

April 2024

The Current

Monthly News from Port Edwards United Methodist Church

Welcome Our New Administrative Assistant

glad you're
here with us.



My name is Connie Cross. I am from the Central Wisconsin area and currently live in Wisconsin Rapids. I have been retired for 5 years. I am divorced and have lived with my boyfriend for 9 years. I have a 33-year-old son who is on the Autism Spectrum. He lives with his special-needs girlfriend. I spend time with them when I can, to help them out with things that they have trouble doing by themselves and teach them daily living skills. I also help my friend, who is mostly homebound, with grocery shopping and helping around her house.

I have one sibling who lives in Bismarck, North Dakota.

Our parents have both passed.

I have an associate degree as a Network Specialist and a certificate in Customer Service - Office Technology. I also tutored college students in Microsoft Office at Mid-State Technical College from 2004 to 2014 while I was a student. I help my friends and family with computer support. I have worked as an administrative assistant and secretary for over 40 years in Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Texas when I was in basic training in the U.S. Army.

In my spare time I enjoy sketching, scanning pictures onto my computer, reading about technology, altering clothing, canning, fishing, gardening, and cooking. I also enjoy working on my family tree. I started it over 40 years ago.

We are so happy to have Connie join our staff at PEUMC!

Her first day on the job is Monday, April 1st! Stop by and introduce yourself!

New Office Hours for April



Connie will be experimenting with the office hours.

For the month of April, they will be:

Monday through Friday

8:00 - noon

A SPECIAL HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO GAYLORD JOHNSON

WHO TURNS 100 FRIDAY, APRIL 5TH!



Easter Lily Dedications

In memory of . . .

Hans Hansen

JoAnn Morgan

Our parents

Helen C. Smith; Edwin & Marie Heuer

Mothers & Fathers

Mr. & Mrs. Joe McGrath

Lloyd & Suzanne Lacasse /

Helen Reihmer

Ralph, Dorothy, and David Boger

Ellis John Mills /

One for the altar

My grandmother, Huldah E. Moore

Rev. Lloyd & Myrtle Foster

My husband, Gerald Studinski

Bob & Mae Monty /

Paul & Jane Thomasgard

Thomas Wirtz

Ray Wunrow

Nancy Hansen

Kenneth & Susanne Brzezinski

H. James & Marijean Herschleb

Edwin & Mary Heuer

Gerald & Nancy Klahn

Patrick & Kathy McGrath

Maribeth Lacasse-Salo

Lisa Miller

Kathleen June Mills

Sandra Robinson

Dennis & LuAnn Slattery

Sharon Studinski

Leo & Sue Thomasgard

Rose Wirtz

Gloria Wunrow

In honor of . . .

Mr. & Mrs. Don White

by Patrick & Kathy McGrath

Our son & daughter-in-law,

Trent & Kristina Tell

by Candace Prah-Tell



P.E.U.M.C. CONSTITUENT SPOTLIGHT!

PATRICK MCGRATH



Did you, or do you still, have any nicknames? **Magoo.** (*Because he drives like him???*)

How long have you attended PEUMC? **~50 years**

What is your favorite memory about PEUMC? **Singing at Christmas**

What is your favorite hymn or Christian song? Why?

“What a Wonderful World” by Louis Armstrong

What are your hobbies? **Photography**

What is your favorite holiday tradition? **I don't have just one; I have many.**

What is your favorite food? **Cheese manicotti.**

Share with us some fun facts about yourself?

I grew up in Prairie du Chien, WI. I had 4 siblings and raised Catholic. I went to Catholic grade school, first-eighth, and to church every morning; then public high school. I graduated from U.W. LaCrosse with a Math Education degree.

With what religious traditions did you grow up? **Roman Catholic**

What brought you to this area? **A teaching job.**

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

Everyone knows everything about me.

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

Check us out; if you like us, stay.

April Household Prayers

This month the congregation is asked to pray for the following families

(*randomly chosen on 3/31*):

- Pat Markuson
- Donna & Damon Klinger household
- Jerene & Mark Sillars household
- Collin, Ethan, Korbin, Jenna, Matt Boerner household





March–April Bimonthly Mission Project

The Family Center – Wisconsin Rapids

**GOAL: FILL 20 BAGS OF UNDERSIZE/TRAVEL-SIZE
HOUSEHOLD/HYGIENE PRODUCTS**

Our missional goal is to completely fill 20 “Sendoff Bags.” These bags will be given to client-families at the time they leave the Family Center program and enter permanent housing for the first time. Many of these clients do not have the initial household and hygiene products necessary to start a new life in a place of their own. So, these bags will be something like practical “housewarming baskets.”

The following list is a suggestion:

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> garbage bags | <input type="checkbox"/> toothbrushes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> dish soap | <input type="checkbox"/> toothpaste |
| <input type="checkbox"/> light bulbs | <input type="checkbox"/> paper towels |
| <input type="checkbox"/> batteries (all sizes) | <input type="checkbox"/> toilet paper |
| <input type="checkbox"/> laundry detergent | <input type="checkbox"/> shampoo |
| <input type="checkbox"/> sponges | <input type="checkbox"/> body wash |
| <input type="checkbox"/> general cleaning items | <input type="checkbox"/> etc. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> towels
(hand, bath, dish) | |

What we’ve collected so far (updated 3/27):

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 89 – Individual trash bags | 16 – rolls of toilet paper |
| 9 – dish/kitchen towels | 8 – dish scrubs |
| 5 – small toothpastes | 3 – large toothpaste |
| 4 – laundry detergent packets | |
| 1 – 4-pack bulbs | 1 – 2-pack bulbs |
| 1 – 4-pack AA batteries | 1 – 4-pack AAA batteries |
| 4 – SOS pads | 2 – dish detergents |
| 2 – All-Purpose cleaner | 1 – 2-pack toothbrushes |
| 1 – bottle of shampoo | 1 – bottle of conditioner |
| 2 – kitchen brushes | 1 – hand soap |

NOTE:

- All items should be undersized or travel-size. Laundry detergent could be a handful of pods or individual packets, for instance. These items must fit in a tote bag. Size of bag TBD.
- Bring these items to the church sooner than later so that we can monitor the progress and keep you updated!
- All money collected will be given directly to The Family Center and will not be allocated to purchase “Sendoff” items.
- You do not need to fill up an entire bag yourself. We are compiling all donations, filling the bags ourselves.

PASTOR CALEB TO ATTEND GENERAL CONFERENCE

Pastor Caleb's application has been accepted as a "marshal" for the worldwide gathering of United Methodists—something that only takes place once every 4 years. The 2020 cancelled General Conference was supposed to meet in Minneapolis, MN, but was cancelled for obvious pandemic reasons.

The G.C. is made up of delegates, around 800, that represent all the various regions of the *Connexion*. They will pass legislation and cast a strategic plan for the next 4 years. The delegates are 50% clergy and 50% lay person (like yourselves)!

I will not be able to vote while there, as I am not a delegate; but as a marshal, I will be given duties that will help make the two-week-long gathering function.

The 2024 General Conference will take place in Charlotte, North Carolina.

The U.M.C. has no pope or president. No bishop to rule them all. Only a legislative body of delegates that attend a gathering once every 4 years. These delegates are elected new each time. One prominent individual stated that the United Methodist Church only ever exists during the two weeks these delegates meet. At the close of the session, the UMC ceases to exist except through the shared covenant that binds us by the *Book of Discipline*.

I, Pastor Caleb, will be gone for the full duration of G.C. - April 22nd through May 3rd.

Pastor Wanda on call for Pastor Caleb

Pastor Wanda Valdman, pastor at Nekoosa United Church of Christ, will be on call for pastoral emergencies while Pastor Caleb is away.

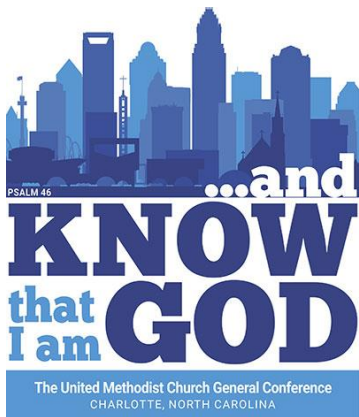
Her number is 715-213-7447.

The U.M.C. Structure (FYI)

from Rev. Jeremy Smith's 'Hacking Christianity' blog site.

The worldwide level of The United Methodist Church is structured like the U.S. Government with three branches:

- The Legislative Branch is the **General Conference**, a deliberative body that typically convenes every four years to write the polity of The UMC for the next four years.
- The Executive Branch is the **Bishops and the General Agencies / Commissions** that put into practice the polity of The UMC and govern the UMC in between General Conferences.
- The Judicial Branch is the **Judicial Council**, a review entity that determines answers when the written polity and the actual practices of the UMC are in conflict or unclear.



What Happens Now: General Conference 2024

by Rev. Jeremy Smith (*from the same source as the aforementioned article*)

At this time four years ago, United Methodists were gearing up for a tough slog of a Conference—[but] now, the feeling is *far* more congenial and collaborative across the aisle. *What has changed?*

The exit of most Traditionalist delegates and the advancement or election of progressive or centrist reserve delegates turned what was already a majority in the USA into a supermajority in America. This allows for a better chance at alignment across the worldwide United Methodism on structure and principles, even if practices will continue to be different; and with a clearer relationship between USA churches and African churches—many things are [now] possible.

#1: Regionalization goes Worldwide: United Methodism is a Global Church. However, our church structure reflects our colonial past, with unequal decision-making and accountability. Regions outside the USA (called 'Central Conferences') have far more permission to make local changes [and adapt parts of the *Book of Discipline*] than the USA, and those same regions at General Conference must sit through days of polity discussions and privileges that are USA-centric. To remedy these wrongs, Central Conference voices have been involved in efforts to right those unjust structures, which is called '**regionalization**': flattening the church hierarchy by creating and allowing all geographic regions to operate united in mission but contextual in practice.

The hurdles? 2/3 of GC2024 delegates must approve the legislation, and a subsequent 2/3 ratification by all Annual Conferences must support what would be a constitutional amendment.

#2: Revise the Social Principles: The revised Social Principles were developed over several years and across several General Conferences, with the General Board of Church and Society holding dozens of conversations globally to craft these new principles.

#3: Remove Harmful Language: LGBTQ+ United Methodists are not fully included in the life of the church, as full membership, clergy orders, and marriage support are excluded by name in our polity. Multiple efforts will take place this year to remove those exclusions. Only 50% + 1 of the delegates need to support changing our polity.



Open Hearts. Open Minds. Open Doors.

The people of The United Methodist Church®



General Conference of the U.M.C.

Who makes decisions for The United Methodist Church if there is no one person in charge?

Good question.

The only body that can set official policy, make changes to our *Books of Discipline* and *Resolutions*, and speak on behalf of the entire denomination is the General Conference.

General = global.

Statement from U.S. Delegates

This statement is part of ongoing collaborative work among a coalition of U.S. delegates who share the goals named within.

We hope that the gathering in Charlotte, NC, will bear witness to a more perfect way of faithful service to Christ, who “makes all things new and reconciles all people unto himself” [2 *Corinthians* 5:16-20]. As our portion of the Church commences a prolonged period of healing, reconciliation, and rebuilding, we have engaged in ongoing conversations and reflection with United Methodists from around the world to discern what changes we might make as a general Conference that might strengthen unity amidst diversity and allow enough flexibility for our various geographical regions to thrive. As a result of these conversations and with a spirit of humility, we share the following endorsements with all General Conference delegates.

Worldwide Regionalization: We support [*the creation of*] distinct regional governing bodies in Africa, Europe, the Philippines, and the U.S. These proposed changes would expand the ability of regions outside the U.S. to adapt portions of the UM *Book of Discipline*, and, for the first time, give the U.S. this same authority. We support this legislation because we are committed to great self-determination and self-governance; we also believe that expanding regional decision-making will allow annual conferences within each region to thrive.

The Revised Social Principles: We support the adoption of the Revised Social Principles as a much-needed restatement of our fundamental moral and social commitments as United Methodists. Commissioned by the 2012 General Conference, the newly revised Social Principles fulfill their mandates to be more globally relevant, theologically and biblically grounded, and succinct. The revised Social Principles provide a timely opportunity for reaffirming who we are as United Methodists.

Removal of Exclusionary Policies: We support the removal of all provisions in the UM *Book of Discipline* regarding the participation of gays and lesbians in The United Methodist Church. Removing the current language will create a new starting place for dialogue and learning. It will also remove a significant stumbling block to engaging all people in the ministries of the Church, particularly for local congregations and annual conferences ready to welcome LGBTQ+ people [*in every level of the church*].

We hope that passing these vital pieces of legislation will strengthen our worldwide fellowship, foster greater unity in the midst of diversity, and ensure that many years hence, United Methodists worldwide will still be able to proclaim that we are one body serving one Lord of all.

Yours in Christ:

Signed: 241 General Conference Delegates / of that 10 Delegates from Wisconsin (to date)

Wisconsin Delegates who have signed:

Clergy:

Rev. Jeremy Deaner, *New Richmond, WI*
Rev. Allie Scott, *Luther College, Decorah, IA*
Rev. Krysta Deede, *Onalaska, WI*
Dr. Rev. Scott Carlson, *Director of
Congregational Development, WI*
Rev. Kevin Dembinski, *New London, WI*

Rev. Gail Burgess, *Bristol, WI*
Rev. Jenny Arneson, *Sun Prairie, WI*

Laity:

Allan Lindsay,
Donald Cramer, *Mukwonago, WI*
Jessica Gobel, *Onalaska, WI*

Lenten Offering Results:

During our two Weekend Lenten Services hosted at P.E.U.M.C., we collected **\$161.00** to go to the Port Edwards School District's fund which helps student lunch debt relief.

Tricia Fancher to speak on April 28th

With Pastor Caleb out of state at GC2024,

Tricia, the Executive Director of The Family Center in Wisconsin Rapids, during our Sunday service, will be giving us an update of her ministry.



OUR PRIORITIZED GOALS

As a result of two weeks' worth of surveys, we now have a better grasp of how to prioritize our PEUMC goals:

- #1: Provide learning opportunities for the community. (60 yeses)
- #2: Provide a compensation children/youth coordinator. (55 yeses)
- #3: Establish a ministry of companionship to both the local church and those in need in the community. (49 yeses)**
- #4: Establish a system of small groups and homes groups in the church. (35 yeses)**

We will begin to place our focus on #1 & #2.

Thank you for your responses!

This will prove to be very helpful to our leadership and volunteers!

GOAL: LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Our #1 goal will take the form of what was once called 'The Gatherings.' Now, it has been rebranded as 'Head & Heart Events' –or 'H & H' for short.

We will attempt to provide occasional workshops and presentations that we believe would be beneficial to members of our community. Most of these events will be held in the banquet room of *El Café*. The owner, Fidel, is giving the church a special offer on the use of this space. *Why not use the church?* Unfortunately, we have come to discover that there is a real reservation within many people to enter a church building, either because they are not religious or of being from another religious/denomination. *El Café* is an important neutral space for small community events like this. However, we will make sure that people know that these events are sponsored by PEUMC because we care about the 'head & heart' of each member of our community.



Head and Heart Event #1



Facts & Myths About Hospice:

presented by Dawn Freelund,
Volunteer Community Outreach Coordinator for *Compassus*
(House of the Dove, Marshfield)



Did you know . . .

- hospice is not just for the last days of life.
- research shows that those on hospice live an average of 29 days longer.
- there is no cost for hospice. It is covered by Medicare, Medicaid, VA, and most commercial insurances.
- hospice care is for the patient AND their family.
- hospice is a service that can be provided anywhere you live including nursing homes, assisted living, and private residents.

*Quality end-of-life care isn't about how you die;
it's about how you live!*

Tuesday, April 16th – 7:00-8:00 PM
El Café banquet room; no reservations; free

P.E.U.M.C.

125TH ANNIVERSARY EVENT

Sunday, June 23rd, 2023 – 10:00 AM

Worship, Music, *and* Food!

Reminisce with former pastors and members!

Share stories and memories!

The meal will be fully catered.

Reservation postcards
will be sent out mid-April.

WORSHIP SERVANTS (SO FAR) FOR APRIL

COMMUNION: Judy CANDLES: Judy	GREETER(S)	USHER	LITURGIST	PEW AMBASSADOR	MUSICIAN
APRIL 7 TH	Maribeth & Midge	Pat McG.	Kathy McG.	Sue T.	
APRIL 14 TH	Harvestines	Mike	Kathy Mills	Kathy McG.	
APRIL 21 ST	Candy	Mike		Diane S.	
APRIL 28 TH	Sweats			Diane S.	

SUNDAYS IN APRIL

April 7th	Acts 1:1-14: <i>Jesus Commissions the Disciples</i>	G O D T H R O U G H U S	Easter.2 Communion Sunday
April 14th	Acts 3:1-10: <i>Peter Heals</i>		Easter.3
April 21st	Acts 17:1-9: <i>The Church at Thessalonica</i>		Easter.4 "Festival of God's Creation"
April 28th	Acts 18:1-4: <i>The Church at Corinth</i>		Easter.5 Tricia Fancher, The Family Center

The Resurrection of Jesus is only the beginning of God's mission for the world. Before His ascension, Jesus sends out His followers to spread God's kin'dom (Acts 1). These apostles continue Jesus' work, empowered by God's own Spirit (Acts 3). One way we can do God's work is by being examples of love (Acts 17). Unity in the church comes from God working through us so that the Good News of Jesus continues to spread (Acts 18).

\$\$ for College Care Packages

Money will be collected throughout April for the college care packages. We have 7 youth associated with our congregation currently in college: **Dan & Marissa Harnish, Carson Parks, Melanie Sillars, Nathan & Brandon Swenson, and Michaela Warpinski.** See Diane for details.

LOOKING AHEAD:

20th Anniversary Rapids Community Choir Concert
 Sunday, May 5th - 4:00 PM
 First Congregational Church, Rapids

Graduation Sunday
 Sunday, May 19th

Lilyann Sillars & Korbin Boerner will be graduating high school this year.

Thank You from . . .



Thank you for your generous donation to Feeding Our Communities with United Services (FOCUS) to support our programs. We sincerely appreciate your gift and concern for those who are in need of food especially in these inflationary times. The FOCUS programs have all been blessed by the generosity of so many caring people in our area and community.

Please know that your donation to FOCUS helps to provide over 1,700 people with over 49,300 meals from the pantry each month, 135 people with community meals each week and 500 people with 2,040 meals each weekend during the school year from the backpacks program. Overall, over 622,300 meals were provided in 2023 by the services of FOCUS. We are so thankful for your part in helping us to help others.

Donation Amount: \$34.00

Dale Bikowski - Treasure



Dear United Methodist Church: We gratefully acknowledge your very generous donation. We are very encouraged by your sincere thoughtfulness to the mission of MARY'S PLACE OF CENTRAL WISCONSIN. We cannot begin to tell you how your gift will benefit so many people who are in need. We are so thankful to you. It is through gifts such as yours that we can continue our mission to address the special needs of the low-income/no-income people here in Wood County.

Donation Amount: \$172.00

Sincerely,

Jim Joyce, President

Upcoming Trustees Project

- Finalize the moisture issue in the Fellowship Hall/Memorial Lounge. These corners have had interior moisture issues that have damaged the paint. This is being caused by rainwater running down the metal caps of the roof parapet and dropping off around the corners. Sandstone can be very porous. Sealant was applied to areas around each of the exterior corners of the F.H./M.L. Next, small gutters will be installed to collect & drain the rainwater away from the stone corners. El Crider will be repainting these corners soon.
- Fix front lawn damaged by elevator equipment. Ben Martinson of the Village Public Works crew has graciously offered to fix the sidewalk himself. But the lawn, including sections of the sprinkler system, will need to be fixed as spring approaches.
- Six problematic spots on the roof will be addressed in a more permanent way.
- The ceiling of the vestibule (outside the sanctuary) and the tower room (old main entry) will be replaced. Leaks from snow/rain blown into the bell tower has caused water damage to these ceilings.
- The foyer floor will be replaced with carpet squares. This will be our congregational fundraiser. Prices are still TBD.
- Portraits of our past ministers will return to the Memorial Lounge.



Memorial Trees on Their Way



Two new palm bushes and two new olive trees will soon be framing our high altar.

The two palm bushes are in memory of **Kathy Sweet**. Kari, her daughter, shared how much Kathy saw palm branches as spiritual objects. Each year, Kathy would take her Palm-Passion Sunday palm branch home and stick it behind the portrait of her late son, Michael.

The two olive trees are in memory of **Roger Sweet**. Olives represent strength and victory and have long been associated with Greek & Roman athleticism. Olive trees can represent eternal life since they can grow to be very old. One of the oldest known olive trees in the world is 4,000 and still producing fruit!

Both palms and olives have biblical significances and are very appropriate for our altar area!

The two silk trees that previously adorned the chancel area will either be retired or placed in another location. If you know who donated these trees, please let us know!

Nurture Committee News

From Diane Sweat, Chair

- Congregational movie night took place Tuesday, February 27th. We saw the movie 'ORDINARY ANGELS.' We went to Culver's afterwards to discuss our thoughts. Seven people attended and 5 went to Culver's. We would like to continue doing this, each month possibly.
- A tie blanket will be made for Barbara Taylor. Judy will purchase the materials and the congregation will be asked to tie the ends and say a prayer over it.
- Ginnie Oliver will receive a plant on behalf of the church.
- We want the congregation to sign a big birthday card for Gaylord Johnson who is turning 100 on April 5th.
- We will begin our collection for the college care packages on Easter and continue throughout April.
- We will try to produce a special anniversary pictorial directory of the church. Pat McGrath has agreed to take household photos and other group photos, plus photos of our anniversary event. We will try to have them ready by the fall.
- Little stuffed lambs have been purchased for the Pew Ambassadors to give to any family that attends church with a little one (infant/toddler/adolescent). Each lamb will come with a card stating the lamb's name.



APRIL

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
March 31 st	1	2	3	4	5	6
<i>Easter Sunday</i> 10:00 AM	Connie Cross's first day in the church office.	Worship Team 9:00 AM Sharing Memories 10:30 Discussion 11:00 Lunch @ El-Café	<u>Birthday</u> Sue Mitchell		<u>Birthday</u> Gaylord Johnson (100 th) <i>Pastor's day off</i>	
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
2 nd Sunday of Easter 10:00 AM		The Ministry Team 10 am	Circle of Friends 1:00 PM – church OFFICE CLOSED IN RECOGNIZE OF NAT'L PASTOR CALEB DAY! <u>Birthday</u> Pastor Caleb (35 th)	<u>Birthday</u> Sandy Robinson	<i>Pastor's day off</i>	<u>Birthday</u> Collin & Ethan Boerner
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
3 rd Sunday of Easter 10:00 AM 2 nd Sunday Refreshments SPARK!/Confirmation		'FACTS & MYTHS ABOUT HOSPICE' 7:00 PM – El Café	S-PRC – 10 AM		<i>Pastor's day off</i>	<u>Birthday</u> Midge Herschleb
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
4 th Sunday of Easter <i>"Festival of God's Creation"</i> 10:00 AM Church Council 11:15 AM	<u>Birthday</u> Ed Heuer	<u>Birthday</u> Aaron Harnisch	<u>Birthday</u> Jerene Sillars		<u>Birthday</u> Natalee Haddow	
Pastor Caleb gone to General Conference – Charlotte, North Carolina – April 22 nd to May 3 rd						
28	29	30	May 1 st	May 2 nd	May 3 rd	May 4 th
5 th Sunday of Easter 10:00 AM		<u>Birthday</u> Jon Mykisen		UWIF – 12:15p		
Pastor Caleb gone to General Conference – Charlotte, North Carolina – April 22 nd to May 3 rd						

April Church Office Hours:

Connie: Monday through Friday : 8:00a – noon

Pastor: Monday through Thursday : 9:00a – 1:00p