

Letters of ENCOURAGEMENT

God Loves You



No Matter What

January 31, 2024

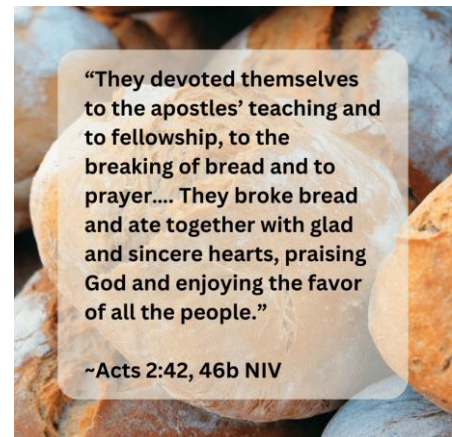
A Note from Beth Latella

Dear Friends,

“They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.... They broke bread and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people.” (NIV)

As we have been studying the birth of the Church and what it can mean for our church, this passage about fellowship and eating together, from Acts 2:42-47, really spoke to me.

About eight years ago we revived our Wednesday Community Suppers, expanding them from just our church membership to everyone in the community in need of food and fellowship.
(<https://hilliardumc.org/events/community-supper/>)



This model of sitting down together for a meal — sharing food, conversation, and prayer — lasted until the pandemic. In March 2020, we switched to a drive-through under the giant portico. We began delivery to a few families in need and to Wellington Village, a senior living community. This legacy of take-out and deliveries continued when we opened back up for sit-down dining.

Last fall, I shared my concern that we would need a larger volunteer team to serve these tasks: packing for delivery and takeout while setting tables and serving for dining in. There was such a generous response. We gained a dozen new volunteers, and I just love watching the friendships, humor, and simple kindnesses of this marvelous team.



It seems, though, that I may have emphasized our need for volunteers at the expense of the invitation to come share a meal with us. **We prepare a meal and offer it to you as a way to share fellowship, to nurture the body of the church.**

“Breaking bread together” sometimes refers to the Communion meal, sharing Christ’s body in remembrance of Him. But it can also mean sharing with each other and with the community in Christ’s name.

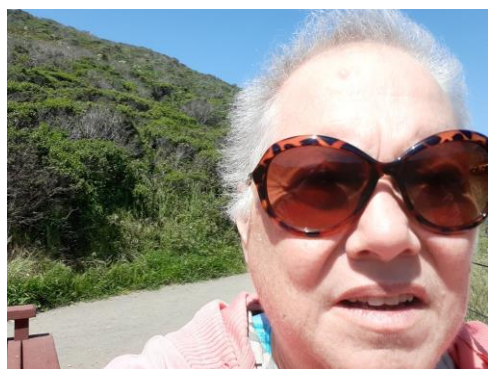
When you come and eat, you are allowing us to minister to you, and you are also ministering to the others at your table, getting to know them and helping them to know you and to know the church. It helps us all build those authentic relationships we’re always talking about, which are so beneficial to our well-being.

On Facebook this week, I found this quote from Luke Edwards, a UMC pastor in North Carolina: “The Church is called not only to feed the hungry, but to eat together. When the table is set and all sit down, tables melt away and relationships are formed. That is the beauty of Christ’s table.”

To that I can only add the humorous tag “When Methodists meet, Methodists eat.”

Please come eat with us on Wednesday nights, 5:30-6:30pm in the Social Hall (enter under the giant portico).

Beth



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