



FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH of BELLA VISTA

The Good News

JANUARY 2024

Constructive Theology

A contemporary approach
to enduring faith challenges

2024

Together, may each day of 2024 be filled with our best efforts to be drawn closer to God, filled with the Holy Spirit, and transformed by the love and grace of our Savior. As we are recreated each day, may we share the Good News with those close to us and those we meet along our journey.



“Seeing In the Dark”

Ret. Rev. Cathy Luck



It's a phrase that must have been used for a book or a movie, or perhaps it is a poem. What you may not know is that these four words describe the outcome of the mystical “Dark Night of the Soul”. I used to think that the dark night was a time of severe depression and desperation, a time when one feels like giving up, a time when God or any divinity or power seems remote and uncaring if not absent, and I assumed that was all the dark night.

What I realize today is “the dark night” as just described is actually not about someone or something outside, but about us. Whatever the circumstances around or within us that lead into the darkness, our physical, emotional, and spiritual senses are engaged in a different way than usual. Isolation, achiness, and physical illness are some of the ways we respond. We may feel afraid or angry. We may feel tired. We may be grieving. We may feel cold. We don't understand in our minds what has changed, why it has changed, or what we can do about it. Do you hear the egocentricity in this description?

The truth is the ego can no longer pursue, achieve, and control in the stage of faith known as “the dark night”. This darkness is literally a step in the process of spiritual formation. The darkness may have started when the faithful person intentionally began to let go of control as a positive step toward growth with God. However, as the time of loss and letting go expanded, so did the darkness. The story of Job comes to mind. From beginning to the end, we read of a God-fearing man who is attempting to hold on to his faith in darkness. In the arguments presented by his friends, Job does not find any light. I can just imagine that after every argument is presented, another light goes out. What happens after four lights have gone out is total darkness. Then Job learns to “see in the dark”. Perhaps without even realizing that his next utterance is one of faith, Job questions God. What? God is

there in the darkness to hear his plea? I'm not even sure that he expected God to answer. Job was making a plea into the empty lightless night. But when God speaks, Job begins to be able to see again.

“Seeing in the dark” is my new realization about the dark night of the soul. Before we move on to the next stage of faith, first we learn to “see in the dark.” It's not just a return to the way things were before the darkness, but it is a new way of seeing the world. As if we were created for the night, we are given new eyes that see we are not alone.

Advent in the Christian calendar is an annual symbolic time for experiencing the dark. The twelve days of Christmas are a symbolic time for discovering the presence of the numinous in the dark. And Epiphany is for formulating and sharing our stories of what we have discovered with others. May we feel this rhythm in the coming days, weeks and on into the new year.

Blessings,
Cathy Luck

Volunteer Adult Spiritual Formation Coordinator



Friends of Christ meet this month on Thursdays, 1/11 & 1/25, at 1:30pm in the Parlor. Come explore & discuss different media about Jesus Christ with friends.



Hello, Lay Servants!

Much is happening around the conference with Lay Servant Ministries! We had a big group of folks who enjoyed the hospitality of Mount Eagle Retreat Center in mid November. Four classes were offered during this overnight LSM Academy. In addition to offering Spiritual Gifts and Polity, we certified 17 new Lay Servants with the Intro class being offered on Friday and by Zoom on Saturday.

There is an upcoming LSM Academy in Jacksonville on January 27th where six classes will be offered. One class will be offered in Bentonville on January 20th. See our page on the ARUMC website at arumc.org/our-resources/lay-servant-ministries for details and to register.

As we strive to offer more classes around the conference, please let us know which classes you would like to see offered, ideas for locations and if you would be willing to facilitate.

And remember, LSM classes are not just for those who wish to become certified as Lay Servants, Lay Speakers or Lay Ministers. The LSM curriculum is a wonderful way to deepen your own discipleship journey and relationship with Jesus Christ and others. LSM provides a better understanding of our identity as United Methodists by exposing us to our heritage and structure and helping us to explore our gifts for ministry as we seek to care for and serve our neighbors.

In service together,
Karen Anderson
NWD Lay Servant Ministries Coordinator

2024 Helping Hands News



For many years, members of FUMCBV have found this Resale Shop that helps many people in Benton County to be a rewarding place to volunteer. And like many other organizations it has undergone changes. It seems that Covid and other factors have caused several churches who used to support Helping Hands on Saturdays, to no longer be able to continue. That leaves 9 churches including us to take up the slack. Instead of helping out 4 times a year, they are asking us to come 6 times in 2024:

Feb 3, April 6, June 8, August 10, October 12 and Dec 14

We do have a small crew who have been very faithful in working but with this increase in the schedule it sure would be nice to have a few more to help. If you have any questions, feel free to talk to anyone on that crew: Linda & Weldon Hyde, Mabel Ashline, Sue Nebrig, Cheryl Campbell, or Verna Bottjen.



Disciple Fast Track I

Becoming Disciples Through Bible Study

Many members of our congregation have completed four years of Disciple Bible study. The rewards are immeasurable! Have you always wanted to know more? As the Psalm says, “Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, a light unto my path.”

Adapted from the original DISCIPLE I study, this twenty-four week study was developed in response to the time demands of busy lives. Revised and updated for the BeADisciple Study App, the digital version of Disciple Fast Track I offers a sweeping survey of Scripture, from Genesis to Revelation, with readings that cover the equivalent of about half the Bible.

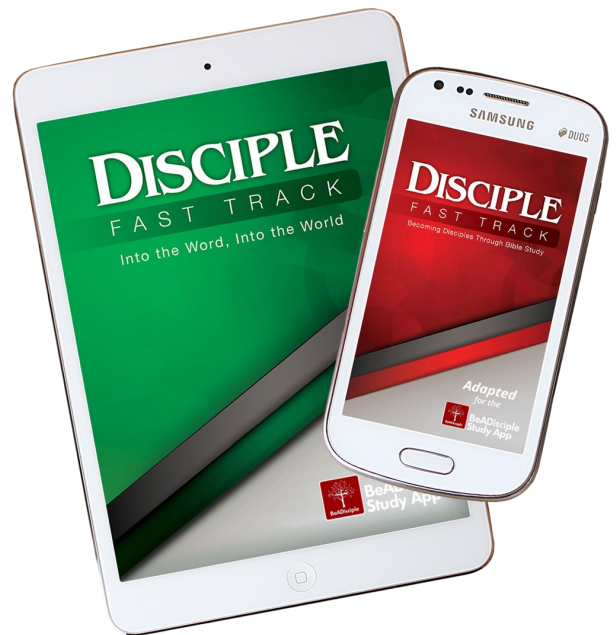
Disciple Fast Track I includes commentary, Bible reading, and scholar videos. Weekly meetings are 75 minutes each.

30 minutes / day **5** days / week **24** weeks

All materials needed can be accessed through your smart phone, tablet or computer. Once-a-week group sessions will be conducted on Zoom. Do you have a friend or family member who would like to participate with us? Using the digital app and Zoom classroom, we can have participants from all over the world including our snowbirds! Please contact Cathy Luck by January 15th at 479-619-6063 or caluck88@gmail.com if you would like to be in this study group. Registration fee for the app is \$45 .



BeADisciple Study App



The next **UMM** meeting is on **Wednesday, 1/17**. Dinner is at **5:30pm** in **Becker Hall**. The meeting will follow at **6:00pm**.

SUNDAY		MONDAY		TUESDAY		WEDNESDAY		THURSDAY		FRIDAY		SATURDAY																								
 9:00 Classic Service - Sanctuary 10:00 Fellowship Time - Parlor 10:00 Child/Adult Sun.School-LL/Rm6 11:00 Casual Service - BH	1 HAPPY NEW YEAR OFFICE CLOSED 6:30 By the Book AA - Rm 28	9:00 Taking Down the Greens 9:30 Yoga - Becker Hall 6:00 Scouts (Boys/No Cubs) - Parlor 6:30 Scouts (Girls) - Sanctuary	3 9:00 BV Quilters - Quilt Rm 9:30 UWF Board Meeting - Parlor 10:00 CBCO Blood Drive (til 3pm) - BH 3:00 Chancel Bells - Music Rm 4:00 Chancel Choir - Sanctuary	4 9:30 Yoga - Becker Hall 12:30 Caregivers Support Grp - Parlor 2:00 Praise Team Practice - BH 5:00 Rotary Club Meeting - Parlor	5 Office Closed 11:30 BVPS Board Meeting - Rm 28	6 8:30 Amp Big Book AA - Rm 28	7 9:00 Classic Service - Sanctuary 10:00 Fellowship Time - Parlor 10:00 Child/Adult Sun.School-LL/Rm6 11:00 Casual Service - BH	8 9:00 DAR - Parlor 10:30 Staff Mtg - Rm 6 12:30 Women's Chorus - MR 5:00 Potluck/Games - Parlor 6:30 By the Book AA - Rm 28	9 9:30 Yoga - Becker Hall 1:30 Sarah Circle - Parlor 6:00 Scouts - Quilt/BH/LL/Rm6/Parlor 6:30 Scouts (Girls) - Sanctuary	10 9:00 BV Quilters - Quilt Rm 9:30 Chapter CX PEO Meeting-Parlor 2:00 Grief Support Group - Parlor 3:00 Chancel Bells - Music Rm 4:00 Chancel Choir - Sanctuary 6:00 SPRC Meeting - Parlor	11 9:30 Yoga - Becker Hall 1:30 Friends of Christ - Parlor 2:00 Praise Team Practice - BH 5:00 Rotary Club Meeting - Parlor 6:00 Evening Circle - Youth Room	12 Office Closed	13 8:15 Young@Heart 8:30 Amp Big Book AA - Rm 28 10:30 Agape Shepherd Group	14 9:00 Classic Service - Sanctuary 10:00 Fellowship Time - Parlor 10:00 Children's Sunday School-LL 11:00 Casual Service - BH 12:15 Finance Meeting - Parlor	15 8:00 Care & Share Trailer 9:30 Martha Circle - Quilt Rm 10:30 Staff Mtg - Rm 6 12:30 Women's Chorus - MR 5:00 Potluck/Games - Parlor 6:00 HealingStrong- Room 6 6:30 By the Book AA - Rm 28	16 9:30 Yoga - Becker Hall 1:30 Naomi Circle - Parlor 6:00 Scouts - Quilt/BH/LL/Rm6/Parlor 6:30 Scouts (Girls) - Sanctuary 6:30 Men's Chorus - Music Room	17 9:00 BV Quilters - Quilt Rm 2:00 Grief Support Group - Parlor 3:00 Chancel Bells - Music Rm 4:00 Chancel Choir - Sanctuary 5:30 UMM Meeting/Meal - BH	18 9:30 Yoga - Becker Hall 2:00 Praise Team Practice - BH 5:00 Rotary Club Meeting - Parlor 6:30 Cancer Support Group - Parlor	19 Office Closed	20 8:30 Amp Big Book AA - Rm 28	21 9:00 Classic Service 10:00 Fellowship Time - Parlor 10:00 Children's Sunday School-LL 11:00 Casual Service - BH 12:15 Trustees Meeting - Parlor 1:30 CCM Meeting - Parlor	22 10:30 Staff Mtg - Rm 6 11:00 Women's Chorus Party-MR 5:00 Potluck/Games - Parlor 6:30 By the Book AA - Rm 28	23 9:30 Yoga - Becker Hall 6:00 Scouts - Quilt/BH/LL/Rm6/Parlor 6:30 Scouts (Girls) - Sanctuary 6:30 Men's Chorus - Music Room	24 9:00 BV Quilters - Quilt Rm 2:00 Grief Support Group - Parlor 3:00 Chancel Bells - Music Rm 4:00 Chancel Choir - Sanctuary	25 9:30 Yoga - Becker Hall 1:30 Friends of Christ - Parlor 2:00 Praise Team Practice - BH 5:00 Rotary Club Meeting - Parlor	26 Office Closed	27 8:30 Amp Big Book AA - Rm 28	28 9:00 Classic Service - Sanctuary 10:00 Fellowship Time - Parlor 10:00 Children's Sunday School-LL 11:00 Casual Service - BH	29 10:30 Staff Mtg - Rm 6 11:00 Women's Chorus Party-MR 5:00 Potluck/Games - Parlor 6:30 By the Book AA - Rm 28	30 9:30 Yoga - Becker Hall 6:00 Scouts - Quilt/BH/LL/Rm6/Parlor 6:30 Scouts (Girls) - Sanctuary 6:30 Men's Chorus - Music Room	31 9:00 BV Quilters - Quilt Rm 2:00 Grief Support Group - Parlor 3:00 Chancel Bells - Music Rm 4:00 Chancel Choir - Sanctuary					28 9:00 Classic Service - Sanctuary 10:00 Fellowship Time - Parlor 10:00 Children's Sunday School-LL 11:00 Casual Service - BH
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 **JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES** 

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|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1/01 Heath & Jennifer Lehmann | 1/23 Rod & Arlene Alford |
| 1/19 Duane & Lynn Penner | 1/24 Rich & Janice Abbott |
| 1/20 Bette Cummings | 1/27 David & Marilyn Frisby |

 **JANUARY BIRTHDAYS** 

- | | | |
|---------------------|----------------------------|----------------------|
| 1/01 Roger Justice | 1/10 Terry Augspurger | 1/22 Billy Beverage |
| 1/04 Molly Harris | 1/10 Marlene Clapp-Barron | 1/23 Kevin Hight |
| 1/04 Bill Potts | 1/14 Ed Jenner | 1/23 Marion Korn |
| 1/06 Gladys Jutte | 1/15 Cynthia Augspurger | 1/23 Jean Meadows |
| 1/06 Chris Murphy | 1/15 Mary Jane Hammarstrom | 1/24 Andrew Smith |
| 1/07 Judi Shannon | 1/17 Doris Selley | 1/25 Ivan Lantz |
| 1/08 Stephen Grider | 1/19 David George | 1/25 Nita Wallace |
| 1/08 Dena Mayes | 1/20 Jan Kolbe | 1/27 James Forrest |
| 1/08 Anny Weber | 1/21 Ryker Mendoza | 1/27 Troy Kizzire |
| 1/09 Gene Aragon | 1/21 Linda Richardson | 1/30 Tom Walton |
| | | 1/31 Gary Grosnickle |

January 2024 Newsletter Financial Data
information as of November 30, 2023

	2023 Actual	2023 Budget
Month of November Contributions (Income*)	\$ 36,789.39	\$ 32,586.17
Month of November Expenses	\$ 35,435.99	\$ 35,345.01
Difference	\$ 1,353.40	\$ (2,758.84)
Year to Date Income Contributions Only	\$ 180,476.70	\$ 162,930.85
Year to Date Expenses	\$ 165,848.52	\$ 178,325.05
Difference	\$ 14,628.18	\$ (15,394.20)

**Income does not include Missions or Endowment Interest (Fiscal Year started July 1.)*



IN GRATITUDE

Thank You

Thank you for all the cards, calls, thoughts and prayers you sent my way.

Sincerely, Marilyn Pommerenke



Silent Auction Thank You

Thank you to everyone who bid on the donated Gerald Hatley paintings, those who won the paintings, and to those who contributed without bidding. We appreciate your generosity in giving to the Methodist Family Health Foundation.

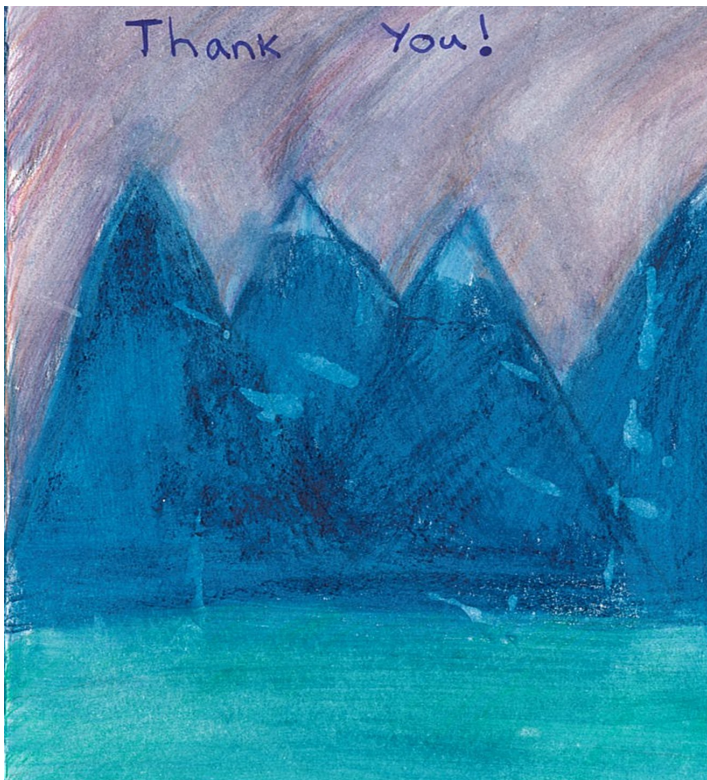
Thank You

Thanks to our church family for the wonderful Christmas cards, and for coming to our house to Christmas carol.

Verle & Suzanne Shremaker



Thank You!



Thank you all so much for the very sweet art, gift cards, and love. You all made my birthday sooo special! I tried to do a little art for you all as well, but yours was way better. I continue to fight brain cancer and am not giving up hope. Continue to spread your love and hope because it truly helps!

Love,
Taylor Ford

This special Thank You is from Taylor Ford, Teri Thiele's niece, who is fighting a rare form of brain cancer. A few months ago, Teri asked if we would send Taylor birthday cards. In addition to a lot of you, the preschool kids, other churches, and complete strangers also pitched in and sent her paintings, art projects, cards, & gift cards!



IN GRATITUDE



Dear Church Family,

I have been remiss about getting this written, always hoping I suppose, to be back with you sooner rather than later; but it very much looks like later. I wish to thank all who have been upholding me in thought and prayer, I am certain God has been listening and I am better for it. Also many thanks for the wonderful and encouraging cards, which let me know you have not forgotten me and wish me well once more. To Maryann Johnson in particular, as her visits to my home are very welcome and remind me that there is an entire world of folks and activities out there. Her visits and her many acts of kindness mean so much to me. Holding all of you in my prayers is a joy for me in my absence from Worship and congregational events.

Also, many thanks to the carolers who called at my home Sunday afternoon. It was a wonderful treat for me to hear Christmas music being sung, and by our own choir members. I am taking this opportunity also, to wish each and every one a very merry Christmas and a most happy and blessed New Year.

I remain, your friend and sister in Christ, Marilyn Hertel



The faces of our homebound members and friends lit up as they opened all the Christmas Cards signed by YOU! The Annual Christmas Card Delivery was completed by Wesley Shepherd Group members early in December. The 30 festive sacks were filled with signed Christmas cards from FUMC members. Thanks to everyone who participated to make this ministry a success!



Staff Love Offering Thank You

All of us on staff here at FUMCBV thank you all for your generosity in giving to the Staff Love Gift this Christmas season. We so appreciate it!



United Women in Faith

GREETINGS FROM UNITED WOMEN OF FAITH!

As 2023 is coming to a close, the UWF are very thankful for the wonderful year we have had in helping Women, Children, and Youth, in Benton County, the US, and globally. We are looking forward to a Great 2024.

At our December Unit Meeting, Troy Kizzire, Jane Potts, Jill Hale, and Bob and Shari Vermett were presented Special Recognition Awards for all the MANY ways they have helped UWF and our church in the past years.

Awards were also presented to the Unit, including the Diamond Unit, and the Elizabeth Thorton Workman award, that helps fund Schools and Hospitals worldwide, Charter for Racial Justice, MiWach Unit, and Miles of Pennies Unit. 5 Starr Woman awards were presented to four members, and UWF Reading Program Certificates were presented to seven.

In January, all the circles will have their Pledge Services that help women, children, and youth, in our state, country, and the world.

DATES TO REMEMBER:

Jan. 3rd Board meeting

Jan. 6th Local Unit Update/Officer Training 10:00am-12:00 pm (via Zoom)

Call President, Barbara Brooks at 876-5353 for questions or comments. You, too, can become a member and make a difference someone's life. **ALL ARE WELCOME! HAVE A VERY HEALTHY AND HAPPY NEW YEAR!**

Jan. Circle Meetings



Sarah
Tuesday, 1/9,
at 1:00pm
in the
Parlor

Evening
Thursday, 1/11,
at 6:00pm
in the
Youth Room

Martha
Monday, 1/15,
at 9:30am
in the
Quilt Room

Naomi
Tuesday, 1/16,
at 1:30pm
in the
Parlor



The ladies of Naomi Circle helped Ruth Ireland celebrate her 100th birthday at their Christmas party on Tuesday, December 19th. Happy 100th Birthday, Ruth!





Book Nook: New in the Church Library



UWF 2024 READING PROGRAM BOOKS

EDUCATION FOR MISSIONS (CATEGORY I):

1. THE 1619 PROJECT by Nikole Hannah-Jones (BONUS BOOK)
2. HOW BEAUTIFUL WE WERE by Imbolo Mbue
3. I'M BLACK. I'M CHRISTIAN. I'M METHODIST. by Rudy Rasmus (BONUS BOOK)
4. HOUSE THAT LOVE BUILT by Sarah Jackson) by Beth Adams

NURTURING FOR COMMUNITY (CATEGORY II):

1. A LITTLE PIECE OF LIGHT by Donna Hylton
2. THE THREE MOTHERS by Anna Malaika Tubbs
3. THE SEED KEEPER by Diane Wilson

SOCIAL ACTION (CATEGORY III):

1. UNTIL I AM FREE by Keisha N Blain
2. CONDITIONAL CITIZENS by Laila LaLami

3. CASTE by Isabel Wilkerson
4. WILLFUL DEFIANCE by Mark R Warren

SPIRITUAL GROWTH (CATEGORY IV):

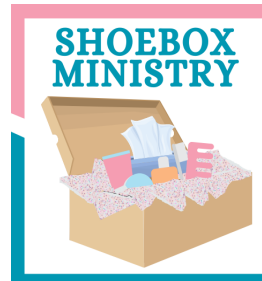
1. BIPOLAR FAITH by Monica A Coleman
2. WORTH IT by Brit Baron
3. BRAIDING SWEETGRASS by Robin Wall Kimmerer (BONUS BOOK)

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT (CATEGORY V):

1. OUR STRANGELY WARMED HEARTS by Karen P. Oliveto (BONUS BOOK)
2. I AM A GIRL FROM AFRICA by Elizabeth Nyamayo
3. YOU'VE BEEN CHOSEN by Cynt Marshall
4. BEAUTIFUL COUNTRY by Qian Julie Wang



As usual, we need protein: **PEANUT BUTTER & CANNED MEATS** (chicken, tuna, etc.). **CEREAL & SHELF-STABLE MILK** (like Parmalat) also remain popular. Be sure to get the medium-sized jars of peanut butter and boxes of cereal so they fit in the Blessing Box. Please drop off your donations to the church office or in Room 5, the Blessing Box Room. As always, ***please NO EXPIRED, DENTED, OPENED, or UN-LABELED cans.***



The Shoebox Ministry Team delivered 165 boxes of hygiene products and little Christmas gifts to both the Bentonville Salvation Army & the Fayetteville Salvation Army, along with Seven Hills also in Fayetteville. Both shelters say they currently are in desperate need of toiletries. Travel sizes are best because they fit in the shoeboxes easily. Please pick some up the next time you're out shopping. Leave them on the Shoebox Ministry table in the narthex. Thank you for your continued support. We couldn't do this without you!



First United Methodist Church
 20 Boyce Drive
 Bella Vista, AR 72715

We're Here to Serve You

Lead Pastor - Rev. Ron Hayes
 ron.hayes@arumc.org (479) 366-9725
 Church Administrator - Amy Gilmore
 Church Secretary - Andrea Fobes
 Music Ministries Director - Dr. Lawrence Zehring
 Organist/Accompanist - Lamar Puckett
 Praise Band Leaders - Rick & Gloria Atha

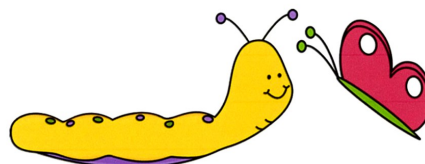
Phone: (479) 855-1158
 www.fumcbellavista.com
 facebook.com/fumcbv

Office Hours:
 Monday-Thursday
 9:00am-4:00pm

Bella Vista PreSchool

Seeking Volunteers!!

Help prepare students for lifelong success!
 Volunteers spend 1-2 mornings a month playing, reading, and interacting with 3-5 year olds as well as assisting the classroom teacher



Interested? Call or text
 Melanie Nichols at 479-531-1149
 bvpreschool@gmail.com
 Look for us on FaceBook!!

A FEW WAYS WE SUPPORT EACH OTHER:



CAREGIVERS SUPPORT GROUP MEETING
 THURSDAY, JAN. 4, AT 12:30 PM IN THE PARLOR
 *RESPITE CARE PROVIDED



GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP (GSG)
Grief isn't a journey you have to make alone. This month, GSG meets **Wednesdays, 1/10, 1/17, 1/24, & 1/31 at 2:00pm in the Parlor.** Facilitated by Pastor Ron.



CANCER SUPPORT GROUP MEETING
 Thursday, 1/18, at 6:30pm in the Parlor

PRAISE REPORTS & PRAYER REQUESTS

As a church family, we lift each other up in prayer for both our joys and our concerns. **Send your Praises and Prayer requests to Pastor Ron** at his email: **ron.hayes@arumc.org** or call him: **(479) 366-9725**. You can also call the church office **(479) 855-1158**, email our secretary, Andrea, at: **andrea@fumcbellavista.com** or stop by **20 Boyce Dr.** You may also complete a **Prayer Request Card** in the Narthex or Becker Hall and drop them in the Prayer Boxes there. They are checked during office hours.