

# SPIRE Newsletter



August 2021

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## CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS

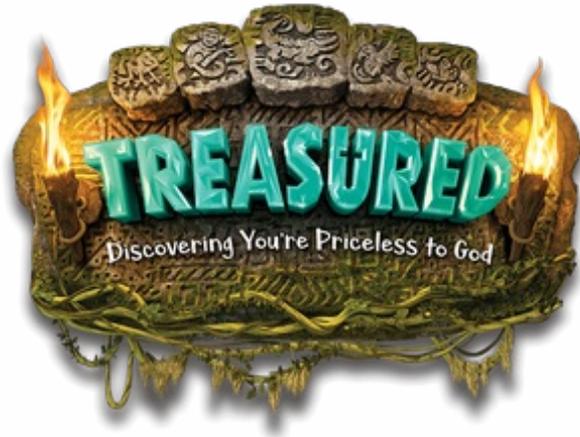
- Aug. 1:** parish nurses' walk
- Aug. 2:** Vacation Bible School begins
- Aug. 5:** men's prayer breakfast
- Aug. 6:** Vacation Bible School ends
- Aug. 7:** women's prayer breakfast
- Aug. 20:** Hunger Task Force food drive
- Aug. 22:** meet our new Minister of Music Deanna Gibeau
- Aug. 22:** Hunger Task Force food drive

## WORSHIP SERMON SPOTLIGHT

- Aug. 1:** Genesis 27:30-33, A Stolen Blessing
- Aug. 8:** Vacation Bible School Sunday
- Aug. 15:** Genesis 28:10-17, God's Surprising Presence
- Aug. 22:** Genesis 32:22-28, What Is Your Name?
- Aug. 29:** Genesis 35:1-7, Go Up To Bethel!

## WORSHIP MUSIC

- Aug. 1:** Lori Ludwig & Elna Hickson
- Aug. 8:** Vacation Bible School Kids!



## Vacation Bible School Starts August 2!

Vacation Bible School (VBS) is set for Monday, August 2 through Friday, August 6, from 9 am to 12 noon each day. We want to spread the good news of Jesus to as many children as we can. Don't forget to invite family, friends, and neighbors.

To provide a meaningful experience for all the children, the costs can add up—VBS costs approximately \$35 per student. There are many ways you can help us nurture our youngest. You can make a donation that is labeled "VBS", you can donate a sponsorship for \$35, or grab a "gem" from our VBS display in the narthex—each supports a particular VBS item.

Don't forget to mark your calendars and join us in the fun during VBS week. Brighten your summer by being a volunteer. The joy and smiles of children will fill

your heart. It is uplifting for all. You are all treasured!

For more information, email [childrensmin@mequonumc.org](mailto:childrensmin@mequonumc.org) or visit MUMC's website and check out "Children's Ministry".

## From the Pastor

I quite agree with what Robert Fulghum said about dandelions. He said, "If dandelions were rare and fragile, people would knock themselves out to pay \$14.95 a plant, raise them by hand in a greenhouse, and form dandelion societies and all that. But they are everywhere..., so we call them "weeds."



I grew up in Seoul, Korea where dandelions are not everywhere. They appear in spring sparingly and are definitely appreciated by many as one of the flowers that show the beauty of spring. When I was a little girl, my friends and I made dandelion rings, bracelets, and bouquets if we were lucky to find many of them. And I still think dandelions are flowers, but I don't appreciate them as much as I used to. Why? Because they lack rareness here in Wisconsin. They are everywhere throughout spring.

Dandelions are not the only things that are less appreciated due to their lack of rareness, are they? It's easy to take things for granted such as three meals a day, clean water, fresh air, a roof overhead, a healthy body to work with, family and friends to love and laugh with, and freedom to worship our God. The thing is, however, that not everyone in the world has the privilege to enjoy what I just mentioned. Rather, it is a very rare privilege. But often times we lack contentment or gratitude simply because of lack of rareness. So friends, may we have eyes to see the precious rareness in/from life we have so that we may be more content and grateful for the life that has been gifted to us!

With a thankful heart,  
Sue Lee

## Welcome MUMC's New Minister of Music

Hello MUMC family! My name is Deanna Gibeau. As your new Music Minister I have already had the pleasure of meeting with Rick Gattoni and of being introduced to Pastor Sue, the Staff-Parish Relations Committee, your lovely office staff, and several choir members at interviews and other prep meetings. I am very much looking forward to meeting all of you in the coming weeks at Mequon United Methodist Church as we come together in worship and praise each Sunday.

At the beginning of the summer, I visited my childhood church community at St.

Paul's United Methodist Church in Manitowoc while attending a dear friend's memorial. I had been baptized and confirmed at St. Paul's and brought up by many of the people who attended this gathering. Reconnecting with them reminded me of the significance of their roles in my life and of the love and support that was present in this vibrant and caring congregation as I grew up there.

The St. Paul's community allowed me the opportunity to provide music for their services and events throughout my youth. My first organist job at age 14 was at Wesley United Methodist Church, and I then went on to play organ and conduct the choir at Trinity United Methodist while in college in Madison. In the years since then

I have taught private voice and piano, composed a bit, spearheaded and conducted children's and women's choirs, organized choral festivals and visiting choir tours, and music directed and performed with various choral, religious, and theater groups. I even had the wonderful experience of singing with Bel Canto for a few years!

Coming full circle by joining all of you at MUMC as your new Music Minister, I am happy to find myself returning to my Methodist roots, and very grateful for the opportunity to serve in this way. As we raise our voices in song together, I am confident that we also will continue building this vibrant and caring community with God's grace through our music. And how beautiful that you are known as the "music church" in the Wisconsin Conference!

As we continue with the beloved traditions of choir anthems, special music, seasonal cantatas, and hymn singing, I am looking forward to trying out other and diverse musical offerings that also give us opportunities to experience God's love in joyful and meaningful ways. I am looking forward to seeing you at church and at coffee hour beginning August 22!

Sincerely,  
Deanna Gibeau



## Announcements

**MUMC is in need of volunteers** to staff the nursery during worship each Sunday in August. If you are able to help, please phone Carol Bayne at 262-242-4770 or email her at [office@mequonumc.org](mailto:office@mequonumc.org).

**Since returning to in-person worship**, MUMC is in need of only one usher each Sunday morning. Because we are not collecting the offering during worship and are using pre-packaged communion elements, the usher has only three responsibilities: distributing the bulletin as worshipers enter, counting the number of attendees, and collecting the offering to put into the safe in the office. If you are available to usher, please sign up at [signupgenius.com](http://signupgenius.com). You can also let Carol know in the office. Thank you in advance for your service!

**Susan Solverson reports** that blood pressure screenings will return to MUMC beginning in September on the second Sunday of every month following worship service.

**Sonlight is in need of some additional riding toys** (tricycles, etc.) for children ages 2 through 5. Perhaps you have such a toy you no longer need and would be willing to donate it to Sonlight. If so, please contact Sue Lyon, Director, at 262-242-4771 to make arrangements for delivery or pick-up.

Thanks,  
Ed Mordy, Church Trustee

**Dear MUMC family**—Thank you so much for the wonderful celebration of our music ministry at the end of June. We know that there are too many of you to name individually, so please just know that we appreciated all of you who contributed to the service, the luncheon, the flowers, the bench, but most of all, to the MUSIC!

Fondly,  
Michelle and Rick

**Thank you, Volunteers!** Thank you to everyone who helped with the reception for Rick and Michelle on Sunday, June 27.

Shelley Burns planned the menu, shopped, and prepared the main dishes. As you saw, we had plenty of salads and lots of variety. This church does a great job making food! Thank you to Katie Jackson for the amazing floral arrangements on all the tables, and Ann Miller for washing and ironing the tablecloths. So many of you volunteered to set up, serve and clean up, it was truly appreciated and made it a very special event.

Thank you again for all your hard work,  
Susan Caldwell

## August Youth Group Yodel

MUMC's youth group has returned from its 2021 Mission Trip to Chattanooga, Tennessee. It was a little bittersweet as it was a super small camp and our last trip. But we made every second count and the trip was one of the best!

We were tasked with replacing some of our resident's soffits, then we painted all of the soffits and fascia boards on the house. Our resident was incredibly appreciative and loved having us there. She provided snacks and drinks throughout the hot workdays. With the help of a 30' ladder we were able to completely finish our project for our resident.

We spent our free time cheering on the Bucks, playing a lot of Uno, and exploring the mountains around the area. On our half day we went swimming and then on a boat tour of Chattanooga. Of course we had to indulge in some BBQ ribs while we were there!!

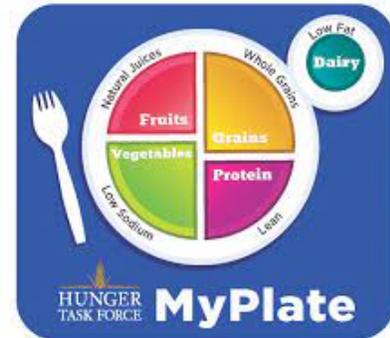
We had a blast and that was all possible because of our supportive congregation, thank you!

# Outreach Committee Ministries

## . . . Hunger Task Force Food Drive

Mission Outreach is hosting a food drive for Hunger Task Force the weekend of August 20 - 22. There are several ways to donate non-perishable items for this vital community organization that provides food for so many. You can bring your donations to Mequon UMC and place them in the donation boxes in Sonlight Child Development Center and in the church entrance. You can also drive through to the Midwest Distribution Trailer in the parking lot near the community gardens. Members of the Mission Outreach team will be there on Friday, August 20 from 4 – 6 pm and again right after church on Sunday, August 22.

Wonder what to donate? Hunger Task Force needs foods for the "My Plate" nutrition program. Choose healthy, nutrition-packed foods rather than highly processed, boxed foods. Foods that are especially needed are low fat boxed milk, canned vegetables that are low in sodium, canned fruits packed in their own juice, 100% fruit juices, lean meats, and whole grain cereals and pastas. Foods for babies and toddlers are also needed.



To see the full list of foods needed go to:

<https://www.hungertaskforce.org/what-we-do/myplate-what-do-i-donate/>

Check out our webpage, <http://www.mequonumc.org/mission-outreach.html> for more information or contact Marilyn Zwissler, Member, Mission Outreach team.

## . . . Featuring Community Gardens and The Prayer Shawl Ministry

This article is a continuation of our 2021 series of Outreach Committee Ministries articles sharing information about the charitable organizations and groups we honor with our time and treasure. With your faithful support, we are helping to make God's Love Real. Thank you!

### **Community Gardens**

The Outreach committee is pleased to support in-house committees and ministries which support our mission of providing basic food, shelter, and clothing to those in need. In 2017, the Community Garden Committee (formerly part of the Green Team) established the first MUMC community gardens with a few small demonstration plots on asphalt. Later, land behind the parking lot was cleared to make way for larger 16' x 16' plots which were offered to church members, neighbors, and friends for a nominal fee. Jim Layton has been instrumental in managing the gardens.

By the year 2020, the gardens grew to ten plots and a Byron Jackson Memorial patch that produced 1,200 pounds of produce shared by 150 neighbors, church members, and a food pantry client! The gardens benefit the gardeners as well, providing community and an outdoor oasis during the pandemic.

Today, MUMC is host to twelve garden plots, the Byron Jackson Memorial, and a youth garden which are on track to double its impact on the community. Learn more

on August 29, from noon to 2 pm, when the Community Garden Committee hosts an Open House for gardeners to share their harvest and information with interested church members and friends.

In 2020, the Outreach Committee contributed \$500 to the Community Garden. In 2021, Jim Layton applied for and received a grant from the United Methodist Foundation.

### **Prayer Shawl Ministry**

A few years ago, as Ireene Sullivan mourned the death of her sister, she shared a story of consolation with the Outreach Committee and a new idea was born. While her sister was ill, someone gave her a prayer shawl – a small blanket – for comfort. It was prayed over as it was made, arrived with a thoughtful verse, and provided comfort to the recipient as it was used. Crocheting and knitting are arts that are best passed on from generation to generation, friend to friend. What if Mission Outreach sponsored a Prayer Shawl Ministry? Men and women could meet and build a community by getting together to learn from each other. Seniors and the infirm could use their time and talent to contribute to the Outreach Mission – without leaving their homes. And recipients, young and old, would benefit from the gift of a blanket and a prayer. Was there anyone on the committee or in the congregation who had the creativity and organizational skills to launch this new ministry? Marie Widder, of course!



Marie Widder graciously accepted the Mission Outreach challenge and launched the Prayer Shawl Ministry in 2019. After selecting patterns and verses, purchasing yarn and needles, and assembling kits, several participants planned to meet on a regular basis to learn and exchange ideas. Word spread and Marie was able to add participants from other communities such as Newcastle. The timing was impeccable. As the pandemic hit, the ministry took off. Pastor Sue shared the prayer blankets with ailing members and friends of the congregation. As the joy of creating and receiving blankets expanded, so did the patterns and community Outreach. Today, the Ministry provides prayer shawls to comfort those who are ill, mittens and gloves for those in need, and children's blankets for baptisms.

In 2020, the Outreach Committee underwrote \$586 of expenses for the Prayer Shawl Ministry. In 2021, Marie Widder applied for and received a grant from the United Methodist Foundation.

## **From the Wisconsin UM Foundation**

### **Summer: God is not on Vacation August 2021**

*“Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.” Matthew 6:34*

The pace of August is often hectic and life (yours, your children's, your family's) takes you in many directions. But let us remember, God does not take a summer vacation! God is always here for us, so should not we make time for God this summer? The church is not closed during the summer, we are still open! We still

worship on Sundays! The pastor continues to preach sermons and the secretary still writes and prints the bulletin. The pianists prepare and practice each week to lead music in worship. The ushers and greeters show up each Sunday and the communion stewards set up communion. The church is open for worship! So, I invite you to make church part of your summer plans.

When you are in town, I invite you to come to worship. (Though sleeping in may sound fun, remember, God doesn't sleep in.) When you are out of town, I encourage you to find a church wherever you may be. If you cannot find a church, try to worship as a family. Sing hymns, read scriptures, and ask one another where they see God present. Church is an important part of Christian discipleship. It is good for you to be with other Christians and with God. It is good for you to give of your time, talents, and treasures. It is good for you to recharge and recenter. It may be nice outside, but don't forget you also need Son-shine!

What are your summer plans? School may be out, but church is not. Summer is here. Enjoy the Son-shine!

Rev. Krystal Goodger, Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation

## From the Wisconsin Conference

Editor's note: Since the beginning of the pandemic, the Cabinet in our Wisconsin Conference has posted a daily devotion, called a Reflection, that is worthwhile reading. Each one is well written and thought-provoking; many, like the two below, both by Rev. Tsuker Jang, are exceptionally so.

Reflection for July 15, 2021, by Tsuker Jang

### Source of Strength and Comfort

*This is what the Lord says: "Cursed is the one who trusts in man, who draws strength from mere flesh and whose heart turns away from the Lord. That person will be like a bush in the wastelands; they will not see prosperity when it comes. They will dwell in the parched places of the desert, in a salt land where no one lives. But blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord, whose confidence is in him. They will be like a tree planted by the water that sends out its roots by the stream. It does not fear when heat comes; its leaves are always green. It has no worries in a year of drought and never fails to bear fruit." Jeremiah 17:5-8*

This past Fourth of July weekend I had the opportunity to visit the Mall of America again. I went there because my two kids were bored at home. They wanted to do something fun and exciting. So we decided to go to Hmong Village, a marketplace in St. Paul, to eat some Hmong delicacy and authentic food. Then we went from there to the Mall of America.

The Mall had changed so much since it was built. There were many changes, new scenes, and a new variety of stores, and more scary rides in the Nickelodeon Park, which now is called Nickelodeon Universe. I don't like going to the Mall very much or to get on any of the scary rides at the Nickelodeon Universe, but my two kids were having a blast on those rides. I used to take them



there and ride with them. Now that I am no longer young, I do not like the up and down, the deep fall and twist of those rides. Something could happen. They frighten me and give me fears and worries. I could get hurt or even have a heart attack.

Are you fearful or living with worries these days? Life is filled with ups and downs, twists and falls, like a roller coaster ride. Where do you draw your strength or your breath at those fearful moments? Who do you turn to when things get tough? The word of God came to Jeremiah at the time that life was difficult and filled with worries. The rich were getting richer, and the poor were getting poorer. On top of that, the country was torn apart in war. People were doubtful of their daily survival, and they turned to other gods and other nations for help. Sadly, God was not the one whom they turned to.

Let's not forget to turn to God when life is tough. I give thanks that we have someone whom we can always count on in difficult times... our God. God is always there for us, not only in times of joy, but all the time. God gives us strength because God is our primary source of strength, our stream and river, our rock, our refuge and our redeemer. May God's words through Jeremiah remind us that we who "trust in the LORD, whose confidence is in him, we will be like a tree planted by the water that sends out its roots by the stream... its leaves are always green. It has no worries in a year of drought and never fails to bear fruit." These words describe who we really are. May they be our strength and comfort as we live and overcome all the "droughts" of life.

*Lord, you are the Lord of life and the Lord of our strength and comfort. You are like a river that provides water each day so that we, like a tree, can always be green and bear fruit. Give us strength today, and help us to turn to you every day, not just in time of need and difficulty, that we may become your water and bear good fruit for others who are fearful and worried these days. Amen.*

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Reflection for July 26, 2021, by Tsuker Yang

### **Godliness is not Goodness**

*Have nothing to do with profane myths and old wives' tales. Train yourself in godliness, for, while physical training is of some value, godliness is valuable in every way, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come. The saying is sure and worthy of full acceptance. 1 Timothy 4:7-9*

Reading Paul's letter to his young colleague, Timothy, is often inspiring and encouraging to me in the life we have as Christians, and particularly as pastors and leaders. Every Christian is a minister, every disciple of Jesus Christ is young and in need of instruction. Paul's words still seem lively to me as nuggets of gold, as wisdom from my elders that is worth more than gold and silver, for me to heed and to practice in my life and my ministry.

What touches me here is Paul's word about "godliness" as being more superior in value or quality of life than anything else..."holding promise for both the present life and the life to come... worthy of full acceptance." Godliness is not the same as goodness, righteousness, holiness, kindness, gentleness ... which we often refer to or use interchangeably with our moral obligation and character. Godliness has its focus in God – God's goodness, interest, will and purpose for life. The means of grace or works of piety and mercy are certainly godliness... as long as our focus is on God. Paul said for Timothy and us to "train yourself in godliness" and "have

nothing to do with profane myths and old wives' tales." Paul was being personal and directive to Timothy. But I believe we all have our own "profane myths and old wives' tales"... our interests, values, wisdom, knowledge, rights, plans, focus, even shortcoming, etc. These have great value, yet godliness is to be superior over all these things.

Christianity is not about goodness but godliness... honoring God and doing God's will and living God's way in our lives. This should be our focus, our will, our goal, our training, our pursuit, and our practice... as United Methodists, ministers and disciples of Jesus Christ, though many people today live their Christian life only in the sense of goodness rather than godliness.

So, let's take a moment to reflect today, what does godliness mean to you? How do you go about living with godliness in a world that is bombarded with special interests, insecurity, different knowledge, desires, plans and goals? Where do you see godliness fit in as you look forward for tomorrow... for our life and church together? My hope is that we keep our eyes on Jesus... seeing God's big picture and being true to his will, way, interest, purpose, and goal.

*Prayer: Lord, we praise you for your words of wisdom from Paul. The world today is filled with goodness that is worthy of praise. But your way and your goodness are transcended in all of these. Teach us how to live in godliness, and not to look after our own goodness or interest, but to your goodness and interest. Forgive us our sins, make us holy, and give us the heart to do your will in all that we say and do. Amen.*

## Christian Symbol of the Month

### Water

Water flows through the Scriptures: the flood, the Red Sea crossing, the healing of Naaman's leprosy when he washed in the Jordan River, water springing from a rock to nourish Israelites in the wilderness, John's baptism of Jesus and, chiefly, our baptism into Christ. The water of baptism symbolizes cleansing from sin, the quenching of our spiritual thirst, and God raising us from death (drowning in sin) to life everlasting. Just as we can't live without physical water, neither can we truly live without the living water that Jesus gives (see John 4:13-14).



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

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SPIRE Editor [Marilyn Meyer](#)

Calendar by [Carol Bayne](#)

Mailing Assistants: Shirley Campbell, Susan Caldwell, Sandy Christensen, Chris Debbink, Barb Henneck, Ann Miller

Pastor [Sue Lee](#)

Office Manager [Carol Bayne](#)

MUMC Office 262-242-4770

MUMC Office Email:

Finance Manager [Laurie Rausch](#)  
Ministers of Music [Rick & Michelle Hynson](#)  
Organist [Elna Hickson](#)  
Director of Children's Ministries [Gayle Meyer](#)  
Youth Directors [Jenna Burns and Patrick Curran](#)  
Sonlight YMCA Early Childhood Education Center  
Director [Sue Lyon](#)  
Webmaster [Marcia Schwager](#)

[office@mequonumc.org](mailto:office@mequonumc.org)  
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/ Closed Fridays

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