



The Spire

The Newsletter of the Mequon United Methodist Church
February 2025

Connecting people to Jesus Christ and to one another.

Sunday Worship 9:30 am

Sermon Themes

Feb 2: "Help Me Overcome my Unbelief!", *Mark 9:14-29*

Feb 9: In God's Presence, *Isaiah 6:1-10*

Feb 16: "It is Written", *Luke 4:1-13*

Feb 23: Children's Service

Musical Gifts

Feb 2: Chancel Choir

Feb 9: Allison Tinsley-Fuller and JP Horcasitas

Feb 16: Praise Ensemble

Feb 23: Children's Service

Calendar Highlights

Feb 4 - Lunch Bunch -- 11:00 am

Feb 5 - Women's Prayer Meeting -- 7:30 am

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

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

Feb 9 - Chancel Choir Rehearsal -- 11:00 am

Feb 11 - Lunch Bunch -- 11:00 am

Feb 11 - Family Sharing Food Sort -- 1:30 pm

Feb 12 - Reflections Book Club -- 6:00 pm

Feb 16 - Chancel Choir Rehearsal -- 11:00 am

Feb 18 - Lunch Bunch -- 11:00 am

Feb 23 - Youth Mission Trip Info Session -- 10:45 am

Feb 23 - Chancel Choir Rehearsal -- 11:00 am

Feb 23 - Kids' Connection -- 11:00 am

Feb 25 - Lunch Bunch -- 11:00 am

Feb 25 - Fiber Arts Club -- 6:00 pm

Mar 1 - Choir Retreat -- 9:00 am

Mar 5 - Women's Prayer Breakfast -- 7:30 am

Mar 6 - Men's Prayer Breakfast -- 7:00 am

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 ...

MUMC and Old Plank Farm

Old Plank Farm is one of our lesser known ministries. MUMC is a host site for Old Plank Farm members, and Marilyn Zwissler manages the site for us.



In 2012, Pastor Tim invited Joanne Bartel's daughter, Stephanie, to bring her organic produce to our church and we became one of Old Plank Farm's pick-up sites. Stephanie and her sister, Katie, grew up in MUMC and have been members along with their mother. Stephanie started Old Plank Farm, a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) project, in 2009 with 20 farm members and only one acre of land. It has now grown to 400 members with 15 acres of land. Twenty of those members, including some of us at MUMC, pick up boxes of fresh vegetables here at our church.

Stephanie's passion is organic farming, soil restoration, and following the seasonal growing cycle. She is constantly studying and applying the best organic farming techniques to make sure Old Plank Farm produces quality vegetables for her members. She has been awarded grants for this, as well.

Is Old Plank Farm a non-profit? Not really: however, no organic farmer gets wealthy. At best, they have enough to invest in the next season. And that is what Stephanie does. At MUMC, we moved the boxes of vegetables from the church entrance to the back stairs at the kitchen entrance and finally, to their own shed behind the parking lot fence near our Community Gardens. Thanks to Connie Pukaite and Bruce Stern we now have a designated space for people to pick up their vegetables throughout the summer and fall without the hassle of locked doors.

How is this a ministry? Hosting this Old Plank Farm vegetable pick-up site brings people from all over our community to our church. We are providing a space where Old Plank Farm members can come, at their convenience, on Friday afternoons to get their vegetables for the weekend. Those who are not members of our church encounter us in many ways. They see our activities, such as Vacation Bible School and the youth gatherings. In one instance, an Old Plank Farm member saw our Community Gardens. She now has two plots of her own and is a member of MUMC's garden club.

There is always an exchange box with extra vegetables. People can trade vegetables or take an extra one as they choose. Sometimes, members are not able to pick up their boxes on Fridays and Marilyn takes them home, contact the members, and make arrangements for them to get their boxes. This is a community service that people associate with our church. Then there are those times when we have surpluses, or someone decides to donate their vegetables. You have probably seen the Old Plank Farm boxes on the bench in the front entrance of the church inviting you to help yourself.

Usually, every week, there is an abundance of produce that is available to share with the Saukeville Food Pantry, Family Sharing of Ozaukee County and St. Vincent de Paul's mealsite. Jim Layton helps take the vegetables to the Saukville Food pantry during the season. Marilyn remembers taking Brussel Sprouts to the St. Vincent de Paul mealsite . The cook there was so excited! "Are those Brussel Sprouts?" she asked. "We never get Brussel Sprouts!" I thought she was going to start dancing.

Do you remember the abundance of cucumbers last summer? We shared those cucumbers all across our county. So, you see, this ministry touches many lives. We serve those who otherwise would not have fresh organic vegetables, we share our bounty and bring our community together. This summer, check out how expensive organic fruits and vegetables are. Have you bought an organic heirloom tomato recently? Then you understand what a joy our association with Old Plank Farm is. Check out their [website for more info here!](#) You will also find recipes for the variety of vegetables they grow. Here's to some daydreaming about next summer all the wonderful produce that comes with it!



Family Sharing Food Pantry

Volunteer for Food Sorting

February 11

1:30 - 3:30 pm

Sign-up sheets are in the Narthex! The numbers for 2024 are in, and according to the food pantry's spreadsheet, the total volunteer hours for 2024 came to 8,538.60. Based on an estimated value of \$31.86 per hour of volunteer time, volunteers have donated an estimated value of \$272,039.80 worth of time in 2024. Thank you to all of our volunteers!



UMCOR Disaster Relief for California Fires

As wind-blown wildfires ravage Los Angeles County, United Methodists are doing what they can to offer shelter and address immediate needs.

They are also starting to count their own losses — which include the destruction of church members' homes and the buildings of at least two United Methodist churches. **At this point, United Methodists in the affected areas are asking for prayer and financial donations.**

Please donate to the United Methodist Committee on Relief's response to the fires and other [U.S. disasters here!](#)

Connecting with Jesus Christ and One Another

Come ~ Connect ~ Grow Community

Reflections Book Club

Wednesday, February 12, 6:00 pm

The Reflections book group will meet on Wednesday, February 12, beginning at 6:00 pm. Pam Layton will host the meeting t her home. Our discussion book will be How to Read a Book, by Monica Wood. Please RSVP to Pam if you are planning to attend.

Reflections is a women's book group that meets monthly for fellowship and discussion. New women are always welcome. Contact [Barb Henneck](#) for more information about the group.

Looking ahead ... our March book will be *The Women*, by Kristin Hannah.

After Five Supper Club

Super Supper - Feb 22

Our next dinner will feature soup flights on February 22. 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](#)!

Kids' Connection

Sunday, February 23 11:00 am

The next Kids' Connection will be on Sunday, February 23, 11 am-1 pm. Come for food, crafts, fun and fellowship, with a theme of **LOVE!**

Outreach Dinner and Auction

Saturday, February 9, 5:00 pm



One last Sunday to get your RSVP in. We cannot wait to celebrate with all of you on the February 9th at Remington's. "Love takes the stranger in" *Matthew 25:35*

Blood Pressure Checks

Sunday, February 9

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

Fiber Arts Ministry!

Tuesday, Febuary 25 6:00 pm

Grab a kit or bring a WIP and join us! If there are any suggestions for our Fiber Arts, let [Jenna](#) know. All levels of crafters are welcome!

Mission Trip Info Session

Sunday, February 23 10:45 am

If you are a youth or have a youth come join us as we have an info session to cover what the Mission Trip is all about! The trip will be July 5-12 in West Virginia. We have to have our final count soon, so if you're interested at all, please join us!! If you have any questions, reach out to [Jenna and Patrick](#). Youth and parents are both welcome.

Connecting with Jesus Christ and One Another

Come ~ Connect ~ Grow Community

LENTEN ALL CHURCH GROWTH GROUP STUDY

THE CASE FOR EASTER: A JOURNALIST INVESTIGATES THE EVIDENCE FOR THE RESURRECTION

In accordance with our mission to connect people to Jesus Christ and each other, please prayerfully consider committing to participate in our first of two all church studies during Lent.

It will be a 4 week study, offered three times each session:

- Tuesday mornings at church at 11:00 am beginning March 11th.
- Thursday evenings at 7:00 pm via Zoom, beginning March 13th.
- Sunday morning after church beginning March 16th.

Sessions last one hour. That is only a 4 hour commitment to grow your faith and seems very little when compared with Christ's sacrifice so that all who believe in him will receive salvation and the gift of eternal life.

This year's Lenten study is based on the book 'The Case for Easter' by Lee Strobel. This book can be purchased on E-bay or Amazon if desired. Of the many world religions, only one claims its founder returned from the grave. The resurrection of Jesus Christ is the very cornerstone of Christianity. But a dead man coming back to life? In our sophisticated age when myth has given way to science, who can take such a claim seriously? Some argue that Jesus never died on the cross. Conflicting accounts made the empty tomb seem suspect.

How credible is the evidence for—and against—the resurrection? Focusing on his award winning skills as a legal journalist on history's most compelling enigma, Lee Strobel retraces the startling findings that led him from atheism to belief.

He examines:

- The Medical Evidence—Was Jesus' death a sham and his resurrection a hoax?
- The Evidence of the Missing Body—Was he really absent from his tomb?
- The Evidence of Appearances—Was Jesus seen alive after his death on the cross?

The verdict is up to you.

From Pastor Sue

Connecting with Jesus Christ and One Another

Max Lucado, the author of the book of Unshakable Hope that MUMC weekly growth

group, Lunch Bunch is studying now, wrote the following in the book:

The heroes in the Bible came from all walks of life... Yet one common denominator united them; they build their lives on the promises of God. Because of God's promises, Noah believed in rain before rain was a word. Because of God's promises, Abraham left a good home for one he'd never seen. Because of God's promises, David conked a giant, Peter rose from the ashes of regret, and Paul found a grace worth dying for.

The speedy changes in our world can give us a sense of uncertainty and anxiety. We can be thrown off balance by the sufferings we experience in our own lives and the world, the evolving innovation that outpaces our ability to absorb it, and the daily rise and fall of the financial markets. As problems and challenges mount, we can become discouraged and lose heart. But our Lord, Jesus Christ said that "In this world you will have trouble. But take heart!" (John 16:33) And he also gave us the promise of the Holy Spirit and His peace in our hearts: "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid. (John 14:27)

No matter how much life challenges, we can have the peace and hope that passes all human understanding, for we are anchored to a firm foundation that will never be shaken. The foundation is the triune God— Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. As we continue to navigate the uncharted territory of 2025 with many changes and challenges in our lives, this nation and the world, let us remember, our hope and peace rest in God as the people of God who are in this world but not of the world. May we trust and have hope and peace in God who works in all things for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose.

Peace and Hope in Christ,
Sue

Pastoral Letter from Bishop Schwerin

Welcome the Strangers Among Us

"I was a stranger and you welcomed me . . ." (Matt. 25:35)

There are many images in scripture for the life of faith: the body of Christ (I Cor. 12), the household of God (I Peter), and the vine (John 15). While John Wesley taught that our life of faith entails personal holiness, he also helped us understand that our life together is one of social holiness. A pastoral letter from the United Methodist Council of Bishops, "Beloved Community: An Antidote to Extremism" (Sept. 19, 2024), reminds us that love of God inevitably leads to love of neighbor. It is that love that causes me to seek your prayers and faithfulness.

While I support the legitimate efforts of law enforcement to protect the safety and security of our communities, I also support ordinances and statutes that protect the rights of immigrants in Illinois and Wisconsin.

Paragraph 163 of The 2020/2024 Book of Discipline says that "we affirm that every form of government stands under God's judgment and must therefore be held accountable for protecting the innocent, guaranteeing basic freedoms and liberties, protecting the natural world, and establishing just, equitable, and sustainable

economies.”

Insofar as the scripture calls us more than 35 times to love the stranger, I call us to stand with nonviolent migrants, immigrants, and refugees in this country, who live in the shadows of society in a state of perpetual fear. I prayerfully ask us to reject the measure of mass deportations and consider families that include citizens and noncitizens, parents and children, who must not be separated from each other. A recent Council of Bishops letter, “Addressing the Plight of Migrants, Immigrants, and Refugees” (Dec. 18, 2024), states that “they are our neighbors, our friends, and members and pastors of our churches.”

I reject the needless provocation of Chicago as a stated ground zero for a mass deportation effort. I call on federal and state governments to work out bipartisan, comprehensive immigration reform that will solve our issues and provide healing for the nation.

At other times in our history, whether it be the Trail of Tears, the Japanese detention centers, or the legacy of slavery, when the United States government has moved or restricted a mass of people, a tragic loss of life and generational cycles of harm result. The tool of mass deportation is not necessary and is abhorrent to followers of a nonviolent Jesus.

Once again, please pray for the migrants, immigrants, and refugees among us and welcome them with the fullness of Christian love, remembering that as we welcome these our brothers and sisters, we welcome Jesus our Lord.

Thank you.

Peace,

Daniel W. Schwerin, Bishop
Northern Illinois-Wisconsin Area
The United Methodist Church

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!

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

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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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