

Mequon United  
Methodist Church  
11011 North Oriole Lane  
Mequon, WI 53092  
262-242-4770  
[www.mequonumc.org](http://www.mequonumc.org)



January 2019

# Celebrating WITH you

Welcome 2019!  
Celebrating with our MUMC family!  
Celebrating together at  
awe-inspiring MUMC events!

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### *Mission Outreach Dinner and Auction*

January 26  
Fun, food, spirited bidding!  
Raise funds for our many mission projects  
locally and worldwide.

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### *Annual Drive-in Movie Night*

January 27 – 4:00 PM  
"Bedknobs and Broomsticks"  
Fun for the young and young-at-heart!  
Movie concession food!

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### *Family Promise Host Week*

January 27 - February 3  
Help homeless and low-income families  
build independent lives.  
Give of your time, some grocery items, or some meals.

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#### *Also:*

Serve at the mealsite, help on Sunday mornings,  
attend a new study at Lunch Bunch, donate hygiene  
items to the MLK Youth Day of Service, learn CPR,  
read and discuss with Reflections book group.



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#### *Winter warmth*

O God, you give the winter's cold,  
as well as summer's joyous rays.  
You warmly in your love enfold,  
and keep us through life's wintry days.

—Samuel Longfellow

## Pastor Sue's Message



So what is next? That is one of the questions many of us have in January. You may still have a Christmas tree in your living room, and somehow you have a hard time taking it down. Having a hard time taking down the Christmas tree is one thing and dwelling in the past while forgoing the present and the future is another.

A man once said to the wise man, "If you give me \$100, I will teach you how to remember things." The wise man responded, "I will give you \$10,000 if you teach me how to forget things." Do you agree with the wise man? I do. When the wise man said "to forget things," I don't think he meant amnesia, but purposely letting go. In fact, that was exactly what the Apostle Paul meant when he said, "Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it; but one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 3:13-14).

Paul had a dogged determination not to let past scars and bitterness control him or have power over him or manipulate him, but instead, he fixed his eyes on Jesus, pressing on toward the goals God wanted him to achieve to become the person God intended him to be. And *that* is what you and I have been called to do as followers of Jesus Christ. So let's continue to press on together to grow Christ-like Christians as God intends us to be in 2019! Happy New Year everyone!

Pastor Sue Lee



### January Sermon Series: God's Will for Us in Jesus Christ

In the month of January, we will have a new sermon series based on 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18, "Rejoice always,<sup>17</sup> pray continually,<sup>18</sup> give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus."

#### January 6: Rejoice Always

#### January 13: Our identity in Jesus Christ.

#### January 20: Pray Continually.

This day, we will have a Breakthrough Prayer Kick-off. Come join us to find out what Breakthrough Prayer is all about at MUMC in 2019!

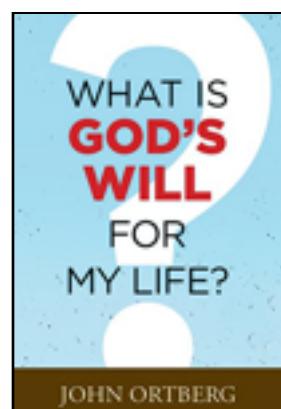
#### January 27: Give Thanks in All Circumstances.

### January Lunch Bunch Study Book

Starting on Tuesday January 8 at 11:00 AM, we will study *What Is God's Will for My Life?* by John Ortberg for four (4) weeks. In this book, the author helps us understand: 1) If God's will for my life is so important, why doesn't he just tell me what it is? 2) How can I learn to recognize God's voice? 3) If I miss God's guidance on an important decision, am I stuck with "plan B" for the rest of my life?" (Quote from *What Is God's Will for My Life?*)

God does have a plan for your life! It's time to discover what it is. You can get this book (\$3.00) from Pastor Sue.

Everyone is welcome! Join the Lunch Bunch folks any time. Our study and discussion is at 11:00 AM. Lunch with mouth-watering homemade soup is at noon.



# Mission Outreach Dinner & Auction

In His Name... SERVE



Saturday, January 26<sup>th</sup>

5:30 - 9:00 PM

Ozaukee Country Club

10823 N. River Road, Mequon, WI

*Fun and food!*

*Auction items for spirited bidding!*

*An entertaining game show!*

Saturday, January 26<sup>th</sup> is the date of the Mequon United Methodist Church (MUMC) Mission Outreach Dinner and Auction. This fun-filled event will be held at the Ozaukee Country Club and serves as a fundraiser and friend-raiser! Enjoy the company of friends and our church family along with delicious food and drinks. Participate in our silent auction, live auction, and entertaining game show. Your formal invitation will arrive in your mailbox.

If you have silent auction items to donate,  
please contact Rick Gatttoni.  
(262-414-573-0505; [rgatttoni72@gmail.com](mailto:rgatttoni72@gmail.com)).

The Mission Outreach Committee would also appreciate extra helping hands before, during and after this event.  
Please contact chairpersons  
Karen Huffman or Irene Sullivan to volunteer.

**Proceeds from this event benefit  
MUMC Mission Outreach  
projects including:**

- Youth Mission Trip
- UMCOR and Global Ministries
- Hunger Task Force
- St. Vincent de Paul Mealsite
- Family Sharing of Ozaukee County's Food Pantry
- Family Promise of Ozaukee County
- ..... and many more

**See you there!**

## Come to MUMC's Drive-in Movie Theater!!!!

### "Bedknobs and Broomsticks"

**Sunday Night, January 27**

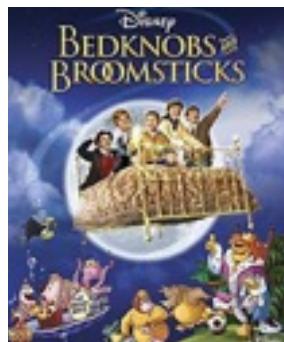
**4:00 - 6:00 PM**

**MUMC Fellowship Hall**

Join us for a special evening with a Disney family-favorite film in our MUMC Indoor Drive-In Movie. This year's film will be *Bedknobs and Broomsticks*. Disney legends Angela Lansbury (*Beauty and the Beast*) and David Tomlinson (*Mary Poppins*) star in this beloved film about an apprentice witch who reluctantly takes in three orphan children. Though her first spells create more laughs than magic, Miss Price and the children soon find themselves swept away aboard a fantastic flying bed — their ticket to fun-filled excitement and adventure.

At our drive-in movie, we'll sit in "car seats" and enjoy traditional concession foods, served up with flair. We'll have all of our favorites – popcorn, burgers, cheeseburgers, hot dogs, chicken nuggets and chips. There will also be fruit cups, carrots & dip, desserts and root beer floats!

**Don't miss out on fun for the whole family!**



## TWO mealsites in January

### **January 24 and 31**

Cold weather means it is difficult for the guests to get to the mealsite. But the need for the meals is critical and the guests are grateful.

Sign up to help serve the meal — leave MUMC at 4:15 PM.

Donated food items are needed including desserts (brownies, bars, sheet cakes, cookies, etc.) and hold-in-your-hand fruit (bananas, apples, clementines, etc.) Leave food items in the parlor by 4:00 PM on the mealsite day.

Sign up sheets will be on the bulletin board inside the front door.



## ► Family Promise Host Week is coming ► January 27 – February 3

Watch for the Sign Up Sheets in the Narthex – or just send an email to Pam Layton at [P.layton90@gmail.com](mailto:P.layton90@gmail.com) if you want to be the first one on the Sign Up.

### Volunteers are needed for:

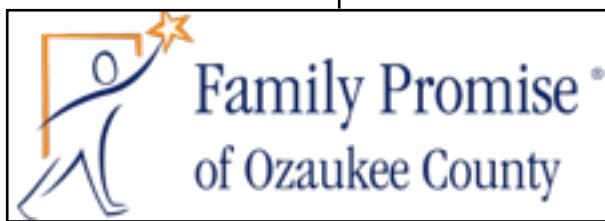
- overnight hosts
- food preparers
- food servers and evening hosts (5:00 - 8:00 PM)
- suppliers of groceries
- folks to set up on Sunday, January 27, and take down on Sunday, February 3.

### Have you "officially" signed up to be a Family

**Promise volunteer?** If you were one of the folks who signed up to volunteer for Family Promise when MUMC first committed to this ministry, this host week is your opportunity to help. Some of our regular volunteers are not able to commit to helping during this upcoming host week so **we need some new folks.**

If you have never signed up to be a Family Promise volunteer at MUMC, the paperwork is very easy. We do need to have one form filled out so that the Family Promise center's administrators can do a background check. You do not need to have paperwork submitted for jobs that do not involve direct interaction with our guests (eg. suppliers of groceries or set-up / take-down help).

If you have any questions contact Pam Layton, Connie Pukaite or Karen Stern.



## Family Promise of Ozaukee is moving!!

Family Promise staff work from a center in Port Washington. This center is the hub of Family Promise. It is where the staff take calls for help; where staff interview and assess families; where families in the program may do laundry, take showers, spend the day; where help to find housing and jobs is provided.

Since its beginning in 2015, Family Promise has had its center in an older residential home in Port Washington. During these few years, Family Promise has become a lead agency in Ozaukee County for housing and job search assistance. Many families receive assistance who never enter the shelter part of the program which is the part that MUMC plays.

As the program grew, the center's space became too small for staff and families. A serious effort was made to find a better location for the center. In December, Kathleen Fisher, CEO of Family Promise of Ozaukee County, put out an announcement, "It's official — We signed the lease and are ready to MAKE A MOVE!" A much-needed new space for the center will be at 136 Grand Avenue, Port Washington, which is a building that has been used as offices with upstairs apartments. By the time you read this article, the building will have been cleaned and painted, and generally made ready for staff and guests. The **big moving day** is January 4.

As with any expansion, there will be growing pains and need for additional equipment and supplies. Watch future issues of "the Spire" for information on what may be needed.

## Martin Luther King Youth Day of Service — donate items for UMCOR Personal Dignity Kits

On Monday, January 21, Mequon United Methodist Church will host its second annual Martin Luther King Youth Day of Service. Last year, over 35 high school students from University School of Milwaukee and members of our youth group assembled 1,000 Personal Dignity Kits for the Midwest Distribution Center. The Distribution Center works with UMCOR to deliver Personal Dignity Kits to those in need in the aftermath of domestic and international disasters such as Hurricanes, Tornadoes, and Flooding. This year, middle schoolers will join us as well.

Please consider donating items (boxes in Narthex) or financial support. A special collection will be taken on Sunday, January 20. Items include:

- Banker size boxes
- Gallon ziplock bags
- Face towels (not kitchen towels)
- Washcloths (not kitchen dishcloths)
- Bar soap, 3 oz
- Shampoo, 3-4 oz
- Combs — 7", not rattail

- Toothbrush, adult size
- Toothpaste, 2.5 oz or more
- Nail clipper (no file)
- Razors, disposable
- Deodorant, 2-3 oz
- All items must be NEW

**If you don't want to purchase items,** you may give a monetary donation toward purchases. Send a check to MUMC or place one in the Sunday collection. Make check payable to "MUMC" and note "MLK Youth Day" in the memo line.



## Friends and Family CPR — January 12 at MUMC

Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) is a life saving procedure that provides artificial circulation to the body. Effective CPR can save the life of someone in need, perhaps someone you know!

CPR involves performing manual chest compressions. It is a skill and a series of steps that can be learned, practiced and mastered. The Friends and Family CPR course includes video training and hands-on practice with mannikins.

When the heart stops beating there is no blood moving throughout the body. Every minute counts. Cells without circulating blood are not receiving oxygen resulting in tissue damage and tissue death. The brain is especially sensitive to a lack of oxygen, permanent damage can result.

Performing CPR helps to keep blood circulating. It is unlikely that CPR will restart the heart but it does restore partial blood flow to the tissues in the body. A persons chance of surviving drops by seven to 10 percent for every minute a normal heartbeat isn't restored.

The Automated External Defibrillator (AED) can analyze the heart and deliver a shock through the chest wall. These portable devices are critical to survival. Laypersons can safely use this device. Did you know there is an AED in the Narthex? Would you like to learn how to use it?

The Friends and Family CPR course will be provided on January 12 at 9 AM at MUMC. You will have the opportunity to learn or relearn CPR skills. We will also explore using the AED.

Interested, questions...Please contact Susan Solverson. Preregister for this class by Thursday January 10. Seating is limited. Call or Text 414-559-4699 (cell). Email [susansolverson@wi.rr.com](mailto:susansolverson@wi.rr.com)



### Friends and Family CPR Class. Sign up now!

- January 12 at 9:00 AM.
- Pre Registration is required by January 10.
- The class is just over an hour.
- Learn how to perform CPR and how to use the AED (Automatic External Defibrillator)
- There is no charge.
- Space is limited so PLEASE pre-register.
- Register with Susan Solverson 414-559-4699 (call or text) or email [susansolverson@wi.rr.com](mailto:susansolverson@wi.rr.com)

Sponsored by the  
Parish Nurse Team.

## January Reflections women's book group ... art, culture, cuisine, and love!!!

The Reflections Book Group will begin 2019 with a meeting on Thursday, January 10<sup>th</sup>. We begin at 7:00 PM in the MUMC Parlor. Our discussion book will be *Cooking for Picasso*, by Camille Aubray. Here's a brief summary about the book from amazon.com:

**The French Riviera, spring 1936:** It's off-season in the lovely seaside village of Juan-les-Pins, where seventeen-year-old Ondine cooks with her mother in the kitchen of their family-owned Café Paradis. A mysterious new patron who's slipped out of Paris and is traveling under a different name has made an unusual request—to have his lunch served to him at the nearby villa he's secretly rented, where he wishes to remain incognito...

**New York, present day:** Céline, a Hollywood makeup artist who's come home for the holidays, learns from her mother, Julie, that Grandmother Ondine once cooked for Picasso. Prompted by her mother's enigmatic stories and the hint of more family secrets yet to be uncovered, Céline carries out Julie's wishes and embarks on a voyage to the very town where Ondine and Picasso first met. In the lush, heady atmosphere of the Côte d'Azur, and with the help of several eccentric fellow guests attending a rigorous cooking class at her hotel, Céline discovers truths about art, culture, cuisine, and love that enable her to embrace her own future.

Featuring an array of both fictional characters and the French Riviera's most famous historical residents, set against the breathtaking scenery of the South of France, *Cooking for Picasso* is a touching, delectable, and wise story, illuminating the powers of trust, money, art, and creativity in the choices that men and women make as they seek a path toward love, success, and joie de vivre.

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

Contact Barb Henneck at [bhenneck@wi.rr.com](mailto:bhenneck@wi.rr.com) for more information about the group or the January meeting.

### Looking ahead . . .

our February discussion book will be *Little Fires Everywhere*, by Celeste Ng.

### Music Notes



Thanks to all who helped make our Advent/Christmas season so meaningful through our music in worship!

#### Music in worship:

- January 6 – College Ensemble
- January 13 – Sanctuary Choir
- January 20 – Quattro Horns
- January 27 – Sanctuary Choir
- February 3 – Handbell Choir



# It's a New Year! MUMC has new "job" openings!

## Sign up now for these openings!



- **Flower chart** — \*\*Immediate need\*\* — the 2019 chart is up in the hallway outside the church office. As this *Spire* goes to print, there are three openings for January.
- **Usher** — \*\*Immediate need\*\* — there are MANY openings in January and the upcoming months. Two people are needed each Sunday to hand out bulletins, pass the collection plate, etc.
- **Liturgists** — during Sunday morning worship, the liturgist does the call to worship, opening prayer, scripture reading, and reviews a list of the church's upcoming activities.
- **Greeters and Coffee Hosts** — a schedule has been posted through June 2019. Check for your dates.
- **Classroom Buddies** — be present in our Sunday morning classrooms. You may assist but will not be responsible for leading the class.

### How do you sign up?

These volunteer spots (except Flower Chart) have an online sign up process. If you have volunteered in the past, you may have access to online signup. If not, just call the church office at 262-242-4770.

## Are you prepared to be a steward this year?

{from Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation}

**Everything is from God.** “Yours, O LORD, are the greatness, the power, the glory, the victory, and the majesty; for all that is in the heavens and on the earth is yours; yours is the kingdom, O LORD, and you are exalted as head above all.” (1 Chronicles 29:11)

Pete Fromm, a Wisconsinite, thought he was prepared to live like a mountain man! He and his college friends read all about mountain men and wilderness survival. They stayed up late at night to talk and dream about living like a mountain man. Then, Pete's chance came. The Fish and Wildlife service needed someone to spend the winter in the Bitterroot Mountains of Idaho watching over salmon breeding grounds. That's when Pete found out that he was not entirely prepared; that there was needed knowledge and skills he did not have.\*

Are you ready to be a faithful steward of God's gifts? The first lesson is to realize and embrace that God is the owner and we are the stewards, the caretakers of God's realm. As scripture says, “the heavens and the earth are yours ... O Lord.” Each of us should ask, how am I, together with others in my church, taking care of all that God has placed in our care? Where are our opportunities to take care of the planet, of people who are in need, of those who are seeking for meaning in their lives, for our neighbors, for our friends?

What is your plan for stewardship this year? Who needs your generosity? Who needs to experience God's grace through your generosity and careful shepherding of God's gifts? Now is the time to prepare. Make a plan to acquire the knowledge and skills of Christian stewardship.

(\*Read more about Pete Fromm's experiences in his memoir, *Indian Creek Chronicles*.)



## Look! What's on MUMC's website?

Almost everyone reading this article goes to websites on a regular basis, maybe even daily. We search for information, things to buy, news, entertainment, games, social networking, and more. How often do you go to MUMC's website? Do you know what you will find there? Here's some examples:

- Upcoming events
- Upcoming special worship services
- The pastor's current message
- Link to donate online
- Audio recording of Sunday worship, with the powerpoint
- Church activities calendar
- Committees/teams — activities and updates
- Directory of our congregation families
- Spire newsletters, going back about 5 years
- Link to Sonlight Child Development Center
- and more .....

Check out the church website. It's at [www.mequonumc.org](http://www.mequonumc.org)

## Like us on Facebook:

### Mequon United Methodist Church

- Upcoming church events
- Photos and videos from worship services and events
- Inspirational thoughts
- and more .....



## Have you seen changes in and around MUMC?

*There's been some repairs and some new things added.*

**These black and white "Spire" photos don't do justice — check out these in person.**



What's this? Just a blank wall? Now it is just a nice blank wall but, before repairs, it was water damaged, shedding paint and looking terrible. Thanks to Trustees for reshaping the outside ground so water now flows away from the church wall, eliminating water damage to the north wall of the Fellowship Hall.



The Community Garden is growing. No, it's not growing plants in mid-winter but new beds have been installed in preparation for a big growing season come summer. Watch for announcement of how you (or your friends and neighbors) can rent a garden space. Thanks to the Green Team for bringing Community Gardens to our church and our neighborhood.



Beautiful stone pavers made by young MUMC artists! The pavers can be seen near the back outside door of MUMC's education wing (Sonlight play area).

## Update from our missionary, Gordon Graner, in the Dominican Republic.

Follow Gordon at [www.granerfamily.org](http://www.granerfamily.org)



### Pedernales: A bustling border town

Monday, October 29, 2018, Gordon Graner writes:

On market days this dusty town on the Haitian border becomes a beehive of activity. But instead of bees there are hundreds of motorcycles at work moving people and goods to market.



We were working out of a church building on the main route to the market. We had to dodge the motorcycles as we were constantly crossing the street to set up and use 12 solar ovens.

We had relied on a pastoral couple to gather what was promised to be a large group of people who wanted solar ovens. However, while those who gathered were enthusiastic, many were adolescent girls and just a handful of women. With hopes somewhat deflated I asked the pastor what we could do to attract more people.

His answer was to go immediately to the radio station and broadcast a message about solar ovens and invite the masses. So we did. We drove to the radio station, hopped out of the jeep, and marched directly into the radio booth. Three men were seated at three microphones doing a live broadcast and were unfazed by our sudden presence in the room. In less than two minutes I was invited to sit at a microphone to

tell our story, live. We had no appointment, paid no money, and apparently only needed the pastor there to authenticate our mission.

It was so cool. I could only laugh at what seemed both marvelous and ridiculous at the same time. When we got back to our solar oven site, I told the crew that I was just on the radio. What I wanted to say but did not say was that we should prepare ourselves for perhaps a hundred women for tomorrow's demonstration. Inside my soul I was excited about the possibilities.

Next day the same group of women showed up, perhaps one or two more. This was far short of the 100 women I had envisioned. But we went ahead with the demonstration taking full advantage of the clear skies and hot sun. Oven temperatures went as high as 335 degrees F.

Then about 11 AM an apparent VIP appeared with his entourage.

He is famous in these parts as a journalist who has put Pedernales on the map. He was very friendly to us and recorded the entire solar oven cooking scene for about 20 minutes. Why did he show up all of a sudden? Could it be he was listening to the radio the day before? Stay tuned.



## Opinions still vary on the Way Forward

By Jim Patterson

Dec. 10, 2018 | NASHVILLE, Tenn. (United Methodist News Service)



***The special called session of the General Conference — set for Feb. 23-26 in St. Louis — will attempt to find common ground on the issue of same-sex marriage and ordination of homosexuals. [Image by United Methodist News Service.]***

Many United Methodists are hoping a clear direction on how the church relates to homosexuality will emerge at the special called session of the General Conference in February.

Important stakeholders are claiming their positions, including some who make preserving unity in the church a priority.

“The hope is that … we’ve created enough urgency in the system to get us unstuck,” said the Rev. Kennetha Bigham-Tsai, chief connectional ministries officer at the Connectional Table. “Now getting unstuck might also be really hard and really painful. … But being stuck is a choice, you know?”

Delegates to the Feb. 23-26 gathering in St. Louis will consider plans to deal with the status of LGBTQ United Methodists, who want equal treatment when it comes to ordination and marriage.

The United Methodist Book of Discipline states that the practice of homosexuality is incompatible with Christian teaching and that “self-avowed practicing homosexuals” cannot be clergy. The Discipline also bans ceremonies that celebrate same-sex unions in United Methodist churches.

Despite these rules, same-gender weddings have been performed in United Methodist churches and by United Methodist clergy. Clergy have publicly declared they are gay, sometimes losing their credentials.

“It seems like it’s no longer possible for us to live together in one body,” said the Rev. Tom Lambrecht, vice president and general manager of Good News, an unofficial group of United Methodists who support upholding the ban on same-sex marriage and gay clergy.

“Between those who are adamantly promoting the affirmation of same-sex marriage and LGBTQ ordination and those of us who believe that is contrary to Scripture, it

### What The Discipline says

***The United Methodist Book of Discipline states that:***

- The practice of homosexuality is incompatible with Christian teaching. Therefore, self-avowed practicing homosexuals are not to be certified as candidates, ordained as ministers or appointed to serve in The United Methodist Church.
- Ceremonies that celebrate homosexual unions shall not be conducted by our ministers and shall not be conducted in our churches.

### Main plans submitted to GC2019

The most prominent plans submitted for consideration at the special conference are:

- **The One Church Plan** would shift to churches and conferences decisions regarding ministry with or by LGBTQ persons rather than maintaining a single standard that operates throughout the worldwide church. It would also remove some of the language in the Book of Discipline that limit LGBTQ people’s involvement as United Methodists.
- **The Connectional Conference Plan** would create three connectional conferences based on perspective on LGBTQ issues. The three connectional conferences would function throughout the worldwide church and the five existing U.S. jurisdictions would be abolished.
- **The Simple Plan** would remove all language from the Book of Discipline that excludes LGBTQ people from full participation in the church.
- **The Traditional Plan** would affirm the current language about homosexuality in the Book of Discipline and seek to strengthen enforcement for violations.
- **The Modified Traditional Plan** would add to the Traditional Plan a committee with authority to hold bishops accountable to the sexuality standards in the Book of Discipline. It would offer a \$200,000 grant to annual conferences that want to leave the denomination because of disagreement over LGBTQ issues.

doesn’t seem like there’s a middle ground or a compromise point that will satisfy people.”

The most prominent plans submitted for consideration at the special conference are the Connectional Conference Plan, the One Church Plan, the Simple Plan, the Traditional Plan and the Modified Traditional Plan.

The Council of Bishops said in recommending the **One Church Plan** that it provides conferences, churches and pastors the flexibility to pursue their mission while retaining the connectional nature of the church. The plan leaves decisions of whether to allow same-gender weddings up to local churches and gay ordination up to annual conferences.

"The question is, 'Can we continue to be a one church denomination which allows us to have ministry in Liberia and the Philippines and in Europe and in the United States?'" said Bishop Kenneth H. Carter Jr., president of the Council of Bishops.

"We are not a small denomination with one ethnicity, with one political perspective, with one theological perspective. We're a global church on four continents. And what is compelling to me about the One Church Plan is that it does create a home for the people who are now in The United Methodist Church."

Most African United Methodists favor **the Traditional Plan**, said the Rev. Forbes Matonga, pastor-in-charge at Nyadire Mission Centre in Zimbabwe and a delegate to the February special session.

The plan maintains the current disciplinary language on homosexuality and strengthens enforcement. Matonga is also a leader in the Wesleyan Covenant Association, an unofficial group that advocates the traditionalist perspective.

"This plan is consistent with what is culturally acceptable in most African countries," Matonga said. "So any plan that proposes to authorize the practice of homosexuality either explicitly or discretely is unacceptable to us." According to Amnesty International, homosexuality is illegal in 36 African countries and legal in 19.

Endorsers of the Traditional Plan include the Estonia Conference and the North Central Jurisdiction Hispanic Caucus. The South Georgia Conference passed a resolution affirming the present Disciplinary language on homosexuality. At a gathering of the Africa Initiative, an unofficial advocacy group, speakers offered support for the Traditional Plan. The Texas Conference delegates voted to endorse the Traditional Plan. Of those present and voting at a delegate meeting, 15 voted for the plan, eight opposed and two abstained.

And while the African bishops have not endorsed a plan, saying that is up to General Conference delegates, they did unanimously reaffirm their view that marriage is between one man and one woman and vow to "maintain the unity" of the church.

The North Central Jurisdiction Hispanic Caucus said in its endorsement of the Traditional Plan that it would maintain biblical standards to be welcoming while keeping the current bans on homosexuality, as well as other forms of extramarital sex.

**The Modified Traditional Plan** beefs up enforcement against bishops who violate the Book of Discipline and includes \$200,000 grants for annual conferences who wish to leave the denomination over the issue of homosexuality. It is supported by the Renewal and Reform Coalition, which includes Good News, the Confessing Movement within The United Methodist Church, UMAction, Taskforce of United Methodists on Abortion and Sexuality and the Wesleyan Covenant Association.

"Some of us felt that (the Traditional Plan) needed to be more complete than it was, especially the whole accountability issue," said the Rev. Maxie Dunnam, minister-at-large at Christ United Methodist Church in Memphis. "We felt that ... needed to be clarified more."

Some modified plan advocates are also supportive of the original Traditional Plan. And others want the Traditional Plan modified in different ways than the changes added by the Modified Traditional Plan.

It is unfortunate that going back to the drawing board to hammer out a new plan garnering broader support isn't likely,

according to the Rev. Chris Ritter, pastor of a multi-site ministry in Illinois that includes Geneseo First United Methodist Church and Cambridge United Methodist Church.

Ritter, also a leader in the Wesleyan Covenant Association, thinks some common ground might be possible between the One Church and Traditional plans.

"The fact that legislation deadlines have passed and camps have formed around the existing plans has unfortunately limited the continued creativity of our church," Ritter said on his blog, People Need Jesus.

Others perceive the divide as too great for effective compromise.

"It's time to stop fighting," said the Rev. Rob Renfroe, president and publisher of Good News. "We have good people on both sides. We see things very differently. We're never going to convince each other that we're right and they're wrong. ... 'Let's say, 'You go your way. Let us go our way. We'll see who God blesses, maybe both of us.' But we don't need to do this to each other any longer."

Among those supporting the **One Church Plan** are the Council of Bishops, the Alaska Conference, the Western Jurisdiction, the Baltimore-Washington Conference, the Northern Illinois Conference, United Methodists, the National Association of Filipino American United Methodists and Methodists Associated Representing the Cause of Hispanic/Latino Americans.

Uniting Methodists, an unofficial group formed in 2017 to promote unity in the church, also has endorsed the plan and is working for its passage. And the Rev. Mark Holland, a Great Plains clergy delegate to General Conference, formed Mainstream UMC to work for passage of the One Church Plan.

The Rev. Tom Berlin, lead pastor of Floris United Methodist Church in Herndon, Virginia, was a member of the Commission on a Way Forward and submitted the One Church Plan legislation to the General Conference. He likes the One Church Plan because it would let Africans and other traditionalist United Methodists do what they feel is right within their culture and context.

"I support the One Church Plan because I believe we live in a broad and diverse denomination that needs room to exercise a variety of options," Berlin said. "Being United Methodist has never meant that I have to agree with every single person in the congregation on every single thing."

United Methodists have the right to reflect theologically through use of Scripture, tradition, reason and experience, the Alaska Conference said in a statement.

"Because of this, we are likely to come up with different answers to the same question because of differences in our contexts and experience. The One Church Plan acknowledges those differences and allows for freedom in our conclusions."

**The Simple Plan**, which calls for removal of the language in the Book of Discipline that excludes LGBTQ people from full participation in the church, is proposed by the unofficial United Methodist Queer Clergy Caucus.

"The United Methodist Church can choose to remove the restrictive language from our Book of Discipline without forcing the hand of those who are still wrestling with the idea of the full inclusion of LGBTQIA+ persons in the church," the caucus said in a statement. "(It) does not require any United Methodist clergy to perform a same-gender wedding. Individual congregations would be allowed to continue in their own discernment."

**The Connectional Conference Plan** lacks endorsements and the United Methodist Judicial Council did not rule on its constitutionality when it considered the three plans in the Way Forward report. The council said it has no authority to scrutinize that plan because it would require several constitutional amendments.

Some United Methodist organizations are stressing the importance of keeping the denomination whole. The Northern Illinois Conference quotes Methodist founder John Wesley's sermon "On Schism" to make this point.

"It is the nature of love to unite us together; and the greater the love, the stricter the union," Wesley said. "Nothing can divide those whom love has united. It is only when our love grows cold, that we can think of separating from our brethren."

The unofficial group Reconciling Ministries Network, which seeks equality of LGBTQ Christians, is not endorsing any of the plans.

"It is with this humility that Reconciling Ministries Network will work continuously within Church structures to fully invite, welcome, and celebrate LGBTQ+ people in the life and leadership of our beloved Church," the RMN said in

a statement. "We remain committed to the work of adopting legislation that ends oppression as well as the ongoing journey toward doing no harm, doing all the good we can, and loving God."

Although the issue of homosexuality in the church is important, other challenges are arguably more pressing, said Urs Schweizer, assistant to Bishop Patrick Streiff in central and southern Europe. Among those issues are sharing faith in post-modern and highly secularized societies, migration, breakdown of families, consumer society and poverty.

"The most important aim (at the special session) is to find a way that does not create winners and losers, does not allow some to stay in the United Methodist Church while encouraging others to leave," Schweizer said. "Many United Methodists in central and southern Europe would rather focus on staying together as one church, as diverse as we may be on some ethical issues."

*Patterson is a United Methodist News Service reporter in Nashville, Tennessee. Contact him at 615-742-5470 or newsdesk@umcom.org. To read more United Methodist news, subscribe to the free Daily or Weekly Digests.*

## Thanks! Thanks! Thanks!

### Christmas Giving Tree: Many Thanks!!!

The Outreach Committee thanks each of you for an extremely successful Christmas Giving Tree mission for Pathfinders of Milwaukee! Seventy-five at-risk or in-crisis youth and young adults were provided Christmas gifts from our very generous MUMC congregation.

Pathfinders' mission includes four core initiatives: Housing & Shelter, Education, Family Engagement, and Youth Empowerment. Your kindness and care for these young individuals is greatly appreciated!

### Thanks Wendy!!

**Road clean-up background:** Mequon United Methodist Church is an official participant in the maintenance of God's creation, through our sponsorship of a two roadways in our community. Our roads are primarily Zedler Lane between Port Washington Road and Lake Shore Drive, but also a short spur of Port Washington Lane. According to our agreement with the city, we clean up the area beside these roadways twice a year. Typically we schedule these dates near Earth Day in April and sometime in the Fall.

**Thanks, Wendy!** The fall scheduling in 2018 got away from us in the hubbub of other activities. So Wendy Porterfield took time to do the cleanup on her own. Wendy and her family have participated in this task before so Wendy was a pro! Wendy is modest and wants no thanks but give her some anyway! When you see her, please thank her for her road cleanup mission — past, present, and future!

Watch for announcement of MUMC's next road cleanup dates coming in the Spring. If Wendy is available, we know that she will be leading the way!

### Children's Christmas Program Mission Project — Heifer International

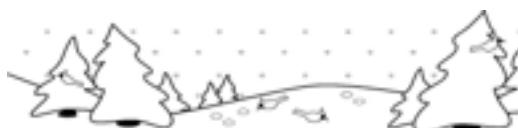
Every year during our Children's Christmas program we ask for the congregation's support for struggling families through the sponsorship of an animal through Heifer International. This year, in recognition of our state and the agricultural product we are most known for, we collected funding to hopefully donate something called "The Cheeses of the World Basket," featuring dairy animals.

The Cheeses of the World Gift Basket is made up of four milk-producing animals: a goat, a sheep, a water buffalo and a heifer. Families will also receive training on the animals' care. Each Cheeses of the World gift basket:

- Provides an abundance of milk to make cheese, butter and yogurt
- Increases wealth by providing dairy products that can be sold



Thank you to all who donated to our project this year. We are still working toward our goal of \$990, the cost of the combined basket. You can still donate — just mark your check with "Heifer International" on the memo line. Thank you for your donations to help families around the world with a gift that keeps on giving.



## Sonlight Scoop

### January 2019

**Sonlight Child Development Center**, established by and operated as a ministry of Mequon United Methodist Church, is open to children from infant through 9 years old, including K2, K3, and K4 programs..

December brought SANTA CLAUS to Sonlight Center for **Christmas Cheer**, celebrated on December 20th! It was a fabulous day! Special spiced cider, coffee and treats were brought in for the parents and staff. All of the children and teachers, and a number of parents, gathered in the gym for Santa's arrival at 10:30. The kids waited patiently... and then Santa arrived! He sat on his throne while most of them came up to visit with him. Some even had a discussion with him about their Christmas gift desires! Santa gave gifts to all of the children.

**Have a Happy New Year!**  
Marie and Sue



### New address

Eleanor Moe, a long time active member of MUMC, moved a while ago and would like to share her address. She is not quite comfortable with many visitors but would like to hear from MUMC friends with cards and notes. Her address is: Luther Manor, 4611 92nd St., Milwaukee, WI 53225.



## the Spire

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Mon. - Thurs.: 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM  
Closed Fridays

### Sunday schedule:

9:30 AM: Worship Service  
and Sunday School

First Sunday is Family Sunday  
(no Sunday School)

10:30 AM: Fellowship for all

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### ***Resolve to "be there"***

Let our New Year's resolution be this: We will be there for one another as fellow members of humanity, in the finest sense of the word.

— Goran Persson



### ***United in diversity***

Although early Christians had much in common, they also dwelt in diversity. Each of their leaders emphasized certain parts of the gospel and favored certain worship styles. They all believed in the resurrected Jesus, and they all celebrated the Lord's Supper and baptism. But Christians in Corinth had a unique approach, as did those in Ephesus, Philippi, Galatia, Rome and so on.

It might be boring if we all believed and practiced completely alike. Variations don't need to be an impediment to Christian unity. As pastor Charles Best said, "If we're going to be in heaven together, we might as well get along now."

### ***MUMC is a Reconciling Congregation***



Mequon United Methodist Church affirms that all people are created in God's image and are of sacred worth. We affirm Jesus' example of love without reservation and we sacredly promise to deal compassionately and justly with one another. Therefore, this inclusive and nurturing community of faith openly invites and welcomes persons of every age, gender identity, sexual orientation, race, physical or mental ability, ethnic origin, socioeconomic status, marital status -- any and all diversities -- as full participants in the life and work of this reconciling community.