

2022



FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF WAUSAU

THE MESSENGER

Dear First UMC,

On our first day in the Holy Land, we were privileged to meet Jean Zaru, a well-known Christian leader and voice for peace and justice in Palestine. She is the only female clergy in Palestine, and leads a Quaker congregation. Her message and title is a fitting highlight to the We Are Witnesses sermon series we just concluded. *Pastor Rebecca*

Being Faithful witnesses: Serving God in a Changing World

Sisters and Brothers,

From the heart of Palestine, a land besieged and violated by Israeli military occupation, I have come to join you today. From the midst of Palestine, a tortured nation held in captivity, I stand with you today.



Both my life experiences in Palestine and my ecumenical work in many corners of the world requires that I share with you the story of my people, a story of human hurt and hope. I represent a narrative of exclusion, the denial of basic human and community rights. But, I have a message of hope. A message of hope embodied in the spirit and will of all those who refuse to submit to the forces of oppression, violence and injustice, structures of domination, colonialism foreign occupation.

The situation in Palestine calls on all of one's resources: physical, mental, emotional and spiritual. And in the darkest nights of the soul, we seek your affirmation and actions, especially as governments and power systems have failed us because of their power politics, absence of will and shortsighted self-interest.



Our group at the Western Wall of the Temple Mount

Continued on pages 4 & 5



We grieve this month at the loss of former member Muriel Lambert, who died May 20th.

Congratulations to Ken & Marian Attoe on their 50th wedding anniversary, June 10th.



Due to the increase in COVID cases this month, we will meet at church in the courtyard for lunch at 11:30 on Monday, June 6th. Bring a sack lunch and a beverage. Be ready to enjoy a nice afternoon of fellowship. If we have inclement weather, we will meet inside.

The first Monday in July is the 4th so I have moved Savvy Seniors to Monday, July 11th at 11:30. We will meet at El Tequila Salsa in Rib Mountain. I will put out a notification of any changes prior to meeting. Any questions please call Vicki at 715-571-3009.



June/July Birthdays

June

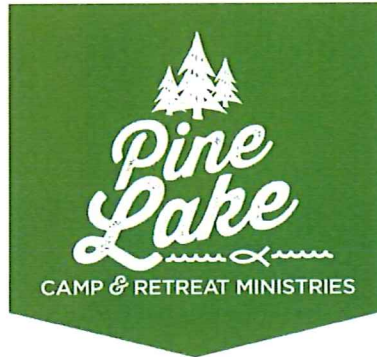
- 1 Elizabeth Harmon
- 2 Beth Rohland
- 3 Tony Borchardt
- 4 Andrew Koss
- 6 Marian Attoe
- 7 Ken Thario*
Dale Zietlow
- 8 Rita Bennett
Joshua Dvorak
- 11 Sue Kissinger
- 12 Andy Flath*
- 15 Taylor Sarazen
- 16 Carol Reitz*
- 17 Doris Fountain*
- 19 Matt Seiser
- 24 Beth Moss*
- 26 Mike Zahn
- 27 Mitchell Stamp
- 29 Laura Grogan
Finnley Schreiber
Peggy Stamp

July

- 2 Marilyn Muelver
- 3 Jamelle Milne
Walter Winchell*
Avery Wyrick
- 7 Dan Daubert
Hannah Marquardt
Gwyneth Chang
Jacqueline Chang
- 9 Monica Dvorak
- 10 Courtney Rohland
- 12 Bowman Seiser

* Signifies a member who for health reasons cannot be at church regularly. We invite you this month to remember these members in your prayers.

Family Camp



Come join us this summer for family camp on July 15-17 at Pine Lake Wildwood Campground. The cost is \$70 per camper vehicle and \$35 per tent. A deposit of \$35 for camper vehicles and \$20 for tents is due by June 5.

Everyone is welcome! Make plans now to be a part of this fun-filled weekend.

The Messenger

Our next newsletter will be a combination of the middle of July (7/18-8/31) and the full month of August (8/1-8/31). If you have any articles to submit, please have those into the office by June 27th.

Thank you.



Continued from page cover page

The current atmosphere in Jerusalem is highly charged, and the situation in the Holy Land is surely far more complex than that which we encounter in Luke's presentation of the first century. Even my identity as a Palestinian Christian is not easily explained to anyone living outside my immediate context. You see, I am Christian and I am Palestinian. One part of my identity cannot be separated from the other. And as such, we, Palestinian Christians, are often referred to as the embroidery work of our people that is we are an interwoven and an integral part of the whole society.

Although we are the modern heirs of the disciples of Jesus in Jerusalem and despite our rich contribution to the Middle East, we have become unknown, unacknowledged and forgotten by much of the world. We are a highly educated community with deep historical roots, a community that is, unfortunately, diminishing every day as a result of political and economic pressures. Our future is uncertain; the pressures are enormous.

And as we part and parcel of our society, not outside of it, it is a daily challenge to remain faithful, to witness to our faith in these the most dire of circumstances where today as Palestinians none of our rights are guaranteed. We stand with our Muslim sister and brothers at the margins of life in Palestine, sharing a common reality of prolonged suffering and waiting, and acting together in hope for a brighter future.

70 years ago, we were cast outside the course of history, our identity denied, and our very human, cultural and historical reality suppressed. We were victims of the cruel myth: 'a land without a people for a people without a land'. And we continue to be victims of an exclusive agenda-an agenda that has usurped our rights, our lands and confiscated, as well, our historical narrative.

Our country is becoming one gigantic prison and one vast cemetery. The people, land, houses and trees have been brutally treated. Fear and insecurity have replaced compassion and trust.

Relations have become hard and tense. When almost every aspect of life is framed in oppression and humiliation, moral space is diminished. Our own humanity is threatened and role models for our children become hard to find. People are tired and depressed. They are traumatized by the violence that is perpetuated against them which affects both their physical and mental health. My people need time to mourn, to heal their wounds, to pacify their children and to find their daily bread.

Our oppression and the Israeli occupation could not have lasted so long without outside assistance. Proportionate to its population, the state of Israel is the recipient of more US aid than any foreign state in history. This aid, combined with political support from the US, enables Israel to tighten its grip of occupation and make our lives more difficult, more unlivable. The truth has been so twisted that anybody who dares to speak out for justice is now associated with terrorism or anti-Semitism or according to the theology of some, against God as they understand God's purpose in this world.

This is done in the name of the so-called Christian Zionists, and as indigenous Palestinian Christians we have no choice but to answer to that claim and to the many religious leaders who exploit the Bible to endorse the legitimacy, policies and conduct of Israel. These Christians have Established a linkage between biblical Israel and the modern nation state of Israel. Evils of discrimination, oppression and dispossession are justified by reference to biblical texts. David Ben-Gurion called the Bible the sacrosanct title deed to Palestine for the Jewish people.

As Palestinian Christians we must liberate our theology from such an understanding. God for us is a God of justice and compassion, not a God of vengeance and exclusivity. As Palestinian Christians, we have long been forgotten, even unknown, and certainly unacknowledged. We have suffered, as have all our people from dispossession, displacement and oppression. And we are then blamed for the history, politics and theology of others.

In spite of our different life experiences, we are very much influenced by each other's contexts. Where Islam is demonized, we are asked to love our neighbors and not to bear false witness against them. Western missionary movements, past and present, in spite of their good works have sometimes been a source of embarrassment and division, especially in Palestine.

The International Christian Embassy in Jerusalem is another story. Politically, it is pro-Israel in its expansionist policy with regard to settlements, and is against any peace process that will end occupation. I find their theology violent and exclusive. It is pro-Israel but anti-Jewish. Fortunately, there are many faithful witnesses in Israel/Palestine. The Christian Peacemaker Teams, the members of the accompaniment programme of the World Council of churches, the International Solidarity Movement joined by local Palestinians and Israelis, all bear witness to peace and justice. We have many others who joined us in our non-violent struggle on many fronts and to support in any ways possible.

Both my context in Palestine and my travels throughout the world have brought me into relation with many religious traditions. Many thinkers struggle with religious diversity. Others, as activists, are concerned with militarism, the degradation of the environment, racism and sexism. Many are working from a faith base on peace and justice issues. Often times, I have found that dialogue within the Christian tradition and among these various groups is not easy.

Some of these difficulties concern our understanding of witness, mission and the Bible. Let me begin by stating that I personally cannot take the Bible literally.

The stories in the Bible reveal people's perceptions of God but not full reality of God. The view that the Bible is to be understood in a literalist way must be surrendered. There are many narratives that are problematic, containing texts of unsurpassed violence, which are an affront to moral sensitivities. Every effort should be made to rescue the Bible from serving as a blunt instrument in the oppression of one people by another. In Palestine, the Americas and South Africa, the Bible has been used as a tool of oppression rather than liberation.

If you want to know what God has been up to in the world, the Spirit bids us to keep our eyes and ears open to the witnesses of others. After all, the Spirit is about movement, and the presence of God. The Spirit fills, inspires, teaches, reminds and comforts. The Spirit both nurtures contemplation and empowers action.

Many Christians differ in their understanding of witness and mission. In many of the places I have visited, the churches' concern about evangelism is related to the growing influence in the context as well as mine, of sects and new religious movements. The stories are very similar from Russia to the Pacific, from the Middle East to South Africa. The churches are disturbed by a massive influx of Christian charismatic and fundamentalists groups and by the aggressive methods of recruitment they use. I am disturbed by their

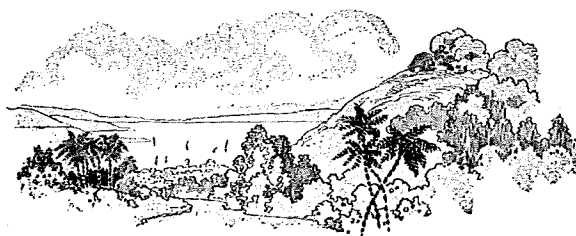
theology where they generally advocate nationalist or religious exclusiveness and the subordinations of women. They reject many of the political and ethical values of modern democracy, basic human rights, pluralism, freedom of speech, sharing of power and responsibility. Their literal understanding of the Bible is frightening and violent and, more often than not, justifies my oppression and dispossession as mandated by God. This is serious, even dangerous.

Must we not re-focus our efforts towards articulating a religious vision that can contribute to a global outlook and a discourse of radical, democratic human community and well being for all?

So, too, are we not challenged to articulate and then realize a liberating spiritual vision of justice? Biblical studies must be re-thought in such a way that they can contribute to the articulation of spiritual understandings that envision human dignity, justice, inclusivity and diversity in new ways.

On many occasions the witness of action has cast doubt on the witness of the Word. To witness to Christ is to follow Jesus' way and mission as expressed in Luke 4:18-19:

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.



Hi FUMC!

Thanks to the support from the church and the Pivet Scholarship, I was able to graduate from the University of New Mexico with my bachelor's degree in Biology and Spanish, with a minor in psychology. Not only that, I also managed to do so a semester early! The last few years I've spent in Albuquerque have been life changing. I started as a high school graduate and college freshman in the on-campus housing and ended up living in my own apartment at graduation! So much has happened in the last four years, and I've grown so much as a person. And, because of the support I've gotten, I've been able to achieve all this debt-free. I have so much appreciation and gratitude for the opportunities I've had throughout my academic career, and my way of giving back has manifested itself in service to my community. Last summer, I served in AmeriCorps at the local food bank in Albuquerque. I spent over 450 hours working in the warehouse, preparing food boxes, as well as leading mobile food pantries while the world has been living through the pandemic. This summer I will be returning to this role and serving again, because it was so rewarding and worthwhile to me the first time. Another recent development in my life was the decision to pursue an MBA. I started in January and so far, it's been great! I'm looking forward to continuing this path and being able to use my knowledge and skills to enrich my community.

Anjali Dvorak



*Congratulations,
Graduates!*

James Duginski - Wausau East High School and
Recipient of the Pivet Scholarship Award

Hannah Marquardt - Wausau West High School

Anjali Dvorak - Bachelor of Science, University of New Mexico

Karli Johnson - Bachelor of Music Education, UW Stevens Point

Danielle Del Conte - Master of Science, Marquette University

Julia Ebert - PhD in Computer Science, Harvard University

Miranda Zahn - PhD in School Psychology, UW Madison

Thank You to our Faith Formation Volunteers

On Sunday, May 22nd, we recognized the following people for their work with Faith Formation during the past year.

Children: Carrie Hockerman, Karen Petersen, and Diane Zahn

Middle and High School: Sheryl Del Conte, Betsy Duginski, and Margaret Getzin

Adults: Gary Getzin

Random Thoughts: A Letter Home by *Mike Zahn*

See, a king will reign in righteousness and rulers will rule with justice. Each person will be like a shelter from the wind and a refuge from the storm, like streams of water in the desert and the shadow of a great rock in a thirsty land. Isaiah 32:1-2

Dear First Church family,

Having answered God's call to tiptoe out into the waters of pastoral ministry, I was promptly thrown into the deep end. On my starting day I officiated a funeral for a prominent member of Christ Church in Merrill. Thanks to some guidance from Pastor Rebecca, Pastor Jerry and Jesus, we had a very meaningful Celebration of Life for her family and friends. The family really appreciated that the church now had an appointed pastor that could do the service- they did not know what they would have done otherwise, as it was their mother's desire to have the funeral service at her church with the church's pastor. This is all to say that I realized, God had called me for that moment and gave me everything to do what needed to be done—thank you God!

I miss you all and part of me will always be at First Church, but there is a lot to do in Merrill and Gleason and that is where I am meant to be right now. May you and I-- in Wausau, in Merrill, in Gleason-- be like streams of water in the desert to the world around us.

Grace, mercy and peace,

Mike Zahn



June: Mission Guatemala

We do not have plans to resume our trips, but we continue to provide ongoing support for the mission in Guatemala with personal needs, clothing, and education. Donate loose change, put cash in the small brown envelopes in the pews or write Mission Guatemala the memo line of your check.

July: Claire's Critter Closet

We assist families in need by providing pet supplies for their critters large and small. Claire's Critter closet is open twice a month at scheduled times to pick up needed pet supplies. Donate loose change, put cash in the small brown envelopes in the pews or write Claire's Critter Closet the memo line of your check.

Project Connect Event

On the morning of Wednesday, April 27, our church hosted Project Connect, a program designed to bring the homeless and near homeless together with the service providers who can help them with food, shelter, job opportunities and access to healthcare.

Eighteen service providers including The United Way, Bridge Community Clinic, The Presbyterian Free Clinic, Job Service and The Neighbor's Place set up information filled tables staffed with knowledgeable people to help those attending find available services of which they may not have been aware.

In addition to the opportunity for the guests to find needed help, the service providers had the opportunity to meet and exchange ideas on how they can best serve the folks in need of secure shelter and a brighter future.

About 50 breakfasts consisting of French Toast, Eggs, Sausage, Juice, and Coffee were served by an excellent cooking, serving, and cleaning crew made up of very dedicated members of our congregation and one cook from the Warming Center kitchen staff. The Warming Center housed in our church closed for the season on April 30th.

Hosting Project Connect provided another great way for FUMC Wausau to serve our community, especially those less fortunate and in need of a hand up. We are blessed to be able to *Live and Share God's Love*.

Dick Rayborn & Pam Anderson

Highway Clean-up

Thank you Alice & Stan, Ken, Betsy, James, Maggie--and so many Scout family and friends--who helped make our 2022 Highway Cleanup a success!



UMW Name Change:

United Methodist Women (UMW) have 150 years of mission history and have had over 25 names throughout the years. Now we have another - **United Women in Faith** reflecting women's lives and how we are organized for mission.

It may be hard for us to remember our new name (we have been UMW since 1972), but we have always been united in faith. If you are interested in learning more, please contact Barbara Ritchie at 715-205-4622 or email barbjack57@msn.com



United
Women
in Faith

FUMC Online

Website: fumcwausau.org
with links to the weekly sermon
in text and podcast

facebook.com/WausauFUMC

WiFi Network: FUMC Public
(password: *fumcpublic*)

Phone: 715.842.2201

June 2022 “Good”

To be a follower of Jesus means to be willing to sacrifice ourselves for the good of all. It means to be willing to deny ourselves for the benefit of all of humanity.

I recently read about a man named Thomas Cannon who did this in a truly remarkable way. He was a postal worker in Richmond, Virginia, who lived much of his life on the edge of poverty so that he could give to those in need. Describing himself as “a poor man’s philanthropist,” he gave away more than \$150,000 to people who were experiencing hard times, or who had been unusually kind or brave. He gave these gifts over the last 33 years of his life, mostly in the form of \$1,000 checks.

He traced his inspiration to his time in the Navy. While he was away at signal school, there was a shipboard explosion at the Port of Chicago and many of his shipmates were killed. He concluded that he was spared for a reason — to help others, to be a role model, to inspire people to see what he called “the oneness of it all.”

Cannon gave to people of all ages, races, nationalities, and incomes. He gave to a low-income woman who started a youth center in her apartment complex . . . to a retired postal worker who was a regular volunteer at an elementary school . . . to a woman and a man who wanted to return to Vietnam to visit their hometown . . . to an advocate for the victims of crime . . . and to a teenager who had been abandoned as an infant but grew up to be named Virginia’s Youth of the Year.

This generosity didn’t come without sacrifice. Cannon supported his wife, his two sons, and himself and his charitable efforts on a salary that never exceeded \$20,000 a year. When he retired from the postal service in 1983, he and his wife lived near the poverty line on his pension. “We lived simply,” he said before his death in 2005, “so we could give money away.”

He wasn’t unhappy about these sacrifices. In fact, he had a great sense of humor, one that he kept even after being diagnosed with terminal cancer. As his health was failing, he told the Richmond newspaper, “A Baptist deacon who owed me \$200 died recently. First thing I’m going to do when I get to the other side is run him down.”

Thomas Cannon didn’t want a foundation to be set up to continue his work after his death. He feared that a foundation would require a bureaucracy, and tons of paperwork. He didn’t even want his name attached to anything. He just left one simple request: “Help somebody.”

Rev. Jason Mahnke, Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation

Our Financial		Picture for April 2022	
April Revenue		April Expenses	
Pledged Offering	\$ 10,901.16	Staffing	\$ 17,935.38
Non-Pledged Offering	\$ 3,020.00	Programming	\$ 1,499.12
Other Revenue	\$ 3,231.00	Apportionments	\$ 3,986.00
From Endowment	\$ 1,672.72	Building Operations	\$ 5,397.67
Total Revenue	\$ 18,824.88	Total Expenses	\$ 28,818.17
		Net MTD	\$ (9,993.29)

STAFF

Pastor Rebecca Voss
rebecca@firstmethodistwausau.org

Faith Formation, Music Director
Martie Pahrís
martie@firstmethodistwausau.org

Bookkeeper Martie Pahrís
finance@firstmethodistwausau.org

Secretary Joan Stroyny
joan@firstmethodistwausau.org

Building Engineer Andy White

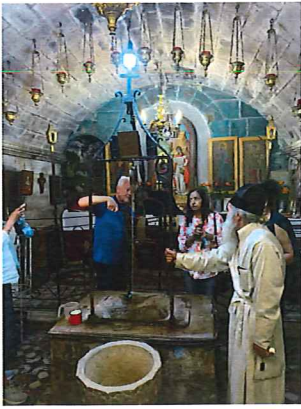
903 Third Street, Wausau, WI 54403

Office Hours: 9 a.m. – 1 p.m.

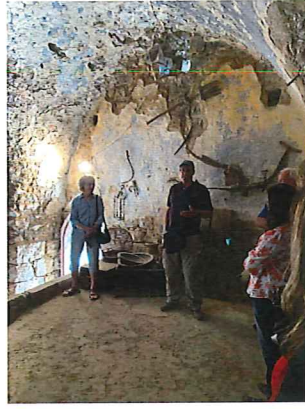
Monday – Thursday

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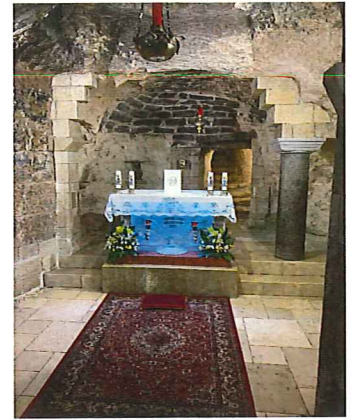
Jacob's Well where Jesus met the outcast woman and offered living water.



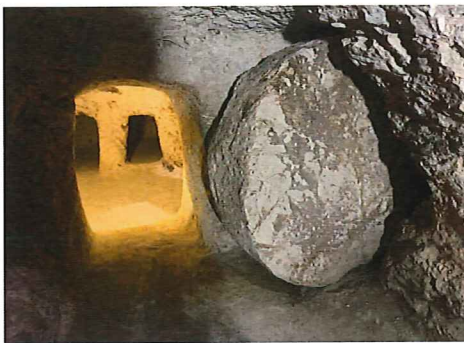
1st century home where extended family lived together.



Garden of Gethsemane.



Site of where Gabriel told Mary she would bear God's Son.



Tomb of Joseph, most similar to the kind Jesus was also buried in.



Church of Beatitudes, built where Jesus gave his Sermon on the Mount.



Site of Jesus multiplying loaves and fish.



Site of Jesus forgiving and restoring Peter after his denial.



Capernaum where Jesus spent most of His ministry.



Sea of Galilee.



Valley of Doves, where Jesus walked between Galilee and Nazareth.



2nd Temple model of Jerusalem.



Masada, Herod's fortress during Jesus' life.



Jerusalem from the Mt. of Olives.



“Palm Sunday Path” where Jesus rode the donkey into Jerusalem.



Qumran Cave, site of Dead Sea Scrolls.



Lower level of 1st century home where animals stayed at night.



Jordan River baptismal site.



“Door of Humility”, the only way to come to God.



Star Street, in Bethlehem.



Mosaic restoration in the oldest church in the world.



Learning from leaders at Wi'am to practice peace & justice in conflict.



Bethlehem.



Site of Jesus' birth.



Greek Orthodox chancel in Church of the Nativity.

The Messenger

First United Methodist Church of Wausau
903 Third Street
Wausau, WI 54403

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Church Purpose:

Live and Share God's Love

Worship in June

Sunday Worship Times

8:00 a.m. Worship in the Chapel 10:00 a.m. Worship in the Sanctuary

Sermon Series: Living the Spirit Life

Sunday, June 5 Pentecost-Overcoming Babel

Psalm 104:24-35, Genesis 11:1-9, Acts 2:1-21

Sunday, June 12 Trinity Sunday (Hymn Sing)

Psalm 8, Proverbs 8:1-4, 22-31, Romans 5:1-5, John 16:12-15

Sunday, June 19 From Madness to Stillness *Father's Day*

Psalm 43, 1 Kings 19:1-4, 8-15a, Luke 8:26-39

Sunday, June 26 Brought Home in the Spirit

Psalm 16:5-11, 2 Kings 2:1-2, 6-14, Luke 9:51-62