

DECEMBER

2022

*Seasons Blessings
of Love and Joy
to All!*



FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF WAUSAU

THE MESSENGER



Dear First Wausau Family of Faith,

How do you prepare for Christmas? If you're like me, you pull down boxes of Christmas decorations, cut down and/or set up a Christmas tree, untangle and hang up lights and memory-filled ornaments on that tree, display a Nativity set, and buy plenty of butter, sugar, and sprinkles. Unfortunately, I often run out of steam and find it a struggle to write and send cards. My biggest hurdle is choosing presents, because I dislike shopping, commercialism, crowds, and slushy parking lots that lead to very rare feelings that I found the "perfect" gift for each person.

All those external preparations can take a toll on the internal preparations that God likely prefers for us to focus on. The season of Advent reminds us of the ways that God is preparing our hearts for Christ to come again. For example, the song "Joy to the World" was not written as a Christmas carol about Jesus being born two millennia ago. It was composed by Isaac Watts, a contemporary of John and Charles Wesley, as a description of what to expect when Christ returns based on Psalm 98:

"Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive her King;

Let every heart prepare him room, and heaven and nature sing..."

Advent is not simply about setting things up for a "Baby Jesus Christmas". It is primarily about preparing our minds and hearts to receive the full-strength Lord, Savior, and King. No one knows when Christ will return, but we are to be watching, praying, and prepared with lives that:

"No more let sins and sorrows grow, nor thorns infest the ground;

He comes to make his blessings flow far as the curse is found..."

As we refocus our Christmas preparations to be more on Advent priorities, we need God's perspective and strength. The last stanza of "Joy to the World" gives us that as a vision in song:

"He rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the nations prove

The glories of his righteousness and wonders of his love.."

Blessed Advent and Christmas to All!

Pastor Rebecca

715.842.2201

www.firstmethodistwausau.org

First Thanksgiving for Wausau's New Refugees



New Beginnings for Refugees organized dozens of volunteers and over 120 refugees and co-sponsors gathered for their first Thanksgiving on November 12th.



Locally-raised turkeys, blessed and prepared by a new 4th generation Halal butcher from Syria, made it a delicious feast for everyone.



December



- | | | |
|-------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1 Joe Schreiber | 14 Sharon Gisselman | 23 Ann Johnson |
| 7 Betsy Duginski | Stan Schacht | 24 Vicki Nowaczyk |
| Lynne Sydow | Lois Susor* | 28 Denny Carey |
| 9 Yvonne Firary | 16 Robert Bauer* | 29 Anita Gerber |
| Carrie Hockerman | 18 Dean Marquardt | 31 Nancy Bogumill |
| 11 Cyrus Adams | 19 Dave Carlson | Sara Koss |
| Arthur Chang | Merrill McMahan | |
| 13 Charlie Strong | Andy White | |

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



**Live and Share
God's Love ...**
with
Peace, Joy & Hope



Savvy Seniors will meet on Monday December 5th, at 11:30 at Jalapenos Restaurant. This is a social group open to singles and couples over the age of 55 who would like to partake in light conversations and fellowship in addition to good food. We would love to have you join us. Any questions call Vicki Nowaczyk at 715-571-3009.

Fall UWF Rummage Sale Recap



**United
Women
in Faith**

If you happened to take a look at Fellowship Hall the last week of October, you couldn't miss the piled tables of home goods, clothing, books, games, holiday items, toys, etc. All evidence of the first United Women in Faith's first rummage sale. This occurred more than a decade after the last pre-owned sales coordinated by the United Methodist Women, so it was good to return to a somewhat familiar event. While all the tables except one were organized by the UWF, the items for sale came from many members of the church as donations, collected over the past couple of years. Those donations were very much appreciated and helped provide a large variety of goods. Andy White set up his own tables of items he has collected through the years as well. The UWF was able to raise money through the sale that will benefit community groups such as Peyton's Promise, Claire's Critter Closet, and others. During the two days of the sale, Bibi and her family from Afghanistan were also able to sell some ethnic foods and some items that Bibi sews.

This sale would not have been possible without the many hours given by a number of volunteers over many days in October—unloading bags and boxes of donated items, sorting goods onto tables, pricing items, and then reloading boxes and bags of leftover items for donation to St. Vincent's or to keep for a probable future sale in 2023. There were some books that were kept for distribution to people coming through the Personal Needs Closet, as well as a good collection of children's books for those families to enjoy. Many, many thanks to the following people who gave so much of their time to the success of this sale—Nancy Turner, Sara Koss, Gail Cain, Sharon Gisselman, Diann Misoni, Laura Cowan, Julie Mieke, Margaret Getzin, Barb Ritchie, Bonnie Goertz, Mary Ann Dykes, and Andy White. Other volunteers were Nancy Bogumill, Judy Hoover, Monica Dvorak, Carole Machek, and Lin Strong, who worked with Bibi and her family. We are already looking forward to another probable sale sometime in the spring or early summer of 2023.

December Missions

This month's offering will be for Red Cliff. This mission serves the residents of the reservation and deepens the relationship with the native community there. The donations will provide supplies for the early childhood programs and clothing for the children. In addition to financial donations, there is a gift box in the Parlor for new infant & toddler hats and mittens. Thank you for your generosity.



Ray Nowaczyk

Random Thoughts - The Unused Card

by Mike Zahn

"I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full." John 10:10

Imagine that you were given a gift card for Christmas. That's not hard to do; gift cards are very popular these days and they are wonderful to receive. Let's say you get a VISA gift card that you can use anywhere. Let's say it's worth, I don't know, a hundred dollars. That's a pretty nice gift card. But what if you never use it? What if it sits in a drawer until the day you die and you never use it? It's still worth a hundred dollars, I guess, but you never get any value out of it in this life. Whatever enjoyment the giver intended for you to get from the card is left unused in the drawer.

Jesus is God's gift to the world, the "bread of life" and yet how many treat him as if he is a gift card that they never bother to use. Jesus said he came that we may have life and have it to the full. He did not come just to give us a gift card to heaven. He intended for us to fully experience the hope, peace, joy and love that only a relationship with God can bring, and while we are yet alive!

This Christmas, let's celebrate the gift God gave us in Jesus. Let's spend every dime of his gift, making our lives, the lives of others, and the life of this world--better.

Time to Reopen the Church Nursery

It is always a good thing when young families attend church and want to be part of the Sunday worship service. But sometimes, those young families need support from the church nursery for their children aged 5 and under. Prior to the pandemic, our church had a nursery director, staffing the nursery for at least two hours every Sunday morning and many Wednesday evenings as well. While we have not yet returned to our Wednesday night activities, we are seeing a need to have a staffed nursery available on many Sunday mornings. Our former director, Anna S., is not able to return to the nursery at this time, but she does hope to at some point in the future.

Therefore, we need to look within our church and possibly outside our church, to help fill this need. There is a sign-up sheet on the door to the nursery for interested church members willing to help out, but we will also look at seeking someone (over 18 years old) who is willing to commit to being a paid nursery director two hours a week on Sunday mornings. If you are interested in this position yourself, or you know someone who may be interested, please contact Bonnie Goertz or any other member of SPRC, to help get our nursery staffed and reopened on a full-time basis.



First Wausau UMC Tumblers



These stainless-steel tumblers hold 12 ounces, keep drinks hot or cold, and make great gifts and help us get the word out about our church! You can buy them for \$7 each (at cost, no profit) in the office Monday-Thursday. And they are available in the Parlor on Sunday mornings.

Grief Support Group



We understand how difficult the holidays can be when you are grieving the loss of a loved one. There are many triggers that flood our emotions. Thankfully, we have compassionate people with experience in walking with people through their grief. They will be starting a Grief Support group in January and would like to know who is interested in coming and when works best for the most people. Before the group sessions begin in January, they are available to get together with you individually and support you in this holiday season. Please contact Clare Ostwald at apple62@tdsmail.com or Julie Mieke at Julie.mieke9@gmail.com for more information, or call the church office at 715-842-2201 to be put in touch with the facilitators.

Peyton's Promise



The Peyton Promise event on November 13th collected hundreds of pounds of food and almost \$800 was raised. The organizer, Pete Johnson, says "thank you so much" for everyone's generosity. The people at Bridge Street Mission were very excited and appreciative to get the food. The money will go to buy fresh produce and meat.

FUMC Online

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

facebook.com/WausauFUMC
youtube.com/@FirstWausauUMC

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

Phone: 715.842.2201



Giving Breaks the Temptation of Greed

“The one who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and the one who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each of you must give as you have made up your mind.” (2 Corinthians 9:6-7a)

Are you 70-1/2 or older? Or do you know someone 70-1/2 or older? If you are, what ministries are you most passionate about? Don't pass up the chance to make a special gift this year! Don and Sandi always wanted to see a youth minister in place at their church. When they learned they could make a distribution directly to their church from their Traditional IRA to provide the seed money to start this ministry, they decided to tithe their IRA. A few other members of their church joined them in this effort, and now the youth ministry position is funded for the next five years.

The IRA Rollover is a special giving option that is only available to persons 70-1/2 and older. Call your IRA administrator today and request to have your Required Minimum Distribution for 2022 (or a gift of your choice up to a maximum of \$100,000) sent directly to your local church (or other charity). This gift will benefit the ministry you have designated and will NOT be included in your gross income for tax purposes.

What types of IRAs qualify? Only Traditional and Roth IRAs qualify.

Where can I make Qualified Charitable Distributions from my IRA? Only to qualified public charities. All United Methodist Churches and United Methodist Ministries are qualified public charities: UMCOR, any of our Health and Welfare Ministries, UM Camps, or Advance Specials. You may make an outright gift or make a gift that establishes a permanent endowment fund. On the next page is a sample letter. For more information contact us at:

Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation 750 Windsor Street #305 Sun Prairie, WI 53590-0620 888-903-9863 or wumf@wumf.org



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Grab An “Ornament”!

Merry Christmas! Yes, it is that time of year again, which means there are trees in the church parlor that offer many opportunities to help others less fortunate. This year there are 3 trees, each designated to help out in a given area—Claire’s Critter Closet, the Personal Needs Closet, and the Open Door community. The people who receive these items are so grateful for the help and support provided by us and by our community. Each tree has a number of “ornaments” hanging on it that give suggestions of ways to help that particular area of need. Choose some tags from each tree or just one particular tree, purchase that/those suggested item(s), and return it to church and place it under the designated tree(s). There will be designated wrapped boxes for these items located near or under the trees as well.

If you would rather give a monetary donation to any of these areas, that is always very welcome as well. If you write a check for one of them, please make it out to FUMC-Wausau for the Critter Closet and/or Personal Needs Closet and designate that on the memo line of the check. If you wish to donate money to Open Door, please make the check out directly to that community mission. If you have any questions, see a member of the United Women in Faith for help. Thank you for helping to brighten the holiday and new year for those needing a little help and support in our local communities.

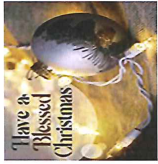


Chapel

The Chapel has been renewed with a larger monitor, removal of the communion rails, and addition of the pulpit, chancel and eventually the baptismal font from the 1909-1959 church building.



Prayer Priorities
Sundays: The Suffering & Seniors
Monday: Missions & Outreach
Tuesday: Teachers & Students
Wednesday: Wausau & Wisconsin
Thursday: The Thirsty & Hungry
Friday: Friends & Family
Saturday: Servant-Leaders & Staff

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>4 8:00am Worship, Chapel, Holy Communion 9:00am Sunday School Classes, All Ages 10:00am Worship, Sanctuary, Holy Communion</p>	<p>5 11:30am Savvy Seniors, Jalapenos'</p>	<p>6 1:00pm - 3:00pm Personal Needs Closet/Claire's Critter Closet 5:30pm Trustees, B.K. Smith</p>	<p>7 5:45pm Handbell Rehearsal 6:45pm Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>8 8:00am AA, Room 101 8:00am Messenger Articles Due 1:00pm - 5:00pm Wausau Free Clinic - Appointment 7:00pm Boy Scouts, Choir Room</p>	<p>9 Office Closed 4:30pm - 6:00pm UWF Cookie Pickup</p>	<p>10 9:00am - 12:00pm Lessons & Carols Rehearsal</p>
<p>11 8:00am No Chapel Service 9:00am Sunday School Classes, All Ages 10:00am, Sanctuary LESSONS AND Carols 11:00am UWF Cookie Pickup</p>	<p>12 7:00pm Ministries Council, Parlor</p>	<p>13 1:00pm - 3:00pm Personal Needs Closet/Claire's Critter Closet 5:30pm Trustees, B.K. Smith</p>	<p>14 5:45pm Missions Team, Parlor</p>	<p>15 Newsletter Articles Due 8:00am AA, Room 101 7:00pm Boy Scouts, Choir Room</p>	<p>16 Office Closed</p>	<p>17 Office Closed</p>
<p>18 8:00am Worship, Chapel 9:00am Sunday School Classes, All Ages 10:00am Worship, Sanctuary</p>	<p>19 7:00pm Ministries Council, Parlor</p>	<p>20 6:00pm SPRC, B.K. Smith 7:00pm Finance Committee, BK Smith Room</p>	<p>21 1:00pm United Women in Faith Meeting, Parlor</p>	<p>22 8:00am AA, Room 101 7:00pm Boy Scouts, Choir Room</p>	<p>23 Office Closed</p>	<p>24 Christmas Eve Services 2:00pm - Chapel 4:00pm - Sanctuary 8:00pm - Sanctuary <i>(Personal Needs/Claire's Critter Closet Closed)</i></p>
<p>25 Christmas Day 9:00am Worship, Chapel (One Service Only)</p> 	<p>26 Office Closed</p>	<p>27 Office Closed</p>	<p>28 Office Closed</p>	<p>29 8:00am AA, Room 101</p>	<p>30 Office Closed</p>	<p>31 New Year's Eve</p>

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 DECEMBER

Sunday Worship Times: 8:00 a.m. Chapel; 10:00 a.m. Sanctuary

**Dec. 11th, 10am only in Sanctuary, Dec. 25th, 9am only in Chapel
and Jan. 1st, 9am only in Sanctuary**

Sunday, Dec 4 - The Lord's Highway

Isaiah 35:1-10; Luke 1:46-55

Sunday, Dec 11 - Lessons and Carols

8:00am No Chapel Service

10:00am Only, Sanctuary

Psalm 96; Isaiah 11:1-10; Luke 1:68-79, 2:1-20;
John 1:1-14

Sunday, Dec 18 - Give You a Sign

Matthew 1:18-25; Luke 2:1-20



**Join us this month for our
Advent & Christmas Services**

Saturday Dec 24 - Christmas Eve

Isaiah 9:2-7; Luke 2:1-20

2:00pm Chapel

4:00pm Sanctuary

8:00pm Sanctuary

Sunday Dec 25 - Christmas Day

9:00am Chapel

Psalm 98; Isaiah 52:7-10; Hebrews 1:1-4;
John 1:1-14

Sunday Jan 1 - New Year's Day

Wesleyan Covenant Renewal Service

9:00am Sanctuary