

The Current

January 2024



Monthly News from Port Edwards United Methodist Church

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ELEVATOR UPDATE

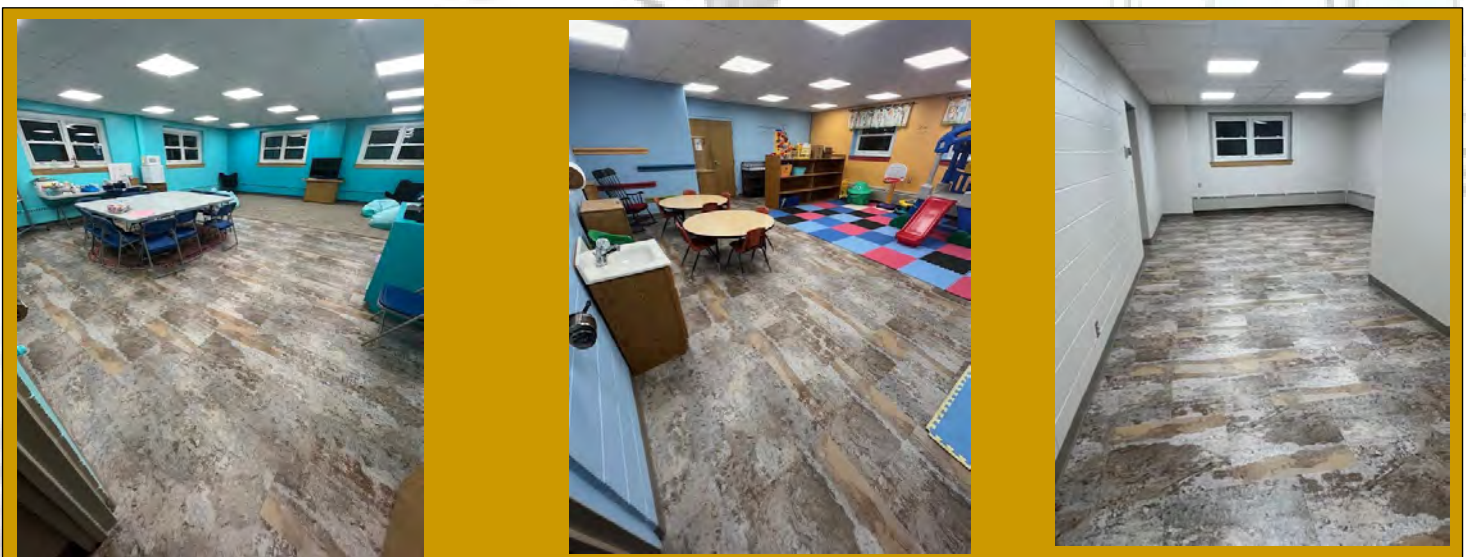
Our project is complete!

Our project finished within our projected budget! The cost did not just include the elevator itself and the tower that houses it, but also new floor tiles and ceiling tiles in 3 rooms in the Lower Level (including new lighting), and well as a new entry into the Memorial Lounge. The total cost was approx. \$410,000.00. We continue to be very appreciative of the \$300,000 contribution from the Alexander Family Foundation!

What about the elevator itself? Our new elevator is a standard one, and while it is nothing “fancy” or “top of the line,” it still features some of the newest technology. Some of this technology is challenging even for the OTIS maintenance crew. Since the November bazaar, the elevator has been having issues “shutting down.” Now, nobody has been stuck inside the elevator yet; it shuts down after it has been resting for a while. As a safety feature, an error code to the main system shuts the machine down. OTIS has made many trips to the church to work on it since its installation, trying to understand what is causing the error code. These problems are well beyond the scope of the church trustees, and OTIS is working tirelessly to understand what is going on. There is not much that can be said about this, except this: each day, OTIS is switching out components and going piece-by-piece through the whole system. This work is completely in OTIS’s hands right now, as we are in that initial period where it is OTIS’s responsibility to get it working.

We apologize for the inconveniences this may be causing. As surely as the sun rises in the east and sets in the west, there will come a day when that elevator functions exactly as we want it to! Until then, we will do our best to keep you updated with this project.

Correction from the article in last month’s newsletter: The “call” button inside the elevator does *NOT* call 9-1-1; it calls the OTIS’s 24/7 customer service. They will call for help in case someone gets stuck.



The Sunday School classroom, the nursery, and the former classroom/storage room were renovated with new flooring and ceiling, equipped with new LED lights in them. The storage room also received a repainting; this room will become The Meeting Room, and will be a place to hold our church meetings, as well as the AA supplies.



Our January-February Mission Project

Fund one "HUNGER RELIEF BUNDLE"
through "Compassion International"

GOAL – Raise \$500

Hunger is one of the greatest challenges we face, and children in poverty are the hardest hit. Our gift will provide critical food security relief for families, mothers, and babies.

With a gift of \$500 toward a Bundle, PEUMC will help provide:

- 5 ****Emergency Food Packs (\$50 each) (\$250 total)**
- **\$160 toward the Global Food Crisis Fund**
- **\$90 for food for a baby and her mother**

****The Emergency Food Packs will provide a family of 5 with a 1-month food supply of essentials like rice, eggs, meat, milk, and corn for less than the cost of a family dinner out at a typical restaurant in the U.S.**

Is "Compassion International" legitimate?

from charitywatch.com (July 2023):

C.I. receives an "A" grade. 82% of proceeds go to overhead. It is considered "Top-rated, "meets government benchmarks," and "meets International transparency benchmarks."

"Compassion International" is ranked #13 on Forbes' 2023 List of 'America's Top 100 Charities' (12-12-23) as has received an 87% on Fundraising Efficiency and 81% on Charitable Commitment.

What is Compassion International?

It is a child-sponsorship organization dedicated to the long-term development of children living in poverty around the world. It is a Christian charity that empowers local churches to provide individualized and holistic care to children in poverty, so they are free to learn, grow, play, and dream. Its headquarters are in Colorado Springs, CO.

Their impact over the last year:

- 2.3M children served.
- 8,600 sponsor churches.
- 1.5M medical interventions.
- 10.6M family food packs.
- 7.6M hygiene kits.
- \$16M given to disaster relief.
- 1.3M letters written to children.

Easter Singers Retreat

Saturday, January 20, 2024
@ 9:00 a.m.



Wisconsin Rapids United Methodist Church
441 Garfield St.
Wisconsin Rapids, WI

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

Wisconsin Rapids United Methodist Community of Faith would like to invite anyone who loves to make a joyful noise to the Lord in our circuit, especially for the journey to Resurrection, Easter Singers. All are welcome to join!

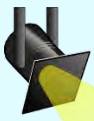
Before we begin this exciting Journey, we will have a couple of hours long Retreat for Relation/Team building and Vocal Technique mastering, singing through some songs that we will make come alive with Jesus' Resurrection.

Please let us know if you are interested in joining through..

wisconsinrapidsumc@gmail.com OR 715-423-8860

Looking forward to seeing you!

Wisconsin Rapids UMC Easter Singers



Church Member Spotlight

William “Bill” Lindroth

How long have you attended PEUMC? Not sure, Pastor Beaton was here when I joined.

What is your favorite memory about PEUMC? The first time I saw the Christmas decorations lit.

What is your favorite hymn or Christian song? “O Come, All Ye Faithful”—I just like the song.

What are your hobbies? Community involvement, Sheepshead cards, computer games.

What is your favorite holiday tradition? Being in contact with our son and daughter and their families

What is your favorite food or recipe? Ham—I am not very kosher.

Share with us some fun facts about yourself:

The most important events in my life have been my marriage to Marna, being present at our daughter’s birth and holding her immediately, and traveling to Manila, Philippines to meet and bring home our son, Ed.

I was born in Central Illinois and raised in suburban Chicago (no, I was never a Bears fan). I left Chicago to attend Hastings College in Nebraska. I am still a Husker fan. Marna and I met in graduate school at Kansas State University pursuing MA degrees in Geography. I also love to watch KSU games. We moved to Pierre SD for Marna’s job in the Department of Natural Resources. I worked in the state Health Department. In SD, we earned MBA degrees from the University of South Dakota. In 1979, Marna was hired as Business Manager for the Rock County Wisconsin Department of Social Services. I worked for the late Milton College and our daughter was born in Janesville.

I earned a PhD in Education from UW Madison in 1985 and was appointed as Assistant Professor and regional administrator at Cardinal Stritch College. I was hired as Dean of General Education at MSTC in 1989 and traveled to meet Ed in 1990.

With what religious traditions did you grow up?

A Swedish ethnic denomination: the Evangelical Covenant Church.

What brought you to this area? The position at MSTC.

Share something fun about yourself that probably nobody at church knows about you. I love cats.

What advice would you give someone curious about our faith or our church?

We are a warm, welcoming church; open to new ways of thinking.



WISCONSIN COUNCIL
OF CHURCHES

COURAGE. JUSTICE. HOLY IMAGINATION.

The WCC strongly encourages congregations to return to using masks in worship and other gatherings. The current wave of COVID and other respiratory virus infections call for increased caution and use of mitigation strategies. By some of the best measures available, we are in the second highest COVID surge after the Omicron wave.

Wisconsin is significantly higher than national and regional trends. (email sent 1/10)

Gifts to Baby Jesus

During our two Christmas Eve services, worshippers were invited to write a message OR draw a picture on a bullet insert. Then they were invited to come forward and place the “gift” in the manger as their offering to Jesus.

Here are some of their responses:

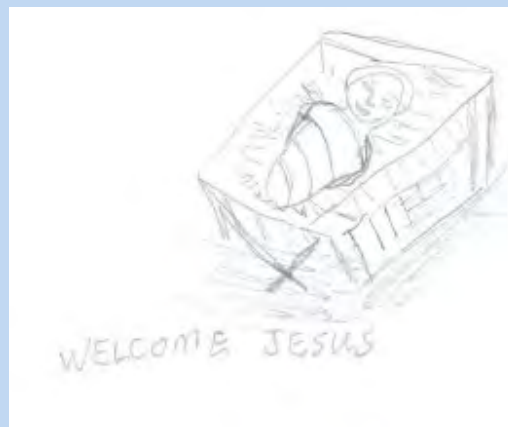
- *“My gift would be to work hard and try to make my corner of the world more peaceful and safer in the coming year.”*
- *“To be generous with my time and talents to help others.
To try to do what I can to make the world a better and kinder place.”*
- *“Peace on earth, the eternal wish by all.”*
- *“Peace and family.”*
- *“My gift to You is my volunteering to make our world a better place.”*
- *“Revelation. Proclamation. Call. Will donate directly to Mary’s Place.”*
- *“I bring a gift of kindness, appreciation, and silence. Happy Birthday, Jesus.”*
- *“Thank you, Jesus”*



Some pictures included:



Any \$ monetary donations \$ given tonight—
placed in the manger or offering box—
will go to MARY'S PLACE—
a transitional housing service to those in need;



We collected **\$172.00** for Mary's Place (Wisconsin Rapids)
during our two Christmas Eve services!

We also collected **\$351.00** for G.R.A.C.E.'s work to alleviate Lincoln High School (Rapids)
of its student lunch debt—collected at our Community Thanksgiving Service!

Nuts & Bolts

BUDGET DISCUSSION, PART 2 OF 3

“Being, and making, disciples of Christ to transform our community and the world!”

In December's newsletter, we reviewed our budgeted MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES for 2024. This month, we are reviewing our UTILITIES EXPENSES (property, church utilities, parsonage utilities). Below is a breakdown of that portion. Utilities are 26.6% of the total budget. NOTE: this includes minor/regular maintenance; not significant/emergency repairs. There is a separate Trustees fund to help cover the cost of such unexpected repairs (new dishwasher, minor roof repair, stone sealing, etc.) *(My annotations are in red.)*

UTILITIES EXPENSES

TRUSTEES - PROPERTY

Property/Liability Insurance..... **\$11,500.00**

This is just a rough number right now. Our insurance will be increasing for 2024. According to Church Mutual, our increase is caused by 4 factors (1) an overall increase in insurance costs across the field, (2) 2022/3 was a particularly bad year for claims, (3) our facility was reassessed, and (4) the addition of the elevator. Our trustees met with our new Church Mutual representative in early December. We review our policy annually. We will be meeting again to discuss Church Mutual's proposed numbers.

Custodial Supplies **\$300.00**

Very minimal. Covers the supplies Kari, our cleaner, would need to purchase to do her job, including paper products for the bathrooms, and tissue boxes.

General Maintenance..... **\$ 6,000.00**

A line item for uncategorized, miscellaneous expenses.

Snow Removal/Mowing Service..... **\$ 3,000.00**

S&S Snow Removal Service (based in Port Edwards) is with whom we are contracting. This is our first year with them. For this winter, our agreement is \$65 to plow the parking lot each time (extra, if we ask for salt). \$75 to shovel the sidewalks (the sidewalk around the entire block). They will ONLY come if it snows 2 inches or more, and only after it stops snowing. However, our Maintenance Technician, Jeff, will try to always make sure the area nearest the main entrance is shoveled and de-iced for our worship services. We use a mixture of salt and sand. Additionally, while our summer mowers are all volunteers, all maintenance to our two lawn mowers, snow blower, leaf blower, weed eater, and gas is taken from this line item.

Parsonage Maintenance **\$ 2,000.00**

For all parsonage-related maintenance. (Just for clarification, to those who are new to this, the parsonage is the church-owned home of the pastor and family; maintenance [including landscaping, appliances, and general maintenance and upkeep], is the responsibility of the church trustees).

Elevator Contract..... **\$ 2,400.00**

The State of Wisconsin requires maintenance contracts for all businesses with an elevator. Our contract will technically start in November of 2024, as we are given a 1-year period of maintenance covered by OTIS. While we will not be spending the full \$2,400.00 in 2024, this does reflect a typical year (\$200 a month for a medium-level maintenance contract that will cover a monthly inspection and basic equipment repairs).

Safe Deposit Box + Bank Fees **\$50.00**

Our church's legal papers are kept here.

TRUSTEES – CHURCH UTILITIES

Heating	\$12,000.00
Electricity.....	\$8,000.00
Water/Sewer	\$1,000.00
Communications (phone & internet).....	\$5,000.00
Copier Contract	\$1,536.00
Garbage Pick-Up Fee.....	\$190.00
Fire Protection Fee	\$354.00

Our utilities were adjusted according to our projected 2024 increase in costs, but they still reflect reality. Our 2022 budget was very close to our budgeted projections. Our Communications includes several phone lines and internet throughout the building. We no longer have Solarus cable boxes at the church. Our Fire Protection Fee covers the required annual inspection of the village by the local fire department, and the inspection of our fire extinguishers by Summit Fire Protection.

TRUSTEES – PARSONAGE UTILITIES

Heating	\$3,000.00
Electricity.....	\$1,800.00
Water/Sewer	\$ 750.00
Communications (phone, internet, cable).....	\$1,716.00
Garbage Pick-Up Fee.....	\$190.00
Fire Protection Fee	\$142.00

Our utilities were adjusted according to our projected 2024 increase in costs, but they still reflect reality. Our 2022 budget was very close to our budgeted projections. Annual Conference Standing Rules require churches to cover the cost of cable, phone, and internet in the parsonage for the pastor's use. In lieu of cable, the church pays for the standard cost of Hulu for \$216 a year; in lieu of a landline phone (this was removed in 2021), the church reimburses the pastor \$720 annually for the use of his cellphone for business purposes. The internet is \$780 annually and is separate from the church's internet.

Total Trustees Expenses: \$60,928.00

This 26.6% of our total church budget for 2024

A METHODIST LEADER'S QUEST TO TRANSFORM KOREAN HISTORY



Photo: Rev. Thomas E. Kim, UM News

United Methodist Bishop Hee-Soo Jung of the Wisconsin Conference preaches at the closing worship service at the Fourth Roundtable for Peace on the Korean Peninsula

on Aug. 31 at the Ambassador Hotel and Kwanglim Methodist Church in Seoul, South Korea. Jung said, "Love can bring pain and make it difficult for us, but we must still love and forgive."

Hailing from Kanghwa Island, a place whose very shores face the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ), the stark boundary that has divided the Korean Peninsula for decades, Jung shared a visceral understanding that everything should be peaceful. "The Korean diaspora scattered around the world has lived with a longing for their hometown and a deep nostalgia

for a hometown they cannot return to due to division," Jung reflected.

"In the recent White House rally and prayer event, we, as representatives of the Korean diaspora, intensified the unified appeal for a peace agreement. Our goal was to spotlight the conclusion of the 70-year ceasefire and galvanize the involvement of churches in both Korea and the United States, specifically The United Methodist Church and Presbyterian Church (USA), to actively contribute to the ongoing pursuit of peace in Korea," shared Jung.

Driven by a profound belief that peace is not only a regional imperative but a global necessity, Jung has taken on multiple leadership roles, serving as the president of the General Board of Global Ministry, chair of the United Methodist Korean National Plan, and a member of the Ecumenical Forum for Korea in Geneva, Switzerland.

"God wants peace on the Korean Peninsula, and for world peace, peace on the Korean Peninsula must be achieved," Jung emphasized.

For Jung, the peace movement is more than just strategic planning. *"In prayer, we can transform division and refrain from demonizing our sisters and brothers in the North. Through prayer, we can nurture hope despite the heightened tensions on the Korean Peninsula. Expressing solidarity with the Korean churches in our prayers strengthens our contribution to the ecumenical efforts for permanent peace in Korea,"* he said.

Against the backdrop of the 70th anniversary of the Korean Armistice Agreement, Jung reflected on the fourth Korean Methodist Church-United Methodist Church-World Methodist Council roundtable, a gathering that saw Methodists from around the world standing shoulder-to-shoulder in solidarity and prayer. The focus: enhancing the Methodist church's contribution to the peacebuilding process in the region. *"We monitor and persuade our church to be responsive, enhancing the normalization of U.S. and North Korea relationships,"* Jung shared. He underscored the importance of advocacy, networking, and active engagement to remove obstacles hindering humanitarian aid, emphasizing a commitment to peaceful processes.

For Jung, the Korean diaspora is not just a scattered community but a testament to resilience, survival, and a relentless pursuit of peace. Through rallies and prayers, the Korean diaspora amplifies its

collective call for a peace agreement, transforming its history into a powerful force for change. *"Division and conflict were their reality, and it remained as an indelible wound and trauma. So peace on the Korean Peninsula is the face of a mother and the warm hearts of brothers. Now, from a place of anti-colonialism and new equality and human rights, we are discussing peace on the Korean Peninsula. It can be said to be a very existential and primordial place of faith,"* shared Jung.

Jung emphasized the divine calling to foster global peace, reflecting on the historic Tozanso process of 1984 led by the World Council of Churches. The urgent mission of the church, amid the pressing global migration crisis, is underscored, addressing the plight of over 70 million displaced individuals. He drew attention to the harsh realities of ongoing conflicts, citing the Gaza Strip and the Russia/Ukraine war, highlighting the necessity of prayer in response.

As Jung envisions a future where the church becomes a healing force and a beacon of peace, his story unfolds as a narrative woven with threads of faith, prayers, and a collective call for reconciliation. *"I am grateful that churches and NGOs around the world are supporting this and praying and joining in as an urgent path to peace. In particular, the strong participation and solidarity of the World Council of Churches serves as an indicator not only for the Korean church but also for many Christians who pray for peace on the Korean Peninsula,"* said Jung.

CLEAN OUT YOUR POCKETS!

"LINT" IS JUST AROUND THE CORNER!



We are continuing our cherished tradition of pairing up with Nekoosa United Church of Christ for our Lenten services. The details are yet to come. But we are considering using the series called "Lent in Plain Sight: A Devotion Through Ten Objects" by Jill Duffield. This may be the basis for our midweek Lenten services. What, when, and where is still TBD.

LENTEN DATES:

Wednesday, February 14th (yes, St. Valentine's Day) – Ash Wednesday

Wednesday, February 21st – first Lenten weekday service

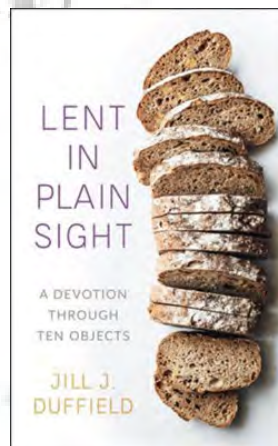
Wednesday, February 28th – second Lenten weekday service, etc. . . .

HOLY WEEK DATES:

Thursday, March 28th – Maundy Thursday

Friday, March 29th – Good Friday

Sunday, March 31st – Easter Sunday!



A MEETING OF . . . Meeting minutes for December 14th,

G.R.A.C.E.



Greater Rapids Area Churches for Ecumenism

2023 – 9:00 AM

Port Edwards United Methodist

Attending: Pastors Caleb (PEUMC), Beth (Moravian), Michelle (Grace ELCA),
Corey S. (Trinity Lutheran, MS, P.E.), Margo P. (Woodland ELCA)

1. **Prayer Vigil Review** – November 11th, 2023. We accidentally scheduled it at the same location as the Veteran's event but were able to borrow their sound system. We had a short prayer service immediately following the Veterans' Day service at the Veterans Park in downtown Rapids. A handful of people stayed. We'll consider purchasing candles when this is scheduled again.
2. **Thanksgiving Service Review** – November 19th, 2023, held at Port Edwards UMC. The offering was \$351; currently held in PEUMC account. Many people stated they enjoyed the service and seeing many new faces. A good number of people stayed afterwards to have pie in the Fellowship Hall.
3. **Blue Christmas Service** – December 20th, 2023, at 6:00 PM, to be held at the Moravian Church of Wis. Rapids. Revs. Beth, Michelle, and Caleb will be participating/leading. It was discussed, for the future, that Wednesday evening is perhaps not the best choice, since some churches have their own Wednesday evening activities.
4. **Other dates/opportunities provided:**
 - a. National Week for Christian Unity – January 18-25 – pulpit swap?
 - b. World Day of Prayer
5. **Spring Fundraiser: Lincoln High School** (Wis. Rapids), to help relieve the school of its student lunch debt.
 - a. Margo will contact LHS for info on their student debt.
 - b. Walk-Off Debt event again this year—start planning earlier and use what we learned from putting together last year's event.
 - c. Another idea: paying off medical debt (locally, if possible) via a national nonprofit organization.
 - i. Needs further research
 - ii. ripmedicaldebt.org might be possibility for this
 - d. Community revitalization is also a possibility for this group to support.
6. Other
 - a. Status of nonprofit paperwork?
 - b. Relationship building among the participating clergy – ideas?
7. Next meeting – January 18th, 2024 @ Grace Lutheran Church WR at 9:00 AM
8. Adjournment



**FOCUS will be hosting 'EMPTY BOWLS' again this year on Saturday,
February 17th from 11:00 AM – 2:00 PM.**

This will be the 10th anniversary in Wood County. Last year, we served 350 guests a bowl of soup, a homemade roll, a homemade dessert, a beverage, and they got to pick out a handmade bowl to take home. We also had over 85 raffle baskets for people to try to win. We are looking for volunteers to wait tables, serve soup/beverages/desserts, take tickets & orders, sell raffles & meal tickets, bus tables, and more. This brought in over \$6,000 to FOCUS last year!

MORE INFORMATION TO COME!

--Mary Schultz

Charge Conference '23 Minutes

Port Edwards United Methodist Church

Date: Thursday, December 14th, 2023 @ 6:00 PM

Presiding Elder: Rev. Tim O'Brien, *St. Paul's-The Springs United Methodist Church, Stevens Point, WI*

Present (in person-Fellowship Hall): Rev. Caleb McGregor, Kathy McGrath, Leo & Sue Thomasgard, Bill Lindroth, John & Diane Sweat, Bob Berg, Skip Mazurek, and Rev. Tim O'Brien.

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM by **Presiding Elder, Rev. Tim O'Brien**. The first order of business was to elect a secretary for the meeting. **Sue Thomasgard** was nominated. Diane Sweat made a motion to elect Sue as secretary, and Kathy McGrath seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Pastor Tim O'Brien offered an opening prayer.

1. We watched the **message from Bishop Jung** on YouTube. He talked about the "Beloved Initiative," which is the mission to empower the churches to reach out to their congregations and communities and make an effort to be inclusive, welcoming everyone, and work together to carry out John Wesley's directives.
2. Pastor Caleb spoke about the "**Safer Sanctuaries**" book which talks about what all the churches need to do to make their facilities safe for everyone. A motion was made by Bill Lindroth and seconded by Kathy McGrath to accept the initiatives put forward in this book. Motion passed.
3. S-PRC chair, Sue Thomasgard, presented Pastor Caleb's financial package to the group. His 2024 salary will be \$51,600, which is a 3.2% cost of living increase. A motion was made by Bill Lindroth and seconded by Kathy McGrath to accept the financial package as presented. The **Pastoral Compensation Package for 2024** was unanimously approved. These numbers can be found both on the "Staff-Parish Relations Committee Report" and reflected in the 2024 budget.
4. We looked at the **Parsonage Checklist**. Everything there is good, and the water report was also good. We will need to compile a list of all the appliances, their model numbers, and ages.
5. Trustees chair, Leo Thomasgard, talked about the **church's insurance**. The cost of the insurance will go up by about \$3,000, partly due to the installation of an elevator. Church Mutual has added an exclusion for wind and water damage. The choice is to pay about \$2,000 for a rider on the insurance or to be responsible for 1% of the total evaluation of the property (\$7.4 million), which amounts to \$74,000. The obvious choice was made to pay for the rider to cover wind and hail damage. *[AMENDED: this amount will be even higher, according to new figures]*
6. Pastor Caleb reported that we have lost 6 members through death and 5 people withdrew their **membership**. We added 2 new members, and we have had several people who have been coming lately and may join in the future. He commented that our church seems to be the most "**well-connected**" church in our area.
7. Pastor Caleb explained that his *housing allowance for 2024 will be \$0*, because Pastor Caleb's husband, Pastor Doug, will continue receiving a housing allowance from the Marshfield Wesley UMC. A motion was made by Sue Thomasgard and seconded by Diane Sweat to accept the housing allowance as presented. Motion carried. The **2024 Resolution on Furnishings Allowance** for the pastor was unanimously approved for \$0.
8. We went over the Accountable Reimbursements for the pastor. A motion was made by Sue Thomasgard and seconded by Diane Sweat to accept the accountable reimbursement plan as presented. Motion carried. The **2024 Accountable Reimbursement Plan (ARP)** for the pastor was unanimously approved for **\$4,300**. To the IRS, this is all one lump sum, but the 4 parts of the ARP are broken down as: *Mileage: \$1,000 / Continuing Education: \$1,000 / Professional Expenses: \$1,500 / Annual Conference & School for Ministry Expenses: \$800*. For tax purposes, these numbers must be approved before the start of the year. These numbers can be found both on the "Staff-Parish Relations Committee Report" and reflected in the 2024 budget.
9. We are granted **TWO Lay Members to Annual Conference**, but we currently don't have any. *[AMENDED: Diane & John Sweat will be our Lay Members]*
10. The only changes to church committees were the replacement of Lucy Silvester by Judy Miller as the Outreach/Missions Team Coordinator, the replacement of LuAnn Slattery by Midge Herschleb as the SPRC Vice Chair, and the additions of

Rose Wirtz and Tiara Grunden to the Witness Team. A motion was made by Bob Berg and seconded Bill Lindroth to accept the leadership report as presented. Motion carried. The **2024 Leadership Roster** was approved.

11. The final item was the 2024 budget. The total budgeted expenses for 2024 are \$228,936.53. A motion was made by Bill Lindroth and seconded by Sue Thomasgard to accept the 2024 Budget as presented. PEUMC's **2024 Church Budget** was unanimously approved.

With no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Sue Thomasgard

Membership Report for 2023

- We received into membership by transfer from another denomination: **Sandy Klein & Helmuth Wrege** (*Lutheran, Missouri Synod*) and **Glenna Sunderland** (*by adult baptism*)
- The following have withdrawn their membership: **Bob & Lynn Dunahee; Christ & Heidi Kawleski & Alaina Kawleski** (*Addalynn, Azleigh, and Croix were 'baptized members' and not counted in our numbers*).
- The following were removed by death: **Joyce Fehrman, Izetta Umland, Hans Hansen, Roger Sweet, John Casey, Tom Wirtz, Kathy Sweet.**
- Nobody was removed by Charge Conference action (for neglect of vows). It is our goal to audit our membership rolls in 2024.

Mission / Ministry Highlights from 2023

List at least 3 Ministry/Mission highlights of your congregation in the year 2023. These highlights can be a combination of what has happened within your congregation and how your congregation has interacted with the community.

1. 5 members + pastor went to Harbor House to paint and do other work.
2. Sponsored and served at a Neighborhood Meals on 11/14.
3. We collected:
\$650 for Heifer International; **\$230** for InGathering 2023 (+ supplies); **\$450** for Mary's Place Transitional Housing and **\$190** for Harbor House; **\$306** for Christmas Gifts for local school kids; **\$374** for Nekoosa's Families Helping Families; **\$250** for college care packages; **\$97** for VBS; \$60 for Stuff the Bus; **\$227** for UMC Maui Fire Relief; **\$391** for UMCOR Syria/Turkey Relief; **\$25** for Alex C. Dove Foundation; **\$172** for Mary's Place on Christmas Eve; **\$570** for FOCUS Neighborhood Table; and funded each of the Six Special Offerings.
4. Built an elevator.

Work that Aligns with Conference Priorities

Describe the work in your local charge/congregation(s) that aligns with the conference priorities: to engage in multicultural ministry; to create new faith opportunities for new people in new places; to engage in ministries that strengthen our vitality and impact; to engage in peace and justice ministries in our communities; and to engage in feeding/hunger ministries that allow us to be in relationship with people in need.

1. We had our own "Hispanic Heritage Sunday," "Black History Sunday"
"Women's History Sunday," and "Native American Heritage Sunday."
We celebrate World Communion Sunday with streamers of national flags around the world.
2. We participate with Meals on Wheels and the local food pantry.
3. We collected money for the 2023 In-Gathering; UMCOR Relief in Maui & Syria/Turkey.
4. For the second time in a row, every teacher and staff at the school received a blessing poem and chocolate on behalf of the congregation.
5. Built an elevator.
6. Celebrate Pride Sunday in June and started playing the Pride flag periodically (6/25/23)
7. We participated in Trunk-or-Treat, handing out bags of candy with our church info.
8. We hosted two bunco nights and a bingo night, plus a showing of "One Foot in Heaven" & "Encanto."
9. We hosted the Community Thanksgiving Service (11/19/23).
10. We pay for Christmas gifts for local school children, collect school supplies.
11. We participated in #WearOrange Gun Violence Walk and a special service at the beginning of June, signing a congregational petition to our state and U.S. officials to help curb gun violence.
12. Helped support a new local ministerial alliance raise funds to relieve local students of lunch debt.

13. Provided a "Messy Church" experience in December for the community.
14. Undergone a *Consecration Sunday* stewardship program, with conference-suggested guest leader.
15. Walked the Nekoosa parade and handed out candy canes.
16. Showed "The Polar Express" on the blow-up screen in the sanctuary.
17. Caroled at the Edgewater Haven Senior Center.
18. Baked, decorated, and delivered many dozens of cookies to local municipal workers.
19. Sponsored and served at The Neighborhood Table.

OUR TWO CORE VALUES:

We believe that in our spiritual DNA, PEUMC values most
(1) **fellowship**, (2) **learning**, and (3) **justice**.

8-Year Mission Goals

By the end of 2029,

1. We will improve the physical and mental health of our community by significantly focusing on ministries to the lonely and isolated; *and*
2. We will substantially increase self-confidence and social awareness in members of our community by providing continuing learning opportunities.

By the end of 2029,

1. We will have invested in God's future with a strong children & youth ministry; *and*
2. We will have established an accountable discipleship culture in our church.

4-Year Mission Goals

To help achieve our 8-YEAR COMMUNITY MISSION GOAL:

By the end of 2025,

1. We will have established a ministry of companionship to the student body of the Port Edwards school district and one to the shut-ins and singles in town.
2. We will have established a learning ministry that promotes justice and personal self-confidence for members in our community.

To help achieve our 8-YEAR CHURCH MISSION GOAL)

By the end of 2025,

1. We will have established a compensated children & youth coordinator.
2. We will provide a variety of short-term small group opportunities that meet the needs of the people.

Looking Ahead

SUNDAYS IN JANUARY & FEBRUARY

<p>Sunday, January 7th</p>	<p>EPIPHANY SUNDAY <i>Psalm 146 / Luke 2:25-40</i> <i>Anna & Simeon Meet Jesus in the Temple</i></p>	<p>Holy Communion (1)Receiving our 2024 'Star Word' (2)Blessing of the Home (an Epiphany Chalk blessing) (3)Signing our 2024 Church Covenant</p>
<p>Sunday, January 14th</p>	<p>BAPTISM OF THE LORD SUNDAY <i>Psalm 91 /</i> <i>Mark 1:1; 2:13-14; 3:13-19</i> <i>Jesus is baptized and begins gathering His followers.</i></p>	<p>Reaffirming our Baptismal Covenant as a congregation.</p>
<p>Sunday, January 21st</p>	<p>ECUMENICAL SUNDAY <i>Psalm 103 /</i> <i>Mark 1:21-34; 2:1-12; 3:1-6</i> <i>Jesus heals a lot of people</i></p>	<p>Celebrating the contributions of the many traditions within Christianity and the pursuit of Christian unity.</p>
<p>Sunday, January 28th</p>	<p>WESLEY'S COVENANT RENEWAL SERVICE <i>Psalm 89 /</i> <i>Mark 1:40-45; 3:20-30; 5:24-34</i> <i>More stories of Jesus healing.</i></p>	<p>Adaptation of an old service by John Wesley to renew our own personal covenants with God.</p>
<p>Sunday, February 4th</p>	<p>BLACK HISTORY SUNDAY <i>Psalm 122 /</i> <i>Mark 2:23-28; 4:35-41; 6:1-13</i> <i>Jesus stills a storm.</i></p>	<p>Holy Communion Celebrating the contributions of people of color to our Christian faith.</p>
<p>Sunday, February 11th</p>	<p>TRANSFIGURATION SUNDAY <i>Psalm 27 /</i> <i>Mark 8:27-9:8</i> <i>Jesus is transfigured on the mountaintop.</i></p>	<p>Burying the 'Alleluias' and preparing for the Season of Lent</p>

Sunday School will be the first Sunday of each month (January – May)

Port Edwards Community Game Night



Saturday, January 20th – 6:00–7:30 PM

**PORT EDWARDS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
(411 Wisconsin River Drive)**

**The board game based on the classic game show!
\$50 gift certificate for winning team!**

Register by Thursday, January 18th

by phone: 715-887-3011

by online form (QR code)

**\$3.00 entry fee
per person at
door
(FREE, if you
bring canned
goods for local
food pantry—
SWEPS)**



**This event is a
“safe and brave”
space!**

**Each team will
consist of 5
people, but
individuals will be
placed together
on a team.**



January

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
Dec. 31	1	2	3	4	5	6
				12:15 pm UWIF Luncheon	<i>Pastor's day off</i>	EPIPHANY
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Epiphany Sunday 10:00 AM Worship Packers & Potatoes				HUMAN TRAFFICKING AWARENESS DAY	<i>Pastor's day off</i>	
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Baptism of the Lord 10:00 AM Worship 2 nd Sunday Refreshments Packing of the Greens	MLK DAY				<i>Pastor's day off</i>	"FAMILY FEUD" Game Night 6:00-7:30 (please pre-register) \$3 per person at the door.
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
Ecumenical Sunday 10:00 AM Worship Church Council					<i>Pastor's day off</i>	
28	29	30	31	Feb. 1	Feb. 2.	Feb. 3
Wesley's Covenant Service 10:00 AM Worship					GROUNDHOG DAY <i>Pastor's day off</i>	

January 18th through the 25th is Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.

- This is an ecumenical Christian observance celebrated internationally.
- The focus is to pray for unity between the many Christian traditions.
- During these days, please be praying that traditions, sects, and denominations of Christianity can continue to work toward greater visible unity
- for the sake of our shared mission to bring holiness to our lands!

Fellowship

Nancy Klahn was all smiles when she received her beautiful (and warm) pink-rosed blanket from the church. The blanket was blessed as part of worship on December 17th.



Nancy's new home is at The Waterford.



Crystal Rietveld, Lucy, Sue T., Judy, Ellen, Kathy, Diane, and Lori help to tie the blanket for Nancy.



Many dozens of Christmas cookies were decorated after the service on December 17th. Lindsey Hintz purchased (and baked) the cookies and provided the toppings so that members of the church could decorate them. A plate was given to the Public Works department of P.E., the Fire Department of P.E., the Police Department of P.E., and to Diane and Kim in the Village Hall of P.E. They were all very happy with the delicious and beautifully decorated church cookies!



TWO MORE BEAUTIFUL PHOTOS OF OUR SANCTUARY FOR CHRISTMAS 2023



PACKERS-AND-POTATOES!



After the service on Sunday, January 7th, we enjoyed another Packers-and-Potatoes!

Leo Thomasgard was our spud-meister who cooked the potatoes, and we enjoyed all the traditional toppings that make for a wonderful baked potato bar, concluding with some Methodist desserts!

Pat McGrath has suggested we host a "Bears-and-Brats" meal next year.

Anyone wish to support his idea? Anyone? Anyone?

Nobody? ~~ Sorry Pat! 😊



Beginning this January, we will be randomly choosing 4 to 5 households to be included in our congregational prayers. This month please send prayers for:

- Kathy Mills
- Kevin, Jennifer, Brandon and Nathan Swensen
- Sandy Robinson
- Nina & Ken Pelo

2023 Newborn Saints Sunday



Sofia JoyLynn Miller
Granddaughter to
Larry & Judy Miller
born July 18, 2023.



Otto David Silvester
Great grandson to
Norm & Lucy Silvester
born June 8, 2023.

On Sunday, December 31st, we recognized these two newborn saints!

We also recognized Elijah Scott Heinzen, Caleb Lewis McGilvery, and Violet White.

Welcome to our world!



Thank you to our Worship Team helpers for the 2024 year:

COMMUNION SET UP

January – Sue
February – Becky
March – Judy
April – Judy
May – Skip
June – Skip
July – Skip
August – Becky
September – Judy
October – Sue
November – Becky
December – Sue

SUNDAY CHOOOL TEACHERS

January 7th – Kathy McGrath
February 4th – Lori
March 3rd – Becky
April 7th – Lori
May 5th – Ellen

CANDLE REFILLS

January – Judy
February – Becky
March – Sue
April – Judy
May – Skip
June – Skip
July – Skip
August – Becky
September – Sue
October – Skip
November – Becky
December – Sue & Becky

SPARK! TEACHERS

January – Lori (Jan. 21st)
February – Lindsey (Feb. 4th)
March – Lisa (March 3rd & 17th)
April – Kathy McGrath (April 14th & 28th)
May – Ellen (no lessons, unless make up)

**THANK YOU, VOLUNTEERS,
FOR HELPING OUR NEIGHBORS
IN DECEMBER!**



A program of Aspirus Riverview Hospital
made possible by United Way of
South Wood & Adams Counties

Home Delivered Meals Drivers

Julie Berg
Pat & Kathy McGrath
Sue Mitchell
Leo Thomasgard
Becky Taylor

Every four weeks, PEUMC volunteers deliver a hot and nutritious noon meal to homes of Wisconsin Rapids area residents who are unable to prepare their own meals. Anyone interested in helping with this program may contact Becky Taylor (715-887-2163) for more information. **THANK YOU!**

Love is Love

*Photos from the marriage of
Pastor Doug and Pastor Caleb.*

(Photos by Zelora Photography, Madison, WI)



Every love story is
beautiful, but ours
is my favorite.

BIRTHDAYS

January 1
SHARON STUDINSKI

January 14
MARGE BAUER

January 15
SKIP MAZUREK

January 20
KEN BRZEZINSKI

January 22
DANIAL HARNISCH

January 28
JEANNE BRUENER

Anniversaries

January 29
KEN & NINA PELO



Prayer For Members Of The Church

Dear Lord in heaven,
I ask for your grace upon this flock. Let their decision to live for you be never reserved. Care for them daily and guide them so they do not get lost. Protect them from the claws and talons of the evil one. Let them live in peace, prosperity, and blessings. Feed them spiritually so they never hunger or thirst. Keep them strong and together for you no matter what. Continue to shine your light unto their paths so they never fall in the darkness.

Amen

Member Address Updates

Kathleen Mills
30 LeTendre Ave Apt. 1
Port Edwards, WI 54469

Christine Landowski
120 Adams Ave
Port Edwards, WI 54469

Nancy Klahn
491 25th St. N.
Wis. Rapids, WI 54494

*Receive each New Year as a
PRESENT FROM GOD AND BE A GIFT
THAT GIVES BACK BY SERVING Him.*