "Every prayer group I knew was praying for her. And she died."

"Wait a minute," she remembers thinking, "This doesn't add up to what I've been taught."
When she shared her confused anguish with her pastor, he counseled, ""When I feel like you feel right now, I pray, because Jesus prayed."
At the time, Douty thought the answer was "glib," she recalls. Thirty years later, Douty, who is a spiritual director in Memphis, Tennessee, doesn't have a better response.

"It was an unsatisfactory answer at the time," she shared. "But I call myself a Christian, a follower of Jesus. And what did Jesus do? He prayed in every circumstance. He prayed when he was happy, when he was sad, when he was bewildered, in the Garden of Gethsemane, even on the cross. So whatever this mystery is, Jesus thought it was important. "

The acts of asking for prayer, praying for others, reciting prayers together are built into our faith tradition. Jesus modeled it, we repeat it. But do we understand it? United Methodist spiritual leaders offer help unraveling the complexity of prayer, and, perhaps in doing so, leading us to accept the mystery and seek a deeper connection with God.

Unanswered prayers

Like Douty, many people struggle with prayers that aren't answered in the ways we want. "When people say, 'God didn't answer my prayer,' I always say, 'You're in good company and I point to the lament in the Psalms," shares the Rev. Claire McNulty-Drewes, a United Methodist pastor in the Mountain Sky Conference.

"I do pray for miracles and I believe in miracles. And I've seen miracles. But I also know the human body is an insidious thing. I don't know why a child gets cancer. It seems unfair. I don't know why car accidents happen to some people but not to me," McNulty-Drewes shares. "The lament psalms remind me I'm not the only one who may be questioning if there really is a God."

To make a specific request when praying to God is common. Our church services are filled with prayer times where we share "joys and concerns" – and mainly, concerns – with one another, asking God for healings, jobs, safety, positive outcomes.

"Viewing prayers as merely requests is transactional," explains Sally Sharpe, a United Methodist and spiritual director in Mt. Juliet, Tennessee. "I'm coming to you because I want something. If my prayer is successful, I'll get what I want. And I think a prevalent understanding of prayer is transactional. But I believe it's experiential, it's relationship."

"Prayer is an opportunity to ground me in that which is holy rather than that which is earthly." Rev. Claire McNulty-Drewes

"I've learned not to tie my prayer to the result of getting what I want," says Douty. "I long ago threw away my prayer notebook where I would write, 'Here's the day I prayed for XYZ and here's the day God answered it.' That makes it about my agenda and this has no room for mystery."

Of course, there are situations, usually times of crisis, when we plead and beg with God for a certain answer to our desperate prayers. It is in these times, says McNulty-Drewes, when

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Continued from pg 2

reframing our understanding of prayer may help, regardless of how the situation unfolds. "Instead of being about changing God's mind or getting what we want from God, it's about changing our mind," she says, referencing a book she read titled "The Meaning of Prayer," published more than 100 years ago by Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick.

"I'm less inclined these days to give God direction," Douty admits. "If I have a friend with a tumor, rather than pray to make that tumor go away, I'm more apt to envision that person completely enclosed in the love and mercy of God."

Prayer is more about relationship than results, Sharpe offers.

"When we are being transparent, authentic and real with God, that's where we are experiencing God's love and God's presence," she points out. "So n our prayers, if we don't get the answer we are asking for, but we feel safe, seen and known by God, that enables us to trust God even when things aren't going as we would like."

Nonstop connection

The Apostle Paul, in 1 Thessalonians 5:16, commends us to "pray without ceasing." What may seem an impossible task of around the clock praying becomes attainable when

redefining prayer from a single act to a way of being.

Sharpe likens her prayer life to a cell phone conversation on which she never presses "end." "We may not have words for a couple of hours, but we're still together," Sharpe says, expounding on the analogy. "The connection is there even if the conversation pauses. I'm always in the background waiting and listening for God to break in again and speak to me, and vice versa. God is attentive and right there. And it goes both ways."

Failsafe praying

If you've ever thought, "I don't know how to pray," there's good news.

"There is no way to get prayer wrong," Sharpe offers. "If you are seeking God and calling out to God, you're seeking connection and that's a win. Prayer is turning to God. You can't mess it up. Just be you. God is always open to that, delighted with that.

"Everybody is different. So why would we think there is one method to connect to God?," she asks, then recommends, "Find the language that suits your soul."

"Prayer becomes an opportunity to reframe my day-to-day posture," McNulty-Drewes explains, "to ground me in that which is holy, rather than grounding me in that which is earthly."

Crystal Caviness works for UMC.org at United Methodist Communications. This story was published on April 20, 2022.

HEALING HYMNS

For a holiday season boost, open your hymnal. In interviews with 65 North Carolinians who had experienced a life-threatening illness, the death of a loved one, or another difficult time, those who expressed their faith through song said they felt strengthened, more at peace, and better able to endure stressful situations when they sang or simply hummed hymns to themselves while thinking about the lyrics. Most helpful were hymns of thanksgiving and praise, like "Amazing Grace" or "I will Trust in the Lord." says lead author Jill B. Hamilton, Ph.D., of the School of Nursing at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She encourages visitors to bring a recording of favorite hymns for loved ones who are hospitalized. Also, she says, "these songs can be very comforting during the holidays as people remember those they've lost."

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Sermon Series



2/22 Ash Madacaday	The Fast We Choose
2/22 Ash Wednesday	Isaiah 58:3-12
2/26 First Sunday in Lent	If You Fall Down
2/20 First Suriday III Left	Matthew 4:1-11
3/5 Second Sunday in Lent	Go from Your Country
3/3 Second Sunday III Lent	Genesis 12:1-4
3/12 Third Sunday in Lent	Give Me Water
3/12 Third Sunday in Lent	John 4:5-42
3/19 Fourth Sunday in Lent	In the Presence
3/19 Fourth Sunday III Lent	John 9:1-41
2/26 Fifth Sunday in Lant	Who Could Stand
3/26 Fifth Sunday in Lent	Ezekiel 37:1-14







New Mission Opportunity! March 23



Every other month we help Spring Valley UMC with their Homeless Mission. They serve dinner to the homeless every Thursday night. Last month we made Baked Ziti, garlic bread, salad and dessert.

This month, on March 23rd, we are sending baked BBQ chicken drumsticks with rolls, a salad, fruit and dessert over for them to serve. It gives them a small break. (they don't have to cook, just serve)

We need your help. Can you help in the kitchen? Or possibly bake some cookies for the dessert? We need 130 cookies total, so we need a lot of bakers.

Whatever you can do will be a big help! Thanks!

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We Packed for Our College Students



We have six students we were remembering this year for Valentine's Day. Four of them are in the US in college and two are studying overseas through their universities. Four boxes of candy and treats and two gift cards were sent out to the students.





The Pancake Dinner Was Delicious!!!







Sous Chef Matt









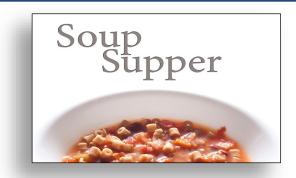


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Ash Wednesday

Our indoor evening service was at 6:30pm on February 22, but Pastor Miso was concerned for those who couldn't make the evening service; so she sat out in front of the church for 2 hours with "Ashes To Go". (Shhh...next year she may try for outside Starbucks, at least she could get some coffee!)





March 14 6:00 PM

A few great soups, interesting breads, a salad and desserts make up our Lenten Soup Supper. Hungry? Come and enjoy the food, the fellowship and a short devotion time. You'll go home satisfied in many ways!

Maybe we could make some pizza pockets... maybe make our own playdough...and maybe there's more! What do you think?

Call (201) 327-3960 to reserve a seat in the kitchen. \$10 per child + one non-perishable food item for the Paterson food pantry.

Thursday
March 30

5pm-6:30pm





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UMCOR RESPONSE TO EARTHQUAKES IN TURKEY AND SYRIA

By Susan Clark

ATLANTA (February 9, 2023) – A 7.8 magnitude earthquake struck southern Turkey at 4:17 a.m. on Monday, Feb. 6, 2023, the most powerful earthquake recorded since 1939. In the hours that followed, at least 78 aftershocks were reported, followed by a second earthquake of 7.5 magnitude.

The earthquake and aftershocks also impacted northwest Syria, where 4.1 million people depend on humanitarian assistance. Syrian communities, many of them women and children, are simultaneously facing an ongoing cholera outbreak and extreme winter weather, including heavy rain and snow.

Thousands have been killed in both countries, and deaths continue to rise as rescue crews seek survivors in collapsed buildings. The humanitarian response is struggling to ramp up to meet the need among the devastation and winter weather.

UMCOR's longstanding humanitarian partner, International Blue Crescent (IBC), has multiple offices and project sites in Turkey. In IBC offices, people fill the halls as they seek shelter, warmth, and a hot meal. With the devastating damage to roads, transport and infrastructure, IBC has received hundreds of families in its Kilis Community Center for shelter, warm items, and hot meals since the first hours Monday morning. Kilis is serving as a major hub for coordination and relief efforts, including for cross-border response into Syria.



IBC staff serve meals to earthquake victims at Kilis Community Center. Photo: Courtesy of International Blue Crescent

UMCOR has released initial solidarity grants to IBC and Forum for Development Culture and Dialogue (working in Syria) to help provide tents, heaters,



A little girl is rescued in Gaziantep, Turkey after a series of earthquakes hit Turkey and Syria on Monday, Feb. 6, 2023. (Credit: International Blue Crescent)

blankets, warm clothes, ready to eat meals and first aid kits to those who have been displaced. UMCOR staff members are also in touch with other partners in the region. Additional updates will be provided as more information becomes available.

Please join UMCOR in prayer for the many people affected by these devastating earthquakes, including the rescue crews seeking survivors and those caring for the injured and displaced.

Support relief and recovery efforts for this and other international disasters by donating to Advance # 982450 here.

Susan Clark is the chief communications officer for Global Ministries and UMCOR.

About UMCOR and the General Board of Global Ministries of The United Methodist Church

Founded in 1940, the United Methodist Committee on Relief is the global humanitarian relief agency of The United Methodist Church. A part of Global Ministries, UMCOR works in more than 80 countries worldwide, including the United States and its territories. The agency's mission, grounded in the teachings of Jesus, is to alleviate human suffering with open hearts and minds to all people. Working in the areas of disaster response and recovery, sustainable development and migration, UMCOR responds to natural or civil disasters that are interruptions of such magnitude that they overwhelm a community's ability to recover on its own. Learn more about UMCOR by visiting www.umcor.org or by following www.facebook.com/umcor and www.twitter.com/ umc umcor.

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BHUMC RESPONDS TO EARTHQUAKES IN TURKEY AND SYRIA

As always, Bergen Highlands is willing to step up to help those who are in need. Below are your Lenten giving calendars to help the survivors of the devastating earthquake in Turkey and Syria. All monies collected wil be sent to UMCOR who is presently over there providing the much needed aid to these poor men, women and children who have lost everything.

This could be kind of fun and a real eye opener as to how much we really have in our life!

Pastor Miso will be handing out a paper box for you to collect your donations in. All calendar donations will be collected on Easter Sunday, a perfect day to show your love for your neighbor.

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			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12.	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	Ash Wednesday A coin for every lamp.	A coin for every light switch.	A coin for every candle.	A coin for every flashlight (include your smartphone).
Pray today, thanking God for the gift of light. Pray for those who live in darkness.	A coin for every box of cereal.	A coin for every can of soup.				

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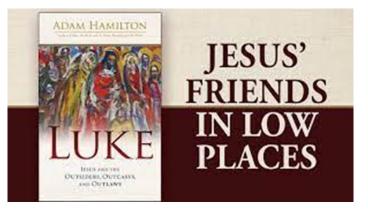
BHUMC RESPONDS TO EARTHQUAKES IN TURKEY AND SYRIA

	*	*	Mari	ch	*	
S	М	T	w	T	F	5
	9	9	A coin for every type of bread.	A coin for every jar of jelly.	A coin for every bottle of salad dressing.	A coin for every ja of peanut butter.
5 Pray today, thanking God for the food you enjoy. Pray for those who have no food this day.	A coin for every ball cap or hat.	7 A coin for every pair of shoes.	8 A coin for every pair of jeans or pants.	A coin for every coat.	A coin for every t-shirt.	A coin for every sweatshirt.
Pray today, thanking God for clothing that protects you from the elements. Pray for those who lack clothing to keep them warm and dry.	A coin for every ball or piece of athletic equipment.	14 A coin for every electronic video game.	A coin for every smart device (phones, tablets, etc.).	A coin for every televison.	17 A coin for every doll or stuffed animal.	A coin for every board or card game.
19 Pray today, thanking God for how you can enjoy entertainment in your home. Pray for those who would be grateful for just one of these items.	A coin for every box of band-aids.	A coin for every bottle of vitamins.	A coin for every box of tissues.	A coin for every bottle of hand sanitizer.	A coin for every toothbrush and tube of toothpaste.	A coin for every cough drop in your house.
2.6 Pray today, thanking God for your health. Pray for those who are sick.	A coin for every room in your home.	A coin for every electrical outlet in your home.	A coin for every chair in your home.	30 A coin for every desk (virtual work/school) in your home.	A coin for every bathroom.	

## April ## ##							
	S	M	Т	W	Т	F	S
	2 Palm Sunday Pray today, thanking God for shelter. Pray for those who have no place to sleep at night.	3 A coin for every Bible.	4 A coin for every book of hymns or sacred songs in your home.	5 A coin for every cross in your home.	6 A coin for every prayer you say today.	7 A coin for every story of Jesus you can tell.	A coin for every bed. 8 A coin for every person in your family.
	9	10	11	12.	13	14	15
	Easter Sunday	10		14	15	14	'
	Pray, thanking God for J ways we can gather and those who will receive t they would see God's pr	worship God. Pray for he coins collected that					

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Adult Lenten Bible Stud



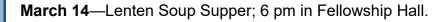
Tuesdays 7:00 PM

Don't forget to bring your Bible as we explore and discover Jesus' life and his relationships with all those he met.

March 7	Chapters 1-2 Lifting Up the Lowly
March 14	Soup Supper
March 21	Chapters 3 Parables from the Underside
March 28	Chapters 4 On the Journey to Jerusalem
April 4	Chapters 5-6 The Final Week

Important Dates to Remember...

March 12—Daylight Saving Time; push your clocks ahead 1 hour. Sorry!



March 30—Kids in the Kitchen; 5pm-6:30pm.

April 2—Palm Sunday Service

April 2—Easter Egg Hunt after worship service (ages 12 and under).

April 6—Holy Thursday Service; 7:00pm.

April 9—Easter Sunday Service; 10:15am.

April 29—Best Stuff Sale

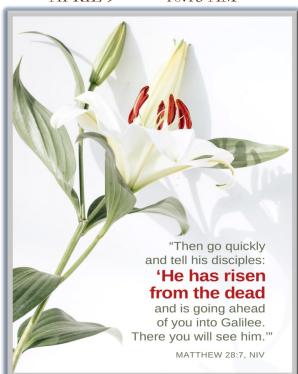


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Holy Thursday Service Thursday ~ April 6 ~ 6:30 PM I will lift up the CUP OF SALVATION and call on the name of the LORD ... Psalm 116:13

Easter Sunday Worship Service

APRIL 9 ~ 10:15 AM





Worship Service at 10:15 am Egg Hunt at 11:15 am



Rules of the Egg Hunt: Each adult member of the congregation will be given a few Easter eggs to hide after the service ends either in the Sanctuary or the Narthex. You will have 5 minutes. The children (ages 12 and under) will find them and put them into a common basket in the Narthex. They will then sort them so everyone will get the same number of eggs to take home.

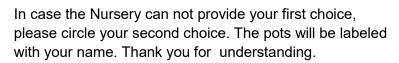
A Happy Easter!

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Time to Order Altar Flowers for Easter



This year we will be special ordering our flowers so that you will get (hopefully) exactly what you want for Easter. They will be on the altar for the Easter Service and you can take them home after the service ends. If you are unable to take them home at that time you will find them on Monday in the church kitchen.







Flower	Price	Amt. Wanted	Total Cost
Tulip	\$9.00		
Daffodil	\$10.00		
Hyacinth	\$10.00		
Lily	\$10.00		
Martha Washington Geranium	\$12.00		
	Totals		

Please use this form to indicate the plants you wish to order for our Easter Worship!

Flower orders are due by Sunday, March 26th. Thanks!

Name:	
Given in honor of	
Given in memory of_	



Please return this form with payment to:

Bergen Highlands UMC 318 West Saddle River Road Upper Saddle River, New Jersey 07458 Page 13 Highlander

Easter Word Search

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APOSTLES CROWN LAMB PRAYER RESURRECTION SON CHURCH FAITH MARY REDEMPTION RISEN SUNDAY CROSS JESUS MIRACLE REJOICE SAVIOR TOMB



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Bring the Best Stuff you want to get rid of beginning April 17th and if you would like, stay and help us price some of the items. For more information on what to bring call 201-327-3960 or contact Pat Hiler at church.

Share this information with your neighbors and friends!

Saturday April 29 9am-2pm



Community donations accepted April 17-26.

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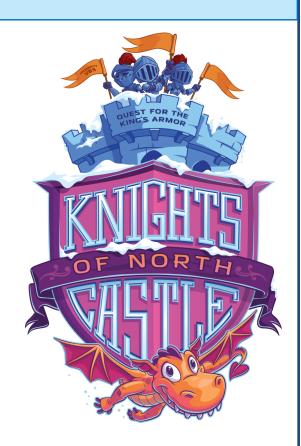
VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL



9am ~ Noon every day

Come be a knight with us and join in the challenge to find the armor of God. Can you do it?

It's a cold, frozen land...we need strong knights that can be bold and strong for God.



CRAFTS, SCIENCE, GAMES, SNACKS AND GREAT BIBLE STORIES

Sign up by going to **bergenhighlandsumc.org** web site **Upcoming Events** page, scroll down to Vacation Bible School and click on **Register**. See you in August!



Can you help out? Counselors needed.—
Senior Counselors –teens grades 8 and up
Junior Counselors—grades 6 and 7

Adults welcome!!!!

Contact Pat Hiler or Pastor Miso at 201-327-3960

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I remember one of the best things about being a kid was that I never felt like I needed to deal with a hard day by myself. No matter what was happening from a skinned knee to a bruised ego I had a secret weapon that would get me through. I could always yell, "Help!" and my mom would stop what she was doing and come over and offer her help. I wonder "At what age do we stop doing that?" When do we begin to learn that it's NOT ok to ask for help or that we should do everything ourselves? How often are we like child—needing help, perhaps wanting help—and yet, we don't ask?

Are you reluctant to ask for help? You're definitely not alone. Too many of us are unwilling to admit we need help. We think it's a sign of weakness. Actually, it is likely fear or pride that keeps us from admitting we need help, not weakness.

Starting a new year, we naturally want the opportunity to reset and plan for the future. However, to do this well you need to be in the right place, spiritually, emotionally, and physically. We have been through a tough year (or should I say years) and I was thinking we might need to pause and take time to allow ourselves an opportunity to be healed and restored before we pick up something new.

There are numerous stories about healing throughout the bible, but especially in the Gospels and Acts. The practice of praying for healing and of expecting healing to take place was a common understanding. Through these stories we can see that healing occurred in different ways and circumstances. The first step on the pathway to healing is when we get real, admit our spiritual brokenness, and acknowledge our need for God to heal us.

As a pastor, a mom, a leader, not asking for help creates a problem not just for me but for others because it makes people think that they need to uphold the same expectations. If she can do this alone so can I. Kind of like if we believe people



have perfect lives based on their social media platforms. Humbly announcing we need help might free others to do the same.

Sometimes we avoid asking for help of fear that it will be a burden to others. We think, I don't want to drag someone else down with my pain. It's not fair for me to ask someone else to carry this weight.

God designed the body of believers to work together and help one another – not to function as isolated individuals. By asking for help, we are honoring God's purpose in gifting us differently and honoring each other by encouraging the use of these gifts – and this is far from placing an unfair burden on someone else.

So, over this next week I invite you to prayerfully consider where do you need a helping hand. Is it a physical need, are you struggling emotionally, or spiritually? Then the next faithful step is to ask for help. Maybe that means asking someone to pray with you or setting aside some time to call on Jesus about your need. Maybe it's making a doctor's appointment or making a call to a counselor. Or maybe you might like to have a conversation with your pastor or another church member, or as a pastor you might consider sharing with a colleague, this means making call or sending a note. The first step in healing is admitting your need.

Gracious Jesus, we call upon you to open ourselves to come to you in our time of need, but also to share our burdens with those who you have placed in our lives. Amen.

Written by **Gina Yeske**Director of Resourcing, Metro-Highlands Region

Bergen Highlands United Methodist Church

318 West Saddle River Road

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Parsonage: 201-934-1618
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www.bergenhighlandsumc.org



Important BHUMC Dates for 2023

Jan. 6 — Epiphany

Feb. 5-Valentine Packages –for college students home or away.

Feb. 21—Pancake Supper; 6pm

Feb. 22—Ash Wednesday Service; 6:30pm; BHUMC

Lenten Coin Drive for the Turkey/Syria earthquake victims

March 14- Soup Supper; 6pm

March 30—Kids in the Kitchen; 5pm-6:30pm

April 2 -Palm Sunday Service

April 2—Easter Egg Hunt after service (ages 12 and under)

April 6-Holy Thursday Service; 7:00pm

April 9– Easter Sunday Service; 10:15am

April 29—Best Stuff Sale; 9am-2pm

May 7 - Mother's Day

TBA—Church Clean Up

May —BHUMC in the USR Memorial Day Parade TBA

June 16—Strawberry Picking, 8:30am.

June 17 —Strawberry Festival, Rain or Shine

June 19—Father's Day

July 3—Summer Worship begins-New service hours 9:15am

Aug 14-18—VBS, 9am-noon every day, register on line.

Sept. 11—Back to Fall Service Hour; 10:15am and BBQ after church

Oct. 2—World Communion Sunday

Oct 20—Kids in the Kitchen, 5pm-6:30pm.

Nov. 1-30—Winter Clothing Drive

Nov. —Hanging of the Greens

Dec. 5-8—Toy Drive drop off

Dec. 24- Christmas Eve Service, 5:30pm in the Sanctuary

Dec. 25- Christmas Day

If you have a suggestion for the newsletter, send an email to:

bergenhighlandsumc@gmail.com

You never know, it might find it's way into a newsletter one day!



- Adult Bible Study-Tuesdays beginning in the Fall at 7:00; call for more info 201-327-3960
- Adult Choir-TBA
- Children's and Youth Choirs-TBA
- BHUMC Youth Group- TBA
- Executive Leadership Team –as needed after church,
 Contact person-Pat Hiler or Pastor Miso Park 201-327-3960

Put these dates on YOUR calen-

Dates and times can occasionally change, for more info call 201-327-3960, thanks.