

- Open Hearts
- Open Minds
- Open Doors

Inside this issue:

Celebrating	2
New Year	3
2024 Food Drive	4
Mission Cooking	5
Paterson Toy Drive	5
Soles 4 Souls	6
Missions Calendar	7
Sermon Series	8/9
Bible Study	9
Epiphany Sunday	10
Valentine Boxing	10
Jan.SeniorGathering	11
Feb.SeniorGathering	12
Dates	12
Kids Maze	13
Prayers for People	14
Calendar	15

the HIGHLANDER

Volume 16 Issue 1

January/February 2025



Dear Bergen Highlands Family,
I hope you had a wonderful Christmas.

As we begin a brand-new year, what are you expecting to do or achieve?

Whether it is a big milestone in your life journey or a moment of peace, let us lean on God who will lead us each and every day.

Jeremiah 29:11 says,

“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.” This scripture is a beautiful reminder that God is sovereign, and His plans for us are rooted in His deep love and grace. No matter what the past year has brought, we can step into this new chapter with confidence, knowing that He has our future in His hands.

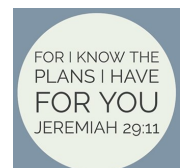
I do not know how your year 2024 was, however, we have countless reasons to give thanks to God. BHUMC never stopped worshipping God and served God’s people. With your generous donations, we sent Christmas gifts to 88 Paterson children and their families. We fed Homeless brothers and sisters in Spring Valley, NY and hosted

monthly senior gatherings to serve community seniors. We were able to do greater worldwide missions by paying our full amount of shared ministry to the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference. God blessed our church through you and all who love our church. Let us enter this new year with hearts full of gratitude for the blessings we’ve received and the lessons we’ve learned.

As we begin this new journey, we are called to trust God’s plans for our lives, our families, and our church community. Jeremiah 29:11 assures us that His intentions are always for our well-being, to give us hope and a future. Let us trust in God who will lead us this new year. Let us continue to gather together and praise God with our whole heart each Sunday. Please join us for Tuesday Bible study to begin this new year by experiencing the power of the Holy Spirit. Let us continue to do our mission and ministries with a joyous heart as our Savior, Jesus Christ has been born to us and is with us now and forever.

As we step into this new year, let’s do so with expectant hearts. God’s plans are good, and He walks with us every step of the way. Let us trust Him with our future, knowing that He holds it securely. May 2025 be a year of growth, faith, and fulfillment of God’s promises. Together, let us proclaim His goodness and share His hope with the world. Happy New Year!

In His Love,
Pastor Miso



The Celebrating at BHUMC



All Saints Sunday—Nov.3



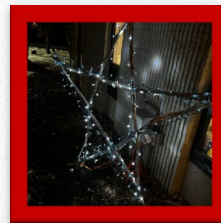
Thanksgiving Service-Nov.24



Ladies Celebrating with Georgia



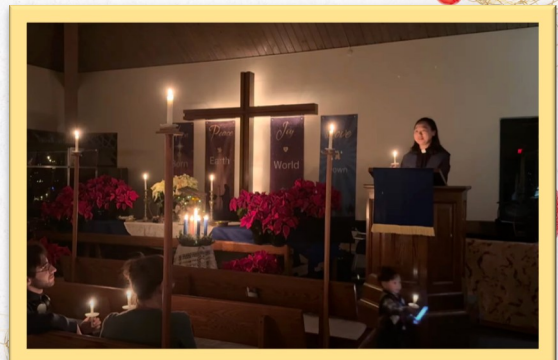
Setting Up For Christmas



2025 Christmas Eve Service



50 Hot Coco invites to the community.





5 Ways God Would Tell You to Start the New Year.

It's 2025, a brand-new year has begun, it's going to be busy and we're probably going to need some help. It's a good time to start thinking about better relationships and the most important one is with Jesus. God has given us a clean slate to start along with many suggestions as to how we could have better relationships and a better life.

Here are 5 practical ways to begin 2025 following His guidance

1. Begin With Keeping God First in Your Life

One thing to think about as you consider the place of priority God holds in your life is how do you spend your time each week? You have work and relaxation, family and friends, but where is God on your list?

- Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness...(Matthew 6:33)
- Proverbs 3:6 proclaims, "In everything you do, put God first, and he will direct you and crown your efforts with success,"

2. Begin with a Renewed Commitment to the Priority of Prayer

Prayer is our voice to God, our chance to thank Him, praise Him, ask Him for what we need, even complain about our day. Talk to Him, He is a parent who wants to hear from His children.

- ² My God and King, listen to my prayer.³ Every morning, Lord, I lay my gifts before you and look to you for help. And every morning you hear my prayers. (Psalm 5:2,3)

3. Begin Without the Nagging Paralyzing Effect of Fear, Dread and Worry

- So do not be afraid. I am with you. Do not be terrified. I am your God. I will make you strong and help you. I will hold you safe in my hands. I always do what is right. (Isa.41:10)
- ⁷ Turn all your worries over to him. He cares about you. (1 Peter 5:7)

4. Begin With Forgiveness for Yourself and for Others.

- ¹⁴ "If you forgive those who sin against you, your heavenly Father will forgive you. ¹⁵ But if you refuse to forgive others, your Father will not forgive your sins. (Matt. 6:14-15)
- ¹³ Make allowance for each other's faults and forgive anyone who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others. (Colossians 3:13)

5. Begin with The End in Mind.

What do you want the end of 2025 to be like? What do you want to have accomplished, how do

you want to be better? Different? This means you'll need to set and accomplish goals. Here are some ideas on how to do so.

- Commit your actions to the Lord, and your plans will succeed. (Prov. 16:3)
- ³³ Seek the Kingdom of God^[a] above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need. Matt. 6:33

Overall, I think Ephesians 4:32 and Philippians 4:6-7 put it best,

- ³² **Instead, be kind to each other, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God through Christ has forgiven you. (Ephesians 4:32)**
- ⁶ **Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. ⁷ Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.**

It's just amazing what the Bible can teach us! Take some time to read it.

Incredible!

258 lbs.!

It's really wonderful that over the few weeks before Thanksgiving, BHUMC members and friends bought and contributed so much to help feed the hungry. All 258 lbs of food went to CUMAC (the Center of United Methodist Aid to the Community) in Paterson, NJ. A fantastic gift for the holidays.

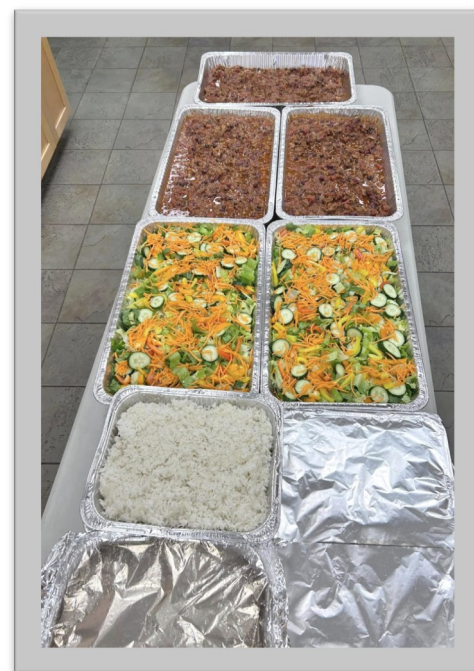
Thank you for your generosity!



"The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others"

-Mahatma Gandhi

Spring Valley UMC Homeless Mission



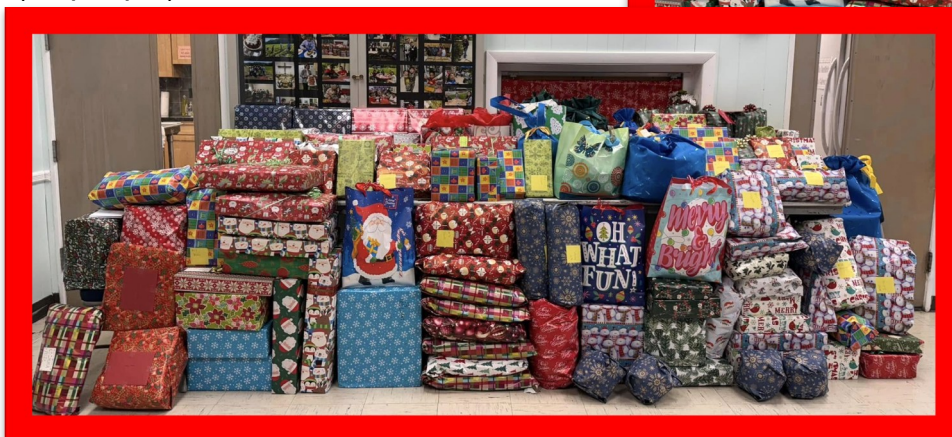
Last month we made chili for 75 men, women and children who live in Spring Valley, NY. and we will be cooking again on January 23rd.

Our mission commitment is to help the Spring Valley United Methodist Church six times a year feed the low income and indigent of the area. We supply a full dinner, piece of fruit and dessert.

It would be great if you could help! If you would like to help cook, be at the church by 2pm on the Jan. 23rd. If you would rather bake, we need 225 cookies total, can you bake 36 of them?

Paterson Toy Drive

With the help of community people and the faithful dedication of the BHUMC family, we collected winter coats and Christmas gifts for 33 Paterson families (88 people).



SOLES 4 SOULS

WEARING OUT POVERTY™

Everyone deserves a good pair of shoes.

Every day children are prevented from attending school, adults are unable to work. Walking becomes unbearable. A new pair of shoes provides relief in many developing nations around the globe, in times of disaster, and helps bridge the economic gap in the United States and Canada.

When someone doesn't have shoes, it's not just their feet that suffer.

They become vulnerable to disease.

Every day millions are exposed to unsanitary conditions that can lead to sickness, even death.

Students are unable to attend school.

Children often don't meet uniform requirements in order to attend school and are unable to receive an education.

There is a loss of dignity.

Without something as basic as a good pair of shoes, people often feel hopeless and discouraged.

Together, we can help people get back on their feet.

You can help by donating your old, but still useable, shoes to BHUMC to be donated to Soles 4 Souls **during the month of March**. All shoes in good condition are acceptable—CASUAL, FANCY, WORK, ETC. There will be a "Shoe Box" where you can place your shoes. Please, either tie the shoe laces together or bind the pairs together with strong elastic bands or string. We will deliver them to the Soles 4 Souls drop-off in Cokesbury, NJ early March.

Here is our Mission Schedule for the year.

We may not have Gold, Frankincense, or Myrrh to give but think of all the other ways we can offer our gifts.

Please choose a few dates, put them on your calendar and commit yourself to serving God through His children.

MONTH	EVENT	DATE
JAN.	Senior Event	Jan. 9th
	Cooking for Spring Valley	Jan.23rd
FEB	Soles for Souls (used shoe drive)	Feb 1-28
	Valentine Boxes	Feb. 9th
	Senior Event	Feb. 13th
	Cooking for Spring Valley	Feb. 27th
MARCH	Spring CUMAC Food Drive	March 5th-April 6th
	Senior Event	March 13th
APRIL	Senior Event	April10th
MAY	Senior Event	May 8th
JUNE	Cooking for Spring Valley	June 19th
JULY	Cooking for Spring Valley	TBA
AUG.		
SEPT.	Senior Event	Sept 11th
OCT	Fall - CUMAC Food Drive	Oct. 5th-Nov. 2nd
	Senior Event	Oct. 9th
	Cooking for Spring Valley	Oct. 23rd
NOV.	Cooking for Spring Valley	TBA
	Senior Event	Nov. 13th
	Toy Drive	Dec. 8th
DEC.	Senior Event	Dec. 11th

Sermon Series

Jan. 5 – Epiphany Sunday



1/12	Release into Rest	1 Kings 10:1-9
1/19	A Rhythm of Rest	Ecclesiastes 3:1-13
1/26	What Kind of Rest: The Science Behind Rest	Genesis 2:1-3
2/2	The Gift of Rest	Leviticus 25:1-1

January/February Sermon Series
continued



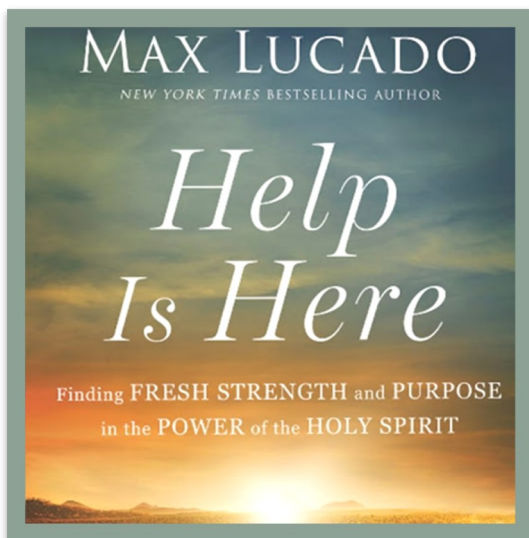
2/9	Left everything and Followed	Luke 5:1-11
2/16	Rejoice in that Day	Luke 6:17-26
2/23	Do to Others	Luke 6:27-38
3/2	Astounded at the Greatness	Luke 9:28-36



Adult Bible Study

Tuesdays ~ 7PM

January & February Bible Study

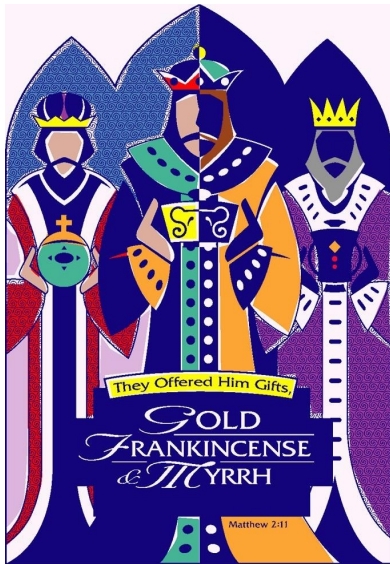


In *Help Is Here*, Max will give you the tools and encouragement you need to learn who the Spirit is and how the Spirit can help.

January 7	Our Powerful Ally
January 14	Our Strength and Guide
January 21	Our Peace and Guarantee
January 28	Our Intercessor and Advocate
February 4	No Bible Study
February 11	Our Gift-Giver of Life

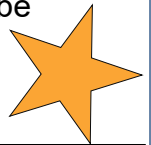
Epiphany Sunday

Sunday ~ Jan. 5



Just as God guided the Magi to the baby Jesus by the star, Star words are a way to allow the Holy Spirit to guide us during the new year to look for God in our daily lives. Use whatever word you choose on Epiphany Sunday as a prayer or meditation word to help you become closer to Christ.

If you are not able to get a Star Word on Epiphany Sunday, email pat.hiler@gmail.com and your own Star Word will be emailed to you.



Valentine's Day for College Students

It's that time again, This year we are sending 5 college students Valentine Boxes. We will be boxing them on ...

Sunday, February 9th after Church

We can only accept wrapped candies and treats but we also accept SMALL hand held games and stress relievers.

Make sure your Valentine donation is in church by February 9th. We box the candy after coffee hour.

Thank you. ❤️

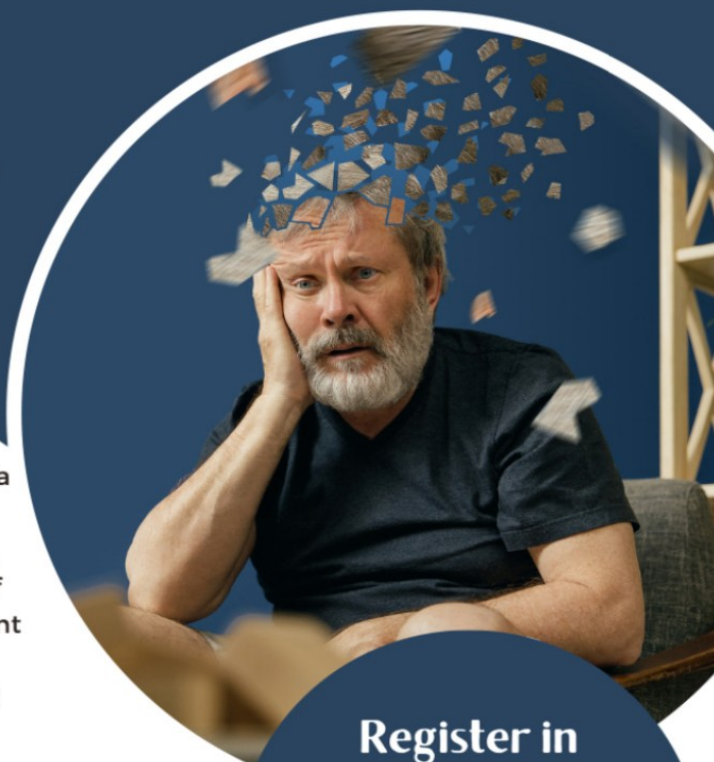




Senior Gathering :: January 9th

Understanding Alzheimer's and Dementia

WITH CARY LOPEZ
Executive Director & Co - Founder of
Act Now Foundation



Participants will learn about dementia and the different types that exist, the first signs and changes of the disease, causes and risk factors, the 3 stages of Alzheimer's, the first steps in treatment and planning and what Act Now Foundation can do to help, and more!



Bergen Highlands United Methodist Church

318 West Saddle River Road
Upper Saddle River, NJ 07458

Register in Person on the day of Seminar!
January 9, 2025
11:00 AM

A program made possible by funding from the Bergen County Division of Senior Services

www.actnowfoundation.org





Senior Gathering :: February 13th



CHEER & CHORE

bergenvolunteers.org

CHEER empowers seniors and those with disabilities to live independently and age in place safely and with dignity.

Volunteers assist with tasks and errands such as grocery shopping, prescription pick-up, library book returns, or visits to the post office. Most importantly, volunteers provide much-needed companionship and a connection to the outside world.

CHORE helps seniors and those with disabilities remain safe in their homes by offering repair services and home maintenance.

Our CHORE volunteers use tools and expertise to bring our clients peace of mind. Every installation of a grab bar and every leaky faucet repair ensures **seniors can move through their homes with confidence and security.**



Jan. 5—Epiphany Sunday/ Star Words

Jan. 9—Senior Gathering: Understanding Alzheimer's and Dementia, 11am.

Jan. 23—Cooking for the Spring Valley Homeless Mission, 2pm.

Feb. 1-28—Soles 4 Souls used shoe drive.

Feb. 5—Valentine Boxes for College Students.

Feb.13—Senior Gathering: Cheer and Chore Volunteers, 11am.

Feb. 27—Cooking for the Spring Valley Homeless Mission, 2pm.

March 4—Pancake Supper, 6pm.

March 5-April 6—Spring CUMAC Food Drive.

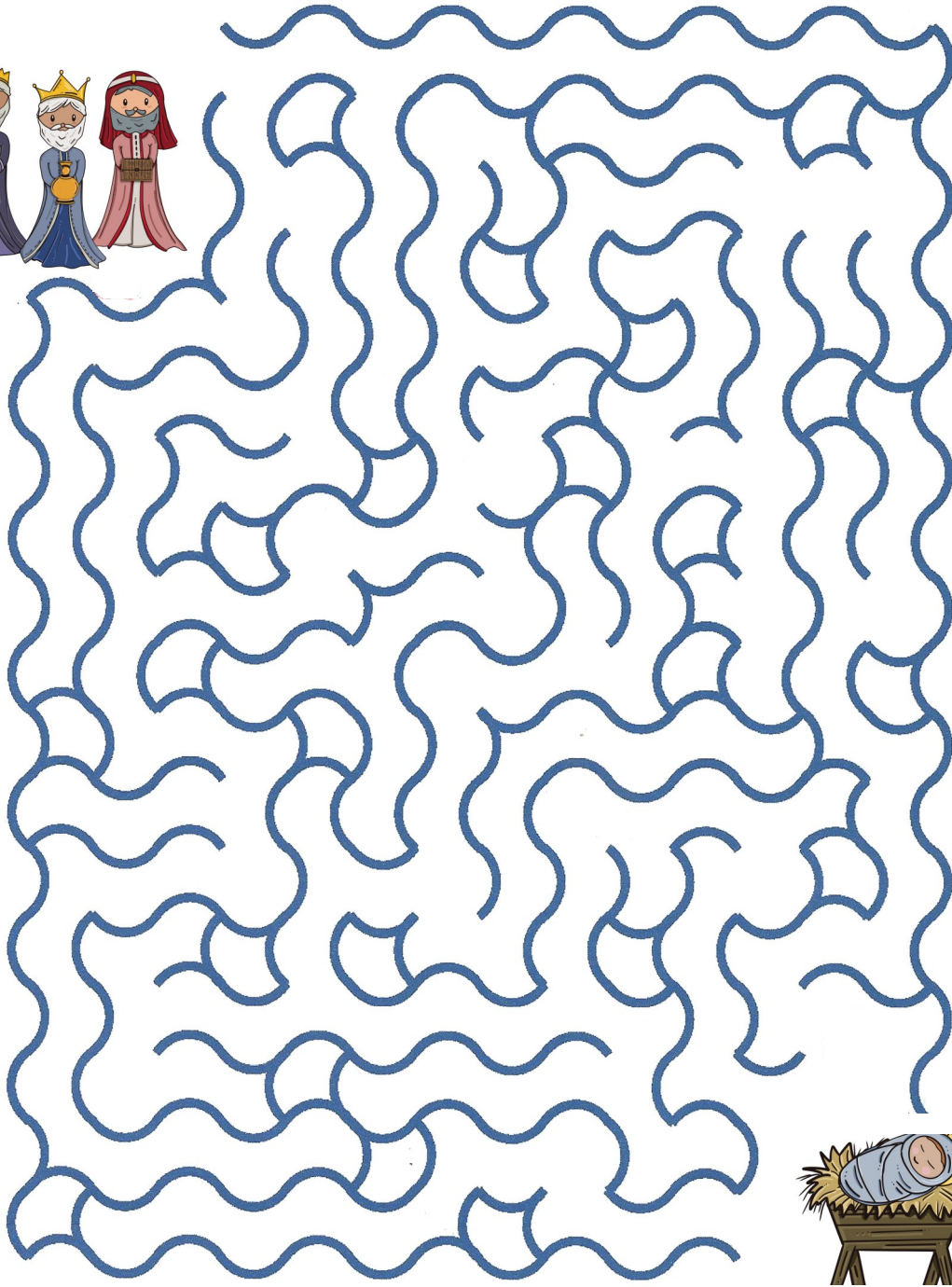
March 5—Ash Wednesday Service, 5:30pm.

March 9—Daylight Savings Time begins, **set your clocks ahead 1 hour.**



MAZE

Help the Maji find their way to the baby Jesus.

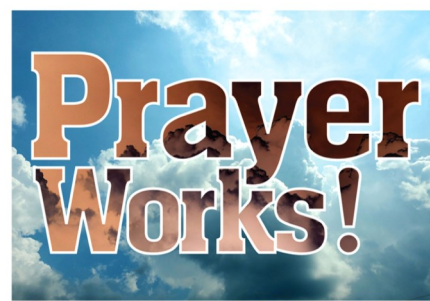


O Lord, Father of Light, from whom comes all good and perfect gifts. We are ever thankful for your love and presence in our lives and want to show our love in return by sharing our gifts with those of your children in need. Look upon us with mercy and grant us the health and courage we need to carry out our service to you and those in need. In Jesus' name. Amen

Isaiah 41:10

So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.

(NIV)



Keep Them In Your Prayers

- **Alphee Family**—on the loss of Jean's mother
- **Pineda Family (Armand's good friend, Romeo)**—who recently passed away
- **Cian** (the 13 yr old Nephew of Melissa Case's Friend)—battling tissue cancer which has a low survival rate
- **Gabbert family**—for the loss of a loving mother,
- **Sally and Ed Zelhof**—for them to stay healthy as they go through multiple health concerns.
- **Ed**—(Julia's brother) - as he battles cancer
- **Jude Walker**- (Matt's grand nephew)-prayers for this 17yr old who is still bed ridden after a car accident on May 12.
- ◆ **Joan Clifford**—as she goes through chemo treatment.
- ◆ **Baby Jackson and Stacey and Dan, his parents**—(Lorraine Meyer's grandson) - who had a very difficult birth and have now all moved to Texas.
- ◆ **Eva**—a friend of Rachael who is battling blood cancer.
- ◆ **Dorothy Ladwig**—for her battle with cancer and keeping strong, and positive.
- ◆ **Allen and Pamela Silverstein**—(Russell's parents) for recovery from difficult health issues.
- ◆ **Georgia Greiner**—for more strength and health that matches her spirit for life.
- ◆ **For all those in pain** today who need our prayers but have not yet asked.



Important BHUMC Dates for 2025

Bergen Highlands
United Methodist Church

318 West Saddle River
Road

Church: 201-327-3960
Parsonage: 201-934-1618
bergenhighlandsumc@gmail.com

www.bergenhighlandsumc.org

Join Us!



- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>Jan. 6 —Epiphany</p> <p>Jan. 9—Senior Gathering, 11am</p> <p>Jan. 23—Cooking for Missions</p> <p>Feb. 1-28—Soles 4 Souls Mission</p> <p>Feb. 5—Valentine Boxes for College Students</p> <p>Feb. 13—Senior Gathering</p> <p>Feb. 27—Cooking for Missions</p> <p>March 4—Pancake Supper, 6pm</p> <p>March 5-April 6—Spring CUMAC Food Drive</p> <p>March 5—Ash Wednesday Service, 5:30pm.</p> <p>March 9—Dayligh Savings Time begins</p> <p>March 13—Senior Gathering</p> <p>March 25— Soup Supper; 6pm</p> <p>April 13 -Palm Sunday Service</p> <p>April 13—Easter Egg Hunt after service (ages 12 and under)</p> <p>April 17—Holy Thursday Service; 7:00pm</p> <p>April 20— Easter Sunday Service; 10:15am</p> <p>May 3—Best Stuff Sale; 9am-2pm</p> | <p>May 8—Senior Gathering</p> <p>May 11— Mother’s Day</p> <p>May —USR Memorial Day Parade</p> <p>June 13—Strawberry Picking, 8:30am.</p> <p>June 14 —Strawberry Festival, Rain or Shine</p> <p>June 15—Father’s Day</p> <p>June 19—Cooking for Missions</p> <p>July 7—Summer Worship begins- New service hours 9:15am</p> <p>July TBA—Cooking for Missions</p> <p>Sept. 8—Back to Fall Service Hour; 10:15am and BBQ after church</p> <p>Sept. 27—USR Oktoberfest, noon-6p</p> <p>Oct. 5—World Communion Sunday</p> <p>Oct. 5-Nov.2—Fall CUMAC Food Drive</p> <p>Oct. 23—Cooking for Missions</p> <p>Nov. TBA—Cooking For Missions</p> <p>Dec. 7 —Hanging of the Greens</p> <p>TBA—Toy Drive drop off</p> <p>Dec. 24—Candlelight Service, 5:30pm</p> <p>Dec. 25- Christmas Day</p> |
|---|---|

- **Adult Bible Study**-Tuesdays beginning at 7:00; call for more info 201-327-3960
- **Adult Choir**-Before church service
- **Children’s and Youth Choirs**-Thursday at 3:30pm
- **BHUMC Youth Group**– TBA
- **Executive Leadership Team** –as needed after church, Contact person-Pat Hiler or Pastor Miso Park 201-327-3960



Put these dates on YOUR calendar!

Dates and times can occasionally change, for more info call 201-327-3960, thanks.

If you have a suggestion for the newsletter, send an email to: bergenhighlandsumc@gmail.com