

SPIRE Newsletter



December 2022

Our Mission: Connecting People to Jesus Christ and to One Another



[View MUMC Online Calendar](#)

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CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS

Nov. 28 - Dec. 2: Family Promise Host Week, 5 pm meal delivery

Dec. 1: 7 am, men's prayer breakfast, Parlor

Dec. 2: 6 pm, Kids' Night Out

Dec. 7: 7:30 am, women's prayer meeting, Parlor

Dec. 8: 6 pm, Reflections Christmas party

Dec. 9 and 16: 8 pm, Live Nativity in MUMC's front yard

Dec. 10: 10 am, practice for Christmas Program

Dec. 10: 11 am, Youth Group cookie making

Dec. 11: 8:45 am, practice for Christmas Program; 9:30 am, Christmas Program

Dec. 18: 9:30 am during worship, celebrating faithful ministries of Elna Hickson and Marilyn Zwissler

Feb. 11, 2023: Mission Outreach dinner and auction, 4:30 pm

Mission Outreach's Christmas Giving Tree 2022 Supports Pathfinders

Sharing the Gift of Christmas
with Those in Need

This year, we at MUMC, will once again support the mission work of Pathfinders of Milwaukee. Please visit their website at pathfindersmke.org to understand the vast array of services they provide for Milwaukee area youth and young adults.

As we have done the past two years, the Mission Outreach Committee is asking members to provide monetary donations and Mission Outreach Committee members will do the shopping. A donation amount of your choice is welcome, and we are grateful for any amount you give to this worthy

WORSHIP SERMON SPOTLIGHT

Dec. 4: Matthew 3:1-12, Shalom!

Dec. 11: Children's Christmas Program

Dec. 18: Carol Sing Sunday and Celebrating Faithful Ministry of Elna Hickson and Marilyn Zwissler

Dec. 24: Isaiah 9:2-7 & Luke 2:1-20, Emmanuel

Dec. 25: John 1:1-14, "The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us."

WORSHIP MUSIC

Dec. 4: Praise Ensemble

Dec. 11: Children's Christmas

organization and the young clients they serve. In the past, the average donation amount has been \$40 - \$50 per MUMC members who donated. For Christmas 2021, MUMC members' donations provided gifts to Pathfinders of Milwaukee at a total value of \$2335!! Amazing!

Instructions:

Donations can be given on-line or by check. For online donations, go to www.mequonumc.org; click on Donate; click on Make an Online Donation; choose Christmas Giving Tree in the drop-down box. For

monetary donations, please make checks payable to MUMC with "Giving Tree" in the notation line. Leave your check in the secure box outside of the church office or mail to: MUMC, 11011 N. Oriole Lane, Mequon, WI 53092.

In order to allow time for the Mission Outreach Committee members to shop and have gifts ready for Pathfinders for Christmas giving, we would appreciate receiving your donations by **Monday, December 5.**

Questions? Contact Karen Stern, phone 262-227-7811, or Susan Yorio, phone 262-853-3933. Smile and know you just made Christmas brighter for a Milwaukee area youth or young adult!

Thank You Merry Christmas God Bless You!

Mission Outreach's Clothing Drives for Repairers of the Breach Begin Now and in 2023

Mission Outreach will be collecting new men's and women's underwear and socks at the end of January 2023 in conjunction with the auction on Saturday, February 11. In the meantime, if you have gently used winter coats, hats, gloves, sweaters, and pants that you would like to give away, we will make sure they are taken to Repairers of the Breach. Please bring them downstairs to the elevator alcove next to Fellowship Hall. You will find bins and a coat rack where you can leave your items. There will also be a Hunger Task Force box for winter clothing.

Repairers of the Breach is a Christian organization that serves homeless men and women of Milwaukee. It is the only daytime refuge and resource center that is open from 7 am to 4 pm. All other shelters are open at night only. They provide meals, a warming room, showers, job assistance and skill development, a computer center, health clinic, and art studio—whatever it takes to help at-risk adults get back on track. Their email is www.repairers.org.

If you have questions, contact Marilyn Zwissler.

From the Pastor

Everyone has their inner struggles. I recently read a story about a Native American tribal leader describing his own inner struggles. He said, "There are two dogs inside me. One of the dogs is mean and evil. The other dog is good. The mean dog fights the good dog all the time." Someone asked him which dog usually wins. After a brief reflection, he answered, "The one I feed the most." This is good! I say a big amen to the man's wisdom because what he said is absolutely true.

Friends, no matter what happened in 2022, Advent is the perfect season to feed the good dog in us with substantial and nutritious "food." I found a very good "food" we can use to feed our good dog from one of my all-time favorite movies, Elf. It is the Code of Elves. The code is to remind elves and ourselves of things that we need to remember in this special season and beyond. The Code of Elves is:

1. Treat every day like Christmas.
2. There's room for everyone on the nice list.
3. The best way to spread Christmas cheer is by singing loudly for all to hear.

Friends, this Christmas season, let us feed our hearts with good thoughts like the Code of Elves so that our inner struggles may bring more winnings that bring more hope, peace, joy, love, and positive gains to us and to those who are around us.

To celebrate Emmanuel – God with us – Mequon United Methodist Church offers special services during the month of December as follows:

Dec. 11: Children's Christmas Program Sunday at 9:30 am

Dec. 18: Carol Sing Sunday at 9:30 am

Dec. 24: Christmas Eve Candlelight Service at 4 pm

"Let us go to his dwelling place, let us worship at his footstool," (Psalm 132:7 NIV)

Merry Christmas!

Sue

Announcements

Advent Devotional: A Gift for You

Advent began Sunday, November 27. Copies of *All Is Bright: Daily Prayers for Advent* are now available in the narthex. The prayers in this booklet by Jane Wilke enlighten our hearts, souls, and minds with the Good News that the glory of the Lord will be revealed in a tiny baby boy. Let these petitions brighten each day of your Advent celebration. These Advent devotionals are a gift to all members of the congregation—pick up your copy today.

Our Family Promise Host Week began Monday, November 28, and continues through Friday, December 2. (Host Weeks are Monday through Friday, evening meals to be delivered by 5 pm.) You don't need to cook a whole meal. We're happy to coordinate with volunteers who are willing to contribute a portion of a meal ... the entree, a salad, side dish, bread/rolls, fruit or dessert. Please contact Pam Layton (p.layton90@gmail.com) or Connie Pukaite (pukaite@sbcglobal.net) to help.

December Prayer Meetings

The men's prayer breakfast will be held Thursday, December 1 at 7 am and the

women's prayer meeting will be held Wednesday, December 7 at 7:30 am, in the Parlor. All are welcome!

Annual Charge Conference will be held on Thursday, December 1, at 6 pm, in the sanctuary. All MUMC members are invited.

New Dates for New Member Classes

New Member classes will be offered on three Sundays, December 4, 11, and 18, at 10:45 am, following worship, in Pastor Sue's office. The classes will cover the United Methodist Church Membership Covenant, and what it means to be a church member. If you would like to participate, please contact Pastor Sue at pastor@mequonumc.org

Elna Hickson and Marilyn Zwissler are retiring! Celebrate the faithful ministries of Elna and Marilyn on Sunday, December 18, during special presentations during the worship service. Then afterward enjoy cake and coffee in Fellowship Hall. Come join us as we honor their many years of faithful, dedicated service to MUMC and take a moment to express our gratitude to them personally.

Thank you from the MUMC Mission Outreach Committee and Family Sharing of Ozaukee County whose Mission Statement is: "Helping serve the needs of low-income, elderly, and disabled residents of Ozaukee County."

As a congregation, MUMC gathered and donated 50 full bags of non-perishable Thanksgiving food items and on October 9, Bread Sunday, \$410 was donated by our congregation. All food and funds benefitted Family Sharing of Ozaukee County for Thanksgiving meals. Your generosity is greatly appreciated by Ozaukee County residents in need! Much gratitude!

Attention! Attention! Save the Date! Mission Outreach Auction/Dinner on Saturday, February 11, 2023, at Sommer Pavilion at River Barn Park.

The Outreach team is bursting at the seams with joy to invite you back to our in-person gala. This year, for our all-church mission fundraiser, we want you to be connected to each other even more. Because our church's new mission is Connecting People to Jesus Christ and to One Another, there could not be a more timely season to make this happen. Mark your calendars for this special all-church event. Bring friends, family members, and neighbors. Look for your invitation in the mail soon.



- Place: Sommer Pavilion at River Barn Park
- Address: 9808 N. Cedarburg Rd 44W, Mequon
- Date: February 11, 2023
- Time: 4:30 pm
- Attire: Casual

Sincerely,
The Outreach Team

Children's Ministry

Calling all shepherds, wise people, and stable

hands!

Connect everyone at MUMC and the community to Jesus by being part of our all- church LIVE nativity on Friday, December 9 and Friday, December 16, from 6 – 8 pm. Enjoy the story of His birth, a bonfire, hot cocoa, cookies, and caroling. There will be a sign up in the Narthex or email childrensmin@mequonumc.org. Invite your families, friends, and neighbors!



We are looking for some support help as well. Needs: Cookies, bales of straw, wood pallets, adult size costumes, and stable animals.

Join us on Friday, December 2 from 6 – 8 pm (dinner included) for Kids' Night Out as we begin our Advent season by making a Nativity luminary, in Fellowship Hall. There will also be card making for Senior Centers, Christmas music, and we celebrate William Penner's birthday. Happy Birthday William! RSVP to childrensmin@mequonumc.org

Other Children's Ministry Events:

Saturday, December 10, 10 – 11 am: Christmas Program Practice

Saturday, December 10, 11 am, Youth Group cookie making with Mr. Glen

Sunday, December 11, 8:45 – 10:30 am: Christmas Program

Reflections Book Group

DECEMBER REFLECTIONS

The Reflections Book Group will celebrate Christmas on Thursday, December 8 at the home of Susan Caldwell, 1926 W. Hidden Reserve Ct., Mequon. The festivities begin at 6 pm. Please bring a wrapped gift (around \$20 value) for our steal-a-gift exchange. RSVP to Susan at susancaldwell@outlook.com and indicate if you can bring an appetizer, dessert, or beverage to share. No book discussion this month.

Reflections is a women's book group that meets monthly for discussion and fellowship. New women are always welcome. Contact Barb Henneck at bhenneck@gmail.com for more information about the group or our December meeting.

Looking ahead . . . our January book will be *West with Giraffes* by Lynda Rutledge.

MUMC Seeks Part-time Organist and Part-time Audio/Video Tech

Mequon United Methodist Church is seeking a part-time organist: **this is a part-time salaried position, approximately 10 hours per week**, to provide organ and/or piano music accompaniment for choir rehearsals and choir performances at regular church services, special church services, and church-sponsored events.

The position requires experience and competency in playing organ and piano music, hymns, and accompanying soloists and ensembles in a Christian worship setting, and skills and experience with both traditional and contemporary worship

music is preferred

This is a salaried position with two-week annual vacation. See the full job description at mequonumc.org. Submit your resume to office@mwequonumc.org or by mail to: Office Manager, Mequon United Methodist Church, 11011 N. Oriole Lane, Mequon, WI 53092.

Mequon United Methodist Church is seeking a part-time AV Tech to prepare and present audio and video content for church services that are conducted in-person and livestreamed. **This is a part-time hourly position, approximately 12 to 16 hours per week.**

The individual will be responsible for digitizing content for the presentation of church services for in-person and virtual services, for operating the audio and video equipment during services and managing the livestream event with volunteer operators. Other responsibilities include creating announcement/presentation video loops to be displayed on church monitors and preparing content and videos for the MUMC website.

The individual needs to have the ability to troubleshoot technical issues on the fly. This person needs good interpersonal skills to enable collaboration with church members and volunteers in preparing for services, as well as a high level of attention to detail and consistency in process and content.

Full job description and list of duties can be found on the MUMC website (<http://www.mequonumc.org>). Email resume to: office@mequonumc.org or call the church office at 262-242-4770 for more information.

MUMC's Audio/Video Team Wants You!

Marilyn Zwissler, our fearless leader for the last several years, is taking off her tech hat and retiring from the AV team. Under her leadership, our Livestream and enhanced in-service offerings have allowed 60+ additional people to watch/join our services every week. (Connecting People to Jesus Christ and to One Another!) To build on this work, we'd love to expand our **volunteer** ranks to continue our digital journey while streamlining the workload for everyone.

Successful candidates will have a working knowledge of PowerPoint and Google Drive; it's a plus if you know audio boards/mixing, VMix (our presentation software), video production, and/or YouTube studio. Once you are comfortable with the technology, our weekly work includes developing the service with direction from the Worship Team (approximately 3 hours/week); making PowerPoints and videos for the service (about 6 hours per week); performing/monitoring/posting the service & Livestream (2 people, about 2.5 hours/week). We are sometimes called on to do additional work for Vacation Bible School, church conferences, meetings, growth studies, and more.

If you want to use your technical chops to serve the Lord, please let us know and we'll get your training program started! Contact any AV Team member: Marilyn Zwissler, Dave Traut, Jenna Burns, Shelley Burns, Patrick Curran, or Matt Fuller.

From the Wisconsin Conference

Weekly Devotion for November 7, 2022, by Scott Carlson

For there is still a vision for the appointed time; it speaks of the end and does not lie. If it seems to tarry, wait for it; it will surely come; it will not delay . . . the righteous live by their faithfulness. Habakkuk 2:3-4

In my quiet time this last week, I have been reflecting and brooding over what it means to be a disciple. Every year at this time I am challenged by some words from *The Saviors of God: Spiritual Exercises* by the Greek writer Nikos Kazantzakis. I invite you to reflect and brood with me:

"My prayer is not the whimpering of a beggar nor a confession of love. Nor is it the trivial reckoning of a small tradesman: Give me and I shall give you."

"My prayer is the report of a soldier to his general: This is what I did today, this is how I fought to save the entire battle in my own sector, these are the obstacles I found, this is how I plan to fight tomorrow."

"My God and I are horseman galloping in the burning sun or under drizzling rain. Pale, starving, but unsubdued, we ride and converse. 'Leader!' I cry. He turns his face towards me, and I shudder to confront his anguish. 'Our love for each other is rough and ready, we sit at the same table, we drink the same wine in this low tavern of life.'"

The images of these passages that jump out at me are the images that are earthy and working. They remind me that faith gets worked out in the everyday tumble of life. Faith, or a relationship with God, is not reserved for simply the quiet pristine moments. It is meant to be lived out in the midst of the messiness of life.

The passage that challenges me is the report of the soldier. Every day that I read it, it invites me to question, "What am I doing for God today? What am I doing to live in faith and overcome obstacles in the midst of living today? What do I need to do tomorrow?" This passage reminds me to be intentional about living faith. It is my hope and prayer for you, that you will reflect and brood about your faith. What are the obstacles in your way? What do you need to do to live in faith? What can you do to be intentional about knowing God? What can you do for God today?

Holy One, thank you for calling us and your church to be witnesses of your love and grace in this world. It is often too easy to think that our life of faith is a private transaction between you and us. Help us to remember on this day that you call us to live our faith in this world. Teach us to live out loud. Help us to go beyond the safety we have become comfortable with and to share the hope you have given us with a world in need. In the hope that Jesus offers us. Amen.

Weekly Devotion for November 14, 2022, by Sue D'Alessio

"Devotions"

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:4-7

This is one of my favorite scripture passages. It is incredibly replete with guidance

for living a life filled with faith and grace. In this season of Thanksgiving and of preparation for Advent celebrations, as well as this time of tremendous transition and change, both in our Church and in our culture, I appreciate Paul's instructions for living in the joy and peace of God in Christ Jesus: "Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God."

"Do not worry about anything..." How easily we worry. When life is uncertain – and these are certainly uncertain times – we tend to prefer to know what's going to happen – to be in control of all the events in our lives. We have learned all sorts of ways to help us feel more secure and certain (knock on wood) and fend off potential disaster or dismay or disappointment. How can we possibly stop worrying, especially not worrying about anything? I love a quote from Cicero: "It is foolish to tear one's hair out in grief (or fear or worry or...), as though grief (or change or chaos or...) could be lessened by baldness." The images this conjures in my mind are silly and playful enough, that it stops me from focusing on whatever I feel like tearing out my hair over. And I can let go – and move on to the next part of Paul's instructions:

"...but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God." In everything. Yes, my worries. Yes, our fears. Yes, whatever is uncomfortably, distressingly present in our hearts and minds. We can offer them all – everything – to God "in prayer and supplication" (humble, earnest asking). Everything going on in our lives can be offered to God and trust that God is present and offering us whatever hope and healing and grace and fortitude we need for this moment. However, the most important element of all of this is "...with thanksgiving" – offering thanks even when we are uncertain, before we experience any blessing or relief or peace. Paul understands and teaches us that when we open ourselves to God in prayer with thanksgiving, we open ourselves, not to every prayer being answered the way we want, but rather we open ourselves to the guarding "peace of God, which surpasses all understanding" and we can live, then, in the deepest joy in the nearness and presence of God.

Ever-present God, we bring our worries and frustrations, our challenges and fears, our hopes and dreams to you – to your grace, blessing and peace. Help us to live fully in faith. We offer ourselves wholeheartedly and whole-mindedly, with great thanksgiving, to all the gifts you give. Thank you. Thank you. In the name of Christ Jesus, Amen.

Christian Symbol of the Month

Evergreen Tree—These trees, which keep their green leaves year-round, are symbolic of Christmas, eternal life, and God's everlasting love. In the Bible, evergreen trees are called the "cedars of Lebanon," suggesting growth (Psalm 92:12), height (Amos 2:9), fragrance (Hosea 14:6), and steadfast faith.



One Last Thing . . .

"The child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God."

Luke 1:35, NRSV

Mequon United Methodist Church

**Our Vision: To be THE Bridge to Community Connection,
Collaboration, and Common Ground Through Jesus Christ**

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

Disclaimer: Editor reserves the right to edit content.

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/ Closed Fridays

Sunday Schedule

9:30am Worship Service

10:30am Fellowship

www.mequonumc.org

