

JANUARY  
2023



Dear First Wausau Family and Friends,

Happy New Year! With New Year's Day landing on a Sunday, it seems appropriate to hold an historic "Wesleyan Covenant Renewal Service" on January 1. We are renewing our personal commitment to Christ and our commitment to loving and serving our neighbors with Jesus' love and grace. As we reconnect with meaningful traditions like this, we also find ourselves being transformed for a healthier future. Though change is often challenging, we are reminded that God is always making all things new. In Jesus' parting words in Revelation 21:5 he promises, "See, I make all things new". Our rich heritage can guide us to pray and discern to see how God wants to renew our faith, our congregation, and our world!

You may notice several ways our church is making some changes in hopes of renewing our commitment to Christ and our community. One adjustment is our name, from *First United Methodist Church of Wausau* to *First Wausau* (United Methodist Church). We are still thoroughly United Methodist in connection, theology, and practice, but the denominational name is a mouthful and has become much less relevant for people looking for a church home. Instead, focusing on the word "First" has at least two meanings. We have a unique heritage as the first church of any kind in Wausau. That history and stability will be a witness to those seeking a trustworthy congregation. The other meaning is also missional. As a church we do not exist for ourselves, but to be ambassadors of Christ's grace in our community. We are committed to the Wausau area and working for peace and justice for all our neighbors.

As we recommit and refocus, the MCCI "Get the Word Out" team has been hard at work creating a new logo and will be rolling out a new website (thanks to Jon Goertz for both!). About a year ago we had to quickly decide on a new domain name after discovering our old [fumcwausau.org](http://fumcwausau.org) could not be renewed and has since expired. The current one, [firstmethodistwausau.org](http://firstmethodistwausau.org) is unfortunately too cumbersome. We have secured a new domain that will become active in a few weeks: **FirstWausau.org**. We will also be making substantial changes to the monthly Messenger to make it easier to produce and read.

The biggest change that every member will be deciding soon is regarding our building. The MCCI Building Repurpose Team, the Trustees, and the Ministries Council have been hard at work to ensure growth and strength of our ministry through a generous way of serving our community. Please mark your calendars for a congregation-wide vote at **11 am on Sunday, February 12** to decide whether to donate our property to the Community Foundation in exchange for a free, renewable 100-year lease on spaces we need for worship, discipleship, and mission. All members will be receiving a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in a few weeks to explain the details of the upcoming vote.

2023 looks to be a transforming year for our church. Your prayers, presence, gifts, service, and witness are all ways to partner with Christ in making all things new. I'm grateful for this congregation's commitment to both Christ and our community!

Grace and Peace,

Pastor Rebecca

# THE MESSENGER

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF WAUSAU

715.842.2201

[www.firstmethodistwausau.org](http://www.firstmethodistwausau.org)





Lessons & Carols Service





## Welcome New Members!

We are pleased to welcome new members of our congregation at worship at **10 am on January 15**. All who desire to join need to contact Pastor Rebecca. Membership classes have been offered, or you may call or email schedule to meet with Pastor Rebecca for more information on membership, 715-842-2201 or [pastorrebeccavoss@gmail.com](mailto:pastorrebeccavoss@gmail.com)

Our Journey:  
*To live and share  
God's love  
in service, joy &  
hope.*



Savvy Seniors will be meeting on Monday Jan 9th at 1130 at the Mandarin Restaurant. The date has been changed to the second Monday because of the alternative New Year. The Rose Parade and football games might impact our lunch participation. This is a social group open to singles & couples over the age of 55. We would love to have you join us Any questions, call Vicki Nowaczyk at 715-571-3009. Thank you.



# January

- |                                     |                                    |   |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|---|
| 1 Alice Schacht<br>Jennifer Johnson | 8 Michael Sydow<br>LaRae Horton    | 20 Alan Hauber<br>Lila Rouse              |
| 2 Sandra Salzman<br>Amelia Higgins  | 12 Michael Turner<br>Alonzo Dvorak | 21 Mary Ann Dykes<br>Arlene Gundelfinger* |
| 3 Susan Rye                         | 13 Debra Martin                    | 26 Don Misoni<br>Sandi Schmoldt           |
| 7 Gail Cain<br>Scott Denfeld        | 16 Gideon Adams                    |   |

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

## Missions Team Hosts

In January we are hosting Open Door located on North Fourth Street, they are a safe haven for those just released from the Marathon County Jail and those homeless seeking a place to find help as well. They provide clothing, personal needs items, help finding needed resources and a friendly place to learn and share.

In February we are hosting The Good News Project, located on North Fifth Street. They provide, at little or no cost, a wide variety of home health items for those recovering from illness or injury. They also have a very active recycling program for electronics, keeping these items out of the landfills.

Visit these great organizations during coffee hour on the Sundays shown and learn more about how they serve our community.

*Dick Rayborn*



## January Missions

Donations support our Community Dinner Ministry. On the 5th Sunday of the month, we take the lead in providing a community meal for anyone who is hungry. With Covid-19 we are offering boxed meals and handing them out in the parking lot of the First Presbyterian Church. We look forward to being able to serve inside the church when it is deemed safe. If you want to get involved, we will be needing baked goods to add to the meal. Please contact Jen Johnson at 715-470-2527 and she will arrange a time to pick up any baked goods. Thank you to the volunteers that grocery shop, prep meals, bake and help serve. Our next meal will be January 29th at 4:00pm at the First Presbyterian Church. Please also keep our dinner guests in your prayers.

Thank you, Jen Johnson



## Letter from our Pivet Scholar

I hope this letter finds you well! I wanted to reach out again to thank you for your continued support of my education via the Pivet scholarship. Further, I wanted to provide an update on how my academic year has gone so far at the University of Minnesota. This fall semester, I was able to take some very interesting and impactful courses for my elementary education major, history minor, and teaching English as a second language (TESL) minor. The most impactful of these courses was undoubtedly my reading practice for the elementary education major. This particular class involved going into a local school to work as a reading interventionist for students who were behind in literacy. The class was a great opportunity for myself, as it combined the disciplines of my TESL minor and elementary education major.

Over the semester I got to contribute to great progress made by the two students I was paired with. Oftentimes, students who are behind their peers in reading have a sense of shame or inadequacy about their ability. With the pandemic's effects on education, a lot of students find themselves experiencing these emotions. With both my students, I found that they really just needed someone to believe in their ability to improve and provide the tools necessary to learn. Reflecting on the experience, getting to witness their self-belief and reading ability improve alongside each other was immensely gratifying. Overall, the class's experience was highly influential in how I will view literacy instruction in my future classroom and view empowering my students to believe in themselves.

As highlighted in my last update letter, I want to again commend and thank FUMC for the work they continue to do in Wausau. Through the church newsletter or news stories, I frequently hear word of the impactful work that FUMC does to help those in our community. In addition to my immense thanks for the church's support of my education, I thank you for your unwavering support of our community.

Gratefully, Michael Del Conte

## I Like Floormats: January 2023

This story is from "I Like Giving" by Brad Formsma. His book and corresponding website, [www.ilikegiving.com](http://www.ilikegiving.com), are full of stories and videos about the power of generosity.

It is hard to characterize my brother-in-law, James. He's not a guy who draws a lot of attention to himself, and he's not a guy with great wealth. In fact, James is, well, quite average, but when it comes to generosity, James is one of the most above-average people I've ever met.

For instance, if James needed to borrow your car, he would likely return it with a full tank of fuel or maybe a new set of tires. Or maybe it would have been detailed. And unless you happened to notice, he wouldn't draw any attention to it.

Which is exactly what happened with the floor mats in our Honda Accord. They were worn-out. I mean, they're floor mats. They are one of those things you think about replacing when you vacuum the car and say to yourself, "Wow, these look terrible. I need to replace them." You finish vacuuming, put the mats back, and never give them another thought until the next time you clean your car.

However, this particular time I did notice them. They were new. I immediately asked my wife if she'd bought the new car mats. She said she though I had. Immediately we knew it was James. I could not think of when he might have done it. I went back in the house, called him, and asked if he was responsible. As I suspected, he was.

"When did you put new mats in the car?" I asked since we hadn't seen him in weeks. "About three months ago," he sheepishly replied.

I couldn't believe I'd been so unobservant, but I wasn't the least bit surprised by James thoughtful act of generosity. It's a lifestyle with him. I truly can't think of anything he enjoys doing more than giving, and I can't think of anyone who has more fun finding unique ways to give. I mean, who would ever think of replacing someone's floor mats?

*Rev. Jason Mahnke, Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation*

### **FUMC Wired**

**Website:** [firstmethodistwausau.org](http://firstmethodistwausau.org)  
with links to the weekly sermon  
in text and podcast

[facebook.com/WausauFUMC](https://facebook.com/WausauFUMC)  
[youtube.com/FirstWausauUMC](https://youtube.com/FirstWausauUMC)

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

**Phone:** 715.842.2201



## Summer Worship Survey

The Ministries Council would like your thoughts on having one worship service each Sunday in the summer. The primary benefit is that people who normally do not see or know each other because they go to different services would be able to connect and develop new and better relationships. It would also be helpful for the staff and worship volunteers to have responsibilities proportionate to the lighter attendance we have in the summer.

If it is determined that one worship service is preferable, the next decision is the worship time. Our 8 am service often increases in attendance during the summer, with people wanting to get outside earlier in the day. Because we do not have Sunday School or choir in the summer, we could have one service at 9 am instead of two services at 8 and 10 am. The service would be live streamed so that people can attend virtually if the timing does not work as well.

Please share your thoughts about this with Pastor Rebecca, Martie Pahriss, Margaret Getzin (Worship Design chairperson) or another church leader on the Ministries Council. Thank you!

## Random Thoughts - Assets and Apportionments

by Mike Zahn

*You will be made rich in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God. This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of God's people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God.* 2 Corinthians 9:11-12

You get a different perspective on things when you're away for awhile. Having been part of First Wausau Downtown Church (getting used to the new name but I like it) for 20 years, I have always known it to be a generous congregation over the past 175 years, but what you are planning to do with your building is positively revolutionary! God is working on an amazing thing for you to literally give away your building for the good of the community. And you will be blessed in return by being able to use a portion of the building rent-free for at least 100 years, saving money that can be used for ministry work to help people in the name of Jesus.

Another thing I have always been impressed with is that you make it a priority to pay 100% of your apportionments to our Conference. Apportionments are what fund the connectional infrastructure that is the key to the United Methodist Church. Our connection to each other is what makes the UMC such a force for Christ in the world. We can do so much more together. I can tell you that not all churches are in a position to pay their full apportionments, and some churches even seem to be unwilling to do so. The generosity First Wausau models is a great inspiration to other churches. It does not go unnoticed.

### STAFF

|                                 |                |  |
|---------------------------------|----------------|--|
| Pastor                          | Rebecca Voss   | <a href="mailto:rebecca@firstmethodistwausau.org">rebecca@firstmethodistwausau.org</a> |
| Faith Formation, Music Director | Martie Pahriss | <a href="mailto:martie@firstmethodistwausau.org">martie@firstmethodistwausau.org</a>   |
| Finance Director                | Martie Pahriss | <a href="mailto:finance@firstmethodistwausau.org">finance@firstmethodistwausau.org</a> |
| Secretary                       | Joan Stroyny   | <a href="mailto:joan@firstmethodistwausau.org">joan@firstmethodistwausau.org</a>       |
| Building Engineer               | Andy White     |  |

903 Third Steet, Wausau, WI 54403  
Office Hours: 9 a.m. – 1 p.m. Monday – Thursday  
(715) 842-2201  
[www.firstmethodistwausau.org](http://www.firstmethodistwausau.org)

**The Messenger**

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

**ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED**

**Our Mission:**

Living as a community where  
God is forming deeply committed  
followers of Christ.

# WORSHIP IN JANUARY

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

**Sunday, January 1 - 9:00 am Only, Sanctuary**  
**Wesleyan Covenant Renewal Service**

**Sunday, January 8 - "The Water's Fine"**  
Psalm 29; Isaiah 42:1-9; Matthew 3:13-17

**Sunday, January 15 - "Not Lacking"**  
Psalm 40:1-11; Isaiah 49:1-7; 1 Corinthians 1:1-9

**Sunday, January 22 - "Have the Same Mind"**  
Psalm 27:1, 5-14; Isaiah 9:1-4;  
1 Corinthians 1:10-18

**Sunday, January 29 - "Blessed Are"**  
Psalm 15; Micah 6:1-8; Matthew 5:1-12



# January

**Prayer Priorities**  
**Sundays: The Suffering & Seniors**  
**Mondays: Missions & Outreach**  
**Tuesdays: Teachers & Students**  
**Wednesdays: Wausau & Wisconsin**  
**Thursdays: The Thirsty & Hungry**  
**Fridays: Friends & Family**  
**Saturdays: Servant-Leaders & Staff**

| Sunday  | Monday  | Tuesday   | Wednesday  | Thursday  | Friday              | Saturday   |
|---|---|---|--|---|---------------------|--|
| 1<br>New Year's Day<br>9:00am Worship with Holy Communion, Sanctuary  | 2<br>Office Closed                                      | 3   | 4  | 5<br>8:00am AA, Room 101<br>7:00pm Boy Scouts, Choir Room   | 6<br>Office Closed  | 7  |
| 8<br>8:00am Worship, Chapel<br>9:00am Sunday School Classes, All Ages<br>10:00am Worship, Sanctuary<br>11:00am Missions Team Presentation-Open Door | 9<br>11:30am Savvy Seniors, Mandarin Chinese Restaurant | 10<br>1:00pm - 3:00pm Personal Needs Closet/Claire's Critter Closet             | 11<br>5:45pm Missions Team, Parlor   | 12<br>8:00am AA, Room 101<br>6:00pm Weeping Willows 4-H, Fellowship Hall<br>7:00pm Boy Scouts, Choir Room | 13<br>Office Closed | 14   |
| 15<br>8:00am Worship, Chapel<br>9:00am Sunday School Classes, All Ages<br>10:00am Worship, Sanctuary<br>Reception of New Members                    | 16  | 17<br>6:00pm SPRC, B.K. Smith<br>7:00pm Finance Committee, BK Smith Room        | 18<br>1:00pm Women in Faith Meeting, Parlor<br><b>DEADLINE FOR NEWSLETTER ARTICLES</b> | 19<br>8:00am AA, Room 101<br>7:00pm Boy Scouts, Choir Room  | 20<br>Office Closed | 21   |
| 22<br>8:00am Worship, Chapel<br>9:00am Sunday School Classes, All Ages<br>10:00am Worship, Sanctuary  | 23  | 24<br>1:00pm - 2:30pm Prayer Shawl Group, Parlor<br>5:30pm Trustees, B.K. Smith | 25   | 26<br>7:00pm Boy Scouts, Choir Room   | 27<br>Office Closed | 28<br>9:00am - 11:00am Personal Needs Closet/Claire's Critter Closet |
| 29<br>8:00am Worship, Chapel<br>9:00am Sunday School Classes, All Ages<br>10:00am Worship, Sanctuary  | 30  | 31  |  |   |                     |  |