

Community Worship with Song..... & A Slice!

More perfect weather could not have been found on Sunday July 21st as all 3 of our newly yoked Methodist churches joined in an outdoor worship setting at the Pleasant Grove Pizza Farm. The morning's event was created, hosted, and led by Blooming Grove UMC. As usual, Lyndy Zabel and all the members of World Beat Connection Christian band had us singing, clapping, jiving, jitterbugging (!! Yes, that's right!), smiling, and **truly feeling** the spirit – both during the worship service, as well as afterward while we savored an assortment of taste bud-tantalizing 'pies', and sweet treats.



With this year's focus on Holding God's Holy World in Our Hands we were led, both in word through responsive readings, prayers, and liturgy, and in song through congregational hymns and in immersing ourselves in the music shared by World Beat Connection to acknowledge our role in 'holding this world'. Once again we



gathered an offering for a cause which has touched our hearts: the small farming community of Hamburg, Iowa whose livelihood – no, whose very existence - has been devastated by the ongoing flooding which began for them in March. We held Hamburg in our hands and hearts, as those hands placed money in the offering baskets. Janesville UMC youth willingly and eagerly helped pass those baskets. Additional monies were raised (via pizza sales and bake sale) to assist support of a

local piece of our world – Waseca's *Bethlehem Inn* which offers short-term housing for women and children during which they are also assisted in regaining independence and a meaningful place in society. Thinking of our responsibility as stewards of this world, we even had compostable plates and forks, and colorful re-useable (cloth) napkins.

Emily and Bill (Pleasant Grove Pizza Farm owners) graciously allowed us to descend upon and literally take over their space as worshippers arrived by car, motorcycle, baby strollers and tractor-drawn wagon. \$2.00 of each and every pizza purchased during our time there was donated to the *Bethlehem Inn*.

And we can't forget the amazing assortment of goodies at the bake sale table (made and donated by our church ladies... maybe a fella or 2 also offered their baking



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skills), with those monies also going to one or both of the aforementioned mission focuses.

For the kids, there were animals to be watched and petted, balls to be kicked, catch to be played and the on-going music which the little ones were less inhibited about ‘cutting loose’ to jive. All told, there were 86 people who joined to worship together, plus the band! Through their wonderful generosity, we will send \$560.73 to the Iowa Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church to be used to aid the community of Hamburg, and \$408.00 to *Bethlehem Inn* of Waseca (\$80 of pizza sales & \$328.00 from bake sale).

Just as we closed our service with the responsive benediction, let’s remember that again now: *Let this circle move as the Body of Christ’s presence in the world. We are here. We are ready. And we have work to do! Creator God, send us burrowing inward and spiraling outward. Guide us as we boldly and lovingly hold Your holy world in our hands Walk with us as we join together to renew the beauty of Your earth.*

Pizza Farm Thank-Yous

Thank-you to the many people who made our “Worship at the Farm” possible:

- BGUMC Pizza Farm Coordinating Team: Patti Ellingson, Marlis Mahler, Linda Danks, Carolyn Kanne, Judy Mahler, Pastor Kathy King
- Pizza Farm Service Publicity: Chery Southworth
- Pleasant Grove Pizza Farm Owners: Bill Bartz and Emily Knudsen
- World Beat Connection: A music ministry of

the MN UMC Annual Conference, led by Pastor Lyndy Zabel

- BGUMC Volunteers: 31 persons from the BGUMC congregation who baked items for the bake sale and/or worked together on the day of “Worship at the Farm” to set up and host the event, providing a warm greeting and sincere welcome and hospitality to all in attendance.

