

SPIRE Newsletter



August 2023

Our Mission: Connecting people to Jesus Christ and to one another.



[View MUMC Online Calendar](#)

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CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS

July 31: 12:30 pm - Tai Chi
Aug 2: 7:30 am - Women's Prayer Breakfast
Aug 3: 7 am - Men's Prayer Breakfast
Aug 6: 9:45 am - Summer Sunday School
Aug 7: 12:30 pm - Tai Chi
Aug 11: 12:30 pm - Tai Chi
Aug 13: 4 pm - Parish Nurses' Walk
Aug 14: 12:30 pm - Tai Chi
Aug 18: 12:30 pm - Tai Chi
Aug 20: 9:45 am - Summer Sunday School
Aug 20: 10:45 am - New Member Class
Aug 21: 12:30 pm - Tai Chi
Aug 22: 6 pm - Fiber Arts Club
Aug 25: 12:30 pm - Tai Chi
Aug 28: 12:30 pm - Tai Chi
Aug 28: 7 pm - Church Council Meeting

SERMON SPOTLIGHT

July 30: VBS Sunday!!
Aug 6: Exodus 8:1-15: "Tomorrow"
Aug 13: Exodus 16:1-35, We Miss Egypt!!
Aug 20: Exodus 32:1-14, The Golden Calf and Moses' Prayer
Aug 27: Pastor Carly Kuntz

WORSHIP MUSIC

July 30: VBS Kids!!
Aug 6: Allison and Elna
Aug 13: Praise Ensemble
Aug 20: a surprise!
Aug 27: a super surprise!!



Highlights of the 2023 Annual Conference



*Theme: On Earth as it is in Heaven:
Engaging in Transformative Community Building*

Phillipians 2:1-4

Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, 2 then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind. 3 Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, for not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.

I want to thank the congregation and Pastor Sue for allowing me the opportunity to be the lay delegate to the annual conference. I was truly moved by the music, worship experiences, and fellowship. Methodists love to sing, and the music was wonderful.

One of the main items of business was the churches seeking to leave the UMC denomination over divisions in granting equal rights to all. I'm going to take a minute to provide a bit of context for this.

The 2019 Special Session of the United Methodist General Conference, which is an international body representing churches world-wide, passed the Traditional Plan, which increased penalties for United Methodist Clergy who are LGBTQIA+ and for clergy who support the LGBTQIA+ community through officiating at their weddings. The adoption of the Traditional Plan caused a lot of outrage and feelings of alienation, leaving many people wondering if the UMC is truly the loving community it professes to be.

In 2022, the North Central Jurisdictional Conference, which includes Wisconsin, in an attempt to address the divide, adopted a moratorium or abeyance in enforcement of penalties under the Traditional Plan, which basically acknowledges this rule but states that it will not be enforced. Complaints will be acknowledged in a timely way, but no punitive consequences will result. At the same time, a process was created to allow churches who deny rights to the LGBTQIA+ community a way to leave the denomination.

As we have seen since, the majority of our pastors and members are in favor of full rights for all, but about 10% of congregations have decided to leave the denomination over this issue, a process called disaffiliation. Recognizing the deep grief and challenges this entails, our conference set up a process to allow churches to disaffiliate, as long as they met certain criteria: their apportionments were paid in full; they were up to date with their clergy pension and health-care contributions;

completing a deliberate and prayerful process and taking a vote, churches could leave the UMC and keep their assets, such as their church buildings. 43 Wisconsin churches completed this process in the timeline allocated. The 2023 Wisconsin General Conference voted to accept all 43 disaffiliation motions on June 9th. This represents ~10% of the UMC churches in the Wisconsin conference. There is a plan in place to reach out to members and clergy of the disaffiliating churches who do not agree with the decision, to assist them in finding a new home in the UMC.

There was a lot of talk about healing moving forward and the heartbreak in the disaffiliating churches. I wish there had been more discussion regarding healing the people who felt pushed out and rejected by passage of the Traditional Plan, and historically had to go their whole lives without being accepted into clergy or being able to marry in the church they were baptized in (my personal opinion). In addition to the disaffiliating churches, 6 churches voted to discontinue their ministry for other reasons. In the Milwaukee area, the historic Summerfield congregation downtown on Juneau is closing. We celebrated that in the past, a great many people have been sustained on their faith journey through these churches, and recognize that there is a season for all things. Churches who vote to discontinue return their church buildings and assets to the conference.

The church statistician reported that as a conference, with these closings, disaffiliations, and membership declines that all mainline Protestant churches are experiencing, our membership has gone from 49,826 in the year of 2021 to 42,233 in 2023 statewide. In recognition of this, the state will go from 5 to 4 districts, eliminating one district superintendent position.

The annual conference held elections for provisional reserve delegates to the postponed 2020 General and Jurisdictional Conferences, since many of the delegates nominated pre-pandemic are no longer available to fulfill this commitment.

Finally, there was a workshop on understanding differences, and being more understanding and accepting of cultural differences.

*Submitted by Emily Levine,
Lay Delegate to Annual Conference*

Family Promise Volunteers Needed

DO YOU ENJOY HELPING OTHERS? Here's an opportunity for you!

During the work-week of August 21 through 25, MUMC volunteers will be needed to help prepare evening meals for homeless individuals and families who are at the Family Promise Portlight Shelter. Currently, there are 6 adults and 3 children at Portlight ... that can and does change weekly, sometimes by the day. Now that the static shelter is in place, it's easier than ever to help our neighbors in need. We can prepare entre' dishes to serve family-style, and since Family Promise is partnering with Ozaukee's food pantries, some parts of the meals – bread, salad, drinks – do not need to be provided by our church volunteers.

Volunteer Meal Helpers have options:

- Cook an entre' or make a homemade dessert, or do both; or just deliver & set up the food at the Shelter
- Cook at home and deliver the meal to the Shelter, or to the church for

another volunteer to deliver to the Shelter (15 minutes away in Port Washington)

- Bring ingredients & cook at the Shelter ... the aroma of homemade food cooking is a comfort
- Deliver the food and stay to serve, eat and visit with our homeless guests
- Set up the food buffet-style for self-service and leave guests with the opportunity to manage their own & family's meal time and clean up
-

Anyone willing to help during MUMC's August week at the Family Promise Portlight Shelter, please sign up right away with Pam Layton (p.layton90@gmail.com) or Connie Pukaite (pukaite@sbcglobal.net).

Hunger Task Force Drive



On August 6th we will begin our food collection drive for Hunger Task Force. Our theme is "back to school." Please donate food that schools and other child hunger organizations serve to make sure children have the nutritious meals they need to succeed. We are also collecting school supplies, such as pencils, art supplies, notebooks, note paper, and fun things like stickers.

Aug. 6th Think Breakfast! What do children need for a good, nutritious breakfast? Whole grain cereals, oatmeal, orange juice, canned fruit, milk (Boxed low-fat milk or milk alternatives).

August 13th What will children need for lunch? Soup, canned vegetables, canned meats (tuna, chicken), canned beans, peanut butter.

August 20^h Healthy after school snacks! Granola bars, nuts and seeds, raisins, Graham crackers, milk (boxed, low-fat or milk alternatives).

August 27th Dinner time! Spaghetti, Spaghetti sauce, canned dinners (Chow Mein), stews, beans, chili, canned vegetables, canned fruit.

Everything must be non-perishable, low or no sugar, processed in fruit or vegetable juices, and whole grains.

Food collection boxes will be in the church entrance and the Narthex. Bins for school supplies will be by the Sanctuary entrance.

Use Hunger Task Force's "My Plate" to help you decide what to donate.
<https://www.hungertaskforce.org/what-we-do/myplate/>

Mission Outreach Coordinator: Marilyn Zwissler

Announcements

VBS Thank You

It was a Stellar week at Mequon UMC during Vacation Bible School. We learned that we should shine Jesus' light in all situations.

Helping others shines Jesus' light. Children's ministry is teaming with Hunger Task Force to see how many pounds of food and school supplies we can collect. See the Hunger Task Force article to see what items are needed. Shine your light by helping those in need.

Thank you to all who helped make this week out of this world through financial donations. Also, thank you to the following volunteers who shared their time, talents, and faith to help 38 children connect with Jesus Christ and to one another during VBS:

Cassie Anderson
Carol Bayne
Sheila Blanks
Shelley Burns
Skylar Chrobak
Sara Cooper
Patrick Curran
Pat Gattoni
Stephanie Gayfield
Karen Huffman
Jim Meyer
Katie Nowak
Pastor Sue
Wendy Porterfield
Allison Tinsley-Fuller
Kristin Traut
Kathy Windis



Controlling Blood Pressure is Key!

The Parish Nurses will resume blood pressure checks after service on September 10th. And then will continue on the second Sunday each month.



Ways to make a difference!

MUMC welcomes people to serve as Ushers, Liturgists, Sunday School helpers, Coffee Hosts, and Volunteers on all ministry teams! Our church community grows stronger when we all share our gifts with one another. Call the [church office](#) if you need ideas and contacts!

Lunch Bunch!



Lunch Bunch will resume on **September 12th**. See you then!

Walking, Fresh Air, Fellowship!

The last walk of the summer is here! Our August 13th walk will be at Concordia University. This walk offers beautiful



Fiber Arts Ministry

We had a fabulous first meeting! And we are excited for the next one. Any crafter is welcome to come. We had felting,

needlepoint, macrame, sketching, and knitting! Our next "meeting" will be **Tuesday, August 22nd, 6pm, in the Parlor**. Can't make it? No worries, catch us again next month. Would you like to bring a snack for everyone? Please let Jenna Burns know j.burns1127@gmail.com

views of Lake Michigan and landscaped grounds. Sorry - pets are not permitted.

Questions? Text or call Susan Solverson 414-559-4699.

New Member Classes

New Member classes will be offered on Sundays, August 13, 20, and September 3, at 10:45am in Pastor Sue's office. The classes will cover:

- What does it mean to join the Church, the Bride of Christ
- Mequon UMC Membership Covenant

If you'd like to participate, please contact Pastor Sue at pastor@mequonumc.org



Thank you Lunch Bunch!

Thank you, Lunch Bunch, for the gift card

*for making soup! It's a joy to make soup and to know you all appreciate it! Thank you!
-Ireene Sullivan*



Confirmation Classes

Confirmation 2023-24 classes will begin in September for those who are eligible to be confirmed in May 2024. The MUMC Confirmation Study will:

- Help confirmands explore the foundations of our faith as they compare and contrast Christianity's main beliefs to other world religions: Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, and Islam
- Teach who they are in Christ and what following Jesus means by utilizing, [3 Big Questions That Change Every Teenager](#), by Kara Powell and Brad Griffin

MUMC Confirmation is for 8th graders and older. Questions? Please contact Pastor Sue at pastor@mequonumc.org

Getting to Know... Your Church Committees!

This is the first in our monthly series on how "church works" by highlighting our church committees, their purpose, members, and the excellent work they do! We are starting this month with "Ad Council". Fair warning to committee chairs - we will be contacting you to provide content for this series soon!

Administrative Council - aka "Ad Council"

The Mequon United Methodist Church's Administrative Council is a group of committed, senior MUMC leaders that acts as the administrative body to connect our local church and the general Church. The Council helps to plan and implement a program of nurture, outreach, and witness for the church. It also has a strategic role in evaluating our mission and ministry on an annual basis. We meet as a group monthly to discuss church business. For those interested, minutes of our monthly meetings are kept in church records and can be requested through our Office Manager, at office@mequonumc.org or by calling (262) 242-4770.

[Click here to see who's on Ad Council!](#)

All of us on the Administrative Council welcome your input and any questions as we strive to build our community and achieve our mission of "connecting people to Jesus Christ and to one another." Please reach out!

A Note From Our Pastor

As we work on our TCI program, MUMC has three Strategic Priorities:

1. Build a culture and identity around our core values and mission.
2. Create a community gathering place to meet the emotional, physical and spiritual needs of people in our region.
3. Create an engaging environment that fosters a passionate desire in our congregation to serve God.

Our three TCI Strategic Priority Teams have drafted action steps to achieve their objectives within a two- or three-year time frame. An Implementation Review Team has now been formed. The team consists of the Ad Council Chair (Joel Huffman), Lay Leader (Glen Van Fossen), SPRC Chair (Rick Gattoni), TCI Strategic Priorities Member (Emily Penner) and the pastor.

The Review Team will oversee the whole implementation process, ensure that all action steps are on track with target due dates, adjust action steps as needed, and communicate with the congregation regularly.

A number of action steps have already been completed by the Marketing Team: our new vision and mission statements are now prominent on new stationery, welcome brochures, and invitation cards. A supply of the cards is available in the Narthex. Please carry the invitation cards with you always and use them to connect people to Jesus Christ and MUMC!

May we continue to fix our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer, and perfecter of faith.
In Christ,
Sue

Wisconsin Conference Devotions

Weekly Devotion for July 24, 2023, by Bishop Hee-Soo Jung

Prayers and Reflections

Jacob left Beer-sheba and went toward Haran. He came to a certain place and stayed there for the night, because the sun had set. Taking one of the stones of the place, he put it under his head and lay down in that place. And he dreamed that there was a ladder set up on the earth, the top of it reaching to heaven; and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. And the LORD stood beside him and said, "I am the LORD, the God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie I will give to you and to your offspring; and your offspring shall be like the dust of the earth, and you shall spread abroad to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south; and all the families of the earth shall be blessed in you and in your offspring. Know that I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you." Then Jacob woke from his sleep and said, "Surely the LORD is in this place--and I did not know it!" And he was afraid, and said, "How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God,

and this is the gate of heaven." So Jacob rose early in the morning, and he took the stone that he had put under his head and set it up for a pillar and poured oil on the top of it. He called that place Bethel; but the name of the city was Luz at the first (Genesis 28:10-19a).

[Click here to read the rest of Bishop Hee-Soo Jung's weekly devotional.](#)

To subscribe to the Weekly Devotion from the Wisconsin Conference, [click here](#).

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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Spire!

Deadline for SPIRE copy: the 25th of the month. Send copy to 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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Sonlight YMCA Early Childhood Education

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

Sunday Schedule:

9:30am Worship Service

