

SPIRE Newsletter



October 2021

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CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS

Oct. 2: Marsh Meadow workday
Oct. 3: World Communion Sunday
Oct. 5: Lunch Bunch
Oct. 6: Women's prayer meeting
Oct. 6: Day of Remembrance for Native Americans
Oct. 7: Men's prayer meeting
Oct. 10: Bread Sunday
Oct. 10: Family Sharing food collection begins
Oct. 10: Blood pressure screening
Oct. 14: Reflections book group
Oct. 24: Commitment Sunday
Oct. 25-29: Family Promise week
Oct. 30: Marsh Meadow workday
Oct. 31: Reformation Day
Nov. 1: Family Sharing food collection ends
Dec. 6-10: Family Promise week

WORSHIP SERMON SPOTLIGHT October Preaching Schedule

Oct. 3: Presence, Luke 10:38-42 & Psalm 100:1-5
Oct. 10: Service, Ephesians 2:8-10
Oct. 17: Gifts, John 6:1-15
Oct. 24: Witness, John 9:1-25
Oct. 30: Children's Sabbath Sunday

WORSHIP MUSIC

Oct. 3: Lori Ludwig & Elna Hickson
Oct. 10: Jeff & Deanna Gibeau

2022 MUMC Stewardship Campaign

We as a church are in the middle of a membership covenant renewal and a growth group study entitled "I am a Church Member." In the book *I am a Church Member* by Thom S. Rainer, he titles Chapter 6, "I Will Treasure Church Membership as a Gift." He explains that church membership is a gift. A gift must be treasured. It should not be taken for granted or considered lightly. Because it is a gift, we must always be thankful for it. When we receive a gift with true appreciation, we naturally want to respond to the Giver.

In the coming weeks you will receive a commitment card in the mail. We hope you will prayerfully consider giving your best gift, keeping in mind the words of 2 Corinthians 9:7, "Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver."

Commitment Sunday is October 24. Thank you for your commitment to our church.

Mike Debbink and the MUMC Finance Committee

From the Pastor

As we were about to start the five-week MUMC Membership Covenant Renewal on September 26, I asked one of our church members what setting aside a time daily for devotions and prayer with/to the Lord means to her. She articulated powerfully and eloquently, and I'd like to share what she wrote with you to share the blessing that I felt when I read it.

Our parents taught us to believe in God's power that allows us to move forward in grace. As I have matured spiritually over the years, all their teachings are beginning to make more sense. Now I freely invite the Holy Spirit (my guide) to be a part of my daily life for these reasons:

- To set the tone for today's activities
- To refresh my brain (clear the clutter)
- To feel and listen to the presence of God just for a moment
- To humble my heart
- To trust in God's protection and provision
- To know that God is with me through challenging and quiet times

Each of us has a prayer in our hearts; pray that prayer and watch God work wonders in your life.

MUMC's Membership Covenant is based on the UMC Membership Covenant that all professing members make as they join the church.

Mequon United Methodist Church Membership Covenant: As a member of Mequon United Methodist Church,

- ***Prayers:*** I will set aside a time daily for devotions and prayer. I will pray for my church, its ministry, and church leaders.
- ***Presence:*** I will strive to attend weekly worship services and growth group studies to grow in faith.
- ***Gifts:*** I will honor God by giving my income with the goal of tithing.
- ***Service:*** I will give my talents and service to make God's love real to others in my church and beyond church walls.
- ***Witness:*** I will be a unifying church member by acting with love toward other members, by engaging my conversations about my church in a positive way, and by inviting those who don't have their church home to my church.

Friends, the mission of the church is *making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world*, and *discipleship is what our MUMC membership is aiming for* through our payers, our presence, our service, our gifts, and our witness. May all MUMC family be intentional to become more faithful and fruitful disciples of Jesus Christ through this journey of renewal!

In Christ,
Sue Lee

Bread Sunday Kicks Off Season of Giving

The Mission Outreach Committee invites you to

coffee hour following worship on Sunday, October 10, 2021, to break bread together, to give thanks for our blessings, and to prepare to share our bounty for the upcoming holidays.



The Mission Outreach Committee will “kick off” the Thanksgiving season and the start of the Thanksgiving food collection for Family Sharing of Ozaukee County on Bread Sunday, which is an annual MUMC tradition. But this year the Mission Outreach Committee will serve a variety of delicious breads to YOU after worship, during coffee hour! In return, your monetary donations will be appreciated and given to Family Sharing of Ozaukee County to lift up the needs of others in our community during the Thanksgiving holiday.

Also, during the Bread Sunday coffee hour, plan on picking up an empty grocery bag with an attached list of nonperishable foods requested by Family Sharing of Ozaukee County for Thanksgiving. Fill the bag with your donations and return to church by Monday, November 1.

Requested Nonperishable Foods:

- boxed mashed potatoes
- canned sweet potatoes
- boxed stuffing mix
- canned gravy
- canned pumpkin
- pumpkin pie spice
- canned cranberry sauce
- boxed pie crust (not refrigerated or frozen)
- canned french-fried onions (as a topping for green bean casserole)



Thank you for helping to serve the needs of low-income, elderly, and disabled residents of Ozaukee County! The Mission Outreach Committee looks forward to sharing breads with our congregation during the coffee hour on Bread Sunday, October 10!

Questions? Contact Susan Yorio by phone at 262-853-3933 or by email at susanyorio9113@gmail.com.

Announcements

Many thanks to Jim Layton, our Community Gardens Coordinator, for all of the work he puts into making the gardens such a success. This growing season, 400 pounds of fresh produce from our gardeners were donated to our Ozaukee County neighbors at the Saukville Food Pantry. Using the community garden standard value of \$2 per pound, that is equivalent to an \$800 donation.

On Sunday, September 26, Light of the World, this year’s Christmas Cantata, by Arnold B. Sherman, was introduced at choir rehearsal. Join our Sanctuary Choir and bring any friends and family members along who love to sing, as we begin to prepare this beautiful music to worship and celebrate the birth of our Lord. Contact Deanna with any questions at deannagibeau99@gmail.com.

Marsh Meadow workdays are set for Saturday, October 2 and Saturday,

October 30, from 9 am to noon. We will be clearing buckthorn from the Marsh Meadow. Please bring leather gloves and loppers or heavy-duty pruners. Linda Mordy will provide water and snacks. If you have questions, contact Linda at lmordy@sbcglobal.net or 262-242-8091.

October Prayer Meetings The women's monthly prayer meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, October 6 at 7:30 am, and the men's monthly prayer meeting is scheduled for Thursday, October 7 at 7 am. Both meetings will be held in person, in the parlor. All are welcome.

Ireene Sullivan would like to extend a heartfelt "thank you" to every baker who so generously provided desserts for Meal Site during September. The response was fabulous! Thank you!

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.

Ed Mordy
Church Trustee



Transforming MUMC

Exciting News!! Lilly Endowment, a private philanthropic foundation that supports community development, education, and religion, has provided a 3-year grant for Mequon United Methodist Church and three other churches in southeast Wisconsin to participate in a program called "*Transforming Church: A Visioning Roadmap.*" The other churches in our 'church cohort' are Lutheran Church of the Resurrection in Racine, Christ Church United Methodist in Racine, and Spirit Alive! Church in Kenosha.

Transforming Church is designed to help congregations thrive by helping them discover their unique contribution to their local community, congregational life, and Christian tradition. Consulting advisors will provide pastors and congregational leaders from our four churches with the tools to establish initiatives aimed at meeting evolving cultural and community contexts while protecting the unique values and identity of each individual church.

A thriving congregation is a unique congregation, embracing its own sense of identity while remaining firmly rooted in Christian practices and traditions. Specific outcomes will vary from church to church. Rather than focusing on model-based metrics, such as attendance or giving, JH Consulting & Leighton Ford Ministries will help each congregation:

- clearly identify their rapidly changing social and cultural context, and the issues that context creates for their congregation
- effectively prepare members and leaders to begin the process of necessary change
- gain greater clarity about their values, mission, and strategic direction
- develop an enhanced sense of community
- increase the level of ministry partnership between staff and laity

- increase ministry outreach in their community

Activities over the three years will include:

- pastors participating together in leadership development led by consultant and coach John Holm
- lay leaders from each church participating in four retreats focused on discovering, visioning, and implementation
- members of each congregation engaging in focus groups, surveys, and a debrief process

FIRST STEPS STARTED IN SEPTEMBER! MUMC's Administration Council joined other church leaders in a one-day retreat on September 25, and ALL MUMC MEMBERS will be asked to complete a Transforming Church Insight congregational survey. At a broad level, survey questions will measure:

- Community: Our church's relational connections, friendliness, and hospitality
- Code: Our church's sense of identity
- Calling: How MUMC members feel about leadership, change management, and financial stewardship
- Cause: The impact our church has on our members as well as in the local community
- Change: Our church's capacity for change

Here is what the First Presbyterian Church of Orlando said after participating in *Transforming Church* visioning.

"The Transforming Church journey was a game-changer for us! By God's design, the process allowed us to honestly confront current issues while prayerfully considering how we might live into a new future. It completely re-energized our staff, elders, and congregation, and – for the first time – we have a roadmap for the future that is driven by the Holy Spirit as discerned by the collective will of His people."

Of the other churches around the country that have participated in this program, 98% reported an increase in local ministry, a greater sense of community, and a dramatic increase in attendance and engagement in ministries.

Surveys are available online; paper surveys are in the narthex. Contact the office if you want a paper survey mailed to you. Please prayerfully consider the survey, and respond fully and sincerely. **Your responses are vital in guiding MUMC's future** Please submit paper surveys to the church office in a sealed envelope by October 11; submit online surveys by October 18. Help prepare MUMC for an even brighter future as we, collectively, strive To Make God's Love Real in a changing world.

Church-wide Study Continues in October

From the Adult Christian Education Team

Sign Up Now for Church-Wide Growth Group Study! We at MUMC have an opportunity to discover the privilege and responsibility of belonging to a local church. On September 28 we began a four-week study of Thom S. Rainer's book, *I Am a Church Member: Discovering the Attitude that Makes the Difference*.

You may recall that each church member received this book in 2019. If you are

unable to find your copy, we can get you another. Our goal is to have every member participate in a one-hour class once a week for four weeks; each class will be offered four times each week for your convenience, with in-person and Zoom options.

Session 1:

On Zoom: 9/28 at 7 pm; 9/30 at 11 am

In parlor: 9/30 at 7 pm; 10/2 at 9 am

Session 2:

On Zoom: 10/5 at 7 pm; 10/7 at 11 am

In parlor: 10/7 at 7 pm; 10/9 at 9 am

Session 3:

On Zoom: 10/12 at 7 pm; 10/14 at 11 am

In youth room: 10/14 at 7 pm

In parlor: 10/16 at 9 am

Session 4:

On Zoom: 10/19 at 7 pm; 10/21 at 11 am

In parlor: 10/21 at 7 pm; 10/23 at 9 am

There is a sign-up sheet in the narthex; you can also email Pastor Sue or Carol Bayne to sign up.

Music Ministry News

MUMC choir schedule, October-December 2021

Women's Choir

Rehearsals—

Sun., Oct. 3 at 6 pm

Sun., Oct. 10 at 6 pm

Sun., Oct. 17 at 6 pm

Sun., Oct. 24 at 8:42 am

Gift of Music—

Sun., Oct. 24 at 9:30 am church service

Sun., Oct. 31 (with children) at 9:30 am church service

Men's Choir

Rehearsals—

Sun., Oct. 31 at 6 pm

Sun., Nov. 7 at 6 pm

Sun., Nov. 14 at 6 pm

Sun., Nov. 21 at 8:42 am

Gift of Music—

Sun., Nov. 21 at 9:30 am church service

Sanctuary Choir

Rehearsals—

Sun., Oct. 3 at 7:15 pm

Sun., Oct. 10 at 7:15 pm

Sun., Oct. 17 at 7:15 pm

Sun., Oct. 24—no rehearsal
Sun., Oct. 31 at 7:15 pm
Sun., Nov. 7 at 7:15 pm
Sun., Nov. 14 at 7:15 pm
Sun., Nov. 21—no rehearsal
Sun., Nov. 28 at 10:45 am, after church service
Sun., Dec. 5—no rehearsal
Sun., Dec. 12 at 10:45 am, after church service
Sat., Dec. 18, time to be announced, Dress Rehearsal

Gift of Music—

Sun., Dec. 19 at 9:30 am, “Light of the World” Christmas Cantata (meet at 8:30 am before the service)
Fri., Dec. 24 at 9 pm, Christmas Eve service

Mission Outreach Ministries

We are pleased to offer the latest in a series of Outreach Committee articles describing the charitable organizations and ministries we honor with our time and treasure. With your faithful support, we are helping to make God’s Love Real. Thank you!

One of the most important issues addressed by the Outreach Committee, with support from members and friends of the Mequon United Methodist Church, is food insecurity. In addition to the **Community Garden** which supports our congregation, neighbors, and the Saukville Food Pantry, Mission Outreach supports the **Hunger Task Force, Family Sharing of Ozaukee County, Meals on Wheels**, and the **St. Vincent de Paul North Side Meal Site** with financial support and “boots on the ground.”

Founded in 1974, the **Hunger Task Force** is an independent anti-hunger organization created in Milwaukee to prevent hunger and malnutrition with nutritious food offerings to food pantries and residents in need, free of charge. At the end of the year 2020, the Hunger Task force distributed 13 million pounds of food – 30% more than 2019 – even though food pantries were operating at about half-capacity. Each year, the Outreach Committee collects food staples for and participates in an annual Food Sort. This year, with a moratorium on in-person volunteer activities, the Committee initiated an additional food drive in August to supplement on-going collections. Learn more about the Hunger Task Force at www.hungertaskforce.org. In 2021, Mission Outreach allocated \$1,000 to the Hunger Task Force.



Founded in 1978, **Family Sharing** Food Pantry is the oldest running food pantry in Ozaukee County, providing food to residents in need, with dignity and compassion, free of charge. Like the Hunger Task Force, Family Sharing has experienced an enormous increase in demand due to the economic challenges created by COVID-19. Each fall, Mission Outreach kicks off an annual Thanksgiving food drive for Family Sharing with Bread Sunday. Please join the Outreach team, who will be serving you, after our worship service for Bread Sunday on October 10. Learn more about Family Sharing at www.familysharingozaukee.org. In 2021, Mission Outreach allocated \$1,000 to the Family Sharing Food Pantry.

Meals on Wheels offers hot, nutritious meals to people at home in Ozaukee County. Just \$500 purchases 100 meals! In 2021, Mission Outreach allocated \$1,000 to Meals on Wheels. Interested in learning more? Contact Sandy Christensen, liaison, or visit www.co.ozaukee.wi.us/517/Home-Delivered-Meals.

For over twenty years, Mission Outreach has supported the **St. Vincent de Paul Northside Meal Site** in the Harambee neighborhood serving meals to the homeless and food insecure. Due to COVID-19, the in-person meal site is currently closed. Clients pick up dinner curbside at All People's Church in the Harambee neighborhood. We continue to provide desserts on the fourth Thursday of odd months and every fifth Thursday – about ten times per year.

In 2020, St. Vincent de Paul served over 56,000 meals from its two locations. To learn more about the St. Vincent de Paul meal sites, visit www.svdpmilw.org or contact Ireene Sullivan, liaison. In 2021, Mission Outreach allocated \$450 per quarter, \$1,800 annually, to support the St. Vincent de Paul Northside Meal Site.

Family Promise Ministry Update – October 2021

Thank you to MUMC volunteers who helped feed individuals and families who were receiving emergency shelter from Family Promise of Ozaukee County during the week of September 12. Those homemade evening meals are well-appreciated; they not only feed the body, but help heal souls that often feel lost and uncared for.

MUMC fed nine people, including children, who received emergency shelter each night in that September week; but with the continuing support of MUMC and other donors, Family Promise has been able to help so many more Ozaukee households to prevent homelessness. From January through July, Family Promise helped 120 households connect with resources to prevent loss of their living arrangements, and provided rapid re-housing help for another 29 households to get them back into housing quickly.

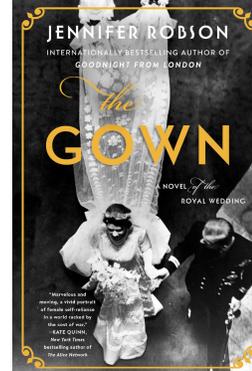
The Family Promise Board and staff also continue to work toward building a shelter so we can get families needing emergency shelter out of expensive (\$14,000 per month) motel living. Working with government grants for funds that will only partially cover the expense of building and furnishing a shelter requires even more time-consuming due-diligence and approvals than working with private donations only. Additionally, current costs for construction materials and delays caused by supply line back orders are increasing the projected expenses for building the shelter and hindering the time-line. But, Family Promise is making steady progress, and the goal remains to open the new shelter in June 2022, God willing.

In the meantime, volunteers in our Family Promise interfaith network will continue to provide meals for the families in emergency motel shelter. **Mark your Calendars for October 25 to 29.** That's the next week when MUMC volunteers will be needed to cook and deliver meals.

Reflections Book Group

The Reflections book group will meet Thursday, October 14 at 7 pm in the church parlor. Our discussion book this month is *The Gown: A Novel of the Royal Wedding* by Jennifer Robson. Here's a brief summary from amazon.com:

With *The Gown*, Jennifer Robson takes us inside the workrooms where one of the most famous wedding gowns in history was created. Balancing behind-the-scenes details with a sweeping portrait of a society left reeling by the calamitous costs of victory, she introduces readers to three unforgettable heroines, their points of view alternating and intersecting throughout its pages, whose lives are woven together by the pain of survival, the bonds of friendship, and the redemptive power of love.



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

Looking ahead . . . our November discussion book will be *Inheritance: A Memoir of Genealogy, Paternity, and Love* by Dani Shapiro.

From the Wisconsin Conference

Editor's note: From the beginning of the pandemic until the end of August 2021, the Cabinet of the Wisconsin Conference posted a daily devotion, called a Reflection, to their website. Since September 1, they are posting a weekly Reflection. Each Reflection is well written and thought-provoking; many like the one below, are exceptionally so.

A Reflection for September 27, 2021 by Dan Schwerin

Psalm 26

*Vindicate me, O Lord,
for I have walked in my integrity,
and I have trusted in the Lord without wavering.*

*Prove me, O Lord, and try me;
test my heart and mind.*

*For your steadfast love is before my eyes,
and I walk in faithfulness to you.*

*I do not sit with the worthless,
nor do I consort with hypocrites;*

*I hate the company of evildoers,
and will not sit with the wicked.*

*I wash my hands in innocence,
and go around your altar, O Lord,
singing aloud a song of thanksgiving,
and telling all your wondrous deeds.*

*O Lord, I love the house in which you dwell,
and the place where your glory abides.*

*Do not sweep me away with sinners,
nor my life with the bloodthirsty,
those in whose hands are evil devices,
and whose right hands are full of bribes.*

*But as for me, I walk in my integrity;
redeem me, and be gracious to me.*

*My foot stands on level ground;
in the great congregation I will bless the Lord.*

I wonder what words you use when you pray after having done everything right and life is still a mess. What tone would you use with God? What is your next prayer

when you watch and pray in silence?

Psalm 26 is a prayer for vindication while it is not yet seen on the horizon. After the first line cries out, the one who prays takes a personal inventory saying, 'I have walked'—'and I have trusted!'

It seems to me this writer has made an offering of integrity and is praying that this offering would be enough for God. One of the meanings of the word integrity is, 'the state of being whole and undivided.' When Jeremiah says, 'no one is righteous,' he reminds hearers that no one has an undivided moral quality. Ministry in a pandemic time, life in Covid times is certainly not undivided—we often feel as if we are not keeping up with family or work commitments—and complexity only increases across our days. Now the UMC has much to make whole: its history with First Nation Peoples, the abuse being alleged in a partnered relationship with the Boy Scouts, and the many miles before us as we walk into racial justice and radical inclusion.

But maybe the kernel of this prayer is that the faithful can offer God 'integrity enough,' then watch and pray.

My wife Julie and I walk at night and watch the moon in its phases. Last night it was full, but not every evening can the moon be perfectly full. Sometimes I think, waxing or waning, the moon is full enough to speak mystery and depth and for us to see beauty in its face. Some days what you give to home or work or to God's reign of justice and mercy is less than what you had hoped, and yet it is offering enough for the altar today. Tomorrow we get to come back and make an offering again. Meantime the corn is ripe in the field. The milkweeds are giving birth, and we join together with the power of Christ's presence where two or three are gathered.

Sunday is World Communion Sunday. The church is tired from a pandemic, but we live from a union that is both broken and blessed. So, with Psalm 26 as a lectionary reading, let's walk and trust together for the increase of integrity. I will be on my knees with you.

Peace,
Dan Schwerin

Soul Food by Bishop Jung

Think Like a Mountain

We are shaped by our landscape. I know growing up on the Korean Peninsula has meant the mountains are always at my shoulder. Mountains still convey a sense of home even as I live in the prairies of Wisconsin. Perhaps people who grow up in prairie land see a horizon as an agent of God's still, small voice.

Maybe the people who grew up near lakes or rivers hear God's renewing voice in running water. For me, there is a humbling and awe-filled presence waiting for me in relationship to a mountain. The presence of my ancestors on my home mountain



and its seasonal colors are like a clock's face. The mountain is a mother and father and friend at my shoulder.

The prophet Isaiah promises God's reign will order the dis-ordered harmonies of creation. 11:9 proclaims: "they will neither hurt nor destroy on my holy mountain." Why? The second half of the verse says: "the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord." Knowledge of God leads to harmony, not only between God and neighbor, but among and between creatures. The wolf will live with the lamb because knowledge of God settles the appetite of the predator.

The Wisconsin Conservationist Aldo Leopold, author of *A Sand County Almanac*, advises us to think like a mountain. He lamented the desire of some to eradicate wolves. Without them the face of the mountain is scarred with too many deer runs and too little vegetation. To think like a mountain is to think of the intended harmony of the whole. God has made us in relationship. Everything from Protons to Neutrons to Monarchs and Milkweed is in relationship. Relationship teaches us about proportion and the consequences of harm. Our God is a world-affirming God who continues God's self-giving nature in creation. Too often we have served world-destroying idols and peddled easy and short-sighted theologies. As Deuteronomy 5:14 describes it, Sabbath-keeping communities provide for rest that renews all creatures. On the Sabbath, ox, donkey, or livestock are no longer beasts of burden to be commodified but they are released to be renewed by their proper relationship with the created order and Creator.

Every human creature is impacted by the dis-order of systemic sin and living out of proportion to our relationship in creation. Tribal nations and communities of color, immigrants and low-income communities are those who suffer most from air-quality degradation and lead poisoning. Climate justice and planetary health requires that we think like a mountain. Knowledge of God increases harmony and settles the appetite of the predator.

I continue to join a chorus of voices that calls for climate justice and planetary health.

The September 16 bulletin from the General Board of Church and Society's Rev. Dr. Susan Henry Crowe reminds us that the United Methodist Church has long been attentive to the realities of climate change when it adopted the 2016 Social Principles, stating in Paragraph 160.D:

We acknowledge the global impact of humanity's disregard for God's creation. Rampant industrialization and the corresponding increase in the use of fossil fuels have led to a buildup of pollutants in the earth's atmosphere. We therefore support efforts of all governments. These "greenhouse gas" emissions threaten to alter dramatically the earth's climate for generations to come with severe environmental, economic and social implications. The adverse impacts of global climate change disproportionately affect individuals and nations least responsible for the emissions. We therefore support efforts of all governments to require mandatory reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, and call on individuals, congregations, businesses, industries, and communities to reduce their emissions.

The September 7 issue of *The Guardian* featured a story about an unprecedented joint declaration. Pope Francis, the leader of the Roman Catholic church, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, the spiritual leader of the Orthodox church, and the archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, who is the leader of the global Anglican communion, call on the world population: "whatever their beliefs or

worldview” to “listen to the cry of the Earth and of people who are poor.”

Their statement says: “Today, we are paying the price (of the climate emergency). Tomorrow could be worse.” It concludes: “This is a critical moment. Our children’s future and the future of our common home depend on it.”

I would recommend a book entitled *Climate Church, Climate World* by Rev. Jim Antal, who warns about the fiction of living as if our choices do not have impact for us or for creation. He calls on the church to lead by examining its fragility and inability to prayerfully consider planetary health and discern our proper repentance. We must think like a mountain and keep the vows we have made at baptism to do all in our power to order our lives to nurture the life of children. Antal calls on pastors to hear their calling, like Jeremiah and Ezekiel, to deliver a generation and hear the cries of the earth. Siblings, every single day this summer brought fire and storm and heat and waste that puts us in peril.

Where do we go if we cannot go to the woods as a pilgrim of God, or to the waters as First Nation people have harvesting rice and teaching their young? Where will we live if we soil our nest? May we remember racial justice and radical inclusion by living climate justice and remembering the milkweed beetle is our neighbor.

My granddaughter, Sydney Grace, is depending on me to think like a mountain. I pray you do, too. Know that I am praying for you.

In the hope that Jesus offers us,
Bishop Hee-Soo Jung

Christian Symbol of the Month

Oak

Oak trees are common in Israel, and, according to tradition, Jesus' cross may have been made of oak. In the Old Testament, oaks often symbolize strength and longevity. In Hebrew, the words for oak and providence are related, and some important biblical events take place near, or are marked by, oak trees; for example, "The Lord appeared to Abraham by the oaks of Mamre , , ,"



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.

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