

SPIRE Newsletter



July 2021



*Happy Fourth
of July!*

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CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS

Jul. 3: Youth Mission Trip begins

Jul. 8: Reflections book group dines out

Jul. 10: Youth Mission Trip ends

Jul. 11: Parish Nurses walk at Virmond Park

Jul. 18: Parish Nurses walk at Concordia University Bluff

Jul. 25: Parish Nurses walk at Mequon Nature Preserve

Aug. 1: Parish Nurses walk at Lion's Den Gorge Nature Preserve

Aug. 2: Vacation Bible School begins

Aug. 6: Vacation Bible School ends

**WORSHIP SERMON
SPOTLIGHT**

Outreach Ministries Featuring Youth Mission Trip

This is the second post in our 2021 series of Outreach committee articles sharing information about the charitable organizations and groups we honor with our time and treasure. With your faithful support, we are helping to make God's Love Real. Thank you!

Youth Mission Trip

The Outreach committee is pleased to support in-house committees which support our mission of providing basic food, shelter and clothing, such as our youth group led by Patrick Curran and Jenna Burns. Each year, the committee transfers an average of \$100 per person or \$1,000 to a dedicated account to defray food and travel costs for the youth mission trips. In a typical summer, the youth travel by van to a domestic location where they participate in a Home Repair

Jul. 4: 1 Samuel 13:8-15, *Free From the People-Pleasing Trap*
Jul. 11: 1 Samuel 24:1-15, *Free to Be the Person God Wants You to Be*
Jul. 18: *Living What You Learn*, Gayle Meyer in the pulpit
Jul. 25: *What is the Truth?* Glen Van Fossen in the pulpit

WORSHIP MUSIC

Jul. 4 : Lori Ludwig & Elna Hickson
Jul. 11: Lori Ludwig & Marcia Schwager

Workcamp.

Here is an excerpt from the GroupMissionTrips.com website:
Home Repair Mission Trips
“Group Mission Trips offers youth home repair mission trips known as Group Workcamps. At Group Workcamps, hundreds of teenagers from youth groups across the country repair and transform homes while deepening their faith and building new relationships with their peers and youth leaders.

Our home repair mission trips are mid-sized gatherings with up to 400 teenage participants that focus specifically on residential home repair. The types of home repair projects range from painting, to building decks and wheelchair ramps, and other general home repairs, but the service projects often are secondary to the spiritual growth that happens when teenagers step out of their own worlds and serve those in need. Beyond the physical transformation that happens in communities, teenagers bring the hope and light of Jesus to the residents they serve.

During a home repair mission trip, participants generally stay at a local school that is full of fun and energy throughout the week as they engage in indoor and outdoor games, share meals together, and participate in worship and teaching in morning and evening programs.”

Several members of our youth group attend our youth mission trip on an annual basis. It is tiring, but extremely rewarding. This year, our youth will be traveling to Tennessee from July 3 to July 10. Please wish them well and Godspeed.

In 2020, the Outreach Committee contributed \$1,000 for this trip.

Wheeler Scholarship Fund

In 2016, in honor of Susan Yorio’s mother, Betty Wheeler, the Yorio family established the Betty Wheeler Scholarship Fund. The idea was that any young person who would like to attend the Group Mission Trip could do so without financial hardship. Youth may apply for the scholarship fund for payment of half their trip cost. To show good faith and effort, the teen or young adult must earn and/or contribute the remainder of their group mission trip fee. Upon return, we ask recipients to reflect with a thank you letter to the Yorio family, sharing their experience and lessons learned.

In 2020, the Outreach Committee contributed \$500 to this fund.

From the Pastor

When circumstances are not as we expect or desire, our faith/confidence in God could become shaken unless we remember how God has helped us in the past. Our confidence in God could become fickle unless we believe that the very God will do the same because of who God is: God is faithful and is the same yesterday and today and forever.

The book of Psalms is a great reminder of God's faithfulness. There is no literature that is more honest to life than Psalms. Psalmists are not people talking about a trouble-free life, how God has kept them out of all struggles, suffering, and valleys. Not at all! Rather, they are talking about every skeptical thought, pain, and despair that we face every day, and at the same time, they are talking about God's faithfulness that sustains us in the midst of all those storms in our lives. Therefore, they are saying that we can have an unshakable confidence in God. I love what David said in the great Psalms 23:

"The LORD is my shepherd, I lack nothing... 3 He restores my soul. 4 Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. 5 You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies.

These are words of confidence in God who has helped him through all of the disappointment, discouragement, and despair. He went through the worst – the darkest valley – and yet found himself intact and lacking nothing, for the LORD was with him. He was not abandoned but helped in the presence of difficulties.

May this picture of Psalms 23 be a reality of your daily life as you have confidence in God daily!

In Christ,
Sue Lee

Vacation Bible School Coming Soon

Vacation Bible School (VBS) is just around the corner, scheduled for August 2 - 6, 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.

The costs can add up in order to provide a meaningful experience for all. It costs approximately \$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 "gem" from our VBS display in the narthex that supports a particular item.



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. You are all treasures!

For more information email childrensmin@mequonumc.org or visit the website and check out "Children's Ministry".

Job Openings at MUMC

Audio Video Tech

Mequon United Methodist Church is seeking an individual to be a member of our

tech team in presenting audio and visual content for church services that are conducted in-person and livestreamed. Approximate total hours per week is 2 1/2 hours on Sunday mornings.

The individual will be responsible for operating the audio and visual equipment, during services and managing the livestream event. The individual should have experience in computer skills and willingness to learn. MUMC will provide the training and coaching to ensure the individual's success.

Persons interested or needing more information should call the office or speak with Marilyn Zwissler at 262-242-4770.

Custodian

Mequon United Methodist Church is seeking a part-time custodian who has the ability to work independently. Flexible day or evening schedule, 10 hours per week.

Requires working knowledge of methods, products, procedures, and basic equipment related to general cleaning of public spaces. This is an hourly position.

See the full job description at mequonumc.org. Submit resume by email to office@mequonumc.org or by regular mail to Mequon United Methodist Church, 11011 N. Oriole Lane, Mequon WI 53092.

Minister of Music

Mequon United Methodist Church, a traditional/contemporary worship church in Mequon, Wisconsin, is seeking a part time (12-15 hrs/wk) Minister of Music 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; the ability to develop youth music programs to engage children and youth; and the ability to support and grow adult and special event music ministry leaders and volunteers.

Qualifications:

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

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. Submit resume by email to office@mequonumc.org or by regular mail to Attn: Pastor Sue, Mequon United Methodist Church, 11011 N. Oriole Lane, Mequon WI 53092.

Announcements

The celebration of the life of Nancy Gruner will be held at MUMC on

Monday, July 5. Visitation will begin at 10:30 am; the service will follow at 11:30 am, followed by an informal lunch.

Nancy will be greatly missed by our congregation. We will miss her kindness, her gentleness, and her boundless grace. Our deepest sympathies to Nancy's family.

Nursery Volunteers Needed to staff the nursery during worship services on July 18 and 25, and each Sunday in August (8/1, 8/8, 8/15, 8/22, and 8/29). If you are able to help, please email Carol Bayne at office@mequonumc.org.

New—A Daily Prayer For Each Week! The Breakthrough Prayer Team wants to support you in your practice of daily prayer. Starting in June and continuing monthly, the team will offer a one- or two-sentence prayer that you can pray or read daily for the entire week. Even when simply read with focus and intention, these words become a prayer. Let's pray together!

Pick up your July/August Upper Room devotional today! The new issue of the Upper Room is available in the narthex. Contact the office if you want a copy mailed to you, and please indicate whether you prefer a large or small format.

New Directories are Here! The membership directory has been updated, and is available in the narthex.

Parish Nurses Walking Program

The walking program returns on Sunday afternoons. Our mission as parish nurses and health care professionals is to support your mind, body, and spirit. We take leisurely walks on well-maintained trails through beautiful venues in Ozaukee County. Start time each week is 4 pm and will conclude no later than 5 pm. Here's the schedule:



July 11 - Virmond Park, 10606 N. Lake Shore Dr., Mequon; meet in the parking area near the lake

July 18 - Concordia University Bluff, 12800 N. Lake Shore Dr., Mequon; enter at the south entrance and proceed to parking

July 25 - Mequon Nature Preserve, 8200 W. County Line Rd., Mequon; meet in the parking area

August 1 - Lion's Den Gorge Nature Preserve, 511 High Bluff Dr., Grafton; meet near the Lion's Den trailhead

Frequently Asked Questions:

What do I wear? Wear comfortable clothing for summer and good walking shoes.

How do I join this amazing group? Just come, no reservations.

How do I prepare? No training required; no prizes or Olympic medals will be awarded.

You may want to apply sunscreen, consider bug spray, hydrate prior, and bring

water for yourself for after the walk.

We look forward to seeing you on the trails! Questions? Call/text Susan Solverson at 414-559-4699 or email her at susansolverson@wi.rr.com.

Reflections Book Group

The Reflections book group will be dining out at Harvey's Central Grille in Mequon on Thursday, July 8. Our reservation is set for 6 pm. If you are planning to attend, please RSVP to bhenneck@wi.rr.com by Tuesday, July 6.

Our discussion book will be *The Vanishing Half* by Brit Bennett. Here's a brief summary of the book from [amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com):

The Vignes twin sisters will always be identical. But after growing up together in a small, southern black community and running away at age sixteen, it's not just the shape of their daily lives that is different as adults, it's everything: their families, their communities, their racial identities.

Many years later, one sister lives with her black daughter in the same southern town she once tried to escape. The other secretly passes for white, and her white husband knows nothing of her past. Still, even separated by so many miles and just as many lies, the fates of the twins remain intertwined. What will happen to the next generation, when their own daughters' storylines intersect?



Reflections is a women's book group that meets monthly for discussion and fellowship. New women are always welcome.

Looking ahead . . .our September discussion book will be *Beneath a Scarlet Sky* by Mark Sullivan. We will not be meeting in August.

From the Wisconsin UM Foundation

Story Time: Your Ministry Story July 2021

"Now to God who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to God's power that is at work within us." (Ephesians 3:20)

I took my kids fishing for the first time last month. You can imagine the excitement of 5-year-olds with a fishing rod! Besides fishing, they had fun throwing things into the lake. They enjoyed seeing how far they could throw sticks and rocks and seeing the ripples they created. That was a great teaching moment. "Do you know your words and actions are like these sticks? You do one thing, but it has a reaction much larger."

There is a church in our conference that received an estate gift in the mid-1990s for youth. The gift was \$5,000 and was invested here at the Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation. That gift has grown and continued to be used for ministry. In the last 25 years, over \$6,500 has been used for youth ministry! There is still almost \$7,000 in that fund today!

Isn't it wonderful what a modest gift can do for the ministry of a church even after we have died! Isn't it wonderful how one gift can affect youth for years! Isn't it wonderful that one gift is a much larger action than the original giver could have ever known?

How are you giving to the church with your time, talents, and treasures? What ripple affect will it have now and in the future?

Rev. Krystal Goodger, Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation

From the Wisconsin Conference

Editor's note: Since the beginning of the pandemic, the Cabinet in our Wisconsin Conference has posted a daily devotion, called a Reflection, that is worthwhile reading. Each one is well written and thought-provoking; many, like the two below, are exceptionally so.

Reflection for June 6, 2021, by Bishop Hee-Soo Jung

It is good to give thanks to the Lord, to sing praises to your name, O Most High; to declare your steadfast love in the morning, and your faithfulness by night, to the music of the lute and the harp, to the melody of the lyre. For you, O Lord, have made me glad by your work; at the works of your hands I sing for joy.
(Psalms 92:1-4)

We live in an information age where there is a simple process of linear thought that says "change a person's mind and they will act differently." There is a wisdom here, but it is incomplete and doesn't work for many people. Instead, changing one's actions can work to change their thinking.

For example, many people give thanks when they feel like it or when they are happy. They might say, "why should I give thanks when things are going bad in my life?" But what if you give thanks no matter what? Many people will say that giving thanks improves their mood and makes them more mindful of their blessings.

A common experience for many people is the transformative power of mission projects. Talking about the importance of serving others, missional giving, the needs of the poor and marginalized is valuable, but often does little to change a person's heart and mind. However, people who go on mission trips regularly come home deeply changed. They have experienced a new and different reality, and they can never go back to thinking about missions the same way again.

To be with people, to engage and observe, to be curious and inquisitive, to meet and work and laugh and sing – all of this is more powerful than information about them. Much information-based teaching and learning is abstract and conceptual; real-life engagement is concrete and tangible. Engagement moves us from believing to knowing (or, at least, knowing better). Often actions have greater influence on our thinking than our thinking has on our actions.

This is the wisdom of Jesus. Jesus taught in stories that people could relate to, but he also invited people to engage in activities and behaviors with others. He said both "listen" and "follow." Jesus spoke of "eyes to see and ears to hear," but also commanded "go!" Doing and hearing, practicing and learning, giving and receiving are dynamic "both/ands," not "either/ors." It is important that we study and read, reflect and discuss, listen and learn, but it is also essential to our discipleship that we get up, get out, connect, engage, relate, and act. When we establish and

maintain such balance, we will see great growth.

John Wesley once questioned his own faith, and his mentor, Peter Bohler, told him, “Preach faith till you have it, and then, because you have it, you will preach faith.” Give thanks, sing praises, glorify God, offer adoration and you will find a change of heart, a transformation of spirit, and a conversion of your thinking.

Prayer: Loving God, hear our praises, our songs of adoration, and grateful thanksgiving, and our appreciation of your generous blessings. Through your Holy Spirit, work the miracle of a changed heart and mind in each of us. We pray for the gift of joy, for ourselves and for everyone we meet. Amen.

Reflection for June 24, 2021, by Sue D’Alessio: 1+1=3

Then he [Jesus] went about among the villages teaching. He called the twelve and began to send them out two by two, and gave them authority over the unclean spirits. (Mark 6:6b-7)

Jesus said, “For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them.” (Matthew 18:20)

Whenever two people gather or meet together to be disciples, to do the ministry and mission of the church, to laugh and talk with one another in friendship, to do anything together in the name of Jesus the Christ, there are always three present, with Jesus as the third person in the partnership. Jesus understood, taught, and demonstrated his belief that we work better by working together in community, in pairs, in a small group, even in larger gatherings.

Yes, we can work on our own and there are some things we can only do alone. However, all too often, we think we must do things on our own. We don’t share and collaborate on tasks very easily. We become “Lone(Iy) Rangers.” How often have you (as I have done) begrudged that you are the only one working on a project and no one is helping out? After braving through this way of behaving all too often, I finally realized that I wasn’t inviting or including others into the project – in conceiving and planning it, in strategizing or even in working out the details. I thought others would join in if they wanted to and I thought I would be imposing on them if I asked for their help. How wrong I was.

Jesus sent his disciples out to bring healing and hope to others, in pairs – two by two. He understood what it took me a long time to learn – sharing leadership, discipleship, ministry (or anything we do) with others means we can rely on and build upon our different skills and perspectives and knowledge. When we work together in our Christian discipleship, ministry, and mission, one plus one always equals three. It’s a holy mathematical formula. The ministry we engage in with others multiplies exponentially because God in Christ is present, infusing and inspiring our ministry with Spirit and energy, with creativity and strategy, with grace and wisdom.

Creator God, Guide us in our discipling and ministry. Help us to hear your call and to find the people you call to be in collaborative partnership with us. Send us to be your disciples, bringing healing and hope in our communities and throughout the world. With your Spirit, as we follow the example of Jesus, lead us into transformational ministries of radical inclusion and racial justice in every aspect of our ministry. Alleluia. Amen.

Annual Conference 2021

Wisconsin Conference of the United Methodist Church

2021 Virtual Annual Conference Summary Report

The 2021 Annual Conference of the Wisconsin Conference of The United Methodist Church was once again held virtually this year. Planning for the conference began last November immediately following the 2020 Annual Conference. Due to the unknown nature of the pandemic, it was decided to plan for a virtual conference in June 2021. GNTV was the host provider for the event.

Annual Conference began Friday morning, June 18, 2021, with opening music featuring Native American flute music and drumming with a call to honor the heritage of the land, followed by opening worship. Bishop Hee-Soo Jung presided live over the Annual Conference from the Conference Center in Sun Prairie. He was assisted by Conference Secretary Rev. Kevin Rice Myers; Assistant to the Bishop Rev. Dan Dick; incoming Assistant to the Bishop Rev. Dan Schwerin; Conference Chancellor Bill White; incoming Conference Chancellor Marshall Schmitt; and parliamentarian Rev. Steve Zekoff.

There were 685 registrants for Annual Conference. Bishop Hee-Soo Jung called the session to order on Friday morning following the opening worship service. Bishop Jung offered greetings and thanks to those present and those who had worked to make the conference possible. Administrative votes were taken to authorize holding the conference virtually and to set special rules and procedures to guide the business of the session.

Following a short break, Bishop Jung offered the State of the Church address, in which he recognized the difficulty of being the church during the pandemic and provided hope and grace as we move forward, knowing the challenges we face but also knowing that God is with us through it all.

Business continued with Rev. Krysta Deede, chairperson of the Conference Board of Ordained Ministry, introducing the 2021 Class of Ordinands and Commissioned Provisional Members. The morning session closed with the viewing of the Retiree Recognition service.

Following the lunch break, we gathered for a Bible study from Bishop Tracy Malone of the East Ohio Conference. The theme for the study was “Building Beloved Community: Creating Healthy Eco-Systems of Radical Inclusion and Racial Justice”.

Business continued throughout the afternoon with approval of the Consent Agenda, approval of the new Chancellor, Marshall Schmitt, Statistician’s Report, presentation of the 2022 Budget, and a presentation from Rev. Cheryl Weaver, chair of the Joint Board of Pensions, Insurance, and Equitable Compensation, on their action items relating to clergy compensation and proposed changes to current conference policies as it relates to equitable compensation. All action items passed.

Rev. Dan Dick presented the Years of Service Recognitions on behalf of the Commission on Archives and History. Rev. Lori Lossie and Rev. Jorge Mayorga presented a report on the New Ministries Strategy Board and Congregational Development. Deanna Shimko offered the Laity Address during the afternoon session.

Paul Scott, Lay Member from Trinity UMC in Waldo presented Action Item wc106, Disaffiliation of Waldo UMC. After presentation, Barbara Dick presented a motion to postpone Action Item wc106, seconded. Discussions “for” and “against” were presented. Motion to postpone Action Item wc106 passed.

Rev. Kerri Parker from the Wisconsin Council of Churches shared about the work of the Council. Rev. Dawn Jeffers Ramstad presented a report from the Board of Global Ministries. Rev. Roland Fernandes, General Secretary of the General Board, presented an “Answering God’s Call to Mission” video. The afternoon session concluded with a video promoting the “Breakthrough Prayer Initiative”.

One final action item was presented by Rev. Kevin Dembinski to suspend rule 2.3.4 so that a new resolution regarding “Culture of the Call” could be brought forward during Saturday’s session. Action item passed. Bishop Jung ended the Friday session with closing remarks, announcements, and prayer.

Saturday’s session, on June 19, 2021, opened with a video by Rev. Lamarr Gibson celebrating Juneteenth followed by an opening worship service.

Rev. Kate Croskery Jones, Dean of the Cabinet, gave the Cabinet Address. District Superintendents, Rev. Tsuker Yang and Rev. Scott Carlson, presented Action Item wc107 Closing/Discontinuance of Local Churches. Action Item wc107 passed.

The reading of appointments was pre-recorded over Zoom and shown during the morning session followed by a presentation by Dr. Javier Viera, President of Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary. A video presentation on Prayers for Myanmar was shown and the conference was asked to stand in solidarity with those who suffer in the region by offering a three-finger salute.

Presentations by Rick Churan and Rev. Krystal Goodger from the Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation shared that through the New Way Grant they helped 364 churches with \$494,000 to support them during the pandemic with new technology, cleaning supplies, and resources. They also supported 23 churches with grants through the new ministry start program with a total of \$46,000.

Rev. Dan Schwerin, chair of the Episcopacy Committee, gave the Episcopacy Report. Primary work of the committee is to support the Bishop and help the conference make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. The report shared that the committee is grateful for the work Bishop Jung and the Cabinet are doing within our conference to support clergy, provide devotionals, provide online worship so clergy can take a day of respite, and the work of the quadrennial theme of Radical Inclusion and Racial Justice, including work with the Anti-Racism Task Force and the Bishop’s Task Force.

The Service of Remembrance was presented. Every year the conference pauses to remember and honor those from our conference who have passed away since the previous Annual Conference session.

Following a lunch break, the session began with Bishop Tracy Malone offering day two of the Bible Study.

Action Item wc110: Anti-Hate Crimes Resolution was presented by Dr. Don Kim on behalf of the Commission on Religion and Race. Action item passed.

Action Item wc109, approval of the 2022 budget, was presented by Rev. Steve

Miller, Interim Chair for the Council on Finance and Administration. With no discussion, action item passed.

Rev. Sue D'Alessio presented Action Item wc108: Nominations Report. There was no discussion; action item passed.

Action Item wc111, Culture of Call, was presented by Rev. Kevin Dembinski. The action item intent is to be intentional about creating a culture of call to ministry within the Wisconsin Conference. Rev. Angela Utter made a motion to amend the action item to include a clear appointment opening system, similar to the Pacific Northwest Conference. The amendment was accepted as a friendly amendment. Rev. Peace Kim moved to amend the motion to add "Board of Ordained Ministry" to the new amendment. This was accepted as a friendly amendment. The main action item with added friendly amendments passed.

Following closing remarks by Bishop Hee-Soo Jung, the Service of Commissioning and Ordination was played. The Wisconsin Annual Conference adjourned upon the conclusion of the worship service.

Christian Symbol of the Month

Valleys

Valleys symbolize life's dark or low points; for example, Psalms 23:4 refers to "the valley of the shadow of death" (NIV). But valleys also symbolize people who find God's favor because they're lowly and meek. As a result, valleys can be places of blessing. God lifts his people out of despair and rewards their faithfulness.



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

Disclaimer: Editor reserves the right to edit content.

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/ Closed Fridays

Sunday Schedule

9:30am Worship Service

10:30am Fellowship