

FEBRUARY 2025

# THE COMMUNITY CONNECTION

The monthly newsletter of Brown St. & Congress St. UMCs



## MY SALVATION

By LaVaun Wallace

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While going through some of her papers and files, Kay Hardesty came across a poem written by her mother, LaVaun Wallace. According to LaVaun's journal, "My Salvation" was written at 6:45am on Thursday, February 2nd, 1984. Kay remembers her mother writing in that journal whenever something came to mind, one of the ways she expressed her gratitude to God. Her faith saw her through the end of her first marriage and all the other struggles she encountered during her life. "She loved the Lord and always said her prayers," Kay observed.

LaVaun's witness to God's love in her life was not limited to writing, church attendance, or prayer. It shone through in her years as a loving, supportive mother. "When I was involved in Scouts, she was right there with me," Kay said.

In the years LaVaun lived in nursing homes, she shared her faith whenever she could; she was always willing to sit and talk with someone at dinner or Bingo or while she worked on an art project. She was well-loved by the nursing home staff and residents alike.

This brief snapshot of LaVaun reveals someone who had a deep desire for a closer relationship with God. A regular practitioner of journaling, prayer, gratitude, worship, and witness, she did not limit herself to one practice but instead reached out to God through a variety of them, in times of joy and sorrow, both daily and when the moment struck.

Thank you to Kay, who with love, gratitude, and grief for her mother shares this poem with us. As you read LaVaun's words 41 years later, may you be reminded that you are a beloved child of a God who is always with you. May you continue to explore and practice the spiritual disciplines that draw you closer to God, that your life may reveal the life-changing love of Jesus to others, just as LaVaun's did.

### My Salvation

"Oh! What a beautiful, wonderful day when I let Jesus have his way.

He came into my life of sin and cleansed my soul from within.

"Now are you washed in the blood of the lamb?" I replied to him, "I know I am!"

Such happiness filled my soul with love when he smiled at me from above.

"My child," he said, "I have work for you, because with your life, I'm not through.

Into your life will come much strife and sorrow. Put your hand in mine and face tomorrow."

He showers me with countless blessings every day since I asked him into my life to stay.

I praise him with songs, the old and the new. His message is there, plain, for me and you."

# What's Happening in Our Community

## SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES

Sundays from 1/19 - 3/2

11:45am - 1:00pm @ Congress Street

For seven weeks (1/19-3/2) we are gathering together after Congress Street's worship for a meal, then splitting off into small groups to explore spiritual practices together, guided by Adele Ahlberg Calhoun's *The Spiritual Disciplines Handbook*.

Children/youth have their own spaces to explore scripture and prayer. Adults will have a space to learn about and practice some spiritual disciplines in the company of loving community. This opportunity is for Brown Street, Congress Street, and our neighbors and wider community.

In this season, we hope you'll join us as we stick together in the dark and cold, learning new ways to improve our constant connection to God. Even if you have missed the first week or two, or can't make it to every week that's left, you are welcome to join us

## SHARE YOUR STORY IN THE NEWSLETTER

If you feel compelled to share your story - or a meditation or devotion on scripture - we'd love to give you a place to do it! Reach out to Maia either at [info@brownstreetumc.org](mailto:info@brownstreetumc.org) or [info@cosumc.org](mailto:info@cosumc.org) or talk to her after worship on a Sunday.

She can interview you and write something up, edit your own words, or something else. Whatever would be helpful to you!

## B&C STREET CHANCEL CHOIR

Sundays at 9:30am, CS Chapel

Wednesdays at 6:30pm, CS Chapel

If you're interested in sharing your love of music and connecting with others, the B&C Street Chancel Choir is back for spring season and would love to have you join! **Rehearsals resume on 2/2!**

Questions? Contact Bob Malchow at [rmalco311@yahoo.com](mailto:rmalco311@yahoo.com).

## FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

- 1 - Cree Nelson (CS)
- 5 - Howard Lumley (CS)
- 7 - Jim Hartwick (BS)
- 7 - Jane Sulanke (CS)
- 13 - Del Grater (CS)
- 16 - Tudy Lipp (CS)
- 18 - Bob Barker (CS)
- 21 - Jake Ohlemiller (CS)
- 26 - Rick Puckett (CS)

## FEBRUARY OFFICE HOURS

The hours listed below are the hours Maia is in the office. Pastor Ryan is in and out. If you need to meet with him, please reach out to him or Maia to schedule a time!

### Brown Street:

Tuesdays: 10am - 4:30pm

### Congress Street:

Wednesdays & Thursdays: 10am - 4:30pm

Fridays: Flexible

Pastor Ryan's days off are Friday & Saturday.

Maia's days off are Monday & Saturday.

**The office will be closed on Tuesday, 2/11 and Thursday, 2/13.**

# What's Happening in Our Community

## LAY SERVANT ACADEMY

**Saturday, 3/1 at St. Andrew UMC in West Lafayette from 8-5.**

If you are interested in learning more about the United Methodist Church, the Introduction to Lay Servant Ministries: The Basic Course is for you. Our very own Pastor Jake is teaching the Leading Worship course. If you are interested in learning more about leading in worship, this course is for you. If you want to learn about the Social Principles of the United Methodist Church and the changes made since the 2024 General Conference, Justice in Everyday Life, is for you.

To learn more or register go to: <https://inumc.swoogo.com/NWLSA030125>

Questions? Contact Lynn Nelson at: [nelson@cosumc.org](mailto:nelson@cosumc.org) or 765-491-7856.

## LENTEN STUDY

**Thursdays 3/6-4/10, 12pm, Grace UMC**

Bring a brown bag lunch and join Brown Street, Congress Street, and Grace UMCs for a Lenten book study of *Give Up Something Bad for Lent* by James W. Moore. If you need us to order you a book, let us know by signing up by 2/16!

## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED: OFFICE

If you would be willing to fold bulletins (and occasionally newsletters) for about 30 minutes to an hour each week, please let Maia know at [info@brownstreetumc.org](mailto:info@brownstreetumc.org) or [info@cosumc.org](mailto:info@cosumc.org).

## What's Happening at



## FAMILY DINNER

**Tuesdays**

**Doors @ 5:00pm**

**Dinner @ 5:30pm**

We could always use your help! Kitchen prep begins around 3:00pm and Table Hosts huddle at 4:45pm each week. Come help prepare/serve food, be Jesus to our neighbors around the table, and wash dishes! All are welcome!

## MONTHLY MISSION: CARE FUND

Our Care Fund (also known as a Pastor's Discretionary Fund) is used to provide financial assistance to our neighbors in need at the Pastor's discretion. To donate to our Care Fund, mark your envelope "mission" and place it in the collection plate on Sunday morning or write "mission" in the memo line at [brownstumc.org/give](http://brownstumc.org/give).

## AD COUNCIL 24-25

Our Administrative Council is made up of leaders from our congregation who work with the pastor to make decisions and lead into our vision.

### Finance:

Jim Eberle

Imogene Robinson

Joni Sanders

Bill Meinweiser (Treasurer)\*

Aaron Simms (Financial Secretary)\*

### Trustees:

Beau Baumis (Trustees Chair)

Lacey Cobbs

Maia Gibson (Ad Council Chair)

### SPRC:

AJ Hardesty (SPRC Chair)

Jillian Henry

Paul Hertel

### Senior Pastor:

Ryan Traeger\*

\*indicates non-voting member of the council.

## What's Happening at



**CONGRESS ST.**  
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

## CIRCLE OF JOY

**Next Meeting: Monday, Apr. 8th @ 6:30pm, Sanctuary**

**Hostesses:** Brenda King & Penny Glotzbach

Maia will be sharing about her trip to Kenya in 2024! All women of the church are welcome to join us.

## FOOD PANTRY DONATIONS

February is our month to collect food for the Tippecanoe County United Food Pantry. Wish List Items include: peanut butter, canned veggies/fruit, canned tuna/meats, cereal, soup, and hygiene items. Please place your donations in the wicker baskets by the doors. If you would like to make a monetary donation, please mark your envelope "food pantry." (Checks should be made payable to Congress Street UMC.)



## BALANCE & FALL PREVENTION CLASS

**Mondays @ 1:00pm  
through 4/14**

This free class, led by a physical therapist, walks you through different exercises to help improve your balance. All are welcome and encouraged to do what they are able to do. Questions? Contact Lynn Nelson.

## AD COUNCIL 24-25

Our Administrative Council is made up of leaders from our congregation who work with the pastor to make decisions and lead into our vision.

### Finance:

Tracy Fristoe (Chair)

Cliverda Gladden

Chad Johnson (Ad Council Chair)

Dolores Flynn (Treasurer)\*

Bill Meinweiser (Financial Secretary)\*

### Trustees:

Sirena Conway

Shane Lynch (Trustees Chair)

Connie Washburn

### SPRC:

Kay Alderfer

Mike Johnson

Sandy Oswalt (SPRC Chair)

### Senior Pastor:

Ryan Traeger\*

\*indicates non-voting member of the council.



### **BROWN STREET STAFF**

Ryan Traeger  
Pastor

Charis Vander Plaats  
Director of Worship

Maia Gibson  
Administrative Assistant

### **CONTACT BROWN STREET**

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Lafayette, IN 47904  
765-742-1316  
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www.brownstumc.org

### **CONTACT CONGRESS STREET**

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765-447-4158  
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www.cosumc.org

### **CONGRESS STREET STAFF**

Ryan Traeger  
Pastor

Jake Ohlemiller  
Pastor of Worship Arts

Rick Puckett  
Pastor of Visitation

Maia Gibson  
Administrative Assistant

Shane & Teri Lynch  
Custodians

## **WORSHIP WITH US**

**Sundays at 9am - Brown Street**

[www.facebook.com/BrownStreetUnitedMethodistChurch](http://www.facebook.com/BrownStreetUnitedMethodistChurch)

**Sundays at 10:30am - Congress Street**

[www.facebook.com/evolvingfollowers](http://www.facebook.com/evolvingfollowers)

**If you are able and interested in receiving this newsletter via email,  
reach out to Maia at [info@brownstreetumc.org](mailto:info@brownstreetumc.org) or [info@cosumc.org](mailto:info@cosumc.org).**

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