

Bedford First United Methodist Church
Erie United Methodist Church
Grace United Methodist Church
Wesley Chapel United Methodist Church



LAWRENCE COUNTY FUMC NEWS

Good Trouble

On March 18, 2026, I presented the following information at a Lenten Luncheon held at Grace United Methodist Church. Most of the copy was written by ChatGPT with a few inserts from me. As we enter this period of transition for both myself AND this church, I believe this talk hits upon the heart of United Methodism, our purpose as servants of God and our mission to "To **make disciples** of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world by **equipping local churches** for ministry and by **providing a connection** for ministry beyond the local church, **all to the glory of God.**"

(<https://www.inumc.org/who-we-are/>) Below is the text for that talk:

Lately, I've found myself using the phrase "good trouble" more than usual when describing the actions of Jesus. So, I thought I'd use my time this week to do a little exploring of the phrase and how it applies to the teachings and deeds of Jesus.

First a little background, the phrase "good trouble" is most closely associated with Rev. John Lewis, the civil rights leader and longtime U.S. congressman from Georgia who passed away in 2020. He was frequently quoted as saying: "Never, ever be afraid to make some noise and get in good trouble, necessary trouble."

The saying grows out of the spirit of the Civil Rights Movement, in which Lewis participated as a Freedom Rider and as a leader in marches such as the 1965 Selma campaign. In practical terms, "Good Trouble" looks like:

- Speaking out when others are silent
- Advocating for the marginalized
- Challenging unfair policies
- Refusing to comply with injustice

It is not chaos for its own sake. But rather a principled, disciplined method of resistance rooted in love and courage.

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Good Trouble, continued

So, what might be some examples of “good trouble?” How about

- Performing a peaceful, moral action that challenges injustice
- Disrupting unjust systems for the sake of justice
- Standing up for what is right, even when it’s uncomfortable or risky

The Old Testament prophet Micah expresses this beautifully in Micah 6:8--

What does the Lord require of you but to do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with your God?

We even have a hymn about that in our supplement “The Faith We Sing.”

There are two kinds of trouble in the world:

- That wounds and divides
- Holy trouble that heals

When John Lewis spoke of “good trouble,” he was remembering bridges crossed under threat, lunch counters occupied in courage, and jail cells entered in hope. He was remembering that love sometimes refuses to sit quietly.

Jesus knew this kind of trouble also. Every time Jesus restored someone’s dignity, someone else felt threatened. Every time he widened the circle, someone protested.

- He touched lepers
- He spoke with Samaritans
- He ate with Tax Collectors
- He allowed prostitutes to touch and kiss Him
- He stopped the stoning of an adulterous woman
- He overturned tables in the temple
- He broke Sabbath conventions to restore bodies and souls

In fact, if you think about it, every act of holy love that Jesus demonstrated disturbed someone. But here’s the thing. “Good trouble” is not rebellion for ego’s sake. It is obedience to God when obedience disrupts comfort. It is the courage to align ourselves with God’s justice even when it costs us reputation, convenience, or ease.

- The prophets made good trouble
- The apostles made good trouble
- The saints across the centuries have made good trouble

And so should we! Why? Well, as we read in James 2:17 — *Faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead.* So, get busy! You can’t grow in grace without expressing that grace in love of your neighbor.

Jesus did not simply save souls; he announced a kingdom. And kingdoms rearrange things. If our discipleship never unsettles injustice, we may need to ask whether we are walking in the full courage of grace. Love rearranges things.

Perhaps good trouble today looks like:

- Speaking up when someone is demeaned
- Refusing to participate in gossip
- Advocating for the poor
- Interrupting systems that harm
- Loving boldly when fear says to withdraw

Sometimes good trouble is loud. Sometimes it is quiet persistence. Often it is simply refusing to let love shrink. But hear this clearly: Good trouble must always be rooted in humility. Micah does not say “do justice” alone. He says “walk humbly with your God.” If justice becomes self-righteousness, it ceases to be holy. If courage loses compassion, it ceases to be Christlike. The trouble must be good — shaped by grace, guided by prayer, grounded in love.

After all, good trouble begins not in anger but in love — love of neighbor, love of truth, love of God. So go, get into “good trouble” when necessary by being God’s church. Amen.

Continued

Good Trouble, continued

Prayer

God of justice and mercy, give us courage that is rooted in love. Disturb our comfort when comfort protects injustice. Quiet our fear when fear silences truth. Teach us to walk humbly, love deeply, and, when necessary, make good trouble for the sake of Your kingdom.

Show us how to reach out in the community to serve as Your hands and feet. May our words and deeds lead others to Your healing, merciful, forgiving and grace-filled ways. Open our hearts to our siblings all around us. Open our minds to the word of hope you speak to us. Open our spirits to the presence of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, who flings wide open the doors of your kingdom, that all might find life with you. Enable us to leave this sacred space and be Your church. Amen.

Next Generation



Save the Date!

Tabbie Kopp's baby shower:

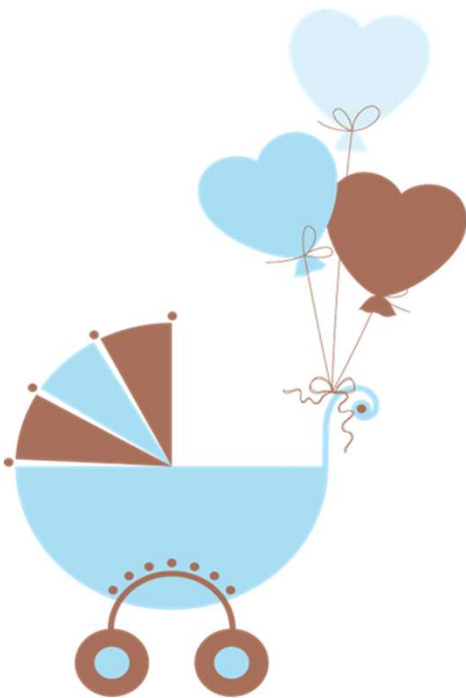
Sunday, May 17, 2026

2:00 PM

Bedford First UMC Fellowship Hall

Hostesses: Abby Farmer, Kayeh Kwakye

& Madison Thompson



Soul Food

SOUL FOOD BOOK CLUB: We will meet on Wednesday, April 1, at 10:30 AM in the Friendship Classroom. The book we will be discussing is *Michael Without Apology* by Catherine Ryan Hyde. It is about a young boy who is badly injured by fireworks and how he deals with the scars from the accident. It is, I felt, a very good book and hope that all of you enjoyed reading it for book club. Discussion will be led by me with lunch somewhere locally following our meeting.

Our book for May 6 is *Mrs. Endicott's Splendid Adventure* by Rhys Bowen with Bev Owens leading the discussion.

Please feel free to join us.

Linda Schoonmaker
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200th Anniversary Celebration



On May 6, 1926, the Methodist congregation in Bedford first assembled with 40 people as charter members. The church was served by circuit riding preachers from the Bloomington circuit. The church met at members' homes and at the Lawrence County courthouse for almost ten years until the first church building was built in 1836. That building was at 18th and I Street.

In 1867, they bought a new brick church at 14th and K Street. and remodeled it. The present church was built in 1899, with a parsonage and annex added in 1903.

As May of 2026 approaches, our congregation is planning a 200th birthday celebration for the congregation and the community. It will be on Saturday, May 16 from 1:00 PM to 5:00 PM. There will be a praise band, giveaways and information about all the local charities we've sponsored through the years.

We hope that all of the congregation will volunteer to help. If possible, we would also like to have games for kids as well as other activities as we think of them. If you have an idea that would help us in planning this celebration, we would welcome it. Please contact Karyn Price at 812-583-8278.

Blessing



Darryl Ivanson's granddaughter, Charlotte, at two months.



- 9 Rita Cox and Rusty Key
- 11 Vicki Groh
- 12 Sarah Burk
- 14 Kinnon Kopp
- 17 Kathy Thompson
- 18 Candy Stedman
- 22 Alexis Clifton Bales
- 28 Jeff Clifton
- 30 Harold Brim

What's Happening

- April 1, Soul Food at 10:30 AM
- April 1, UMW at 1:00 PM, Grace UMC
- April 2, Maundy Thursday Service at 6:00 PM
- April 3, Good Friday Service available online through links on the BFUMC website and Facebook page
- April 3, Community Good Friday Service at 7:00 PM, Bedford First Assembly of God Church, 2601 27th Street
- April 5, Easter Sunday
- April 7, Hospitality Committee at 9:00 AM
- April 8, Administrative Council at 5:00 PM
- ~~Every Sunday, Chimes Practice, 8:45 AM~~
- Every Sunday, Choir Practice, 9:30 AM
- Last Monday of the month, Euchre at 2:00 PM
- Every Tuesday, Men's Breakfast at Denny's at 9:00 AM
- Every Tuesday, Grief Share at 2:00 PM
- Every Thursday, Fiber Time at 2:00 PM
- Every Saturday, Gideons at 8:00 AM

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The Mission of Bedford First United Methodist Church is to grow in faith in Christ and to reach out in God's love to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.