

Ellettsville First United Methodist Church

Dirty Santa

The annual Dirty Santa Game was played on Sunday, January 4th after fellowship. It is always good for some laughs. Thanks to Dewie for putting this fun time together for us.



Every year we enter the season of Lent, hoping that in the forty days (excluding Sundays) between Ash Wednesday (February 18, this year) and Easter, we will find better versions of ourselves. Often, we read the Biblical guidance that says we must “die to self,” and assume that happens by extreme spiritual exertion. There’s good warrant for that approach, I suppose, as we sometimes allow the more selfish parts of our being too much airtime. But what if the opposite is also true?

What if the path to become more loving and more devoted is to become less spiritually depleted, and instead, more spiritually alive? Barbara Brown Taylor once said, “I thought that being faithful was about becoming someone other than who I was, and it was not until this project failed that I began to wonder if my human wholeness might be more useful to God than my exhausting goodness.” As she said, quoting the early church leader, Irenaeus, “The glory of God is a human fully alive.”

So, the question comes: What can we do during Lent to experience a more enhanced spiritual aliveness? There are some obvious options. We can pray faithfully, read the Scripture more deeply, and offer ourselves in loving service. We can also seek new spiritual opportunities, and at the end each day by praying the Examen, a prayer in which we ask two questions: “Where did we see God today?” “Where did we seek brokenness today?” By being alive to spiritual realities, we can open ourselves to the new thing that God is seeking to do in us and in our world. Will you join with me in asking, “What is it that most makes me alive to God, alive to myself, alive to others, alive to the larger world?” Whatever answers come, let’s do that.



Boys Scouts of America were incorporated on Feb 8, 1910. In 1916, this organization was granted a rare Congressional Charter as a select patriot organization. Youth are trained in responsible citizenship, character development and leadership to make moral and ethical choices over their lifetimes through the Scout Oath and Law.

Today's program is now known as Scouting America. It is open to boys and girls from 5-20 years old. Ellettsville First United Methodist Church has supported/chartered a pack, 2 troops, and a Venturing Crew over the years. Take a look at our rotating Eagle display in Rogers Hall to find out who has met the high bar of Eagle.

Shine Without Wax

How sincere are you, really? How honest, dependable, and genuine? These are traits that shape our character and help others see Christ in us.



The word *sincere* comes from an old Latin phrase meaning “without wax.” In ancient Rome, potters sometimes used wax to hide cracks in flawed pottery. Buyers would hold each piece up to the sunlight to see if it was truly solid and not hiding any imperfections.

When we allow the light of Christ to shine through our lives, it reveals both our rough spots and our strengths. The good news is that Jesus never shames us for the cracks; he restores us. As his light works within us, we grow into people of integrity who are whole, authentic, and sincerely his.



FEBRUARY 2026



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25th Annual Community Chili Cook-Off

February 20th



Can you believe this will be our 25th Chili Cook-Off. Bring your favorite Chili or just bring your appetite to our annual Chili Cook-Off which will be held on Friday February 20th at 6:30pm. All are welcome at this community event. Prizes will be awarded to the top chilies. Please have your entries in by 6:15pm. A free will offering will support the restoration of the Star of David windows.

Nurture Committee News

Hello church family. Happy New Year to all. First time writing a letter...yes, I consider this a letter regarding the Nurture Committee. What is nurture? It is not only gathering together for fellowship, it's taking care of one another. Checking in occasionally. Write an email, send a card, drop off goodies, make a phone call to make sure someone is ok. Here's an idea, meet for coffee or even lunch. Retirement should have brought more time but instead I got busier. I even have a hard time finding the time to do any of the 'nurture stuff'. So, I am going to make an effort to write for the newsletters each month and light a fire under me and you! Look out for news to gather for fellowship and support. While you wait ...hug someone.

Greeting Cards Send Out

We will gather together and mail out cards to members for birthdays, anniversaries, encouragement and thinking of you. All materials provided just bring yourself and maybe your favorite color pen! Two Wednesdays at church in the choir room.

Wednesday, January 28 at 9:30am

Wednesday, February 11 at 9:30am

Valentine's Day Cards

During Fellowship after church on **Sunday, February 8**, we will gather and send out Valentine's Day cards to those who are members of our congregation. The children can make their own cards to give to their mom, dad, grandparents. Supplies will be provided. Come join in the fun and fellowship. (*Yes – you can still talk and visit with one another, pretty easy multi-task project.*)

Sponsored by the Nurture Committee

Special Dates

- Black History Month, *February 1-28, 2026*
- Groundhog Day, *February 2, 2026*
- Valentine's Day, *February 14, 2026*
- Presidents Day, *February 16, 2026*
- Ash Wednesday, *February 18, 2026*

Bible Quiz

The New Testament uses several Greek words to describe love. Which of the following best represents the **selfless, sacrificial love** that God shows to humanity?

- A. Eros
- B. Phileo
- C. Agape
- D. Storge



Answer: C (See John 3:16 and 1 Corinthians 13)

Christian Education INTEREST SURVEY

An exciting vision for Christian Education at Ellettsville First UMC is evolving! The newly formed CE committee will be chaired by Connie Frink. Tim Frink, Chris Fisher, Dan Rarey, Donna Dayton, Keith Dayton, and Peggy Beckler will form the newly formed committee, which will explore a variety of innovative learning opportunities. Committee meetings will be open to anyone who would like to participate, and if things go as hoped, meetings will be announced in advance so others can attend. We will begin by brainstorming the list of options you see on the interest survey below. **YOUR INPUT is needed** as we develop short-term and long-term goals. PLEASE fill out the survey and return it to Connie Frink, either in person or electronically by sending to csf430@gmail.com. We cannot stress enough how very important it is for each of you to prayerfully reflect on the educational offerings we might develop. Know that checking the line expressing your general interest by no way is a firm commitment to participate but doing so will help the committee have some sense of whether or not developing programming around a certain format might be viable.

Children's programming requires several essential components: children, volunteers willing to work with children, curriculum and other resources. **Question: do you have 'littles' in your extended family or neighborhood who you would be willing to invite to attend to Children's church at EFUMC?** We could begin with a once a month standard meeting date and build our program from there. Please share your thoughts with your CEC committee or, better yet, join in the discussion and planning.

Our committee will have its first meeting at the home of Connie and Tim Frink sometime in the next few weeks. The exact date and time will be announced soon. If you know Connie, you can expect the evening meeting will include dessert, so please RSVP if you would like to attend by calling (812) 662-4575, emailing csf430@gmail.com or telling her in person.

As we explore innovative ideas to develop and expand our Christian Education curriculum, a wide range of options will continue to be explored. In an effort to be responsive to both the needs of our church and the surrounding community, your input is greatly appreciated! Please indicate any interest you may have in possible attendance. Participants, leaders, and other volunteers are always needed to have a meaningful and vibrant educational program. Please prayerfully consider how you might be willing to take part. All additional suggestions are much appreciated. Thank you!

Name _____

Contact Info: phone _____ (home or cell) Best time to contact: _____

Email: _____

Event scheduling preference:

WEEKDAY	Day /time	WEEKEND
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Morning _____

Afternoon _____

Evening _____

INTEREST in the following:

Children's church as part of monthly family worship Sunday

Bible Study

Book Study

Movie Study

Guest speaker; topic suggestion _____

Hymn sing with study of its meaning and origin;

suggestion: _____

Monthly dinner with small group break-out discussions on selected topics

Advent and/or Lenten workshop

Program about the architecture of EUMC and our stained glass windows

Our Faith as depicted in Art

Other suggestions: _____

Community Outreach

Invitation or event flyer Do you know of anyone in your neighborhood who might be interested in hearing about what is happening at EFUMC? Would you be willing to share a flyer with them and/or confidentially provide the necessary contact information for someone else to do so?

Do you have a neighborhood Facebook page on which we could post EFUMC events?

Suggestions as how to share information with the general public:

Location of Community announcement boards in the community or workplace:

Address of Community Facebook Page allowing announcements:

Community groups and organizations that might allow announcements about special programming:

Other ideas:

Your input is very important! Printed copies of this survey are available on the information table in the back of the church. Once completed, *please return to Connie Frink* or you can copy and fill out the copy in the newsletter and submit electronically to csf430@gmail.com

Spring Cleaning for the Soul

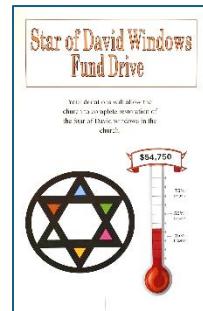
Ash Wednesday is February 18, 2026, and it marks the beginning of the 40 days of Lent. Lent hints of spring, a time when the earth begins to awaken from a winter's nap, and new growth bursts forth all about us.

More personally, it is an opportunity to enter into a springtime for our spirit. For centuries Christians have used the 40 days of Lent to seek spiritual growth. Sincere repentance, a changing of heart, casting off old sinful practices and seeking to commune with our creator help us go in the right direction. Spending serious time in silence and prayer focuses our attention. Reading spiritual literature, becoming more knowledgeable about the New Testament, meeting in small groups with other Christians to share personal stories of faith can all be immensely stimulating. Joining with others to serve the helpless and hopeless can strengthen our spiritual life.

Lent is a time to let God do “spring cleaning” within us. It’s our opportunity to allow God to help us toss out the “stuff” that hinders us and then freshen up the “new creature” we are meant to be as followers of Christ.

Star of David Update and Fundraising

Our church family voted to restore all of the 130 year old Star of David windows during our July Town Hall meeting. During that meeting the Trustees advised that an estimated \$42,000 is needed to complete this task. Since then, in addition to seeking out grant monies we have received donations of \$18,000 in just 6 short months! As we have researched grant possibilities, we determined that we needed to be able to provide the cost of the entire restoration project. This includes all of the funds which the Trustees have already paid for the removal of the windows and the installation of the much needed vents. This means that the actual total cost for the project is approximately just under \$50,000. As we move forward and the weather is warmer, the committee will be reaching out to our community with the fundraising activities. Stay tuned for the next update. Thank you to Keith for creating the beautiful signage placed in the rear of the sanctuary that will let everyone see our progress.



Finance, Stewardship, & Fundraising meetings for 2026

Our 1st meeting will be held on January 25th, at 11:30 AM in the choir room. Subsequent meetings are as follows: April 26th, July 26th, & October 25th. All committee members and interested church family are welcome to join us.

2025 year-end Financial Status

It is with great pleasure that the Finance committee reports that our income for 2025 was slightly more than our expenses. The annual Audit process has begun and as of this report was proceeding without any major causes for concern. Thank you to Rich Samuelson and Cam Trampke for tackling the detailed audit.

Respectfully,
Peggy Beckler



The Communicator

Ellettsville First United Methodist Church, Inc.

803 W. Temperance St.
P.O. Box 548
Ellettsville, IN 47429

Worship 9:30am
Fellowship 10:30am
Adult Sunday School 10:45am
Office Hours: M, W, F 9am-12pm
Church Phone: 812-876-4792
Email: efumchurch@bluemarble.net
Webpage: <http://www.efumchurch.org>

February 2026

