

SPIRE Newsletter



June 2020

[View MUMC Online Calendar](#)

CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS

June 4 - group growth study starts

June 14 - graduate recognition Sunday

June 21 - Father's Day Sunday

WORSHIP MUSIC - featuring the always wonderful Elna Hickson!

June 7 – Enjoy past recordings of all choirs to celebrate Choir Appreciation Sunday!

June 14 – The wonderful family of Penny and Sam Laferriere and Dale Parkinson!

June 21 – Three generations of Widder men in celebration of Father's Day!

June 28 – The wonderful Shuler Family!



Virus May Slow But Does Not Stop MUMC

The prevailing health advice to MUMC leaders is to continue providing virtual worship services through internet options rather than in-person gatherings at the church for the health and safety of our

congregation. But that has not stopped the trustees from getting repairs or improvements done in preparation for MUMC to re-open our building and grounds for active ministries.

When services reconvene safely at MUMC, worshipers will find a few things - some seen, some unseen - changed for the better at our church. Most visible immediately will be a new garden house being built for tool and equipment storage near our active community gardens as well as a new enclosure for the dumpsters. Less permanent, but important for summer ministry to children, will be a large tent set up to provide for the YMCA to operate a day camp starting in mid-June for 30 school-aged youngsters whose parents have been called back to work.

Inside, the trustees have undertaken a number of projects. A sink and cabinets were added to Rooms 101/102 (formerly the Music Room and Children's Library) for the YMCA-Sonlight's new infant/toddler rooms. All Sonlight rooms have been

cleaned/disinfected, and the entry/hallway has been repainted in preparation for reopening. The YMCA has been urged by state licensing to begin accepting children back into Sonlight in early June to provide help to parents required to return to work even as the virus remains a concern. Clearly, reopening MUMC's building and grounds while the virus continues requires new and rigorous procedures for entering the premises to protect everyone's health ... cleaning, disinfecting, checking temperatures, using face masks and hand sanitizers, staying six feet from one another, etc. And those procedures are currently being established so MUMC members may return in confidence.

Other trustee projects accomplished for the good of the church may not be visible, but are important all the same. While many improvements have been made to MUMC's plumbing system over the past 18 to 24 months to raise water quality, the final major improvement has been installation of a sophisticated iron filter system that will eliminate discoloration of sinks and toilets, and remove naturally occurring elements like iron, arsenic, and more from MUMC's drinking water.

In the interests of increasing MUMC's 'green' practices, reducing MUMC's ecological footprint, and lowering operating costs, trustees have replaced all incandescent and fluorescent lights with LED lighting throughout the church. This action is expected to reduce annual electrical expenses by nearly 45%.

In this digital age, internet connection is increasingly critical to MUMC's ability to receive and send communications from our building. Recently, Wi-Fi service was extended throughout the education wing, as well as strengthened for the church and offices.

And finally, the trustees have launched the grass cutting season again, under the coordination of Scott Reed, and we're looking for more volunteers to help. It's a really good outdoor activity that anyone can safely participate in even during the COVID-19 restrictions, and now we have three Simplicity lawn tractors ready for use with a gift of a new one from Doug Micheln. If you can help cut lawn and keep MUMC looking good, please contact Scott at Sreed2@wi.rr.com.

From the Pastor

Some of you might have cut your hair last week for the first time in two months. If you did, I bet that you're now feeling much lighter! Some of you might be determined to wait longer. Whether you recently went to a salon or not, I suspect that you all are wondering about MUMC's re-opening plan. So, here is a brief update:

MUMC's Re-Opening Team has decided to continue holding online worship **through the end of June**. Our decision is based on guidance from The Wisconsin Annual Conference (WAC) COVID-19 Task Team. The WAC COVID-19 Task Team has developed specific protocols to help United Methodist Churches in Wisconsin discern when and how we can safely gather for in-person worship and other activities. The team has recommended a gradual, phased approach. Please see the Worship Phase Graphic "Wisconsin Annual Conference - Steps for Church Reopening" **immediately below**. MUMC's leadership and I will do our best to discern when we can move to the next phrase and will communicate this to you.

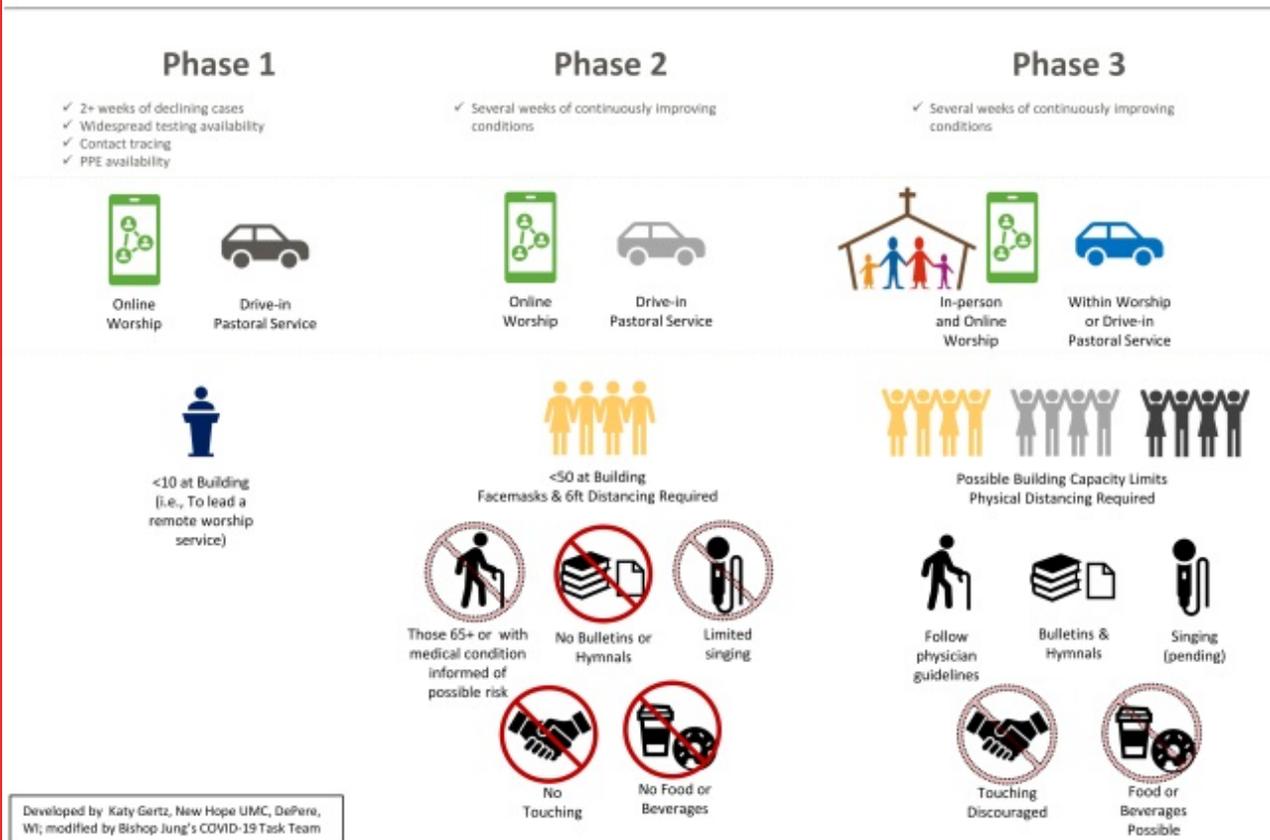
Unfortunately, it seems like the pandemic is going to be around longer than we wanted it to. However, it will end someday, and we will eventually come out of this

valley. But the question we now need to ask ourselves is: What will be our story to tell about these times to the next generation?

One of the life-lessons we learn time and time again is that crises can make us either better or bitter. Crises do change us. We are not the same after walking through them; our responses determine whether we become better or bitter people. So, I pray that we may better appreciate God's never-failing presence in our lives during this waiting time. I pray that we may better appreciate the act of "gathering" for worship on Sunday and walking with Jesus together so that we may come out of this valley with a stronger and more radiant relationship with the Lord and one another; may we all come out of this "fire" as refined gold and silver and may that be our story to tell next generation.

In Christ,
Sue Lee

Wisconsin Annual Conference – Steps for Church Reopening



New Growth Group Study Being Offered Starting June 4, 2020

The MUMC Education Team is excited to offer a new growth group study: *Making Love Last a Lifetime* by Adam Hamilton. Starting on Thursday, June 4, the study group will be held each Thursday, from 7 to 8 pm, for 8 weeks, via Zoom. Please contact Pastor Sue by phone or email if you are interested in participating.

In these thoughtful video presentations, Adam Hamilton offers some keys to developing a healthy, satisfying, and successful marriage. He draws on insights from surveys of over two thousand single and married persons, from experiences

shared by couples he interviewed, from reflections based on fifteen years of counseling individuals and couples, and from his own experiences in marriage. If you are single, these videos can equip and prepare you to have a successful relationship. If you are married, they can help you grow in your relationship with your spouse so that you can experience all that God intends marriage to be. We hope that many will join us in this exciting growth group study.

Questions? Please contact Jean Paulus at tango2nite@wi.rr.com

The curriculum includes:

- Venus and Mars in the Beginning
- What Women Wish Men Knew About Women
- What Men Wish Women Knew About Men
- After the Honeymoon Is Over
- The Habits of an Unhealthy Marriage
- God's Plan for Sexual Intimacy
- The Ministry and Meaning of Faithfulness
- Making Love Last a Lifetime

Upcoming Celebrations

Celebrate Graduates on Sunday, June 14

This is a difficult year for our graduates as social distancing is preventing them from celebrating an important rite of passage. Let's celebrate them all here at MUMC with photos

of all of our graduates, from kindergarten all the way to grad school – sons and daughters, grandchildren and great-grandchildren, nieces and nephews.



Send the photos of your graduates to Carol Bayne at office@mequonumc.org or text them to her cell phone at 414-491-1430. Don't forget to include your graduate's name, and the school from which they're graduating. The deadline for submitting photos is Thursday, June 11.

Father's Day is June 21

Let's share the wisdom of our fathers! We've all said it many times in our lives: "My father always used to say...". As they raised us, taught us about life, and guided our feet toward the right paths, they left us with many bits of wisdom along the way. On Father's Day, to honor our fathers and the father figures in our lives, we will be featuring their pearls of wisdom along with favorite photos of them in a slide show during our virtual service.

Send your wise quote and a photo of your father or father figure to Carol Bayne at office@mequonumc.org or text them to her cell phone at 414-491-1430. Please include your name and your father's name. The deadline for submitting quotes/photos is Thursday, June 18.

Announcements

A thank you from Mark Spooner to his dear MUMC friends– Thank you so much for your ongoing love, prayers, and support for me and my family while I continue to face my health challenges. The cards and letters that you sent to me at the hospital were so very much appreciated. The journey for my renewed health is still ahead of me, but I am so grateful for all of you and your friendship and kindness. I will continue to pray for all of you as we continue on our amazing journey of life with God at our side, who shares His love with us every moment, even through the darkest valleys.

Nancy Creighton is under hospice care. Prayers for Nancy, Malcolm, and Ross would be very appreciated.

Vacation Bible School Update – To ensure that our children stay safe and healthy, the Rocky Railway Vacation Bible School (VBS) has had to reschedule its adventure. We are still hoping VBS will get back on 'track' in August. Gayle Meyer will keep you updated.

A big thank you from Michelle Hynson to all who have enhanced our online worship service with your music. We are a blessed church family!

Our deepest gratitude to Marilyn Zwissler, Dain Shuler, and Dave Traut who have stepped in to make our virtual services engaging and meaningful.

Our deepest appreciation to music ministers Rick and Michelle Hynson, and the many talented musicians at MUMC who are continuing to uplift our hearts with music for our virtual services.

Thank You, Teachers! Please join us in thanking the wonderful people who have impacted our children by teaching Sunday school this year: Skylar Chrobak, Ellen Shuler, Kari Slater, and Glen Van Fossen. We would also like to thank the many classroom buddies who helped throughout the year: Susan Caldwell, Sara Cooper, Nancy Gruner, Emily Levine, Kathy Morgan, Katie Nowak, Jean Paulus, Nan Rilling, and Mary Sisney. We would also like to remember Peg Gardner. She was our dedicated and fearless leader for many years.

We hope to increase our pool of teachers for next year. There is no need for any special talent or skill other than loving to interact with smiling children while you help them to grow their faith. All of the lessons are pre-planned, so very little preparation is required. What does it take? One Sunday a month, September through May, and a willingness to leave church with a heart full of joy. If you are interested in spending one Sunday a month having a great time building the faith of our church's children, or have questions, email Gayle Meyer at childrensmin@mequonumc.org.

Light a Candle of Hope– We invite you to continue to light a candle in the window of your home each night as a visible symbol of the light of life, Jesus Christ, our source of hope. We pray for our community—we have all been touched by this pandemic, and many are hurting and frightened. And we pray for the end of the pandemic. Please leave your candle lit for one hour. We will continue to light our Candle of Hope every evening from 7 – 8 pm until we are able to be together again. This will be our worshipful time “together” as the body of Christ.

Ozaukee Family Sharing Is Here to Help – You may know families or individuals who are facing financial challenges in these difficult times. Family Sharing is here to ensure that those struggling to afford groceries don't go hungry. By providing food at no cost to Ozaukee County residents in need, Family Sharing stays steadfast in its mission *to alleviate hunger in Ozaukee County with dignity and compassion*. If you know of anyone who needs help getting food, please direct them to the Family Sharing website: www.familysharingozaukee.org, or share their phone number, (262) 377-0634, ext. 102. All client information is kept strictly confidential.

Hunger Task Force needs our help! With the COVID-19 shut down, the Hunger Task Force is unable to accept food donations or have volunteers come to the warehouses. The staff is working to provide stock boxes to seniors, children, and families. They are buying food for the boxes and supporting Wisconsin dairy farmers by purchasing local milk. MUMC Mission Outreach is donating \$500 to help them buy food. Here is a link to Hunger Task Force:
<https://www.hungertaskforce.org>

Jim Layton, our community gardens coordinator, reports that more than five inches of rain fell on our garden plots on May 17 and 18. He adds, "That's enough!"

Elna Hickson says, "Life will be so uncomplicated at some point again." I think we all agree Elna!

"My Favorite Bible Verse"

Katie Jackson's favorite Bible verse is John 3:16 (NIV). She says, "This has been our favorite Bible verse since the birth of our only son in 1970. This passage led me to have recurring debates with God since I knew that our son did not only belong to us, but to God first.

Throughout our son's life on this earth, he was loyal, self motivated, inquisitive, compassionate, and creative while being the typical boy. He loved everything about life. At the end of his life he presented those same skills which helped me overcome some of my sadness. I recognized that God, the greatest Father of all, was preparing me for what was to come. In His abundant love, our Father had already prepared a place for 'our son' in His kingdom where he would spend the everlasting life."

16 For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

Thank you, Katie, for sharing this verse which has given you so much comfort and reassurance.

Nancy Gruner's favorite Bible verse is Colossians 3:12-14, and 17 (NIV). She said this verse sums up what being a Christian is, and it is a challenge for us on how to live our lives.

12 Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. 13 Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of

you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. ¹⁴ And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

¹⁷ And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.

Thank you, Nancy, for sharing this verse which challenges us all to live better lives.

Nan Rilling's favorite Bible verse is Numbers 6:24-26 (ESV). She said she has turned to this Priestly Blessing often in her life. This Priestly Blessing helped the Israelites gain hope, strength, and courage when their lives were full of uncertainty and hardship, and has stood the test of time. The words continue to offer hope, calm our fears, and reassure us when we face turmoil in our lives; after the darkness, there is light. Amen.

²² The Lord spoke to Moses, saying, ²³ "Speak to Aaron and his sons, saying, Thus you shall bless the people of Israel: you shall say to them, ²⁴ the Lord bless you and keep you; ²⁵ the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you; ²⁶ the Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace."

Thank you, Nan; this is such an appropriate Bible verse during a pandemic.

Community Gardens Update

On May 15, the following letter was sent to our neighbors who live near the community gardens:

Here at Mequon United Methodist Church, our mission of "Making God's Love Real" cannot be better demonstrated than by providing space for families to raise fresh produce in our community gardens. As a neighbor, you may have noticed that our garden area is growing. We are so excited about it that our church family is sponsoring an organic garden plot so we can share our harvest with you, our neighbors.

On Sunday afternoons, there will be a produce table set up at the main entrance to the gardens with the harvest of the week. Please help yourself. Anything left over on Monday will be taken to a local food pantry.

If you would like to know more about what is going on at the MUMC Community Gardens, please send your e-mail address to Jim Layton at the email below, and we will add you to our frequent garden news communications. FYI: We plan on improving the overall appearance of the community garden area with a small garden shed and a dumpster enclosure, coming soon.

Sincerely yours,

Sue Lee, Pastor
Mequon United Methodist Church

From the Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation

Giving: New Age, New Church
June 2020

'but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength, they will fly up on wings like eagles; they will run and not be tired, they will walk and not be weary.' (Isaiah 40:31)

After Hurricane Sandy, my brother's church on Long Island became the center for recovery efforts in the Mid-Atlantic. 75% sustained damage to their homes; all had neighbors affected by the storm.

Today, we are in the midst of an unprecedented urgent response and recovery effort in which every church must be a center of recovery. Unlike a hurricane, earthquake, wildfire, flood, or famine, the COVID-19 pandemic affects every person and every community worldwide. As we return to church after quarantine, we should not fall into the trap of thinking, "How do we get back to the way we were?" Rather, we ought to ask, "How can we be a better church coming out of the pandemic, than we were going in?" Economic and emotional recovery is going to be a matter of years. What will your church do to help?

Each United Methodist should be discerning his or her own and their congregation's strengths; praying and preparing to join with a small group of congregants who will identify needs in the community/nation/world. Then each group must create, fund, and carry out a plan to address those needs. There will be children who have fallen behind in school. They will need tutoring and encouragement. There will be those who will have no job to which to return. They will need help applying for benefits, negotiating with banks, or getting enough food for their families. There will be people who continue to fall ill with the coronavirus. Fear and anxiety will continue to be widespread.

Prepare yourself for the times to come

Jim Wells, Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation

Apportionment News

June—We've a Story to Tell

The Story We Tell

Historically, the denominations that joined together (The Evangelical Church, The Church of the United Brethren in Christ, The Methodist Episcopal Church, The Methodist Episcopal Church South, and the Methodist Protestant Church, among others) shared a threefold common focus on ministry: evangelism, missions, and social justice. All three of these critical ministries moved the church out into the world. They demanded a multilayered faith sharing — in word, deed, vocational choice, and financial commitment. This demanded the whole person be involved,

all the time. Each Christian believer was an evangelist, a missionary, and an activist and advocate. As the world became more complex, the institution of the church

took over many of these expressions of our faith as “programs.” We formed evangelism committees, supported mission projects, and encouraged our leaders to represent us publicly. Our Christian witness became representational — believers could sit comfortably in the pew and let others do our Christian service for us. The Christian faith became passive, rather than active, and discipleship faded into simple “believe-ism”.

Funding our apportionments, and knowing where they go and what they do are active pursuits that help to connect each giver to the impact their giving makes. It is vitally important that we know our story, share our story, and spread our story. God is doing amazing things through The United Methodist Church. We DO have a story to tell to the nations, but many of our own members have no idea what this story is. Pastors and laity leadership should frequently visit www.umc.org to read the latest news and stories about our church. Interpreter Magazine should be on everyone’s reading list. UMNS — the United Methodist News Service — is another excellent source. Check out our General Board of Global Ministries and General Board of Discipleship websites. Spend time browsing the websites for the General Boards of Higher Education and Church & Society.

There is a wealth of resources available to help us tell our story. The United Methodist Church touches and saves lives worldwide each and every day. There is so much to be proud of, and it is impossible to believe that when people see the great good they do through their contributions, they will not make sure the church pays its apportionments in full.

Take My Life and Let It be Consecrated

A young man from the Philippines, Jerome, tells that he was rescued from the streets and from gangs by a United Methodist pastor and a very persistent lay woman who refused to give up on him. Living on the streets, Jerome existed hand-to-mouth with three siblings. Often trading sex for food, Jerome was barely surviving when he stumbled into a United Methodist church. “At the very moment I came in the doors, they cared for me like I was family,” he said.

Our apportionments support an extensive ministry to children living in extreme poverty in the Philippines. Jerome is one of thousands of young people cared for physically and spiritually. But Jerome’s story doesn’t end with receiving aid and kindness. Jerome now calls himself a “street preacher,” going to places others fear or simply don’t know about. He travels the streets, looking for other young people who are lost and are in need. Every week, he kneels at the railing of the church chancel area to be “recommissioned” to go do ministry on the streets. Jerome’s story is a reminder that our giving doesn’t end when we place our offering in the plate.

Matthew 28:16-20

Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. When they saw him, they worshipped him; but some doubted. And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

Acts 1:6-8

So when they had come together, they asked him, "Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?" He replied, "It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

Questions for Reflection and Discussion

1. In what ways have we grown complacent about the Christian faith in the United States?
2. What are some of the most important aspects of a relationship with God and Jesus Christ that we simply take for granted?
3. What are some ways that we make a difference in our communities, in our conference, and around the world? How is the world transformed by our ministry?



John Wesley (June 28, 1703 — March 2, 1791)

Leader of the revival movement called Methodism; traveled more than 250,000 miles as a fearless itinerant preacher of more than 42,000 sermons; introduced hymn singing; one of 19 children

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Sunday Schedule

9:30am Worship Service

10:30am Fellowship

