

July-August
2025

The Current



Monthly News from Port Edwards United Methodist Church

Pouring Forth the Living Water: Bloom by the River!

Progressive Dinner #1

THURSDAY, JULY 17TH



The Mazureks provided fruit and veggies appetizers.

Candy P.T. provided an entrée of Italian and Mexican lasagna and breadsticks.

Sue M. & Kathleen M. provided a dessert of pound cake and minty fruit salad at the Millers.

Photo: Bill & Marna L., Sara T., Pastors Caleb & Doug, Sue M., Judy & Larry M. gathered on the patio of the Mazureks to start off the evening.

Weather was perfect!

Not pictured: Candy P.T. (photo credit by Ellen M.)

Progressive Dinner #2

MONDAY, JULY 21ST

Rose W. provided pasta e fagioli soup as an appetizer.

The Thomasgards provided an entrée of lasagna & breadsticks.

The Sweats provided a dessert of Roberta M.'s nut bars and chocolate cherry cake with ice cream.

Photo: LuAnn S., Rose W., John & Diane S., Sue & Leo T., Kathleen M., and Pastors Caleb & Doug gathered in the dining room of the Sweats to end the day with dessert and sharing how each couple met!

Photo credit: Dennis S.



SERVICE AT THE "LAKE"

Due to high temperatures, the service on 6/22 was relocated from Dexter Park to Wesley UMC in Marshfield. Pastors Caleb & Doug led the service, and everyone enjoyed a very lovely potluck worthy of the highest Methodist standards!

P.E.U.M.C. Mourns the Loss of Two Great & Godly Gentlemen



Thomas Lee DeMeuse

August 30, 1947 — July 15, 2025

Thomas Lee DeMeuse, 77, Tom passed away peacefully at home in Wisconsin Rapids from esophageal cancer on Tuesday, July 15, 2025.

He was born August 30, 1947, at the Algoma Hospital on Mill St in Algoma WI.

The family attended St Paul's Lutheran Church in Algoma. Tom attended 1st – 8th grades at St Paul's school. He graduated from Algoma High School in 1965. He spent one year in Madison attending the university.

In 1966 he attended Milwaukee Institute of Technology. He graduated with an associate degree with honors in Automotive Mechanics in 1968. He then went to work for Seiler's Oil & Tire Company in Algoma.

In January of 1972 Tom joined the Algoma Volunteer Fire Department which began an almost 50-year career in the fire service. He took night classes from Northeast WI Technical Institute in fire technology, graduating with honors in Fire Science.

Over the next 10 years he became a licensed WI Master Plumber, a licensed WI Building Inspector and a licensed WI Fire Science Instructor. He was named the Instructor of the Year in Fire Science in 1992.

Starting in 1989 Tom served the City of Algoma as Fire Chief for 5 years. Following that he was Fire Chief for 13 years for the Village of Shorewood Hills in Madison WI.

Tom dedicated almost 50 years to the fire service, first as a volunteer firefighter, then as chief in Algoma and Shorewood Hills plus many other facets of the service. After retirement he continued to do pump testing in Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa and Michigan. He was liked and respected throughout the state as an excellent, knowledgeable teacher and good friend.

Tom will be deeply missed by his wife of 18 years, Jennifer (Jef).

Visitation and service were held at Kinnard Funeral & Cremation Services in Algoma, WI on Friday & Saturday, July 18th & 19th. Tom was buried in Clay Banks Cemetery overlooking Lake Michigan.

Edwin "Ed" Heuer

April 22, 1931 – July 20, 2025

Ed Heuer passed peacefully on Sunday, July 20th surrounded by his loving family. This lifelong educator was born in Wild Rose, WI on April 22, 1931. Ed was a Boy Scout in Wild Rose, achieving the rank of Eagle Scout with Bronze and Gold Palms. He loved aviation and qualified for his private pilot's license at the age of 16. Ed earned his Bachelor's Degree at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point in 1953. There he met and married Mary Ann (Smith) Heuer on June 18, 1955. Mary and Ed celebrated their 70th wedding anniversary just this past June in Port Edwards.

Ed served in the Wisconsin National Guard and the US Army from 1953 to 1955. As a teacher, Ed taught math in Racine and Janesville, WI for 11 years. He earned his Master's Degree in Education Administration from Northwestern University in 1960. He and his family; sons Marc and Kurt, and daughter Becky came to Port Edwards in 1968 where he became the elementary principal. Ed served in that leadership role with dedication and enthusiasm for 22 years.

After retirement in 1990, Ed continued working to support and improve local education, helping to found the Port Edwards Educational Foundation in 1995 and regularly reading to kindergarten classes every Friday afternoon. Ed Heuer was a positive catalyst for countless students, families, and teachers in Port Edwards, as well as a loving and devoted husband, father, grandparent and great-grandparent.

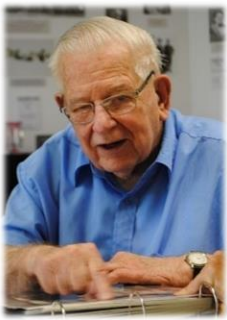
Ed and Mary have been members of Port Edwards United Methodist Church since 1968. They have both been faithful servants to that congregation; Ed served the church as Pastor Parish Relations Chair, Council of Ministries Chair and Sunday School Director. Ed and Mary are devoted to this church and generously offered up their time and tithes to support the work of the local church and beyond.

His lifelong hobbies included woodworking, photography, and biking. He could be seen daily riding the bike trails of Port Edwards well into his eighties, waving at everyone he passed by. Ed was a dedicated attendee of Sunrise Rotary Breakfast meetings and a Paul Harris Fellow in the Wisconsin Rapids Chapter of Rotary Club.

Ed is survived by his wife, Mary, of 70 years, and partner for 74 years.

A Celebration of Life was held on July 29th at PEUMC; Ed's urn was buried at the Port Edwards Cemetery. *"Always in our hearts."*





MARSHALL BUEHLER'S GIFT TO P.E.U.M.C.

"**John Marshall Buehler** passed away on January 24th, 2025. Pursuant to Section 6.1 of the John Marshall Buehler Trust, dated January 14th, 2015, **PORT EDWARDS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH** is the beneficiary of a specific bequest in the amount of **\$2,000.00.**"

A letter of appreciation was given to the Buehler family.

Special Thanks to Mike H.

Mike spent the morning of Monday, July 28th trimming the church parking lot in preparation for Mr. Heuer's funeral. The lot looks much nicer now!

Thank you, Mike!



Before



After

God Save the King Monarchs



As of 7/30, the McGraths have raised & released 328 monarch butterflies, 177 females and 151 males. This has been a good year so far!

Colby Graduates



Photos from Colby's graduation from John Edwards High School. He will be starting basic training in the National Guard in the fall.



Pastor Caleb is a mentor for some of the conference's provisional elders (candidates going thru the process for ordination). Their summer retreat at Pine Lake Camp (Westfield, WI) coincided with "Sports Camp." Adults and campers alike enjoyed evening worship by the lake and snowcones!

SAINT PAUL'S UMC, STEVENS POINT WELCOMES NEW PASTOR

Our Circuit



Cathy Christman
St. Paul's UMC, Stevens Pt.



Kyochul Shin
First UMC, Wis. Rapids



**The Revs.
Kari Riley**
Amherst, Beuna Vista
& Wild Rose UMCs



Douglas Clement
Wesley UMC, Marshfield



Caleb McGregor
Port Edwards UMC

2025 MISSIONAL GIVING REPORT, YTD

MONTH	CAUSE	AMOUNT
Jan.	Human Relations Day Special Offering (1/29)	\$143.00
Jan./Feb.	Reconciling Ministries Network (RMN) (3/4)	\$510.00
March	Wisconsin Council of Churches (3/27)	\$150.00
March	Combined Lenten Services Special Offering: Families Helping Families (PESD Benevolence Fund) (3/12, 3/26)	\$210.00
Mar./Apr.	Easter Lilies (21 lilies ordered) (throughout Lent)	\$277.00
April	Final Combined Lenten Service Special Offering: FOCUS Food Pantry (4/9)	\$99.00
April	Wood County Jail Ministry	\$100.00
April	College Care Packages	\$230.00
April	Reconciling Ministries Network (a private donation through the church)	\$500.00
May	InGathering 2025	\$120.00
June	G.R.A.C.E. local student debt	\$407.49
Sp. Offering	Habitat for Humanity (one-week special offering)	\$220.00
July/August	Habitat for Humanity (as of 8/1)	\$220.00
YTD		\$3,186.49

FLAT ROOF REPAIR



As of 8/1,

33% of the **\$8,550** we need to replace the flat roof
has been raised.

**An online giving portal for this project has
been added to our Vanco platform for
electronic giving, you can find it through
peumc.org/donate OR use this QR code:**



Thank You to Our Funeral Helpers

On behalf of the Heuers and Pastor Caleb, we wish to offer our appreciation to all those who donated their time and energies for Ed Heuer's funeral. First, to **Sara T.** who coordinated with Piggly Wiggly for the catering and organized the work in the kitchen. To all who helped prepare the food and drinks.

To the ushers who helped hand out bulletins and bottled water. To those who greeted at the front door. To **Ellen M., Judy M., and Bill P.** who provided their musical talents for the service. And to all who helped set up the tables & chairs AND return them to "worship position" following the luncheon!

It really took a WHOLE VILLAGE to make that special occasion go smoothly and efficiently.

Your efforts were noticed by so many friends, family, and community members in attendance that day!

GATHERINGS FOR AUGUST-SEPTEMBER

MemoryShare:

Tuesday, August 12th @ 10:30a – El Café
Tuesday, Septem. 2nd @ 10:30a – El Café

Men's Breakfast:

Saturday, August 2nd – 8:00a – El Café
Saturday, Septem. 6th – 8:00a – El Café

U.W.I.F.: October 12th will be UWIF Sunday **Circle of Friends:** September 10th

Vacation Bible School - August 2025



August 4th – 6th (Mon. – Wed.)
3:00p – 5:00p, shared meal at 5:00p
Luau party: Thurs., August 7th – 5:30p
Location: First Congregational Church,
Rapids (311 2nd Street)

Event is FREE!



Greater Rapids Area Churches for Ecumenism

Register your child(ren) thru our church's website: peumc.org/vbs

Event sponsored by the churches of:



THE PORT EDWARDS UNITED METHODIST WOMEN'S ANNUAL

HOLIDAY BAZAAR & LUNCHEON

It may be July, but members of UWIF are already thinking ahead to the church's Holiday Bazaar, which will take place on **Saturday, November 1st**. We are reaching out to the entire congregation, in the hope you will share your talents by providing handcrafted creations. It's never too early to start crafting! Stay tuned for future updates, as we hope to announce the addition of new booths to our delightful bazaar/day of fellowship.

Thank you in advance, as it takes all of us working together to make this day special for our community!

UWIF Bazaar Committee



Couple's Night Out

{Dinner and a Game}

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 17TH

5:30P - 7:00P

PEUMC's Fellowship Hall

Calling all not-so-newlyweds for a night of food and live entertainment!

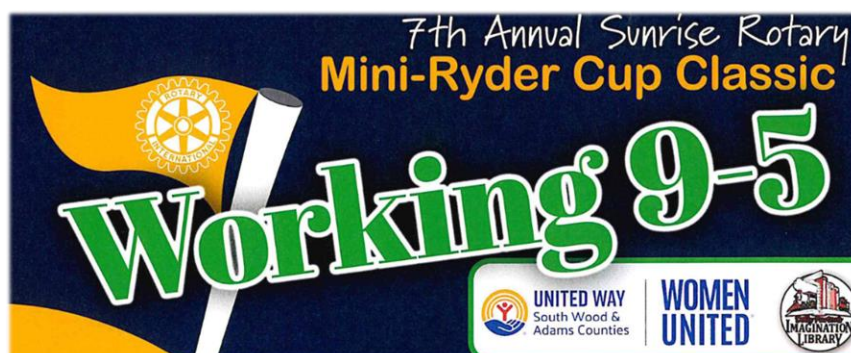
The dinner begins at 5:30P (catered meal & price TBA)

A live performance of The Not-So-Newlywed Game will commence around 6:00P

GAME: Couples will compete against each other in a series of fun question rounds to determine how well spouses know each other.

*NOTE: Our version will be a PG-rated version; there will be no "making whoopee" content.

"I would be going alone, can I still attend?" Singles are welcome, too! If you want to participate in the game, we will have a few rounds where singles can pair up for some funny (not-so-wedded) questions.



Benefits DOLLY PARTON'S IMAGINATION LIBRARY OF WOOD & ADAMS COUNTY

WHEN: Tuesday, August 26th, 2025 – dinner @ 5:00p – golf @ 6:30p

WHERE: Papa Bears Mini-Golf in Rome, WI (just off highway)

COST: \$35 a person – includes a round of mini-golf + dinner

REGISTER: by August 17th via wisconsinrapidsrotary.org/events

or mail payment & contact info. to Sunrise Rotary, PO Box 1181, Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54495

BLESSING OF THE BACKPACKS & MOVIE NIGHT

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 27TH – 7:30P (SUNSET @ 7:45) –PEUMC PARKING LOT

STUDENTS WHO BRING THEIR BACKPACK OR TABLET FOR A BLESSING WILL BE ENTERED INTO A DRAWING FOR ONE MONTH'S WORTH OF SCHOOL MEAL COST (\$52).

STUDENTS AT ANY SCHOOL ARE WELCOME!

MOVIE: GIBLI STUDIO'S 1988 JAPANESE ANIMATED FANTASY FILM.
(7:40P TO 9:06P)



NEW WAY TO SUBMIT A PRAYER REQUEST

Send your prayer requests (joys or concerns) to prayer@peumc.org
(email goes to pastor's private email).

OR you can use the online form available at peumc.org/prayer.

Labor Day Weekend Service

Sunday, August 31st

Service @ 10:00A

potluck to follow

(bring whatever you want!) + lawn chair



WHERE: Ripple Creek Park Shelter (NOT the YMCA park)

Nekoosa U.C.C. & Rapids First Congregational to join us.

The Rev. Kate West to preach.

Alternate location in lieu of bad weather: PEUMC

KICKOFF SUNDAY

Sunday, September 7th

PEUMC sanctuary – 10:00A

Start of *Journey Through the Bible, Part 4: JOHN!*

Annual Congregational Photo

Cookout following the service around gazebo



Looking Ahead:

Indoor movie night: "Wicked: Part I" - Wed., November 19th - PEUMC sanctuary (*blow-up screen*) - 6:00p-ish

Night at the Movies: "Wicked: Part II" -

when released in theatres (~Nov. 20th) - Rogers Cinema



First Saturdays of each month.

8:00a – El Café

Open to all the men of the church (*no girls allowed!!!*)



MemoryShare

First Tuesday of each month.

10:30a – El Café

A support group
for all widows/widowers



OUR MIGRANT GOD

A 3-session study by Pastor Caleb

*Want to develop a Christian vision for immigrant justice?
Want to know what it takes to become a citizen of the U.S.?
Want to hear about on-the-ground stories of life at the border?*

Study based on Isaac Samuel Villegas' 2025 book, *Migrant God*

Session 1: Monday, Sept. 15th / Session 2: Monday, Sept. 22nd / Session 3: Monday, Sept. 29th
6:00p – 7:00p – PEUMC's Memorial Lounge & on ZOOM

PEUMC STARTS HOME GROUPS

'Home Group' is PEUMC's method for helping our church members effectively "*watch over one another in love*" in an organized way. **Home Groups** are **not** study groups and not quite "covenant" groups.

The purpose of **Home Groups** is to *nurture one another*

through fellowship and sharing of joys and concerns. Groups may choose to meet inside homes, or else at local restaurants or any kind of local event or festival.

Our three Home Groups are based on ZIP codes: Nekoosa-Lakes Area, Port, and Rapids.

Our membership is almost divided evenly between these three ZIP codes.

Members beyond these locales are still included in one of the three.

The Nekoosa-Lakes Area Group and the Port Group are already up and running.

The Rapids Group is still in the works. *Thank you for your patience!*



Can I opt out of my Group?

You can choose to attend any of the gatherings, some of the gatherings, or none of them. But every member and friend of the church is assigned a Group for congregational care purposes.

Can I attend the gatherings of other Groups?

Yes! We will be announcing upcoming gatherings in our newsletter & Mailchimp (see next page). If the Port Group is attending an event you are interested in, you are more than welcome to attend. If there is an RSVP requirement, please contact the shepherd in charge!

What will I expect if I cannot attend?

At each gathering, the participants will first be asked "*How is it with you and your family?*"

And then the Group reflect together on the entire Group membership list, asking, "*Who in our Group needs nurturing and care right now? What can we do for them?*"

This is to say, everyone will be "*watched over in love*" without necessarily being in attendance.

Your Group will be sending out greeting cards throughout the year, and will begin finding creative ways to reach out to each only when in need; you will certainly be the recipient of these tangible signs of care as they come.

Card from Amy Palik

PEUMC Family,

My sympathies on the passing of Ed Heuer. Please accept this memorium in honor of him. Mary, her family, and members of PEUMC are in my thoughts and prayers. May God comfort all who loved Ed.

-Amy Palik

PORT HOME GROUP EVENT:



Group will be staying
from 5:00p to 9:00p
(come & go as you please)

Bring your own lawn chairs.

Location:
Dempze Cranberry Farm,
¼ mile past Biron Paper Mill
1060 Center Street,
Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54494

No need to RSVP to Diane S.

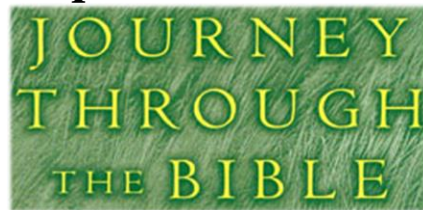
NEKOOSA-LAKES GROUP EVENT:

Located at the Arrowhead Clubhouse
1195 Apache Lane, Nekoosa, WI 54457
Wednesday, August 20th at 10:00A

RSVP to Sara T. by August 6th



Sunday, September 7th Kicks off our



The Final Chapter: The Year of John

We have journeyed through the Bible three times already: During the '22-'23 church year, we focused on the Gospel of Matthew; the Gospel of Mark in '23 to '24; and this past year we experienced the Gospel of Luke. Now we receive the **Gospel of John** for our *fourth and final* journey. This completes one full cycle through the Narrative Lectionary. *We invite you to join us on this journey!*

This Year's Theme:



The stories of Year 4 tell of God's invitation given to all people to be in relationship with Godself. We discover many of the ways God provides gifts of grace at every turn. God is constantly calling the unexpected to step out in faith. And as they do, God never fails to equip them for the journey. God's continued presence and abounding grace allows us to answer God's call, and through those blessings, to live in hope as we serve Jesus through our neighbor.

SOME NOTABLE SCRIPTURES THIS FALL: *Tower of Babel, Jacob's Ladder, Manna in the Wilderness, the Golden Calf, Deborah the Judge, David & Goliath, Shadrack/Meshack/Abednego, and the Valley of the Dry Bones.*

NEW PATHWAYS FOR PROSPECTIVE MEMBERS

At their July 20th meeting, the Leadership Council approved new pathways for prospective members. These pathways were paved and presented by Pastor Caleb to provide clear avenues for those interested in membership at PEUMC. The standardization of such programming is not for standardization-sake or to put up barriers or hoops through which to jump, but to clarify and unify how individuals are brought into professing membership at PEUMC. Step One was to codify these standards into our Principles, Policies, and Procedures.

It is true that some members at PEUMC were asked to go through new membership classes, and depending on the pastor, this could have been just a few sessions *or* a whole semester's worth. Others had just one sit down with the pastor and sufficed. Some young members were confirmed after a few sessions with the pastor and others went through a 5-week course, a 13-week course, an entire year's worth of classes, or for some, even *two* years! Some became members immediately upon request and others waited until enough were interested to justify a class and were received as a group. All of this depended on several factors: who the pastor/leaders were at the time and their preferences, and how many people were in interested in membership in that moment. We believe that establishing a series of pathways that can be engaged *as soon as* an individual announces their interest in joining us officially is the best way to incorporate new people into our membership.

These are called “**pathways**” and are not meant to be construed as “courses” or “classes.” There are no tests.

#1: For those seeking to baptize a child at PEUMC:

come to the waters

- (1) Talk to the pastor. (2) A review of the meaning of baptism and the vows taken by parents and congregation together will be reviewed via **2 sessions** in a pathway called “COME TO THE WATERS.”

#2: For those seeking baptism for themselves and/or membership for the very first time:

BECOMING A DISCIPLE

- (1) Talk to the pastor. (2a) “BECOMING A DISCIPLE” is a **9-sessions-long** pathway for adults and is a fly-by overview of Christianity. This pathway covers such topics as: *God, Jesus, the Holy Spirit, Worship, The Bible, Spiritual Life, etc.* This is the equivalent of a new membership class OR confirmation *for adults*.
(2b) If the person is a youth (“confirmation age”) this same pathway can be extended according to time availability and the contents adapted for a younger audience. In this way, the pathway becomes the same for each person wishing to profess their faith publicly *for the very first time*, regardless of age.

#3: For those seeking to transfer their membership *from another Christian denomination*:

Living as United Methodist Christians

- (1) Talk to the pastor. (2) The introduction to United Methodism will take place in a **3-session-long** pathway called “LIVING AS UNITED METHODIST CHRISTIANS.”

#4: For those seeking to transfer their membership *from another United Methodist congregation*:

- (1) Talk to the pastor. (2) Unless requested, no further pathway is necessary for transfer.

Follow-Up Pathway: **Walking the Walk**

One of the most significant units PEUMC can offer is a **3-session pathway** called “WALKING THE WALK.” This is a highly-encouraged pathway for all who have been baptized or received as members. (Can be requested by *any* member, whether brand new or lifelong). It is a pathway meant to be taken *after* reception. We believe that limiting “new member classes,” or its equivalent, to the time just *before* baptism/reception gives candidates the impression that their public profession of faith is a kind of graduation; and recent history demonstrates that church participation following such benchmarks often diminishes, in part, because such older models focused on *prerequisites* with little *follow up*. This post-reception pathway is a way to help form our members to pursue vital discipleship as a *lifelong journey*. Such a journey doesn’t *end* at baptism or a profession of faith; *it is just beginning!* WALKING THE WALK focuses on how we are being called to live out our faith actively in our daily lives. It is also used to introduce new people to the history of our congregation and how they can see themselves as part of our ongoing story as Port Edwardian United Methodists!

What else should we know?

1. The pastor reserves the right to adapt each path to suit the particular needs of the individual. Therefore, what is printed on the previous page is not a rule but a standard for when the rule must be broken.
2. These pathways are not group classes that must be scheduled periodically; they are to begin upon the discernment of each individual, although groups (and couples) may participate together when applicable. The expectation is that individuals will be undertaking their journey alone. And that’s okay.
3. Sessions are always with the pastor, preferably over a meal in a neutral or public location, with a rotating member of the congregation assisting the sessions. This makes each gathering both intimate but also a time to get to know other members of the church.
4. If a youth, and their parent(s), agree to go through Confirmation alone, that is okay. The sessions will be with the pastor and a rotation of congregational members. Too many young people today are missing out on their own Confirmation because the standard has been set as – *a church can only hold a Confirmation class if there are x-number of youth eligible, and no child would ever want to do Confirmation by themselves*. (Pastor Doug is currently conducting Confirmation for just one youth; we, too, can, and should, conduct Confirmation even if one student is willing and eligible.)
5. The establishment of these pathways help our church promote the various on-ramps into congregational life and fellowship and help to provide continuity between pastoral appointments EVEN THOUGH one pastor cannot bind future pastors; nevertheless, this will help future pastors know what “we do here.”
6. Judicial Council decision #1032, “*The pastor in charge of a United Methodist Church is solely responsible for making the determination of a person’s readiness to receive the vows of membership.*”

Leadership Council Update

At their July 20th meeting, the Leadership Council made the following decisions:

- (1) To pursue obtaining a credit card for the church’s use.
- (2) To establish a “no smoking” policy on church property, inside and outside;
this is in addition to no drugs, alcohol, or controlled substances, in any form at any time.
- (3) To establish a policy that regulates how donations of personal property (like furniture, appliances, household items, etc.) are to be received and accepted; how rummage is collected and removed for rummage sales; and a restriction on storing personal property at the church.
- (4) The Appendix relating to the Pathways for New Members (see article above).
- (5) Reaffirmed a decision by the previous Church Council from February 2024 to sell the church’s handbell set; price is \$19,000 for the set and \$2,000 for the music.
- (6) To submit a grant request to renovate the restrooms on the upper- and lower-levels.
- (7) The hiring of Eric Cross as an independent contractor of the church at \$10 an hour to receive no more than \$600 annually (60 hours); this is a new position titled “*Maintenance Technician’s Assistant.*”
- (8) The hiring of Ethan Boerner as the church’s Media Technician to start sometime this summer at the same rate of \$25 a service.

Madison First UMC Hosts Global Gathering of Reconciling United Methodists

For Helen Ryde, The United Methodist Church's removal of barriers to LGBTQ ministry was like when the walls of Jericho came tumblin' down. *"Joshua took only seven days,"* said Ryde, director of Mission Impact for the Reconciling Ministries Network. *"But we have been marching around these same walls for 50 years."*

Reconciling Ministries Network's July 24-27

Convocation was hosted at First United Methodist Church in downtown Madison, Wisconsin. More than 250 people attended the advocacy group's first such gathering since last year's General Conference brought a seismic shift in the international denomination.

The 2025 Convocation, with the theme *"UNCHARTED,"* offered a time for advocates to celebrate and cooperate as they move into a new denominational landscape. The Reconciling movement began in 1984 with an initiative by another advocacy group, AFFIRMATION, to build a network of United Methodist churches committed to full inclusion. Over the decades, as successive General Conferences erected more barriers to LGBTQ+ people, the network's growing membership kept praying and organizing with faith that God was leading the Church into a new day.

Though that "new day" has now arrived, the Reconciling Ministries Network has no plans to close up shop. The group sees opportunities to work more closely with the denomination in rebuilding after church exits and supporting its justice work.

"Our mission is to provide a space where every Christ-follower discovers who they are and can be who they are in The United Methodist Church in all of the fullness of what that means," said the Rev. David Meredith, a retired pastor in the West Ohio Conference and the group's board chair.

Emblematic of the denomination's greater openness, he spoke in Madison First's sanctuary under banners representing the Convocation's sponsorship by 24 of the 51 U.S. Conferences. Other sponsors included general agencies and other United Methodist ministries who, under the previous funding ban, could not offer such financial support. Three bishops attended the Convocation: Bishop Dan Scherwin of the Wisconsin & Northern Illinois Conferences, Bishop Cedric Bridgeforth, the first black gay bishop, and Bishop Kristin Stoneking, the denomination's third gay bishop. Council of Bishops President, Tracy S. Malone, who leads the Indiana Conference, was unable to attend in person but sent video greetings.

Even as United Methodist churches become more hospitable, the U.S. and some state governments are becoming more hostile to people on the margins. Among those especially targeted are trans people, racial & ethnic minorities, immigrants, and even people who are simply visiting the U.S.

The Rev. Valeria L. Jackson, chair of the network's Equity Council, preached that one lesson from Exodus Chapter 1 is that people can be free one day and enslaved the next. *"Our freedom and our liberation depend on who is in leadership,"* said Jackson, pastor of Park Hill United Methodist Church in Denver. *"Our freedom and our liberation depend on who is on the Council of Bishops, who our district superintendents are, who the lead pastors of our churches are. Our freedom and liberation also depend on who is in the Oval Office."*

For many at the Convocation, this was a time of both joy and trepidation for the challenges ahead.

"This is what we are called to do when suffering still exists," said Bishop Stoneking at the closing worship on Sunday; she is the first openly gay and married bishop elected since the elimination of the gay-clergy ban. *"This is what hope sounds like when it won't stay quiet. This is what love looks like when it moves in and infuses every place where love doesn't yet reign. It says, 'God sent us because God is still leading'."*

(this is a truncation of Heather Hahn's article on United Methodist News, dated July 30th)

Pastors Caleb & Doug spent the opening day at the Convocation for a day of workshops and catching up with friends.



IRS DECLARES CHURCHES CAN NOW ENDORSE POLITICAL CANDIDATES WITHOUT TAX-EXEMPT STATUS PENALTY



STATEMENT BY THE GENERAL BOARD OF CHURCH AND SOCIETY – JULY 15TH, 2025

In a July 7th, 2025, court filing, the U.S. Internal Revenue Service (IRS) declared that churches and other houses of worship can endorse political candidates in certain circumstances without risking the loss of their tax-exempt status, despite a decades-old congressional statute that bans such endorsements.

This recent filing is at odds with a law passed by congress more than 70 years ago known as the Johnson Amendment and applies to all charitable nonprofits, secular or religious. This bans all tax-exempt organizations like churches and charities from “directly or indirectly” participating in politics, specifically in endorsement or opposition of candidates.

Critics of this filing say it is not about religion or free speech, but about radically altering campaign finance laws. The IRS decree could open the floodgates for political operatives to funnel money through churches in exchange for support of their preferred candidates, while receiving generous tax breaks at the expense of taxpayers who may not share those views.

As United Methodists, we advocate for a relationship of mutual respect in which neither religious nor governmental institutions seek to dominate or unduly influence the other.

“While we do not believe churches should affiliate with particular political parties, we do encourage churches to speak out boldly on social issues from a gospel perspective. We further believe churches have a right and responsibility to educate and equip their members to be effective advocate for justice in the wider world” (United Methodist Social Principles, 2025-2028).

POSITION STATEMENT: The General Board of Church and Society of The United Methodist Church strongly opposes the use of churches and houses of worship for partisan political affiliation and endorsement.

P.E.U.M.C.’s “POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT” STATEMENT, Point 1 (based on the IRS’s previous standing):

“Our congregation shall not publicly support, oppose, or contribute to any candidate, whether running for office or in office, or political party, whether that be on the national, state, or local level; neither shall any person, lay or clergy, member or guest, issue statements (verbal or written) in a church setting that endorses, or opposes, a candidate or a political party, nor distribute any materials that are biased toward or against the character of a particular candidate, their administration, or their political party.” (Appendix E of PEUMC’s Principles, Policies, and Procedures, approved 3/16/2025.) This statement is still in effect at PEUMC.

POLITICAL VS. PARTISAN

We must always keep in mind the difference between being **political** (engaging publicly on social issues – the responsibility of democracy and the moral duty of Christ-followers) and being **partisan** (prejudiced toward one party over another). Making statements like *“we support gay marriage”* or *“we oppose abortion”* *IS* being rightfully **political** (albeit, viewed as moral and ethical topics) EVEN THOUGH such statements will certainly align with the established stances of either the Republican or Democratic parties. *This is not the issue, even if it makes some people uncomfortable.* Saying, *“we support the X party”* OR *“we support this position because it is affirmed by the X party”* makes such a stance **partisan**. In other words, the church *cannot align itself* with a party or platform (*“we will affirm what X party says”*) but must be free to affirm and critic any positions of any party. Additionally, the church cannot say *“I don’t think President Z is a moral leader”* (that speaks to the *character* of the president) but can say *“I disagree with the President’s belief on Y issue”* or *“We support the President’s Executive Order related to Q.”* It’s a thin line that, once understood, allows the church to safely and fully engage in important issues that affect the lives of so many people around us.

DAILY SCRIPTURE READINGS – 8/1 – 9/13

Below are daily scripture readings that are based on Sunday morning's lectionary passages. While these passages will jump around within the Bible, just remember that they have been chosen to align *thematically* with either the previous Sunday's or upcoming Sunday's Bible story.

**These will be printed weekly in our bulletins as well. THE NEW LECTIONARY YEARS BEGINS 9/7.*

Abbreviations: "Heb." means "Hebrews" and "Philipp." means "Philippians"

8/1	Ephesians 4:17-24		8/23	Luke 6:1-5	
8/2	Mark 10:17-22		Pentecost.11	Hebrew. 12:18-29	Luke 13:10-17
Pentecost.8	Colossians 3:1-11	Luke 12:13-21	8/25	Hebrews 3:7-4:11	
8/4	Colossia. 3:18-4:1		8/26	Revelation 3:7-13	
8/5	Colossians 4:2-6		8/27	Luke 6:6-11	
8/6	Luke 12:22-31		8/28	1 Peter 3:8-12	
8/7	Romans 9:1-9		8/29	1 Peter 4:7-11	
8/8	Acts 7:1-8		8/30	Matthe. 20:20-28	
8/9	Matthew 6:19-24		Pentecost.12	Heb. 13:1-8, 15-16	Luke 14:1, 7-14
Pentecost.9	Hebr. 11:1-3, 8-16	Luke 12:32-40	9/1	Hebrews 13:7-12	
8/11	Hebrews 11:1-7		9/2	Titus 1:1-9	
8/12	Hebrews 11:17-28		9/3	Luke 14:15-24	
8/13	Luke 12:41-48		9/4	Philipp. 2:25-30	
8/14	Hebrews 10:26-31		9/5	Colossians 4:7-17	
8/15	Hebrews 10:32-39		9/6	Matthe. 10:34-42	
8/16	Matthew 24:15-27		NEW YEAR	Genesis 11:1-9	Tower of Babel
Pentecost.10	Hebrews 11:29-12:2	Luke 12:49-56	9/8	Gene. 11:10-12:9	Call of Abram
8/18	1 John 4:1-6		9/9	Genesis 12:10-20	Abram in Egypt
8/19	Acts 7:44-53		9/10	Genesis 13	Abram & Lot
8/20	Luke 19:45-48		9/11	Genesis 14:1-17	Lot
8/21	Hebrews 12:3-17		9/12	Genesis 14:18-24	Melchizedek
8/22	Acts 17:1-9		9/13	Genesis 16	Hagar

PHOTOS NEEDS FOR DIRECTORY

Friday, August 22nd – deadline

Our newest church directory will be a pictorial one. This Sunday (8/3) Pat M. will be available to take headshots for this directory. After that, you will have to contact that office to arrange a time for Pastor Caleb to take your headshot. OR you can submit a photo, as long as it is less than 5 years old!

****Your submitted photo can have other family members included, even if they are not members here. The directory will be ready by Sunday, September 7th.*

AUGUST HOUSEHOLDS



Throughout August,
our congregation is asked
to pray for the following people:
(randomly chosen on 7/30)

**Joan & Don H. / Pat & Kathy M. / Denise D. /
Helmuth & Sandy / Kathleen M. / Melanie S. /
Jerry K. / Carol Ann & Art H. /
Pastors Caleb & Doug**

July's households were: Bill & Marna L., Ken & Sue B., Travis & Anna H. Family, Glenna S.,
Jenna & Matt B. Family, Ken & Nina P., Bob & Julie B.

You are encouraged to send emails, cards, letters, or make house calls to these individuals during
their month. Check your church directory for contact info.

Worship Servants for August

Communion: M. Hintz Candles: L. Hintz	GREETER(S)	USHER	LITURGIST	Pew AMBASSADOR	REFRESHMENTS
Sun., August 3rd	Julie B.	Mike H.	Bob B.	Kathy Mc.	Ti. G. / Ju. B.
Sun., August 10th			Leo T.	Kathy Mc.	
Sun., August 17th				Diane S.	
Sun., August 24th		Skip M.	Candy P.T.	Sue T.	
Sun., August 31st				Sue T.	

Please notify the church office if you would like your name down for a certain position and date.

office@peumc.org / 715-887-3011 /



Sundays in August

August 3 rd	"Love the Sinner, Hate the Sin."		End of 'Half-Truth' series
August 10 th	Debunking Calvinism		Part 1 of 2
August 17 th	<i>Hymn-sing</i>		PASTOR IN S. INDIANA
August 24 th	Best of Wesleyanism/Arminianism		Part 2 of 2
August 31 st	<i>Labor Weekend Service @ Ripple Creek Park</i>		Rev. Kate West to preach
Sept. 7 th	<i>KICKOFF Sunday</i>	JOURNEY THRU THE BIBLE: JOHN!	Tower of Babel (Congregational photo & cookout)

LAWN MOWING SCHEDULE:

For the week of . . .

August 3rd – Sue M.

August 10th – The Parks

August 17th – Jean M.

August 24th – Leo T.

August 31st – Bob B.

September 7th – Bill L.

September 14th – The Mazureks

August Mission Project



Wisconsin Rapids Area

**Habitat
for Humanity®**



Building their 21st home in the Rapids area!

Give by designating your checks

("August Mission" or "Habitat for Humanity") or giving online
at peumc.org/donate or use this QR code:

**THANK YOU, VOLUNTEERS, FOR HELPING
OUR NEIGHBORS IN JUNE & JULY!**



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

Home Delivered Meals Drivers

Julie Berg

Skip & Ellen Mazurek

Pat & Kathy McGrath

Sue Mitchell

Nina Pelo

Becky Taylor

Leo & Sue Thomasgard

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.



By Merging Strengths of SWEPS, Rapids Family Backpacks & The Neighborhood Table

FOCUS Food Pantry Helpers

Julie Berg

Lori Hintz

Chuck Lamb

Sue Mitchell

Nina Pelo

Candy Prah-Tell

Becky Taylor

Sara Tyne

Your efforts to help put food on the table for our neighbors is so appreciated! Anyone interested in helping with these programs may contact Becky Taylor (715-887-2163) for more information. **THANK YOU!**

AUGUST

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
<i>July 27</i>	<i>July 28</i>	<i>July 29</i>	<i>July 30</i>	<i>July 31</i>	1	2
Service 10:00					Pastor's day off	Mens' Breakfast 8:00a @ El Café
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Service 10:00a Communion	VBS - Day 1 (Frist Congr.) 3:00-5:00p	VBS - Day 2 (Frist Congr.) 3:00-5:00p	Due date to RSVP to Sara T. for The Pines Restaurant VBS - Day 3 (Frist Congr.) 3:00-5:00p	VBS - Day 4 (Frist Congr.) 5:30p	Pastor's day off	
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Service 10:00a Communion service in F. Hall		10:30 MemoryShare @ El Café			Pastor's day off	
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
Service 10:00a <i>Registration due date for Rotary minigolf</i> service in F. Hall			Nekoosa-Lakes Home Group: The Pines Restaurant (Arrowhead Clubhouse) - 10:00a		Pastor's day off Due date for directory photo submissions	Port Home Group: Rooted in Red 5p-9p
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
Service 10:00a Leadership Council Meeting service in F.H.(?)		Papa Bear's Minigolf (Rome) - Rotary Event for <i>Dolly Parton Imagination Library</i> (meal @ 5p, game at 6:30p)	Blessing of the Backpacks & Outdoor Movie: TOTORO (7:30p) - church parking lot		Pastor's day off	
31	<i>Sep 1</i>	<i>Sep 2</i>	<i>Sep 3</i>	<i>Sep 4</i>	<i>Sep 5</i>	<i>Sep 6</i>
Labor Day Service at Ripple Creek Park (10a) - bring lawn chair & something for the potluck		10:30 MemoryShare @ El Café			Pastor's day off	Mens' Breakfast 8:00a @ El Café

Birthdays: Jeff T. - 8/7, Lori H. - 8/11, Gloria W. - 8/22,
LuAnn S. 8/23, Mike H. 8/27, Carlyn C. 8/28, Mable J. 8/29

Anniversaries: Bill & Jody P., 8/3, Ken & Sue B., 8/14,
Curtis & Linda F., 8/24

Church Office Hours:

Connie: Mon - Fri. : 8:00a – Noon
Pastor: Mon. thru Thurs. : 9a – 1:00