

2022



FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF WAUSAU

THE MESSENGER



Dear Wausau First Family of Faith,

As the leaves become vibrant hues of reds and golds and the seasons change, we experience a change that many of us welcome with open windows, warm drinks, and content souls. There are still plenty of outdoor activities and projects to enjoy, but the cool breezes keep us refreshed. Because Wausau is a city with wide-ranging weather, we are used to seasonal change even if we do not like it. Some people are susceptible to aches and illness when the weather transitions and different pollens or molds irritate our eyes and airways. Others are understandably sad to tuck away their boats and campers into storage. We need the Holy Spirit to remind us that God is faithfully preparing us for and guiding us through all the seasons of both personal and congregational life.

In my first “season” of Doctor of Ministry studies I am required to do a “Contextual Analysis” paper on our congregation. It will help guide me toward a research project that will be helpful in revitalizing our church. This October I will be researching and listening for descriptions of the spiritual seasons our congregation has gone through over the past 175 years. This is not to be a sugar-coated history of our building projects and glory days of long-ago programs. These 18–25-pages will summarize the various seasons of strengths and struggles in our congregation’s worship and witness. My professors promise that themes and characteristics will emerge as I write this analysis.

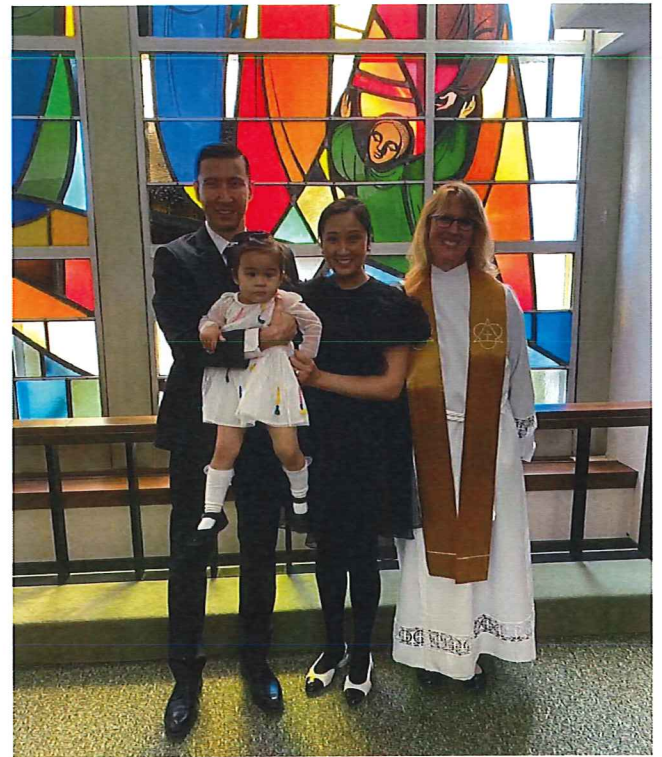
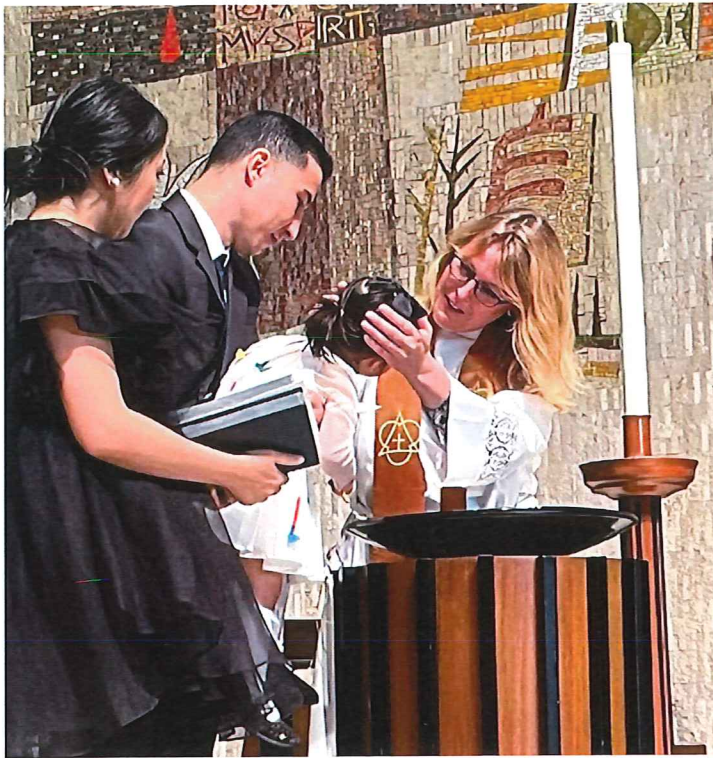
By the end of the semester, I will write another 18-25 page “Synthesis” paper analyzing the overlapping aspects of my own spiritual autobiography (that I’m writing now) and this congregation’s spiritual journey. With the help of my cohort and mentors, I am looking forward to seeing which aspects of our congregational life need the most attention. My professors also promise that pastors and our congregations will inevitably have compatible issues to learn and grow in together. It looks like we are all entering a season of reflection and change.

For those who have been in this congregation for several spiritual seasons, I would greatly appreciate your help. Please email or call me to arrange a visit. I am eager to hear you answer questions like these: When and how did you experience your faith coming alive because of this church? When and why did you find your faith frustrated? Have there been pastors or leaders that helped this church (or just you) through a challenging season? Are there chronic issues that this congregation always seems to wrestle with? Are there certain strengths that have helped our church to be spiritually resilient? I am grateful for all of you and our Almighty, Everlasting God, the Prince of Peace.

Pastor Rebecca

715.842.2201

www.firstmethodistwausau.org



On September 25th we celebrated the baptism of Adelyn Vasilina Sakharuk, daughter of Alek Sakharuk and YounWoo Seo

175th Anniversary Church Sign 1847-2022



STAFF

Pastor Rebecca Voss
rebecca@firstmethodistwausau.org

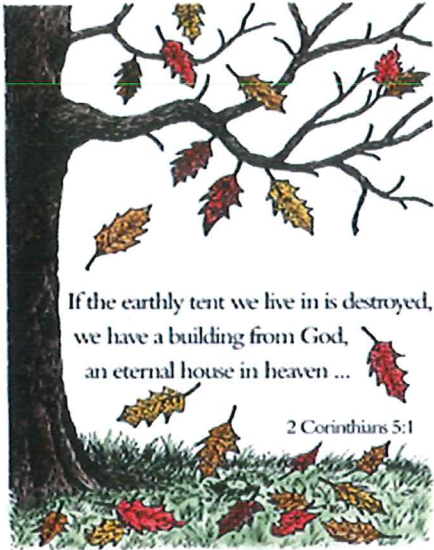
Faith Formation, Music Director
 Martie Pahrís
martie@firstmethodistwausau.org

Finance Director 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
www.firstmethodistwausau.org



October

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|
| 1 Ellie Schreiber | 12 Laura Cowan
Cheryl Wenzel | 29 Gary Boushley
Jerry Morris |
| 3 Margaret Getzin | 16 Kirsten Hornby
Tammy Lahren | 30 Gregory Cowan
Michael Koss
Diane Misoni |
| 4 Madison Mariani | 18 Bob Wylie* | |
| 7 Gary Getzin | 19 Gary Kurth* | |
| 8 Lisa Day
Roger Gundelfinger* | 25 Andrea Anderson*
Pam Steinke | |
| 9 Jake Rybarczyk | | |

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



Peyton's Promise Fall FUMC Drive

Peyton's promise was started by Peyton Meddic. She was a young girl who saw a story on the news about a young boy from Indiana who did not know the words "breakfast", "lunch", and "dinner". "This needs to be changed," she said. She asked her parents if this was happening locally and they said, "Yes, it is." She wanted to make a change, so she did. She came up with "Peyton's Promise."

Peyton's Promise helps more than 50 food pantries in Marathon County. They have even helped with our Personal Needs Closet and have over 200 advocates. I have been a part of Peyton's Promise for 4.5 years and love seeing the impact of what I have done. I personally know people who have been impacted by Peyton's Promise. It is important to realize that hunger affects people of all ages. It was created by kids and is still run by kids. I would suggest this organization to everyone. They are the middleman between food drives and organizations fighting hunger.

We will have a special offering on Sunday, November 13th with cash and food donations. This is a Thanksgiving-themed drive for foods like canned cranberries, boxed stuffing, canned green beans and non-perishable canned foods and boxed items. I hope you can join us for this event. If you cannot attend, you can donate money and items at our church Monday-Thursday, 9am-1pm.



Savvy Seniors will meet at 11:30am on Monday, October 3rd, at 2510 Restaurant. If there are any questions you can call Vicki Nowaczyk at 715-571-3009 or e-mail vicki.nowaczyk@gmail.com

Thank you, *Pete Johnson*



September 28, 2022

Dear Wausau First UMC,

Our 50,000 sq. ft. building has been a beautiful, strong, and spacious place to gather for worship, discipleship, and mission to our community for the past sixty of our 175-year history. Looking to the future, we desire to continue ministering in and from this building and its ideal downtown location.

We have recently invested significant funds in replacing the boiler system, installing a radon abatement system, removing asbestos, replacing most of the windows, restoring and protecting the stained-glass window, rebuilding the parking lot, installing internet wiring, and improving the north entrances and appearance with new awnings, signage, and lighting. We are grateful for the generosity of our congregation in funding these important and transforming projects.

There are several more improvements needed soon. The roof over the sanctuary and other areas needs to be replaced at an estimated cost of \$220,000. The eleven original bathrooms and fixtures throughout the building need to be completely remodeled and replaced, which will cost hundreds of thousands of dollars. All the lighting in the sanctuary needs to be replaced due to damaged wiring, fixtures, and inefficient bulbs, costing about \$100,000. The organ needs about \$80,000 in repairs. To lower utility costs and be good stewards of the earth, it would be a wise investment to spend at least \$50,000 for solar energy from the roof. To rent out better office and educational space, more internet wiring requiring new ceilings and lighting in the lower and upper levels would cost at least \$50,000. These expenses feel overwhelming. We all feel the economic pinch that impacts our ability to give above and beyond our usual offering. If we paid for these projects with our endowment, it would be unwisely depleted and our future cut short.

After prayerfully considering the needs and opportunities of both our congregation and community, the Trustees, the Building Repurpose Team, and the Ministry Council is proposing a creative and generous way for our congregation to best improve and use our property. What if we *give* our building to the Community Foundation?

Our building is in a prime location to serve our community. To grow in worship and ministry in this space, make needed improvements, and reach out in mission, we are proposing this transformative partnership with the Community Foundation of Northcentral Wisconsin. There are many logistics and legalities to work out, but the major idea is that we would have a renewable 100-year free lease to ensure certain areas of the church such as the Sanctuary and space for offices, music, classes, etc. are used exclusively by our congregation.

The Community Foundation would manage the rest of the space to be used by other non-profit organizations which align with our church's social principles. Some of the common areas, such as the Parlor, Chapel, Kitchen, and Fellowship Hall, would be spaces shared by our church and the other non-profit tenants. The Community Foundation would pay for all exterior and most interior improvements and maintenance. Exceptions would be for organ repairs, and possibly the sanctuary lighting. Our congregation would pay for a portion of utilities and cleaning, but we would save at least \$50,000 every year in building expenses.

After researching the needs of our community, the Community Foundation would prioritize using our space for childcare. They would create a partnership with the Woodson YMCA to offer a much-needed expansion to their childcare program. Our building could be used to nurture many young lives and give their parents better means to provide for their families and serve the community.

Another need is to continue as the site for basic English Language Learning (ELL) and Cultural Orientation. New Beginnings for Refugees (sponsored by the Community Foundation) also hopes to use the kitchen and fellowship hall for weekly community dinners featuring ethnic food prepared, sold, and served by new immigrants. This would fulfill the vision depicted in our stained-glass window of people from around the world coming together because of Christ's love and teaching.

The Foundation also recognizes a need for offices, storage, and studio space for several visual- and performing-arts organizations. Many of the sunny, south-facing offices and lower-level classrooms could be ideal, and the Fellowship Hall stage could be used for performances. Our talented congregation is known for celebrating music and the arts, and this is an opportunity to continue and strengthen that tradition. Our staff would likely need to move their offices closer to the parking lot, and they are receptive to that idea.

This kind of arrangement has been done by other United Methodist Churches. Our District Superintendent is supportive of us pursuing this opportunity, and the District Board on Church Building and Location would help us follow a process to ensure the long-term strength of our congregation's mission. Along with these possibilities are likely questions, concerns, and ideas. We invite everyone in our congregation to learn more, ask questions, and discuss your thoughts about this proposal at any of these upcoming meetings:

Monday, October 17, 6:30 pm

Sunday, October 23, 9:00 am

Sunday, October 30, 11:00 am

Grace and Peace,

First UMC Ministry Council, Board of Trustees, and Building Repurpose Team



Safe Sanctuary Program at FUMC Wausau

A number of years ago, FUMC-Wausau participated in a program called Safe Sanctuaries, which covered background checks and safety policies involving volunteers with the children and youth of our church, checks on driving records of volunteers, etc. Through the years, however, continuing these policies fell by the wayside and the background checks were not renewed as they should have been, approximately every 3-4 years. The SPRC (Staff-Parish Relations Committee) is working on establishing updated policies for safety in all aspects of our church life, including protocols on dealing with an active shooter, and setting up the protocols needed to get background checks and driving record checks done soon. Anyone involved with working with our youth, working as a Sunday School teacher or shepherd, volunteering in the nursery, etc. will be required to have these safety checks done. We are in the process of working through how to do this, with the help of Church Mutual Insurance Co and its contacts. Stay tuned for further information, especially if you are already involved with our youth and would like to be involved in the near future, such as helping in the nursery, which will reopen soon.

Bonnie Goertz, SPRC Chair

Our Financial Picture for August 2022			
August Revenue		August Expenses	
Pledged Offering	\$ 12,259.16	Staffing	\$ 18,382.79
Non-Pledged Offering	\$ 2,680.00	Programming	\$ 1,847.55
Other Revenue	\$ 1,970.00	Apportionments	\$ 3,986.00
		Building Operations	\$ 1,840.05
From Endowment	\$ 11,672.72	Total Expenses	\$ 26,056.39
Total Revenue	\$ 28,581.88	Net Total	\$ 2,525.49

God's Voice

In my ministry, several people have asked why God doesn't speak to people like God did in the Bible. Their assumption is that any time Scripture talks about God speaking to someone, that person is hearing a literal voice saying words. I think this is a far too limited understanding of how God speaks to us every day. Consider this story told by Scott McKenzie and Kristine Miller.

"Every day, on her way to work, Audrey's route took her past a women's penitentiary. Surrounding the building and grounds stood a large chain-link fence topped off with barbed wire intended to keep separate those on the inside from those on the outside. Each time Audrey passed the woman's penitentiary, she saw the women walking the grounds or sitting at picnic tables soaking in a few precious moments of warm sunshine. As she passed, Audrey would quietly say a prayer for the incarcerated women and their families. One day, as Audrey was driving past, she felt a strong urge to pull in. Without fully realizing what she was doing, she turned sharply into the entrance of the prison. In an instant, she found herself face-to-face with a large, intimidating prison guard whose face suggested a humorless disposition. Feeling the awkwardness of the moment, Audrey explained that she had felt God's push to visit the facility and asked if they received volunteers."

"The prison guard responded by giving Audrey the business card of the volunteer coordinator and sent Audrey on her way. God's nudge had sent Audrey to an unfamiliar place, and she was courageous enough to go. Soon she started a Bible study class at the prison sharing Jesus' message of love and hope."

Audrey believed that the urge to pull into the penitentiary was God speaking to her. I tend to agree. Rather than waiting for a literal voice to speak to us, what if God spoke and called us through our nudges, yearnings, and hopes. That would mean that God is closer than many of us think or realize. It also means that God challenges us more frequently than we realize. But, when we courageously listen to God with a willing heart, we will discover that the result is transformational, not just for us, but for everyone whose life is impacted.

Rev. Jason Mahnke, Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation

FUMC Online

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

facebook.com/WausauFUMC

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

Phone: 715.842.2201



Random Thoughts The Display Case
by Mike Zahn

Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. Hebrews 12:1

It was wonderful to be back at First Church to preach and see you all again on Sept. 11th! While I was there, I noticed some great pictures and other memorabilia from the church's rich archives in the display cases. You should take the time to go look at them. The display cases are down the hallway from the Sanctuary, through the Parlor and right across from the Chapel. Andy White put the presentation together and he did an excellent job!

One of the items in that case is a Certificate of Appreciation to a Charles Gilbert for many years of service (although maybe his wife should have gotten it!). His name sounded familiar. I recalled it from a history piece from 1967 that I had read in preparing for MCCI. This is what it read:

“From 1888 to 1890, Rev. J.S. Davis was pastor, and when he came to leave, it was reported that his salary had not been fully paid. Mrs. Chas. Gilbert and Mrs. Joseph Gamble took the horse and buggy and solicited the \$800 due him in about a week from the citizens. Many times the Ladies Aid helped with repairs of the church and parsonage and even with the moving expenses of the pastor.

Until this time, Mr. Gilbert had not concerned himself with the church, preferring to sit on the front step and see who went to church and who did not, but, when he saw the dedication of his wife, and noted the contributions of people who were not members of the church, he decided to dedicate himself to his church and from then on was a faithful and devoted leader in the church.”

What you do for Jesus just may be a witness to someone else to better run their race!

Community Dinner

Our church will be hosting the Community Dinner at the First Presbyterian Church on October 30th. This is a meaningful ministry where we are able to offer meals to the community. With Covid-19 we will continue to offer boxed meals and hand them out in the parking lot of First Presbyterian Church. Our dinner in July served 100 people. 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. Please also keep our dinner guests in your prayers. Thank you!



Jennifer Johnson

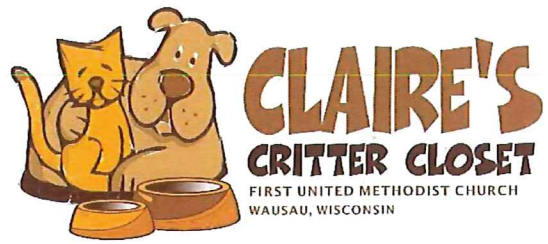


Guatemala Mission

For October the donation will be used to support Mission Guatemala. They provide personal needs, clothing, and education to community Members. Donate loose change, cash in the small brown envelopes in the pews or memo your check.

Update On Claire's Critter Closet

Many people have struggled in recent months with rising prices in all areas of their lives. One of the hardest hit areas is the ability to continue to supply the needs of their beloved cats and dogs with food, litter, treats, etc. The last couple of months have seen a steady rise in the number of clients using both Claire's Critter Closet and the Personal Needs Closet. This past month on the second Tuesday alone, almost 40 families were helped by one or both of the closets. Keeping the Critter Closet adequately supplied to serve everyone who comes has been a challenge. The items most requested recently have been both dry and canned cat food, clumping and non-clumping litter, and cat treats. Other requested items are dry and canned dog food and dog treats for both large and small dogs. The people who are helped by both of the Closets are so grateful for the items they receive and are very appreciative of the help to their budgets that they get that month. Please consider a donation of any size to these very important ministries to the community from our church, especially Claire's Critter Closet at this time.



Bonnie Goertz, SPRC Chair

The Return of the Pre-Owned Sale at FUMC

Do you like browsing through pre-owned items for your home, children's clothing, holiday items, etc.? It has been quite a few years since the last pre-owned sale at FUMC-Wausau, but it will make a return this fall, although in modified form! There will be two days of sales, set for October 28-29, 2022, in the Fellowship Hall (*see flyer on next page*). The format will be different from past sales, as individuals will not be setting up their own tables for their items. A number of people have already donated many items for the sale, and other items will be added to those already at the church if possible, but all proceeds will be collected by the United Women in Faith (formerly United Methodist Women) to be used in local mission work. Tables will be set up in designated areas with suggested prices, and there will possibly be an area available to choose from for a donation amount of one's choice.

It takes people to make events like this happen and help is welcome in a variety of areas. If you are interested in helping to sort items, set up displays, possibly mark some items with prices, and/or work for a couple of hours on the sale days, please contact Bonnie Goertz at 715-716-0051 or bgoertz@charter.net. It is hoped that the return of the pre-owned sale to our church will be a win for everyone involved, both the donors of the items and the new owners of those items!

Bonnie Goertz, SPRC Chair

Colors of Fall

by Joan Stroyny



Fall...into the hands of God,
as His love turns your heart to the deepest fire red.
Embrace...the clear skies which free the clouds
that cover up life.
Color...your mind with only amber joyous thoughts of you
Walk...amidst the orange and green forest of breathless wonder,
the crisp air surrounding you in golden serenity.
Allow...the shadows of sunlight to pierce your soul
with the everlasting presence of God and now
Slowly...begin your journey from this color-ama
to the solitude of cold pure whiteness
Fearlessly...cuddled in the warmth of our Lord.

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH—WAUSAU

Fall



United
Women
in Faith

RUMMAGE SALE

Where: 903 Third Street
Wausau, WI
Fellowship Hall inside
the church*

* Use the north door from the parking lot on
Fulton St. to enter the church building.

When:

Friday, October 28, 2022
9:00 - 4:00

Saturday, October 29, 2022
9:00 - 12:30

Proceeds Will Benefit:

- Claire's Critter Closet
- UWIF Missions Projects

**What will you find at
the sale?**

Holiday Decorations
Home Decor
Kitchen Items
Books
Children's Clothing and Items
Jewelry
Etc...

Questions?

Bonnie Goertz
715-716-0051
or
bgoertz@charter.net



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 OCTOBER

Sunday Worship Times

8:00 a.m. Worship in the Chapel

10:00 a.m. Worship in the Sanctuary

Our October worship series is called **“Not Ashamed”**. Based on the lectionary passages from 2 Timothy, it is about claiming the faith we’ve been given with boldness and enthusiasm. But it is also about honoring those from whom we learned about Christ. We will explore our opportunities to live our faith with compassion and hospitality, and to engage with our neighbors and the world with the humble joy of those who know forgiveness and grace. Join us as we make new commitments to following Christ and renew our faith through long standing commitments.

Sunday, October 2 “Rekindle the Gift”

Psalm 37, Habakkuk 1:1-4, 2:1-4, 2 Timothy 1:1-14

Sunday, October 23 “Poured Out”

Psalm 84, Joel 2:23-29, 2 Timothy 4:6-8, 16-18

Sunday, October 9 “Present Yourself to God”

Psalm 111, Jeremiah 29:1, 4-7, 2 Timothy 2:8-15

Sunday, October 30 MAKE SPACE series “Me, My Stuff, and God”

Psalm 119:137-144, Thessalonians 1:1-4, 11-12
Matthew 25:14-29

Sunday, October 16 “Itching Ears”

Psalm 121, Jeremiah 31:27-34, 2 Timothy 3:14-4:5