

SPIRE Newsletter



January 2023



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CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS

Jan. 1: Happy New Year!
Jan. 1: Repairers of the Breach clothing/personal hygiene collection begins
Jan. 3: **No** Lunch Bunch this week
Jan. 6: 6-8 pm, Kids' Night Out, Fellowship Hall
Jan. 8: 10:45 am, Blood Pressure Screening, Parlor
Jan. 12: Reflections Book Group, 7 pm, Scherzinger home
Feb. 11: Mission Outreach Auction and Dinner, 5 pm, River Barn Park

JANUARY SERMON SCHEDULE

"God Is Closer Than You Think"
Jan. 1: Psalm 23:1-6
Jan. 8: Matthew 3:13-17
Jan. 15: 2 Kings 5:1-27
Jan. 22: 1 Samuel 13:5-14
Jan. 29: Job 2:1-10 and 42:1-6

Two Growth Group Studies Offered in January

Lunch Bunch Study

Forgiveness: Finding Peace by Letting Go by Adam Hamilton

This is a small book about a big problem and includes discussions on anger, patience, and peace. There is nothing more crippling than holding on to anger. Anger, more than any other emotion, has the power to consume our lives, distort our sense of purpose, and destroy our relationship with God. Per Adam Hamilton, revelation comes when we realize that forgiveness is a gift we give ourselves rather than to someone else. He also states that only when we learn to forgive others and ourselves can we truly receive

WORSHIP MUSIC

Jan. 1: Allison Tinsley-Fuller
(recorded)

forgiveness from God. Forgiving others is the key to freeing ourselves.

This is a four-week study offered on Tuesdays, January 10, 17, 24, and 31, at 11 am in the Parlor. Sign-up sheets are posted in the Narthex. You may also call the office to register.

Participants will need to purchase the book, *Forgiveness: Finding Peace Through Letting Go*, which is available on Amazon.

Growth Group Study

Staying in Love by Andy Stanley

According to Andy Stanley, the only thing required to fall in love is having a pulse. We all want to stay together forever and that requires a plan. People who have been married for many years will tell you it is possible and well worth the work to make that happen.

This is a three-week study and will be offered at two times each week. It will be offered on Thursdays, January 12, 19, and 26, at 7 pm via Zoom. It will also be offered on Sundays, January 15, 22, and 29 at 10:45 am in the Youth Room, following church service.

Sign-up sheets are posted in the Narthex. If you are signing up for the Zoom sessions, please remember to provide your email address. You may also call the church to register.

Participants will need to purchase the book, *Staying in Love*, which is available on Amazon.

From Our Pastor

A man once said to a 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 he meant purposely and willfully letting go of things that imprison you to dwell on the past.

That is what the Apostle Paul was talking about 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. Instead, he fixed his eyes on Jesus. He was determined to forget past mistakes and hurt, and be open to new opportunities and challenges to become the person God intended him to be. And that is what you and I have always been called to do as followers of Jesus Christ. So let's continue to press on together toward the goal God has helped us to set: Connecting People to Jesus Christ and to One Another in the spirit of unity in the Lord in 2023! Happy New Year everyone!

Pastor Sue Lee

Mission Outreach Ministries

New Clothing & Personal Hygiene Collection for Repairers of the Breach

Repairers of the Breach is a ministry that provides the only daytime shelter for homeless adults in downtown Milwaukee. It is a place where homeless men and women can find the resources they need to get back on track. This organization was started by homeless people who knew the importance of community, faith, and encouragement to make the transition to a sustainable lifestyle. Repairers provides a warming room, food, showers and laundry, a learning center, a medical clinic, art therapy, spiritual renewal, and much more.

During **January and early February 2023**, we are collecting the following items that Repairers desperately needs:

- Men's and women's socks, all sizes
- Men's underwear, T-shirts, and boxers, all sizes
- Women's underwear, all sizes

The above items must be new and preferably in the original packaging. If you have gently used and cleaned winter clothing, those items are also welcome.

Personal Hygiene items:

- Razors, Shaving Cream
- Foot and hand warmers
- Chapstick
- Deodorant
- Shampoo (travel size)
- Toothpaste and Mouthwash
- Soap (travel size)
- Laundry soap



Please place the clothing in the Hunger Task Force boxes in the Narthex and by Fellowship Hall. Please place the hygiene items in the bins in the Narthex. Volunteers from the Mission Outreach team will take the items to Repairers of the Breach. Coordinator: Marilyn Zwissler. Website: <https://www.repairers.org/>

Mission Outreach Auction and Dinner on February 11, 2023

The Mequon United Methodist Church Mission Outreach Committee invites you to our 2023 in-person leadership dinner and fundraiser! This special event will be held at **5 pm on Saturday, February 11, 2023**, at Sommer Pavilion at River Barn Park in Mequon.

We will begin with a cocktail hour, including wine, beer, soda, and water, and light appetizers, followed by a scrumptious dinner catered by A to Z Dinners, owned by Andrew Koser and Lauren D'Amico Yorio. Attendees may choose Tuscan Chicken or Cauliflower Steak (vegetarian) as their main entree. Both entrees will be served with mixed greens Italian salad, French green beans, and pureed garlic potatoes.

During the evening, Mission Outreach members Katie Jackson and Susan Yorio will provide a brief summary of our 2022 activities and present MUMC's first annual leadership award to a Mission Outreach partner, Pathfinders of Milwaukee.

Funds will be raised from ticket sales, donations, a limited number of silent auction items such as wine baskets, Bucks tickets, Brewer tickets, and personal and convenient MUMC parking spaces, and Raise the Paddle. Thank you to our generous donors: Reflections Book Group, Pat Stapelkamp, and Glen VanFossen. As always, 100% of the net proceeds support our outreach activities and selected partners for the year.

Finally, and most importantly, we will celebrate being together! In keeping with a cozy winter wonderland venue and theme, the attire will be winter casual: fleece, flannel, and sweaters encouraged.

Please save the date—February 11, 2023—beginning at 5 pm. Invitations will be mailed in January. See you there!

Mission Outreach Committee
Mequon United Methodist Church

Extreme Gratitude for Your 2022 Christmas Giving Tree Donations

Thank You MUMC Members! YOU, the Mequon United Methodist Church congregation, donated \$1,830 for the Christmas Giving Tree mission for Pathfinders of Milwaukee! As has occurred in the past, with your donations we were able to purchase Pathfinders' many items from their wish list. Items donated were given to individual Pathfinder clients and are also being enjoyed by the youth and young adults at Pathfinders' facility.

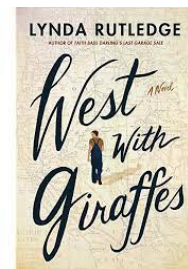
The list of gifts that MUMC donated included multiples of the following items: weighted blankets, clothing, warm hats, backpacks, phone chargers and cords, headphones, art supplies, toys for preschool children, personal hair/nail/bath care products, journals, dishes, glassware, silverware, Target gift cards, and VISA gift cards.

Pathfinders' mission includes four core initiatives for Milwaukee youth and young adults: Housing and Shelter, Education, Family Engagement, and Youth Empowerment. Your kindness and care for these young individuals is greatly appreciated! THANK YOU, once again, for making a positive difference in the lives of others!

Reflections Book Group

JANUARY REFLECTIONS

The Reflections Book Group will start the New Year with a meeting on Thursday, January 12 at the home of Ann Scherzinger. We begin at 7 pm. Our discussion book will be *West with Giraffes* by Lynda Rutledge.



Amazon offers this summary:

Woodrow Wilson Nickel, age 105, feels his life ebbing away. But when he learns giraffes are going extinct, he finds himself recalling the unforgettable experience he cannot take to his grave. It's 1938. The Great Depression lingers. Hitler is threatening Europe, and world-weary Americans long for wonder. They find it in two giraffes who miraculously survive a hurricane while crossing the Atlantic. What follows is a twelve-day road trip in a

custom truck to deliver Southern California's first giraffes to the San Diego Zoo. Behind the wheel is the young Dust Bowl rowdy Woodrow. Inspired by true events, the tale weaves real-life figures with fictional ones, including the world's first female zoo director, a crusty old man with a past, a young female photographer with a secret, and assorted reprobates as spotty as the giraffes. Part adventure, part historical saga, and part coming-of-age love story, *West with Giraffes* explores what it means to be changed by the grace of animals, the kindness of strangers, the passing of time, and a story told before it's too late.

Reflections is a women's book group that meets for discussion and fellowship. Beginning in 2023, our meeting schedule will become more flexible and determined on a month-to-month basis. New women are always welcome. Contact Barb Henneck at bhenneck@gmail.com for more information about the group or our January meeting.

Looking ahead . . . our next book will be *The Henna Artist* by Alka Joshi.

Announcements

Children's Ministry News

Thank you to all who helped make the Live Nativity a huge success. We had two moving nights that reached a total of 85 people. We look forward to doing it again next year. Special thanks to Bruce Stern and Matt Anderson for constructing the stage and setting up the lighting.

Upcoming Children's Ministry Events:

Friday, January 6, 6-8 pm, Kids' Night Out. Join us for the fun. There will be games, dinner, songs, and crafts in the Fellowship Hall.

Sunday, February 26, 9:30 am, Children and Youth Sabbath.

The Upper Room Daily Devotional Guide for January/February is now available in the Narthex. If you are unable to pick up your copy, call or email the church office and we'll mail one to you. Please specify if you would like large or small format.

Save the Date! Mission Outreach Auction/Dinner on Saturday, February 11, 2023, at 5 pm at Sommer Pavilion at River Barn Park in Mequon. See related article above.

MUMC Seeks Organist/Pianist

Mequon United Methodist Church is seeking an organist/pianist. The position is part-time, requiring approximately 10 hours per week. A successful candidate will be expected to:

- provide organ and/or piano music for one church service per week, special church services, and church-sponsored events
- provide organ and/or piano music accompaniment for choir rehearsals and choir performances at regular church services, special church services, and church-sponsored events
- have experience and competence in organ and piano music, hymns, and accompanying ensembles and soloists in a Christian worship setting
- have skills and experience with both traditional and contemporary worship

preferred

This is a salaried position with an annual two-week vacation.

Full job description for this position may be found at www.mequonumc.org. Submit resume to office@mequonumc.org or Attn: Office Manager, Mequon United Methodist Church, 11011 North Oriole Lane, Mequon WI 53092.

From the Wisconsin UM Foundation I Like Floormats January 2023

This story is from *I Like Giving* by Brad Formsma. His book and corresponding website, www.ilikegiving.com, are full of stories and videos about the power of generosity.

"It is hard to characterize my brother-in-law, James. He's not a guy who draws a lot of attention to himself, and he's not a guy with great wealth. In fact, James is, well, quite average, but when it comes to generosity, James is one of the most above-average people I've ever met. For instance, if James needed to borrow your car, he would likely return it with a full tank of fuel or maybe a new set of tires. Or maybe it would have been detailed. And unless you happened to notice, he wouldn't draw any attention to it. Which is exactly what happened with the floor mats in our Honda Accord. They were worn out. I mean, they're floor mats. They are one of those things you think about replacing when you vacuum the car and say to yourself, "Wow, these look terrible. I need to replace them." You finish vacuuming, put the mats back, and never give them another thought until the next time you clean your car. However, this particular time I did notice them. They were new. I immediately asked my wife if she'd bought the new car mats. She said she thought I had. Immediately we knew it was James. I could not think of when he might have done it. I went back in the house, called him, and asked if he was responsible. As I suspected, he was. 'When did you put new mats in the car?' I asked since we hadn't seen him in weeks. 'About three months ago,' he sheepishly replied. I couldn't believe I'd been so unobservant, but I wasn't the least bit surprised by James' thoughtful act of generosity. It's a lifestyle with him. I truly can't think of anything he enjoys doing more than giving, and I can't think of anyone who has more fun finding unique ways to give. I mean, who would ever think of replacing someone's floor mats?"

Rev. Jason Mahnke, Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation

From the Wisconsin Conference

Weekly Devotion for December 26, 2022, by Sue D'Alessio

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. John 1:1

The night was filled with the rush of angel song; startled from their sleep, shepherds hastened to see the miracle of the new birth; exhausted from travel and birthing, Mary and Joseph nestled with their newborn in awe and wonder; a baby, new to the world, began a life of transformation and blessing. God's Word entered the world—God, Emanuel, God with us—incarnate deity, advent of peace, compassionate grace, challenger of the establishment, advocate of the

marginalized, bringer of light to illumine our way. This was a night of new beginnings in a world filled with conflict, of healing from long-held hurt, of hope in the midst of grief and despair, of holiness in a time of oppression and fear. God's Word, alive, embodied—loved, cherished, nurtured, cradled by Mary and Joseph as they began the tremendous journey of parenting this long-awaited baby.

For nearly two thousand years, Christians have been remembering and celebrating the birth of Jesus, each time from the perspectives and experiences of the times in which they have lived, both personally and culturally. While specific events have been different across the centuries, the story and meaning of this birth relate to our situations timelessly—the message is always new and always ancient, directly responding to our greatest needs and aspirations, calling us to live fully, to serve generously, to care compassionately, love wholeheartedly.

This year, in this Christmas season, in this time of turning a new calendar year, in the growing light of each day, may you experience the wonder of the miracle of life, healing of pain and sorrow, and sparkles of delight. May you follow the star which leads us to the Christ-child and feel again the wonder and awe of the new beginnings and new life which God is creating anew, again and again and again.

Holy God, touch us with your hope and love, fill our hearts with your wisdom and compassion, birth in us a new and renewed sense of life. Help us to listen for the rush of angel wings as they speak your messages of great joy and hope for our world. We pray in the name of the newborn Christ. Amen.

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.

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Sunday Schedule

9:30am Worship Service

10:30am Fellowship

www.mequonumc.org

