



# The Spire

The Newsletter of the Mequon United Methodist Church  
January 2025

*Connecting people to Jesus Christ and to one another.*

## Sunday Worship 9:30 am

### Sermon Themes

**Jan 5:** A Year of Grace, *Samuel 30:1-25*

**Jan 12:** Joy in a Mad World,  
*Philippians 4:1-9*  
(Glen Van Fossen preaching)

**Jan 19:** To Whom Do I Owe?  
*Matthew 18:21-25*

**Jan 26:** I Thought, *2 Kings 5:1-14*

### Musical Gifts

**Jan 5:** Allison Tinsley-Fuller and Skylar Chrobak

**Jan 12:** Praise Ensemble

**Jan 19:** Allison Tinsley-Fuller

**Jan 26:** JP Horcasitas

### Calendar Highlights

**Jan 1** - Women's Prayer Meeting -- 7:30 am

**Jan 2** - Men's Prayer Breakfast -- 7:00 am

**Jan 5** - New Member Class -- 10:45 am

**Jan 5** - Chancel Choir Rehearsal -- 11:00 am

**Jan 7** - Lunch Bunch -- 11:00 am

**Jan 8** - Reflections Book Club -- 6:00 pm

**Jan 12** - Chancel Choir Rehearsal -- 11:00 am

**Jan 14** - Lunch Bunch -- 11:00 am

**Jan 19** - Chancel Choir Rehearsal -- 11:00 am

**Jan 21** - Lunch Bunch -- 11:00 am

**Jan 28** - Lunch Bunch -- 11:00 am

**Jan 28** - Fiber Arts Club -- 6:00 pm

**Feb 5** - Women's Prayer Breakfast -- 7:30 am

**Feb 6** - Men's Prayer Breakfast -- 7:00 am

**Feb 8** - Outreach Leadership Dinner and Fundraiser -- 5:00 pm

### **Remember!**

Can't make it in person? MUMC Services are livestreamed on the [MUMC YouTube channel](#) at 9:30 am every Sunday - we'd love to see you there!

You can also watch any of our services at any time on our YouTube channel.

# MUMC Community Connections

To be the bridge to community connection and collaboration ...

## Giving Tree - Thank You!

YOU, the Mequon United Methodist Church congregation, **donated a record \$2,250** for the Christmas Giving Tree mission for Pathfinders of Milwaukee! As has occurred in the past, with your donations, the Mission Outreach Committee was able to purchase Pathfinders' many needed and requested items! 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 MUMC purchased and donated included multiples of the following items: cozy blankets, bath towels, clothing, ear buds, arts and crafts kits, reusable water bottles, rechargeable battery packs, phone charging cords, personal bath care products, board games, and many gift cards for food, household needs, and personal needs . MUMC donations also provided wrapping paper, gift bags, tissue paper, and bows, allowing the Pathfinders staff to give wrapped gifts to their clients.

Also, gratitude to the Fiber Arts group who created and donated a large number of handmade scarves and hats. Pathfinders' clients will be kept warm because of your donations and kindness.

THANK YOU, once again, for making a positive difference in the lives of others! MUMC is an extremely generous congregation!

[Click here for the thank you note from Pathfinders](#)



## Family Sharing Food Pantry

Volunteer for Food Sorting

**January 21**

1:30 - 3:30 pm

Sign-up sheets are in the Narthex!

## Outreach Dinner and Auction

**Let's come together to celebrate our 40th Annual Outreach Auction dinner! The Outreach team would love to see you there!**

**What?** The Mequon United Methodist Church  
Mission Outreach Committee Leadership Dinner and  
Fundraiser

**When?** February 8, 2025 at 5:00 pm

**Where?** Remington's River Inn, 130 South Main  
Street, Thiensville, WI 53092

**Why?** To be the bridge to community connection  
and collaboration through MUMC's outreach  
activities

**What will we do?** Dinner, awards, celebration, auctions, fellowship and fun!

**Wear?** Casual attire. If you feel like it, wear red in honor of our hearts theme and  
"Love takes the stranger in" (Matthew 25:35)



**February 8, 2025, 5 pm – 8 pm**  
**Mission Outreach Leadership Dinner**

Your invitation will arrive soon –  
return your RSVP by mail or in the Narthex after worship!!

## Connecting with Jesus Christ and One Another

Come ~ Connect ~ Grow Community

### **Review of Church's Life and Ministry**

Below is the entire review of the MUMC's ministries/Charge Conference Update. Take a look!

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### **Let it Snow!**

*Friday, January 24, 6:00 pm*

Join us for our January Kids Connection "Let it Snow" themed gathering on Friday, January 24 from 6-8pm. We will have a light dinner, crafts, games, activities and lots of fun. All are invited! Bring your friends! Please RSVP to [childrensmin@mequonumc.org](mailto:childrensmin@mequonumc.org).

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### **After Five Supper Club**

*We're growing - want to join us?*

### **Blood Pressure Checks**

*Sunday, January 12*

Blood pressure checks are before and after Worship. Keeping your blood pressure in check is a key component to good health.

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### **Fiber Arts Ministry!**

*Tuesday, January 28 6:00 pm*

We are back for January! We will continue to meet on the 4th Tuesday for January. If there is a different day that works for people, let [Jenna](#) know. Come and join us! All levels of crafters are welcome!

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**2025 Signups are Open for Liturgists and Ushers**

MUMC's After Five Supper Club enjoyed a wonderful Christmas gathering with light snacks, dessert and connection. We share cooking and hosting tasks making for a fun evening of fellowship for everyone! Want to join us?

Contact [Pam Layton](#) or [Shelley Burns!](#)

Signup Genius has been updated with all the available slots for Ushers and Liturgists for the entirety of 2025. Please check your calendar, and if you're available, sign up! We need you!

## Connecting with Jesus Christ and One Another

Come ~ Connect ~ Grow Community

### Coming Soon to a Lunch Bunch Near You!

#### Video Study - *Unshakeable Hope*

*Building Our Lives on the Promises of God*

*Beginning January 7 for 12 weeks*

This is a video study based on the book *Unshakeable Hope* by Max Lucado. A book is optional, but can be purchased on Ebay or Amazon. This is a 12-week study beginning on January 7th at 11:00am followed by lunch and fellowship afterward. If you cannot do 12 weeks, join us at any time as each week begins with a different video followed by a group discussion.

What is shaking your world? Possibly your future, your faith, your family, or finances? It's a shaky world out there. Could you use some unshakeable hope?

If so, you are not alone. Hope is hard to come by these days. Many people think this world is as good as it gets, and let's face it, it's not that good. Because life is filled with problems, God's word is filled with promises. In *Unshakeable Hope*, Max Lucado unpacks a dozen of the Bible's most significant promises, equipping us to overcome difficult circumstances, experience lasting security, and make wise decisions.

These promises work. They can secure you in the midst of horrific storms. They can buoy you up in day to day difficulties. When the winds and waves of life rage, God's promises are like lights on the shoreline, guiding us home. And since his Word is unbreakable, our hope is unshakeable

Everyone is welcome to join us. We meet for an hour, have thought provoking conversations with Pastor Sue or members of the Education Committee leading the study, and then enjoy lunch and fellowship downstairs.

If you have any questions, or would like more information, please call Jean Paulus at 262-502-0512.

# From Pastor Sue

## Connecting with Jesus Christ and One Another

It seems like that many people are more anxious and concerned about our nation and world as we are heading into the 2025. When the concerns of the world seem more than we can carry, most likely, it's time to remember the message of Christmas we just celebrated.

Christmas reminded us that Jesus Christ came into our lives to be with us showing the life that we are called to live in and of the Kingdom of God as Kingdom citizen even though we live in the kingdom of the world.

When we wonder how the world will ever correct its course, we need to remember that God sent Jesus into the world not to condemn the world, but to save the world and Jesus Christ is the one who transforms people's hearts and lives. Our part is to shine the Light of Life that dwells within us to people we meet in our daily lives with the grace that we have received freely from the Lord. So let's practice God's free gift of grace lavishly in 2025 so that our lives will shine the light that brings life to our divided and troubled nation and the world in the new year in Jesus' name.

A joyful new year in Christ!  
Sue

## 2024 - Review of Church's Life and Ministry

### 1. Mission/Ministry Highlights

*List at least three Ministry/Mission highlights for your congregation in 2024. These can be a combination of what has happened within your congregation or how your congregation has interacted with the community.*

During 2024, our goal has been to focus our ministries on our Mission of "Connecting people to Jesus Christ and to one another" in support of achieving our Vision "To be THE bridge to community connection, collaboration and common ground through Jesus Christ." Here are a few highlights:

- 1) To help build personal connections to our church community and deepen our faith, we continued our small Growth Group efforts, offering both in-person and Zoom meeting options to offer flexibility and accessibility. There were seven studies during the year, from thought leaders such as Max Lucado, Adam Hamilton and Andy Stanley. Attendance ranged from 8– 19. The year-end study is "The Case for Christmas," by Lee Strobel.
- 2) We have a talented children's ministry director and we continued to reach families and children, members as well as non-members, through our children's ministry. Children's ministry provides a safe and nurturing environment as children grow in their faith. Our goal is to help build a strong connection to Jesus for each child that will follow them and flourish throughout their lives. We do this through weekly Children's Time during service, Sunday School, Sunday School Family Picnic on the 1st Sunday of each month, Back to Sunday School Rally, Quarterly Adventures in God's Great Outdoors, Vacation Bible School in the summer (which is available to children in the community). In 2024 we also continued our live Nativity.
- 3) We continued a number of Outreach activities addressing food insecurity, shelter and health. MUMC Community Gardens (offering garden plots for

church and non-church people) supports healthy food options for people and builds community. In 2024 we hosted a garden potluck meal, where gardeners shared dishes from their plots. The gardens make available part of the produce to other church members and community, for free. We expanded the number of plots in 2024 and are planning on landscape improvements in 2025. We also continued as a host church providing meals to Family Promise of Ozaukee County. Family Promise is a program helping homeless families re-establish residence and gain employment. In 2024 Family Promise has been at capacity of 20 guests or so, and we hosted 5 meals during the year. Also, our Parish Nurses continue to promote health for our congregation, such as continuing our blood pressure clinics and providing transportation for members to their health providers.

4) As mentioned in last year's review, Sonlight Child Development, a partnership between MUMC and the YMCA of Greater Milwaukee, wound down its commitment at MUMC at the end of 2023 and early 2024, due to declining enrollment and industry challenges. An important objective of our Transforming Church strategic plan is to secure a new significant new relationship in the first year of the implementation phase. We did so with a new partnership with North Shore Pre-school & Child Care to utilize part of our education wing beginning in September/October. Mary and Paul Coulter own and run other NSPCC locations in the area and were looking to expand. We are excited to partner with them. Their presence not only leverages our facilities, they are genuinely interested in building community. That is a perfect fit with our mission and vision. Many thanks to the Trustees in vetting this opportunity and negotiating the agreement. We also continue to have discussions with other potential partners on utilizing our space.

## **2. Work that Aligns with Conference Priorities**

*Describe the work in our local charge/congregation that aligns with the conference priorities: to engage in multicultural ministry; to create new faith opportunities for people in new places; to engage in ministries that strengthen our vitality and impact; to engage in peace and justice ministries in our communities; and to engage in feeding ministries that allow us to be in relationship with people in need.*

1) Family Promise serves our local homeless population and helps them re-integrate into our community by finding jobs and living accommodations (impact, peace and justice and feeding hunger)

2) As noted above in #4, we look forward to exploring new ways to partner with others in support of each of our missions and strategic priorities, to strengthen our vitality and impact in the community.

3) Our Outreach Ministry is a natural vehicle for current members and for attracting potential new members to live out their faith and pursue their passions for addressing these priorities through multiple missions. Outreach raises funds through an annual auction and Special Sundays. All MUMC members can participate directly. Several of these are the following:

i. UMCOR's Midwest Mission Distribution center. MUMC is one of a few collection centers in Wisconsin that collects and distributes kits, resources and supplies for disaster relief in the United States.

ii. Support (financial and in-person volunteer) for multiple local organizations in our community. An example is Family Sharing of Ozaukee County. We deepened our relationship as a local partner with Family Sharing of Ozaukee County, by offering monthly volunteer opportunities for members for food sorting in addition to food drives.

They were the second recipient of our annual Partnership award at the 2024 Outreach Auction dinner.

iii. Financial and material support for Pathfinders of Milwaukee to bring hope and healing to Milwaukee youth in crisis. One of our decisions that arose from our Transforming Church initiative has been to focus our relationships more on local partners. At our 2023 Outreach Auction dinner, Pathfinders was the first recipient of our annual Partnership award. We have continued to support them financially.

### **3. Future for Your Congregation**

*If your congregation is to be vital, healthy and vibrant in five years, what will that look like (please describe that vision)? As key leaders of the United Methodist Church Faith Community, how do you articulate the vision and the hoped for future of you charge/congregation? Please share three to five steps for the next year that will lead to a more vital, healthy and vibrant congregation.*

Our Vision is “To be THE bridge to community connection, collaboration and common ground through Jesus Christ.”

We will continue our successful efforts in outreach, children’s ministry and Christian education through growth groups, as described in #1, #2 and #3 above.

Also, as we have discussed in prior years, in the fall of 2021 MUMC began a program titled “Transforming Church: A Visioning Roadmap,” a three-year journey of discovery, visioning and coaching, to design a custom roadmap that will guide us into the next phase of a vibrant ministry. This is a program for churches of various denominations designed by Leighton Ford Ministries (LFM), funded by the Lilly Foundation and facilitated by John Holm Consulting, who is our consultant and coach throughout this process. The overarching goal is to create an alignment of our mission, resources and passions with what LFM calls our “True North:” our clear and distinctive values that define who we are and what matters most. By doing so, we strive to increase the focus and clarity of our vision; create a higher level of engagement within our membership and with the community; and invigorate the ministries that reflect our unique mission. These are characteristics of a vital, healthy church. Throughout this process, we welcome and ask for everyone’s input and involvement.

The first two years were dedicated to Discovery, Visioning and Strategy. In 2024, MUMC is completing its third year, which is focused on Implementation. As a brief summary of the process, Discovery was all about understanding who we are as a congregation and what matters most to us, which is critical to preserving our essence and our identity (i.e. our “Core”). We leaned heavily on our members’ input to narrow the themes to four “Core Values.” Doing so will help us to preserve what is most important to us going forward:

Sharing God’s grace through:

- A warm, welcoming and inclusive environment
- Authentic relationships
- A nurturing approach to spiritual growth
- Impactful service and stewardship

Based on our Core Values, we also developed a new Mission Statement, which explains why we exist, our beneficiary and our objective. After much discussion and prayer, we decided the following Mission Statement best captures all of those great ideas:

“Connecting people to Jesus Christ and to one another.”

Our Vision is our intended result. We incorporated our Core Values, our Mission, and our strengths, weaknesses and opportunities (a “SWOT” analysis) into a visioning exercise that asked these questions:

1. What would we like to be most different about our church in ten years?
2. What, specifically and collectively, are we most passionate about as a church?
3. What is the greatest need in our community?
4. What would you like to be most different about our local community in ten years?
5. What can we do potentially better than anyone else in the community?

Our task was to state a bold Vision for MUMC that requires God's help:

"To be THE bridge to community connection, collaboration  
and common ground through Jesus Christ."

At our final in-person retreat with John as a leadership group in February, 2023, we pivoted toward using this work to define our strategic priorities going forward.

Strategy is the process of focusing our resources to fulfill our Mission, in alignment with our Core Values, and in light of our ever-changing context (the community and society around us). The goal is to help us develop strategies that: 1) Align with a Core Value; 2) Connect with a Target Audience; 3) Address a Strength, Weakness, Opportunity or Threat; and 4) Propel the Mission Forward. Our four Strategic Priorities:

1. Build a culture and identity around our core values and mission (given to all cohort churches).
2. Create a community gathering place to meet the emotional, physical and spiritual needs of people in our region (leveraging our Facilities, a strength).
3. Create an engaging environment that fosters a passionate desire in our congregation to serve God (building on Outreach as a strength).
4. Engage members and the community with a strong digital connection (addressing a weakness).

John counseled that prioritizing over a period of years will be important. Each strategic priority has its own plan that lists initiatives, milestones, action steps, team members, deadlines, etc. Our priorities at this time are #1, #2 and #3. The priorities are being updated as we move forward, so the plans become working documents and guidelines for us. Also, Pastor Sue has formed a Transforming Church Implementation Review team that is tasked with keeping the strategic priority teams focused on their plans. The review team will also provide communications to update the congregation on how we are doing.

During this third year ending in 2024, Pastor Sue also had the benefit of regular consulting sessions with John Holm for advice on how best to keep the Transforming Church initiative alive and vibrant in our congregation. Toward the end of 2024, we conducted a follow up survey of our members to help assess our progress. **It is encouraging that we scored higher in every area of the survey compared to the first survey.**

We have been blessed with strong leadership and commitment from all who have been involved in the TCI process, from those who participated in focus groups, shared their thoughts in surveys, reached out to the community, and various leadership groups. In future years, we have the materials and process from this program and all the efforts to update and refresh this work.

### Our Vision:

**To be THE bridge to community connection, collaboration,  
and common ground through Jesus Christ**

**How can YOU help MUMC achieve our vision?**

Like, follow and repost MUMC Social Media -



**Forward this newsletter to:**

- a friend or neighbor looking for community and connection
- a family whose children would love our awesome Children's Ministries
- a community member looking for service opportunities
- anyone who loves Jesus!

You do not have to be a MUMC member to subscribe to the Spire. Click the link below to subscribe!

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

**The editors reserve the right to edit content. Hence, the "editor" title.**

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Office Hours: Mon-Thurs 9am-1pm / Closed Fridays

Sunday Schedule:

9:30am Worship Service

10:30am Fellowship

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