

# SPIRE Newsletter



August 2022

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## CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS

**Jul. 31:** Hunger Task Force food drive begins

**Aug. 1-5:** Vacation Bible School, Monday – Friday, 9 am – 12 noon

**Aug. 3:** 7:30 am, Women's Prayer Meeting, Parlor

**Aug. 4:** 7 am, Men's Prayer Breakfast, Parlor

**Aug. 5:** 6 pm, Kid's Night Out — VBS "Wrap Party"

**Aug. 7:** 9:30 am, VBS Sunday Worship

**Aug. 8-12:** Family Promise host week

**Aug. 14:** 4 pm, Parish Nurses' walk, Lion's Den Gorge Nature Preserve

**Aug. 28:** Hunger Task Force food drive ends

**Sep. 8:** 7 pm, Reflections Book Group

## WORSHIP SERMON SPOTLIGHT

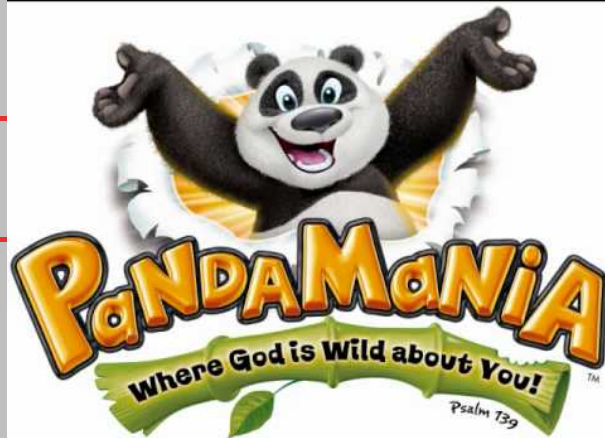
### Sermons in August

**Aug. 7:** VBS Sunday

**Aug. 14:** Micah 6:1-8

**Aug. 21:** Amos 5:21-24

**Aug. 28:** Acts 9:26-28



## Vacation Bible School is Here!

Vacation Bible School (VBS) is scheduled for **Monday – Friday, August 1 – 5, from 9 am – noon.** We would like to spread the good news of Jesus to as many as we can. Don't forget to invite family, friends, and neighbors. There are postcards and handouts available in the Narthex, which you can use to share the information.

The costs can add up in order to provide a meaningful experience for all. It costs about \$35 a student. There are many ways you can help us nurture our youngest. You can make a donation that is labeled "VBS", you can donate a sponsorship for \$35, or grab a

"panda" from our VBS display in the Narthex that supports a particular item. Volunteers are needed, so don't forget to mark your calendars and join us in the

fun during VBS week. Brighten your summer by being a volunteer. The joy and smiles of children will fill your heart! It is uplifting for all. Remember, God is WILD about you!

For more information email [childrensmin@mequonumc.org](mailto:childrensmin@mequonumc.org) or visit our website and check out "Children's Ministry."

## From the Pastor

Recently some of MUMC youth parents and grandparents, the children's ministry director, the Youth Sunday School teacher, and I had an opportunity to read a powerful and practical book entitled *3 Big Questions That Change Every Teenager*. Here is a quote from the book:

"Today's teenagers are the most anxious, creative, and diverse generation in history—which can make it hard for us to relate. And while every teenager is a walking bundle of questions, three rise above the rest:

- Who am I?
- Where do I fit?
- What difference can I make?

Young people struggle to find satisfying and life-giving answers to these questions on their own. They need caring adults willing to lean in with empathy, practice listening, and gently pointing them in the direction of better answers: they are enough because of Jesus, they belong with God's people, and they are invited into God's greater story."

I think that we/the church can and should start to answer those three questions as soon as possible: earlier is better. Our annual VBS (Vacation Bible School) is one of the greatest ways to answer the three questions, and I'm extremely grateful for this ministry here at MUMC. Our VBS this year will be held August 1 – Aug. 5. Thank you for your support of this wonderful program by your prayers, presence, service, and gifts. May the Holy Spirit bless and lead this program so that those better answers may sink deep in the hearts of our children!

In Christ,  
Sue

## Announcements

**One usher is needed each Sunday.** We are in need of one usher for Sunday worship each week. Please consider serving. Since we are not collecting the offering during worship and because we are using pre-packaged communion elements on Communion Sunday, an usher has three responsibilities:

- before worship, distribute the worship bulletin
- during worship, count attendees, including those in the nursery
- after worship, collect the offerings from the offering plates, put them in the envelope provided, and drop the envelope into the safe in the office

If you are available to serve as an usher, sign up at: [www.signupgenius.com](http://www.signupgenius.com). You can also let Office Manager Carol Bayne know you'd like to volunteer, and she'll

add you to the list. Thank you in advance for your service to Mequon UMC!

### **Reflections Book Group . . . Looking Ahead**

The Reflections Book Group does not meet in August. We will resume our usual monthly meetings in September. Mark your calendar now for September 8 at 7 pm in the Parlor. Looking ahead, our September book will be *The Women's March* by Jennifer Chiaverini.

Reflections is a women's book group that meets monthly for discussion and fellowship. New women are always welcome. Contact Barb Henneck at [bhenneck@gmail.com](mailto:bhenneck@gmail.com) for more information about the group.

**The new Congregational Directory** is available in the Narthex. Pick up your copy today!

## **Mission Outreach Ministries**

### **Hunger Task Force Food Drive**

Vacation Bible School and Mission Outreach are joining together to collect food for Hunger Task Force. The food drive begins on July 31 and continues through August 28. Mission Outreach will have collection boxes at the entrance of the church, at the top of the stairs in the Narthex, and in the Sonlight School entrance. Our Goal is 1,000 pounds of donated food! This will beat our record of 750 pounds in past years.



As the boxes fill up, Mission Outreach will deliver the food to Hunger Task Force and keep a running tally of our donations.

Here is a list of the items that Hunger Task Force needs for their Healthy Plate Program:

- Canned fruit and fruit juice in 100% fruit juice (no sugar)
- Low-sodium canned vegetables: green beans, peas, corn, tomatoes, tomato sauce
- Whole grain foods: brown rice, oatmeal, cereal without sugar, multigrain pasta
- Dairy: boxed, low-fat skim milk, almond milk, or soy milk (shelf-stable)
- Healthy on-the-go snacks: granola, nuts and seeds, breakfast bars, graham crackers
- Condiments: salsa, oil, mustard, salt-free seasonings
- Peanut Butter

Monetary donations are also welcome. Make your checks out to MUMC with "Hunger Task Force" in the memo line.

Thank you for helping to provide nutritious food to those in need in the Milwaukee area.

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### **Family Promise**

Our next host week for Family Promise begins Monday, August 8. Family Promise is working to find

alternate housing for people in need this summer because the grant that funded the motel has run out and also to help in preparing for the transition to the new Family Promise shelter.

At this point it is possible we will have as few as four adults to serve.

However, things can change. We do need to be prepared to serve at least four and possibly more.

There are already volunteers for Monday and Friday of that week. If you can serve dinner meals one of the other nights that would be wonderful. We have materials for packing the meal and then the meals should be delivered to the Chalet Motel Office at 5 pm.

If you can help, please contact Pam Layton or Connie Pukaite



## Music Ministry News

Mequon United Methodist Church, a Traditional/Contemporary worship church in Mequon, Wisconsin is seeking a part time (12-15 hrs/wk) Music Director position to expand our music offerings to better achieve our mission of "Making God's Love Real" and developing disciples of Jesus Christ.

The ideal candidate is an energetic, creative, Christ-centered individual with the ability to:

- motivate others through support, development, and performance in contemporary worship music programs
- develop youth music programs that engage children and youth
- support and grow adult and special event music ministry leaders and volunteers.

Qualifications: The ideal candidate must:

- feel "called" by the Lord to do His work.
- have computer knowledge, and experience in running general office machines
- sing and play rhythm guitar or piano at a public performance level
- be able to read and transpose sheet music and chord charts
- possess a Bachelor's Degree in Music or 2-3 years successful experience in both traditional and contemporary church music

Candidates with experience in rhythm guitar, vocal, and soundboard experience will receive heightened consideration.

This is a salaried position with a two-week vacation. See the full job description at [mequonumc.org](http://mequonumc.org).

Submit resume to [office@mequonumc.org](mailto:office@mequonumc.org) or ATTN: Pastor Sue, Mequon United Methodist Church, 11011 North Oriole Lane, Mequon WI 53092.

**From the Wisconsin UM Foundation**

*“Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect.” Romans 12:2*

Once upon a time, a man found the egg of an eagle. It had been abandoned for some reason by its mother, but as it was still warm, the man took it and put it in the nest of one of his backyard chickens along with the other eggs that were there being brooded upon.

After a period of time, the eaglet was hatched, and along with the other chicks from his nest began to go about the back yard doing what the other chicks did. He scratched the earth for worms and insects. He looked for the corn that the man would throw into the yard. He clucked and cackled as best as he could, and as he grew, he would, like other chickens, thrash his wings and fly a few feet in the air.

Years passed in this way, and the eagle grew very old. One day he saw a magnificent bird far above him in the cloudless sky. It glided majestically among the powerful wind currents, soaring and swooping, scarcely beating its long golden wings.

The old eagle looked at it in awe and asked, “What is that?”

“That is the eagle, the king of birds,” said one of his neighbors. “He belongs to the sky and to the high places. We belong to the earth, we are chickens.” The old eagle knew this was true, and so it was he lived and died as a chicken, for that is what he believed he was.

In life, our perspective determines our reality. For instance, most people believe that they need more money to be “okay” financially. How much more? It didn’t matter if they were making \$25,000 or \$250,000, the answer to how much more they needed was always right around 10% more. The truth is, if we haven’t learned how to manage well what we have, having more will leave us with the same set of problems.

On the other hand, developing an attitude of gratitude, an abundance mindset, and planning for giving and saving in our spending plans (aka, budgets) can help us discover contentment no amount of money can give.

Rev. Jason Mahnke  
Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation

## From the Wisconsin Conference

Weekly Devotion for July 25, 2022, by Barbara Certa-Werner

*Lift up your eye and look to the heavens: Who created all these? God who brings out the starry host one by one and calls forth each of them by name. Because of God’s great power and mighty strength, not one of them is missing. Isaiah 40:26*

God is with us in the big and small, leaving fingerprints on every page of the story, forever reminding us: remember God’s goodness here. Look around. Do you see God? God hangs the clouds in the sky and flings stars into the velvet night all so



that you remember in both daylight and darkness, God is with us always. Kaitlyn Bouchillon

The other night, I looked up and noticed the starry night. We have all seen it before, a deep purple/blue/black sky filled with tiny sparkling lights. As I stood there in awe of the beauty and stillness of the night, I offered a prayer of thanksgiving for this experience. I needed this very moment – quieting my mind, slowing down my breathing, and connecting my being to God.



I realized that you and I are truly a blessed people. We are offered so many moments to see God in the everyday – through creation and other people, and yet we pass them by, unrecognized. As the author, Kathy Bouchillon, challenges us, “Do you see God?” God is all around us, if we have eyes to see.

As many of you know, the last ten months have been very difficult for me and my family – losing both my parents, two of our beloved pets, and other major transitions. I have shed many tears, bemoaned my losses, and have been brokenhearted. And yet, amid my sorrow, there have been so many reminders of the love God has for me and how God has walked with me through this time. We have experienced God through cards of care from friends, tokens of love, hugs, flowers, stars in the night, gentle breezes, hymns, poems, prayers, and so much more. And in all these we give thanks.

*God, thank you, for all the ways that You walk with us through all of life. We give you thanks for the tangible ways that You remind us of Your goodness. We are grateful that nothing can separate us from Your love. Help us to see You, in the big and small, knowing You care about it all. Amen.*

## Summary of the Annual Conference 2022

Annual Conference 2022 Hybrid Session was held in Green Bay, Wisconsin, at the KI Center on June 10 - 13. **Mequon United Methodist Church was represented by Pastor Sue, who attended the session in person as the clergy delegate, and Marilyn Meyer, who attended virtually via Zoom, as the laity delegate.** The theme for the session was “Discerning God’s Will for All” based on scripture from Romans 12:1-2. The session was opened with sacred drumming by the Buffalo Creek Singers, to establish the meeting space as a holy place of conferencing.

Mary Council Austin lifted a poem from Langston Hughes which centered us in the knowing of the rivers within the state of Wisconsin. The spirit is moving and gathering us at the river again to hear the word of God to speak dreams for vital ministry. God breathe on us yet again.

This time help us to envision making space to be mindful of how we enter into a time of conferencing, to slow it all down, to be shaped by a text that lifts up a call to model healing dialogue, restore our commitment to beloved community of raised awareness of racial justice and radical inclusion.

Opening Worship: A dynamic interactive sermon between Bishop Jung and Grace Cajjuat brought the gathering into the story of Jesus’ experience with the Syrophenician woman and her daughter afflicted by an unclean spirit.

Does the story imply that there is not enough healing to go around? No! Why do we make nice with uncomfortable passages? How was Jesus humbled and changed by the encounter with the nameless? Leading him to growth in humbleness and an act of justice for the nameless. There are so many ways to love, proclaim and reach out. New economies of sharing the abundance of goodness of healing. This woman teaches Jesus about the abundance of God. Jesus was led to a moment of cultural humility so that he, and we, might be transformed and grow together. Justice, equity, and inclusion.

Organization of Conference: Bishop Jung opened the Conference with a prayer inviting the remembrance of all who have died due to COVID, war, and other situations of unrest.

We proceeded to hold practice votes for everyone to refamiliarize themselves with GNTV voting platform. Bishop then called upon Conference Secretary, Kevin Rice Myers, to get us organized for the work of the Conference.

Action Item wc101 – Resolution authorizing a Hybrid Annual Conference Session, Approved: 440 yes, 2 no, 2 abstain.

Action Item wc102 – Adoption of Session Rules and Procedures (Setting the Bar, Roll Call, Agenda, Schedule, Granting of Privileges), Approved: 453 yes, 3 no, 2 abstain.

Videos from various Conference, denominational, educational organizations were shared during the vote tabulation time.

Allie Scott brought forward a motion to suspend 2.3.4 so another resolution can be considered before the Annual Conference. Passed. An email was sent to all those registered for the Conference for review, reflection, and action that would be taken at the end of the business listed in the Pre-Conference Workbook if time permits before the conclusion of Annual Conference and the Ordination Worship Service.

Welcome of Guests:

Rev. Forrest Wells introduced the members of the Dongbu Conference delegation; this relationship has been strong since 2004. Bishop Yang was invited to greet our conference. Rev. Don Kim translated for Bishop Yang. Bishop Yang spoke of the strong 18-year relationship and wished blessings on Bishop Jung and his ministry. Rev. Dan Schwerin presented a plaque to Bishop Yang and the delegation and brought the action item wc112, Resolution Celebrating the Ongoing Sister Relationship, to the floor. Applause of affirmation from the floor for the vote passage. The bishops shared signing a partnership agreement.

The Consent Agenda items were brought to the floor including:

Action Item wc103a: Camp Promotion

Action Item wc103b: Youth Ministries Sunday

Action Item wc103c: United Women in Faith Sunday

Action Item wc103d: Resolution Facilitating the Work of the Nominations Committee for the Remainder of the 2022-2023 Annual Conference Year

Action Item wc103e: Resolution Relating to Rental/Housing Allowances for Retired or Disabled Clergypersons of the Wisconsin Annual Conference

Consent Agenda Approved.

The 2023 budget was presented by Sarah Sneider, Treasurer and Director of Administration. Sarah presented an overview of the 2021 Statistical data. There is a video prepared by Don Cramer on our website, detailing the results of the statistical data that churches submitted. 2021 Financial results were presented. The Conference received over 1 million dollars in donations that supported over 125 programs across our conference. Overall, we were under budget for expenses for 2021 by \$342,000. We ended the year with a positive result of net income of \$180,941.

The 2023 budget was presented with allocation percentages as follows:

Local congregational development: \$1,883,868— 29.6%

Global connectional ministries: \$1,505,461— 23.7%

Clergy and lay leadership: \$ 561,127— 8.8%

Connectional ministries: \$2,072,472— 32.6%

Conference support ministries: \$ 347,400— 5.5%

Other: \$ (6,000)— -0.1%

Total: \$6,364,328— 100%

The full budget presentation can be found on the conference website.

Action Item wc110: Commitment to Restorative Healing: A Wisconsin Conference Resolution on Survivors and the Boy Scouts of America, was presented by Dan Schwerin, Assistant to Bishop Jung on behalf of The Conference Board of Trustees, the Conference Council on Finance and Administration, the Cabinet and Bishop Jung.

“Restorative healing is at the heart of the Sermon on the Mount, moral action that is restorative to our interdependent good. Jesus calls us to compassion in Matthew 5:41, called to resist injustice with non-violent compassion, to demonstrate trust in the abundant grace of God and to be generous and that our witness be restorative.

There is a proposed settlement that puts survivors at the center of the healing. The settlement commits the UMC to providing \$30 million dollars toward a Survivors’ Trust Fund as a part of the total financial settlement of \$850 million dollars.

Our Wisconsin Conference UMC portion of the financial settlement is \$208,096. We are not asking that this be added to the annual apportionments. We ask that you pray and consider if we can raise all the \$208,096 for the Survivors’ Trust Fund.” The full text of the action item can be found on pages 27-28 of the 2022 Approved Action Item workbook on the website.

A question from the floor was asked if the Annual Conference body could make an offering towards the fund as a sign of leading by example, so that when this is taken back to the churches it is seen as a good faith gesture by the conference. Bishop Jung agreed to talk with Finance and see what could be set up. Following the Friday session, a link was established for people to donate to the Boy Scouts Restorative Fund. Links to all the Annual Conference funds can be found here: <https://secure.myvanco.com/L-Z41R/home>. Action Item wc110 Approved: 391 yes, 31 no, 24 abstain.

Bishop Jung shared that this is a commitment from the Council of Bishops as well and that it’s not just financial but a full commitment to restorative healing for the victims. Safe sanctuary policies are so important, and Bishop Jung urged us to go back to our churches, please confirm that you have a current Safe Sanctuary policy



in place. Church should be a safe ground for everyone, and we need to make assurances to honor that.

Action Item 104 a and b were presented by Cheryl Weaver, chair of the Joint Board of Pensions, Insurance & Equitable Compensation. Action Item 104a: Resolution Adopting Past Service Annuity Rate for 2023, Approved: 433 yes, 6 no, 9 abstain. Action Item 104b: Resolution on Minimum Compensation for 2023, Approved: 415 yes, 17 no, 9 abstain.

Bishop Don and Cecile Ott were welcomed to offer a word to the Annual Conference, including a deep gratitude for the shaping of the conference in his call and support of him as an episcopal candidate. Bishop Ott also lifted the deep commitment of Im and Bishop Jung to the ministry of Wisconsin.

Rev. Kate Jones moved action items 105a and 105b. 105a to address a streamline of our process at the Connectional Table and 105b to correct a previous decision made by the Annual Conference which is outside the guidance of the Book of Discipline and is not in alignment with the by-laws of the Trustees. Action Item 105a; Approved: 418 yes, 14 no, 12 abstain. Action Item 105b; Approved: 423 yes, 9 no, 10 abstain.

Rev. Kate Jones moved action item 106a and 106b. 106a to address apportionment adjustment for those new faith communities. 106b to address the conference moving policy. Action Item 106a, Approved: 429 yes, 7 no, 4 abstain. Action Item 106b, Approved: 421 yes, 10 no, 9 abstain.

The Board of Ordained Ministry sponsored a gathering of the clergy at the Miller Lite Lounge at Lambeau Field for a time of reconnection, fellowship, and food. It was a joyous celebration of reconnection of over 120 clergy and Board of Ordained Ministry members.

### **Saturday, June 11 Session**

The Saturday session began with an opening devotion time and Bible study, Discerning God's Will for All; Romans 12:1-2, led by Jim Winkler. "How can we affirm others and encourage them to live out of the awareness that they are already acceptable and do not have to justify their existence?"

Action Item wc111 – Disaffiliation of Local Churches Over Issues of Human Sexuality Under ¶2553 of the 2016 Book of Discipline: Approval Process for the Wisconsin Conference.

Rev. Steve Zekoff presented the action item. This policy document outlines the terms and conditions by which a local church in the Wisconsin Conference can exercise its right to disaffiliate. The General Council on Finance and Administration has developed a "Standard Form for Disaffiliation Agreements" as required by ¶2553.4a. Judicial Council Decision 1424 affirmed that the Annual Conference has the authority to develop additional procedures and standard terms (which become part of the Disaffiliation Agreement) that are not inconsistent with the minimum standards for disaffiliation required by ¶2553.

The full text of the action item can be found on page 29 of the 2022 Approved Action Item Report. All information pertaining to the process for disaffiliation can be found on the Conference website at [www.wisconsinumc.org/disaffiliation-information](http://www.wisconsinumc.org/disaffiliation-information). Action Item wc111, Approved: 415 yes, 44 no, 26 abstain.

Rev. Doug Clement introduced Tanner Clark, new site director at Lake Lucerne, who invited the gathered body to raise hands for those who had attended camp and whose call into ministry was prompted and nurtured by camp. There were overwhelming hands raised for both!

The Board of Laity chair, Ben Brancel and former chair, Deanna Shimko, offered their presentation. Deanna Shimko was gifted a plaque for her ministry as the Conference Lay Leader for many years. A round of applause was offered by the gathered body.

Connectional Table offered information on the restructuring for more inclusive and effective ministry.

Bishop Jung declared a recess. Following recess, the group joined in the worshipful celebration of this year's class of retirees. The proclamation was led by Class of 2022 retiree, Rev. Don Greer. "How do we walk forward from this moment and this career?" Rev. Greer referenced the flawed and fearless fool, Jacob. Jacob wrestled with God, and it was a struggle that defined him. Jacob walked forward with a limp and a blessing. Thank you to those who have served in ministry and given their love and compassion to those around them.

Following the lunch hour, the gathered body shared in the Memorial Worship remembering those persons associated with the Wisconsin Annual Conference who entered eternal life in the last year. Proclamation was offered by Rev. Forrest Wells, Class of 2022 retiree. He shared that the robe he was wearing was a gift from a mentor and clergy who first led him into understanding and accepting his call into ministry.

The Retiree Service and the Memorial service can be watched in full on the Conference YouTube channel, Wisconsin Conference United Methodist Church.

The Annual Conference took a break from the session. Rev. Jeremy Deaner called us back together singing Holy, Holy, Holy in English and Spanish.

Rev. Scott Ostlund from Garret-Evangelical Theological Seminary indicated the Wisconsin Annual Conference is among the top connections receiving education at GETS. Faculty has worked hard to launch new programs for more ministry contexts with different tools to serve. Scholarship resources are available and hybrid options are making it easier to obtain a degree in a financially healthy manner. Bishop Jung indicated the work of the Cabinet and BOM on a week of time at GETS to strengthen our partnership and develop relationship with seminary students.

Bishop Jung shared the names of those who have attained milestone years of service. The list can be viewed on the Conference website.

Rev. Lori Lossie, from the New Ministry Strategies Board, reported that new ministries were planted despite the struggles of 2020 and 2021. Twenty-four new ministries are currently supported. She offered sincere thank you to Rev. Jorge Mayorga in the capacity as Director of Congregational Development.

Jorge explained the PATH 1 Strategies used for creating new ministries. There are almost 100 ministries within a tiered priority that are being worked on by the New Ministry Strategy Board. There are 26 Hispanic Latino ministry settings making Wisconsin among the leaders for the Pentecost Renewal. Institute of Congregational Development remains among the top incubator for leadership for

starting new ministries. An award of recognition was offered to Rev. Jorge Mayorga for his years of ministry and impact on clergy and the church.

Revs. Forrest Wells, Tsuker Yang, and Scott Carlson presented Action Items wc107a, 107b, and 107c, the discontinuance of three churches: Hixton, North Prairie, and Bloom City UMCs. Action Item 107a, Approved: 414 yes, 4 no, 5 abstain. Action Item 107b, Approved: 414 yes, 3 no, 5 abstain. Action Item 107c, Approved: 415 yes, 3 no, 5 abstain.

Revs. Kate Croskery Jones, Forrest Wells, and Jorge Mayorga, the leaders of the New Revelation Church were introduced. This was a new ministry established last year. Green Bay: Vida Nueva celebrated the chartering of their church a few weeks ago where they took in over 200 members. Bishop Jung offered an official recognition of the congregation with some of the members here at Annual Conference including Ricardo Torres, the pastoral leader, whose daughter, Alma, translated for her father his gratitude to God and the Annual Conference.

New Berlin: Agape Hmong, their lay leader, Jay Xiong, who is also now licensed, was welcomed, and received an official recognition of the new ministry. He expressed a sincere thank you for walking with the group to this moment of celebration of the Agape Hmong ministry. Rev. Nhia Wahn Her is their pastoral leader.

Rev. Kate Croskery Jones presented Action Item wc108, disaffiliation and discontinuance of Trinity UMC in Waldo, 2549.2. A moment of prayer was offered before the Action Item was brought before the AC. Action Item wc108, Approved: 431 yes, 20 no, 18 abstain.

Anti-racism Task Force and Bishop's Task Force offered a report through Rev. Lamarr Gibson. The task force has created and provided training resources to clergy and laity of the Annual Conference. It is structured to address racism, inclusion, and equity. They offer monthly cultural competency forums on the last Saturday of each month. It addresses conflict and competency among ethnic groups. Monday of the 2022 Annual Conference will offer training. Cabinet will be trained. They are working on training for the trainers to assist local congregations to grow in multi-cultural awareness. This is a collaborative effort with a consultant. The task forces welcome feedback, comments, and prayers for this important work of the AC (Annual Conference).

Heidi Careaga, United Women in Faith, National Chair of Finance, Order of Deaconess and Home Missioner's mission is to express love and concern for the believing community for the needs in the world to enable, through education and involvement, the full ministry and the mission of the people of God. The Order of Deaconess and Home Missioner is authorized by the Book of Discipline (§1913-1918). We celebrated Kady Herr-Yang being consecrated as Deaconess. The plenary viewed the UWF commissioning service of this order. Gloria Carter introduced Kady to the AC. Kady lifted the support of Judy Vasby as a catalyst to following the call to becoming a deaconess. The Bishop led a blessing over Kady and then presented her with a recognition of this moment in her journey.

Bishop Jung requested the 2022 Ordination Class come forward to share in the historic questions of faith. The ordinands answered with strong voices and a regular response of "with God's help!" They were welcomed with joyful applause by the gathered body.

Bishop Jung offered his State of the Church address. When we know who we are, we know what our mission is. We are called to seek clarity, not certainty. We are people of personal holiness and social holiness. We are called to prayerful introspection for our own journey of transformation related to anti-racism which must be a part of everyday ministry. We are called forward by renewing and transforming grace for wholeness-making. We must recognize, repent, and restore. Native Peoples, Boy Scouts, racial history we have experienced as a conference. We must seek wholeness-making expected of a servant of Christ and steward God's mysteries. Be well and speak well of those who leave the UMC. No one needs to leave! There is room for all of us! There has always been tension in the unity we hold. John Wesley spoke fervently of unity until death. Called by healing and transforming grace, imagine the life before us, the mystery of God, that we will enjoy. We are only just starting work on cultural competency and anti-racism led by the Anti-Racism Task Force. Imagine the mystery of God that we will enjoy. Think of yourself this way, as a servant of Christ and steward of God's great mysteries. We are called forward by healing and transforming grace.

Rev. Kerri Parker from the Wisconsin Council of Churches offered a greeting lifting the work done through the covid pandemic and resourcing offered by WIAC. Kerri shared the important support of the immigrants who benefited from the support of local churches to meet the needs of families. Kerri indicated the church has had to be nimble in the last year with courage, justice, and holy imagination. When you think of WIAC, think of support as the whole staff is there to support the work of the church.

### **Sunday, June 12, 2022**

Sunday morning session began with opening devotion followed by the second session of the Bible study led by Jim Winkler.

Kathy Hartke presented Action Items wc109a,b – Social Action Resolutions. Action Item wc109a, Resolution: Support for Reproductive Health Care Rights and Justice, Approved: 317 yes, 88 no, 10 abstain. Action Item wc109b, Resolution: Development of Comprehensive Sex Education Curriculum by Discipleship Ministries, Approved: 340 yes, 67 no, 8 abstain.

Gail Burgess gave a video report on the work of the Episcopacy Committee and the relationship with Bishop Jung and his leadership of the Annual Conference. Gail also reported on some of the work of the NC Jurisdictional Conference including the fact that the NCJ will go from 9 to 8 Bishops.

Rev. Scott Carlson was welcomed to offer the Cabinet address. Thank you, Laity, for shifting and doing ministry in new ways during the pandemic which has taught us that the building is simply a tool. Thank you for remembering that we are a church together – the gathering broke out in song. Pivot, reach out, stay connected is an inspiration to so many. God is not done with the church yet. Be patient as we move into a time of denomination uncertainty.

Scott welcomed the new District Superintendents (DS's) and thanked those who now leave the role. He invited the gathered body to pray for those who are leading us into a new future.

Scott and the Cabinet offered flowers and a plant to Bishop and Im Jung. He also offered gratitude to Becky Halstead, Heidi Careaga, and Kristy Yang for their work.

Bishop and the DS's shared the Setting of Appointments. The full report can be

found on the Conference website.

The Revs. Ebenezer Insor, Park Hunter, and Amanda Stein were introduced as the new District Superintendents serving South East, North East, and South West Districts, respectively. They each offered words of greeting and hope for our shared work together.

The report of the Global Ministries was offered by Rev. Anita Lang via video. She lifted the work to support the Afghan refugees and the War in Ukraine. Rev. Mary Balson shared the news of our shared work through the Mission Motivation Committee and the Midwest Distribution Center.

Anita lifted her visit in May 2022 to nurture the connection with the church in Bolivia. She spent time with the bishop, the elderly, and United Women of Faith servants. The Wisconsin Annual Conference was able to purchase six motorcycles to support the work of the church. Anita offered her deep thanks for the support from the Annual Conference for their support.

Rev. Liz Alexander reported that we are launching CYC, Conference Youth Council. They announced that a Fall Retreat is planned in November at Lake Lucerne and that youth from across the state will gather for statewide community, spiritual growth, and to enjoy one of the spectacular camps. Youth 2023 is a four-day conference in July. This will be for middle and high school youth in our conference. They commit to make this affordable for all youth with fundraising. Meredith Spores, Young Adult representative from Cargill UMC. Jennifer Banner talked about her parents' divorce and her relationship with God. Video was shared with the Conference.

Liz challenged us to partner with the youth to share these opportunities with young people as well as those who are part of the community, to share your leaders' names with the CYC to connect with them. Please reach out to the council at their conference email, [youthministry@wisconsinumc.org](mailto:youthministry@wisconsinumc.org).

Rev. Jerome Shabandau offered the blessing for lunch. Upon return from the lunch break, Bishop invited the Rev. Dan Dick to come forward to share prayer. Dan remarked on his new perspective from the floor of Annual Conference after he has returned to ministry of the local church following many years of service in Annual Conference capacities. Dan offered a prayer.

Bishop Jung welcomed the Lutheran Bishop, Anne Edison-Albright, who brought ecumenical greetings.

The General and Jurisdictional Conference delegation was invited forward to offer a reaffirmation of Rev. Dan Schwerin, 1st elected clergy delegate of Wisconsin Annual Conference as an episcopal candidate to the North Central Jurisdiction with a video presentation by Rev. Jenny Arneson, 2nd elected clergy delegate. Lisa King, 1st elected lay delegate offered an update of the work of the delegation and the results of the online NCJ conference.

Action item wc113, Nominations report, was brought to the floor of the Annual Conference by Rev. Sue D'Alessio, with the caveat that the report is going on to perfection as additional leadership is still being worked on. Action Item wc113, Approved: 378 yes, 6 no, 8 abstain.

Rev. Steve Miller and Sarah Sneider brought Action Item wc114, the 2023 budget,



to the floor. There were no questions. Approved: 383 yes, 11 no, 7 abstain.

Rev. Krystal Goodger and Jason Mahnke offered a video presentation on behalf of the Wisconsin Foundation. They brought the results of their partnership with local congregations and new ministries. They noted that everyone is current on their loan payments. WUMF will host the annual stewardship campaign on August 12-13, 2022. They came to celebrate! Thank you for making the conference find joy in your presentation!!!

Rev. Lee Bushweiler brought a question of law related to the Disaffiliation Agreement. A document was presented to the Conference Secretary, Kevin Rice Myers. Questions regarding including clergy in the agreement and the timeline process. Paragraph 51, constitutional law, discipline, must be addressed within 30 days from today.

Rev. Allie Scott brought wc115, Resolution Formally Requesting the Congressional Delegation from Wisconsin to Act on Responsible Fire-Arm Legislation. Three speeches for and three speeches against were offered. Approved: 378 yes, 50 no, 4 abstain.

The women from the Korean Women's leadership were honored on stage by Heidi Careaga and Gloria Carter, Conference President for United Women in Faith.

Revs. Claudia Deede and Sue D'Alessio offered thanks for the fellowship, worship, and conferencing. A word of gratitude was offered to GNTV, Bishop Jung, Kevin Rice Myers, Dan Schwerin, Marshall Schmidt, Steve Zekoff, Matt Horton, Programs and Arrangements committee, and any who were not named but supported in many ways!

Dates for next year's Annual Conference were announced, June 9-12, 2023, at KI Center, Green Bay, Wisconsin. All videos and materials from Annual Conference are available on the conference website at [www.wisconsinumc.org/annual-conference](http://www.wisconsinumc.org/annual-conference).

## Christian Symbol of the Month

**Beehive**—This modern symbol represents the church and its many, varied "workers." A multitude of people, each with different tasks and gifts, works to build up the body of Christ. Often, nine bees are pictured near the hive to represent the nine fruits of the Spirit (see Galatians 5:22-23).



## One Last Thing . . . The Church Hive

Bees live in a cooperative way described as "eusociality," or good relations. Each bee contributes a specific skill to the colony, synchronizing its efforts for the benefit of all. Likewise, a church's health depends on all members fulfilling their responsibility to the organism as a whole. Descriptions of hive life mirror Paul's words about the body of Christ, with members having different gifts "but the same Spirit" (1 Corinthians 12:4).

According to R.S. Beal, Jr., who was both a pastor and a zoology professor, a

beehive is the perfect "living illustration of how to walk in unity." He wrote, "Those of us who have believed in Jesus belong to one another just as much as we belong to Christ. We cannot live independently of one another anymore than we can live independently of Christ. Like the bees, we must learn to practice the sacrifice, labor, sharing, and submission of love that together we 'may grow up into him in all things, who is the head, that is, Christ'" (Ephesians 4:15, KJV). How are you using your own spiritual gifts to build up your church "hive"?

**Deadline for SPIRE copy: the 25th of the month prior to publication's edition. Send copy to [news@mequonumc.org](mailto:news@mequonumc.org) to be included in the monthly SPIRE or the weekly Sunday bulletins.**

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