

Black River Falls
United Methodist Church
100 North Fourth Street
Black River Falls, Wisconsin 54615
Return Service Requested
54615



**THE BLACK RIVER FALLS
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
NEWSLETTER**

Mission Statement:

*"To make disciples of Jesus Christ
for the transformation
of the world "*

REV. INWHA SHON, PASTOR

Worship Service: 9:00 am Sundays

Office Hours: Tues/Wed/Thur
8:00 am to 1:00 pm

Telephone: 715-284-4114

Website: brfumc.org

We are also on Facebook and YouTube!



“The earth is the Lord’s and all that is in it, the world, and those who live in it, for he has founded it on the seas and established it on the rivers.” – Psalm 24:1-2

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ at BRF,

Happy New Year! I hope you had a wonderful Christmas season with your family, friends, or neighbors. I also want to acknowledge that some of you may have experienced a lonely or difficult Christmas season, and my heart goes out to you.

As the old year of 2025 faded away, the new year of 2026 has dawned. Looking back, it was an eventful year, but we got through it with the Holy Spirit. I pray for all of you to go through this new year with the guidance of the Holy Spirit no matter what lies ahead of you, so you could please God and expand the kingdom of God on earth as you go.

First, as we all are children of God and sons and daughters of the King, we should show people in the world God’s love. In other words, since we are His children, His high priests, we are called to reflect the Father’s glory in the world by taking care of what is His. Everything was created by God, and it belongs to Him. We are called to sum up the praises of creation in Him.

Yet if our thinking and actions are toxic, we cannot reflect God’s love into the world. If we do not renew our minds, we cannot change our lives or the lives of anyone around us. We cannot truly be children of God unless we love what God loves.

Please keep in mind that you are God’s masterpieces, created in His image. You are designed to reflect His glory into the world. You were created to bring heaven to earth. Then, how do you do this?

When we begin to think with the mind of the Messiah—renewing our minds and taking every thought captive with the help of the Holy Spirit—we shift our worldview to one of love, the worldview of heaven. As we plant this way of thinking deep into our nonconscious minds by directing the attention of our brains toward what is good and life-giving, transformation begins.

This transformation affects our future thoughts, words, and actions, which impact on our environment as we interact with the world around us. In effect, we bring heaven to earth! Being truly human is essentially about colonizing the world with culture of heaven, which we can do because we are created in the image of God.

“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.” – 2 Corinthians 5:17

Blessings,

Pastor Rev. Inwha Shon

What happened on this day?



No Small Churches

January 6

Discouragement is the occupational hazard of ministry, and many of God’s workers are disheartened by small crowds and meager results. **Charles Spurgeon** could teach them a lesson.

It isn’t that Spurgeon ever struggled with small crowds. Almost from the beginning, multitudes flocked to his feet. When he assumed his London pastorate in 1854, the church had 232 members. Soon so many were crowding his auditoriums that he sometimes asked his members to stay away the next Sunday to accommodate newcomers. He seldom preached to fewer than 6,000, and on one occasion his audience numbered almost 24,000—all this before the day of microphones. During his lifetime Spurgeon preached to approximately 10,000,000 people.

He also became history’s most widely-read preacher. Today there is more material written by Spurgeon than by any other Christian author of any generation. The collection of his Sunday sermons stands as the largest set of books by a single author in the history of the church. He is called the “Prince of Preachers.”

But ironically Spurgeon himself is a testimony to the power of a small church. On Sunday, **January 6, 1850**, a blizzard hit England, and 15-year-old Charles was unable to reach the church he usually attended. He turned down Artillery Street and ducked into a Primitive Methodist Church, finding only a few people standing around the stove. Not even the preacher arrived.

A thin-looking man stood and read Isaiah 45:22—Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth (KJV). The speaker, groping for something to say, kept repeating his text. Finally, he spied young Charles in the back. Pointing his bony finger at the boy, he cried, “Look, young man! Look! Look to Christ!”

The young man did look, and Spurgeon later said, “As the snow fell on my road home from the little house of prayer, I thought every snowflake talked with me and told of the pardon I had found.” Arriving home, his mother saw his expression and exclaimed, “Something wonderful has happened to you.” It had, proving that smaller ponds often yield the biggest fish.

Does anyone remember how glorious this temple used to be? Now it looks like nothing. But cheer up! Because I, the LORD All-Powerful, will be here to help you with the work just as I promised... My Spirit is right here with you. Haggai 2:3-5

Morgan, Robert J., *On This Day: 365 Amazing and Inspiring Stories about Saints, Martyrs and Heroes.*



Mission outreach committee January 2026 newsletter

We will resume sewing again this month. Our first sewing date is January 15 . We will be focusing on pillowcase dresses but there is also an opportunity to work on quilt blocks if you would rather. We have all the supplies you need and a sewing machine if you need one of those too.

How are you doing with your knit or crochet projects? I have purchased some yarn to add to our stock so we have some really nice choices of yarn if you don't wish to use your own. Items are slowly trickling in but I am still hopeful that we will reach our goal of 125 by April 30.

Dinner church will resume January 7. You can check out the upcoming menu items on the Church's web site. Your support over the past year has meant so much. Whether it was a giving of your time to help prepare or serve food, make welcome our guests, or donated food or money it all is greatly appreciated especially by those that join us each week. I pray your generosity continues in the year ahead.

Submitted by Charlene Galston



Dinner Church

Wednesday's—5:30-6:30 PM

EVERYONE is welcome!

REQUEST: Dessert Items

(Homemade or storebought cookies, cakes, bars, etc.)

Volunteers Sign-up at <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0B4FAAAC2AAAFBC16-47489118-dinner> or scan the QR above.

User Name//Password not required.



January Dinner Church Menus

7 Jan

Pulled Pork Sandwiches
Baked Beans
Pickles
Fruit
Dessert

14 Jan

Scalloped Potatoes
with Ham
Green Beans
Fruit
Dessert

21 Jan

Chili
Crackers
Fruit
Dessert

28 Jan

Tator Tot Casserole
Lettuce Salad
Fruit
Dessert



Happy New Year from the Children, Youth and Family programs!

Our past year has been full of great opportunities, memories and spiritual growth of our members. We started 2025 at a youth gathering in the dells, worshipping God with hundreds of other youth from around the state. We held a 30-hour famine at church while learning about hunger around the world. Our Wednesday night gatherings were spent growing in our faith together. Paula, Ella and Chris have enjoyed teaching our little Learners while helping them grow in their faith as well during Sunday school each week. We continue to help pack food bags each month for our neighborhood food pantry. We had fun handling out Easter goodies, walking in the homecoming parade and giving candy and hot dogs out at Trunk or treat. Starting this past fall, we began handing out activity packs at dinner Church to all the children to take home. These packs include coloring sheets, stories to read and a simple craft. We hope to continue you this in 2026. We have started talk on what our 2026 will look like for each of our age groups and programs. We are excited to continue some of the stuff we do on a monthly basis but also add some activities to our programs. If you have any questions about Sunday school or youth group, please contact Suzanne Goldsmith.

Sunday school meets each Sunday from 10:15-10:45am
Youth meets each Wednesday night from 5:30-7pm

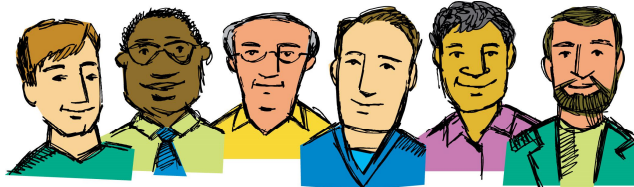
Suzanne Goldsmith
Youth Director
715-896-0224
suziegoldsmith@hotmail.com



WWIS Sunday Morning Radio Broadcast

Do you have someone's birthday or anniversary coming up and you'd like to recognize their special day? You can do so by sponsoring a Sunday morning **WWIS Radio Broadcast!** Contact the church office for with any questions you may have.

THANK YOU!



MEN'S GROUP



The men's group would like to invite all member men to join us for fellowship and service to the church. Beginning in January, we will be meeting the 2nd Sunday of each month following Sunday Service.

The annual Corn Beef & Cabbage Dinner will be held on Sunday March 15th. We will serve from 4:00 PM until sold out. A total of 75 Dinners will be prepared.

As we make preparations for the 2026 Hilltop Garden, if you would like to donate plants, seeds, or fertilizers, please contact Joe, Dave, or Tom. We have specific varieties and products that we will be using this season.



***Thank you to the members who have returned their 2026 pledge cards!
We have received around \$160K in pledges for 2026!***

As Finance Chair of BRF UMC, I see the many ministries we are supporting as a congregation. Your support makes ministry possible.

Receiving your 2026 Estimate of Giving helps make it possible for us to budget, plan and provide appropriate resources for our church and community. We are grateful for so many who support ministry at our church. We invite you to join us by returning your commitment card. Generosity is a personal act of worship in which we express our gratitude to God and experience God's blessings and joy.

We are aware that some families may be facing difficult financial times. If your finances are uncertain, a 10 percent tithe may not be possible. So, we encourage you to estimate whatever percentage you realistically think you will be able to contribute in support of the church's ministries.

As your situation changes throughout the year, you can easily adjust your estimate of giving up or down with a phone call or email.

You may return your Estimate of Giving Commitment Card in the offering this Sunday, or send it to the church by mail.

We are so grateful for you and how you make the ministries of the church possible. We hope to see you in worship in 2026!

Jim Bible, Finance Chair



Greetings to United Women in Faith Members and Friends,

Our UWF local unit made their 2026 annual pledge to mission which will be added to pledges from units around the world. This is our commitment to support national and global outreach which includes scholarships, missionaries, and programs supporting women, children, and youth.

We also look forward to continuing outreach through the sharing of Karen's Kare Kits with individuals in our church and community. We were able to support the Community Connect event that works to match individuals with needed resources and also shared our efforts of mission work with the Business After 5 Chamber of Commerce monthly meeting and will continue to share our mission efforts in these events.

We look forward to using the UWF 2026 Program theme of "Mapping Our Way Forward" to continue and expand on mission activities and projects to share with members and the congregation and to expand on support of our church in community outreach.

We send out a reminder that we will not meet in January and look forward to getting back together on Monday, February 2.

Go Forward with God's Blessing,
Luane Meyer



United Women of Faith wrapped up the year with a wonderful holiday gathering in December. As part of the evening, members who had read a Christmas book—most of them borrowed from our church library—shared brief summaries and their impressions. Happily, every book was a hit. These titles are now featured in a special holiday section of the library for anyone who'd like to enjoy them next season.

Looking ahead, we'll soon be highlighting a selection of new books in our display area. I hope to include short member reports on these titles at an upcoming UWF meeting.

After that, our attention will turn to refreshing the children's and young adult section of the library. We welcome your ideas as we plan. If your kids or grandkids have favorite books, please share them with us—we'd love to consider them as we continue building a collection that serves our whole church family.

Maria Williams

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF BLACK RIVER FALLS

Administrative Council Meeting Minutes

December 18, 2025

Call to Order/Opening Prayer

Meeting called to order at 5:30 PM

Attendees: Roxie Hostrawser, Pastor Shon, Charlene Galston, Luane Meyer, Jim Bible, LeAnne Byrum

Opening Prayer led by Roxie Hostrawser.

Review & Approval of Minutes

No copy available

Pastor's Report - Devotional

Shared articles "Why Churches Die" and "US Church Closures Hit Record, but Faith Thrives in This Rural NC Town: 'I Met Jesus in Prison'"

Discussion followed about what applies to our church and how there is a trend of young people coming back to church. Discussion followed on how to reach out to young people locally-Offering opportunities to serve the community.

Pastor thanked the members of the Ad Council and discussed Christmas Eve service.

Old Business

Committee Reports/Requests

Finance – Jim Bible

26 pledge cards received pledging \$146,510 for 2026. Letters will be sent to encourage others to return cards. Remember pledge is a guideline, not a bill.

Discussed monthly budget email and decided to continue sending the information.

Apportionments: \$15k has been paid. Jim made a motion made to pay the remaining \$5,318 before December 31st. Luanne 2nd and motion carried.

Jim will meet with Tammy Dobson to discuss changes in wages, accounting changes and getting a monthly report for Dinner Church.

Trustees - Dan Brauner (absent)

Worship – Roxie H

The following items were discussed at Worship Committee meeting;

Hymn sing will be on December 28th

Advent series ends 28 December and a new series will begin in January

Staff/Parish Relations – Carol Anderson & Carol Prindle (absent)

United Women of Faith - Luane Meyer

Church Library - Maria Williams has volunteered to manage the library.

December books have been put in Narthex to promote the library

Will ask Maria to come to February meeting to discuss the library and new books to be purchased

Decorated cookies for church fellowship

Made and sent cards to church and community friends

Had a book review of Christmas themed books from the library

Completed 2026 pledge to mission mailing and programs

Working on expanding newsletter submissions

United Women of Faith - Luane Meyer

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Youth Ministry - Suzanne G. (absent)

Mission Outreach - Charlene Galston

Working on grants for Dinner Church and discussion on how the church budget could take over Dinner Church in 2027

Suggested a meeting after Dinner Church (6pm) to discuss information about the church.

Encourage church members to sit with participants and just talk-not preaching-just showing we care

Dinner Church - Charlene Galston

Thank you letters need to be sent to donors-be sure LeAnne gets the names

United Methodist Men - Joe Williams (absent)

New Business

New ways to market to young people

Encourage sports teams to come to Dinner Church after practice

Reach out to Chamber to offer people a way to serve the community by helping at Dinner Church

Next Meeting January 15th at 5:30 PM

Adjourn 6:39 PM



Lauren Beck	1/2	Alexander Hoffman	1/11
Jordan Hill	1/2	Robert Nesbitt	1/16
Nolan Boehm	1/3	Mason Schultz	1/16
Ryan Nandory	1/5	Jeffrey Hagenbrock	1/17
James Kaphengst	1/6	James Hostrawser	1/19
Gabriella Wood	1/7	Rhonda Ammann	1/20
Krystle Brooks	1/8	Megan Harelson	1/26
Pamela Bue	1/9	Arianna Goldsmith	1/27
Timothy McCann	1/9	Selma Laubach	1/27
Joel Pennekamp	1/10	Jocelyn Brauner	1/28
Mary Van Gordon	1/10	Dylan Hill	1/30

Elroy & Jann Dahl	1/19
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Any errors are unintentional. Please contact the church office for any changes, additions, or deletions so we can update the database as well. 715-284-4114 Thank You!

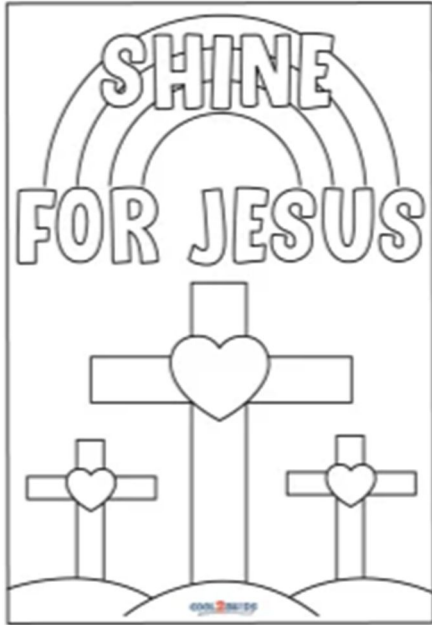
Sunday Volunteers



January	Worship Leader	Greeter/Usher	Fellowship
4th	Tom Epps	Karen & Larry Pennekamp	
11th	Roxie Hostrawser	Don & Charlene Galston	
18th	Dan Brauner	Kristin & Ben Breining	
25th	Jim Bible	Carol Anderson & Linda McCullough	

*Volunteers are needed for Sunday Coffee Fellowship.
Sign up sheet is at the coffee station.*

Children's Page



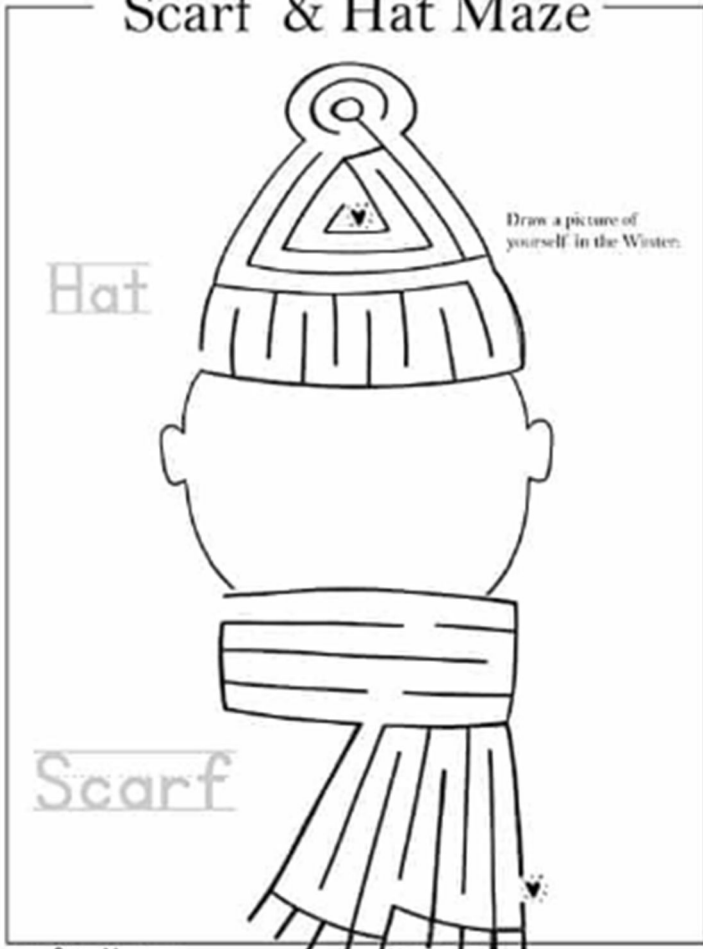
BIBLE ☺ 🌈 ✝️ ❤️ 📖
Word Search

BIRD DARK FISH FLOWER TREE
GOOD REST SEVEN LAND WATER



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Scarf & Hat Maze



January 2026

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1 	2	3
4 Worship 9am Sunday School 10:15-10:45am	5	6 Dinner Church 5:30pm Youth Group 6pm	7 Dinner Church 5:30pm Youth Group 6pm	8	9	10
11 Worship 9am Sunday School 10:15-10:45am Men's Group 10:30 am	12 Board of Trustees 5:30 pm	13	14 Dinner Church 5:30pm Youth Group 6pm	15 Ad Council 5:30pm Mission Outreach Sewing Day 10am-3pm	16	17
18 Worship 9am Sunday School 10:15-10:45am	19  MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY	20	21 Dinner Church 5:30pm Youth Group 6pm	22	23	24
25 Worship 9am Sunday School 10:15-10:45am	26	27	28 Dinner Church 5:30pm Youth Group 6pm	29 Community Connect	30	31