



*Pouring Forth the Living Water:  
Bloom by the River!*



## Work on the Parsonage Stonework Begins!



The church will match each dollar donated by the congregation up to **\$5,000**, so your every \$1.00 will be worth **double!** An online portal via VANCO has been created to give to this project electronically. Or you can designate donations by writing **"STONEWORK PROJECT"** on your envelope or check memo. **We have raised \$1,040 of the total so far!**



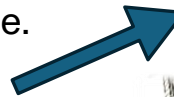
Parsonage Stonework Project

Donate now

You can give online by either going to [peumc.org/donate](https://peumc.org/donate) and finding the 'tile' as seen on the left,



or by scanning the QR code and going directly there by smartphone.



The ~\$10,000 project by Custom Concrete Carpentry (Port Edwards) has begun and only halted momentarily for the snowstorm and supply orders. The effected stone façade has been removed as well as the compromised wooden siding. Installed in its place will be "smart siding," engineered wood strands treated with waxes and resins for enhanced durability and resistance. The color of the new siding has been chosen to blend in with the existing 1960s metal siding that surround this section of the parsonage (facing Market Ave). The 2-to-4-foot stretch of landscape will be filled with concrete to create an expanded front patio, suitable for some tables and chairs. Additionally, the front steps of the parsonage will be reconstructed to satisfy modern ADA codes.



# 2026 Missional Giving Report

MONTH	NAME	AMOUNT COLLECTED	DATE VOUCHERED
Jan. Mission	Chemo Care Packages & Homeless Kits for Riverview Hospital	\$260.00	(will be utilized week after Easter)
Feb. Mission	Park Ave. UMC (Minneapolis) Immigration Care	\$625.00	(3/3)
March Lenten	Wednesday Offerings: G.R.A.C.E. Student Debt	\$220.00	(3/31)
Sp. Offering	Peace with Justice Offering – April 19 <sup>th</sup> , 2026		
Sp. Offering	United Methodist Student Day – June 14 <sup>th</sup> , 2026		
Sp. Offering	World Communion Sunday – Oct. 4 <sup>th</sup> , 2026		
<b>2026 Total Second-Mile Giving for Missions:</b>		<b>\$1,105.00</b>	



The young people of PEUMC were seen making hand-angels on December 14<sup>th</sup> (left) and Valentine's Day cards for shut-ins on February 18<sup>th</sup> (right). The Rev. Dr. Scott Carlson told a group of PEUMC leaders recently: *"I give my Sunday School teacher most of the credit for helping me come to faith; not because I remembered her amazing lessons and incredible crafts, because I don't really remember any of it; but because of how she made me feel in her classroom. I was someone important. It was her welcome that made me feel that church was a safe & special place to be myself."*

## HUMKE STUDENTS OF THE MONTH



Sawyer H. was recognized on March 13<sup>th</sup> as a student of the Month at Humke Elementary School in Nekoosa. He proudly holds a sign recognizing his exceptional skills at cooperation.



Basketball runs deep in the H. family! These 4 siblings pose in their Nekoosa Navy blues.

Please join us in congratulating our apprentice Melanie [redacted] on her graduation from mortuary school! We are very proud of her accomplishments! Now onto the board exams.



**Congratulations to Melanie S.** on her recent graduation from mortuary school! The average mortuary school program lasts two years for an associate and four years for a bachelor's degree. The curriculum includes subjects such as anatomy, physiology, embalming, funeral service laws, grief counseling, and management. Apprenticeships are common during this time for practical training where students learn to manage a funeral home and complete necessary paperwork and practical tasks. Graduates must pass national board exams and complete an

apprenticeship that includes embalming a specific number of cases. Melanie works for Herman-Taylor Funeral Home in Wisconsin Rapids.

## Spring Yard Cleaning Underway at PEUMC



Spring officially arrived on March 20<sup>th</sup>, and Jeff wasted no time once the snow melted to get into the dirt! With electric saws, hacksaws, pickaxes, and shovels, Jeff could be seen digging up overgrown or dying plants around the parsonage and church yards. In the fall, all bushes with thorns or stickers were removed by request of the Council for safety reasons.



**Thank you, Jeff!**

# P.E.U.M.C. NEW MEMBER SPOTLIGHT!



## Jennifer Murphy

1. How long have you attended PEUMC?  
**12 – 18 months.**
2. What is your favorite memory at PEUMC?  
**Membership Sunday when Dave and I officially became members (on his birthday).**
3. What is your favorite hymn?  
***How Great Thou Art.* I can still hear my Grandma Pauline and Great-Grandma Marie singing this in church when I was a young girl.**
4. What is your favorite Bible verse or story?  
**Proverbs 31:25, *"She is clothed in strength and dignity and she laughs without fear of the future."* Something to point to on a daily basis as a tie to women in leadership.**
5. What are your hobbies?  
**Anything with family and our pups; lake life things (boating, kayaking); bicycling (road & mountain); hiking; motorcycling; exercise.**
6. What is your favorite holiday tradition?  
**Christmas Eve service with the family, then board games and fried foods.**
7. What is your favorite food or recipe?  
***Favorite Food:* Deep Dish Pizza & White Cake Pops.  
*Favorite Recipe:* Chocolate Peanut Butter Ooey Gooley Dessert; Lasagna; Beer Cheese Soup**
8. Share some fun facts about yourself.  
**Between Dave and I, we have one first cousin, Breanna, and she is the same age as our youngest son, Holden. We have a small, close, and super cool family that we enjoy very much.**
9. What church, or faith tradition, did you grow up with?  
**Weekly church service in the small Beetown (WI) United Methodist Church followed by Sunday School where Grandma Pauline was the superintendent. I helped teach as soon as I could, given the size of the congregation was so small.**
10. What brought you to this area?  
**Decided to relocate to our lake property. Built a new home on our lake property and moved in January 2026.**
11. If you could choose your own superpower, what would it be and why?  
**I would find a way to solve the mental health crisis we have in the world.**
12. What are some of the jobs/roles you've held in your life?  
**Throughout college, I was an optician and ran an optical clinic (thus, why I still have multiple pairs of glasses . . . never lost the love for various styles of eyeglasses 😊).**
13. Other information you'd like to share:  
**We love our pups . . . we have two golden retrievers, Ollie and Mayzee, and two Aussiedoodles, Piper and Remi. We love beach vacations and, of course, the best season is lake season.**

## A LATE-WINTER WONDERLAND!

Services on Sunday, March 15<sup>th</sup> were cancelled after an average of 28" of snow fell throughout Central Wisconsin that weekend. The photo on the right was taken from inside the church's lobby, showing the ~2-foot snowdrift against the front doors of the church, taken on March 15<sup>th</sup>.



The photo to the left shows the snow piling up against some windows on the Lower Level of the church.

## Port Edwards Home Group – Upcoming Gatherings

*Shepherdess: Diane Sweat / Proposed Gathering Time: Fourth Tuesday of the Month*

**Tuesday, April 28<sup>th</sup> @ Perkins Restaurant (Rapids) @5:30p**

*(contact Diane S. for RSVP)*

**Tuesday, May 26<sup>th</sup> @ Perkins Restaurant (Rapids) @ 5:30p**

*(contact Judy M. for RSVP)*

## Understanding Our New Home Group Ministry @ PEUMC



“Home Groups” is a new concept for PEUMC, and it’s important to inform our members about its purpose and goals.

**Home Groups** is a ministry of our Nurture Team at PEUMC (Diane, Sara, Jef, and Pastor). These groups are meant to bring back, in some form, the various small groups settings that churches like ours once offered and of which we were all a part at one point or another in our faith journey. They also tap into our heritage as Methodists with our famous ‘Class Meetings’ of centuries past. Home Groups are **“locally sponsored get-to-know-you groups”** on behalf of the whole congregation. Their purpose is to provide opportunities to get together around a common Table for the pure and simple sake of getting to know one another and to find a *“home within the church”* — nothing more, nothing less. Home Groups was created at PEUMC out of a critique that the church should offer more than just congregational-wide events but to supplement them with more intimate settings where people can have real, heart-to-heart conversations. This only helps make the congregation into a real *church family*.

Every PEUMC member has been assigned to a Home Group based firstly on their ZIP code. For those who live beyond the local Rapids-area zip codes, they have been assigned according to family connections and other factors to balance the sizes of our three groups.

**Do I have to attend?** No. If the time and location is inconvenient to you, you do not have to attend. Alternatively, if another Home Group meets at a time and place that is more convenient to you, you may join them. (That is, people may switch groups as their situation changes; nobody is locked in – one’s “group assignment” is just the initial default.) If this ministry opportunity isn’t within your calendar’s bandwidth or it doesn’t meet a need that you have right now, there is no obligation whatsoever placed upon you to attend. And the shepherdesses have been instructed to continue to include their members in the invitations without pressure. We just want you to know that we are here for you and will be a source of care for you when you need it.

**Are these meetings?** No, they are not meetings; they are **gatherings**. There is no agenda; just a simple order meant to guide us through some simple icebreakers. The central and most important question that will be asked is a very basic one: **“How is it with you?”** If you have much to say or nothing to say at all, that’s okay. You can share whatever you’d like to share. Notice that this is not a particularly religious (nor probing) question and we are not expecting any kind of answer at all. This question is important to ask because you may find this a rare occasion to be asked this honest question, given the time you need to share, and to share with a group of people who really *\*do\** care to hear from you. That’s the nurturing core of the Home Groups. Making connections. Hearing from one another.

**I Cannot Make It to My Group’s Regular Gathering.** It is our hope that those who attend, or want to attend, will offer suggestions that will help meet the needs and situations of the group. Each member has a voice in deciding when and where your Group meets. The Home Groups *\*may\** gather in members’ homes, if they wish to host. A “default” is set to keep the gatherings consistent.

**What Does the Home Groups ‘Do’?** Through its monthly time spent together, the Home Groups will continuously seek ways to extend tangible care to *\*all\** its group members (whether they attend or not). If someone in the Group is in need of a meal train, a card shower, a group visit, a rotation of drivers, etc., the Home Group is the first place these nurturing opportunities get organized (on behalf of the whole congregation, never in place of it)! That is to say, the Home Groups do not take away congregational care but organize and direct that care to engage the wider community of faith.

Some of our Groups have been most inventive in hosting a great variety of gatherings at public events like plays, concerts, and movies. However, when reviewing these events, it was agreed that such events are *not* at the core of what Home Groups are about. Public events will not be the default mode of coming together; the standard is gathering monthly over a common table. It is out of these gatherings that the group will decide together if an upcoming event would be a good opportunity to do something fun or inspiring together in the community.

**Can I bring others to the group?** Yes, it is not limited to just PEUMC members. You may find that these gatherings would be beneficial to a family member or neighborhood. A good “front door” to the church for seekers. These *\*are\** open groups. However, we also want to avoid having too many people regularly entering and leaving the group and compromising whatever intimacy is needed to have the honest kind of conversations one may feel the need to have. We hope that those who choose to attend will attend enough that we begin to see each other more than just members of the same church, but as friends of different genders and ages and thoughts but still one in Christ.



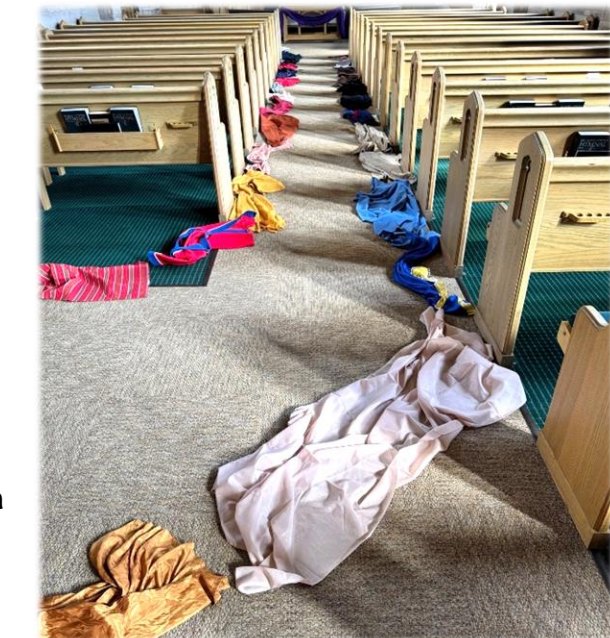
## Why has the sermon (“the preached word”) become the end-all, be-all for Protestants?

For centuries, Protestant Christians assumed that the sermon was the central part of the service and everything around it was just “fluff,” as if speaking was the sole way God could communicate with God’s own people.

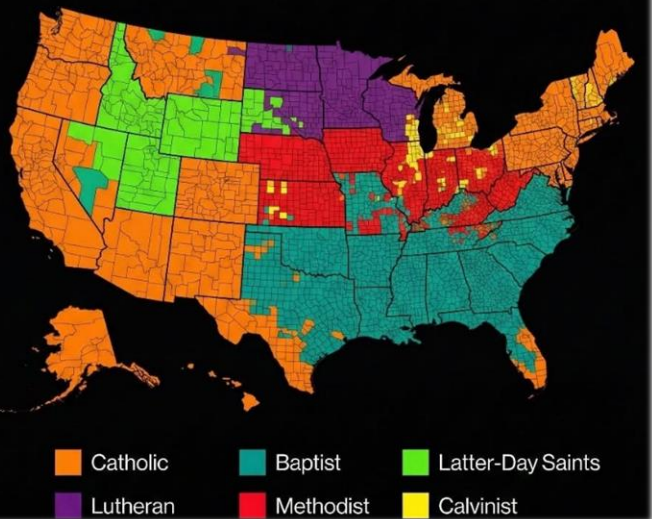
Throughout the Lenten season this year, PEUMC engaged in some hands-on, tactile acts of worship as part of their celebration of the various scriptural stories in the life of Jesus. Such acts aren’t meant to be for pure entertainment’s sake but to engage the entire body and to allow God to communicate in other non-verbal ways, like through touch, smell, vision, and sound. Such acts might be new and unfamiliar to some worshippers but is increasing in 21<sup>st</sup> Century worship practices.

This Lent, worshippers, either on Wednesday nights or Sunday mornings, have been invited to come forward to participate in some ritual participation in the biblical story.

On March 25<sup>th</sup>, worshippers “set the table” by bringing dishware to the Communion Table, to prepare the Table for Jesus, in recognition of the family who donated the upper room of their home for Jesus and His disciples to use (photo featured in last month’s newsletter). On March 4<sup>th</sup>, worshippers were invited to dip a finger into some essential oils in honor of Mary



## Map of the most commonly practiced religion in each US county



who offered her perfume to Jesus (not pictured). On March 11<sup>th</sup>, worshippers were invited to use red paint to mark their initials upon a cross in celebration of Simon from Cyrene who carried the cross for Jesus (pictured above). On March 25<sup>th</sup>, worshippers were invited to lay down their “cloaks” on the sanctuary floor to honor Jesus’ triumphant entry into Jerusalem and in celebration of the unnamed man who offered his donkey for Jesus to ride (pictured above). On Sunday, March 22<sup>nd</sup>, worshippers were invited to wash each other’s hands – a typical act for Maundy Thursday – in recognition of the night that Jesus washed the disciples’ feet (pictured above).



## Extending Our Welcome

24 LGBTQ+ Welcome Bags have been completed and are awaiting their new homes! Each bag contains 20 items, including a welcome brochure from the church and materials on our commitment to full inclusion, several pro-gay Christian pamphlets like *“What Does the Bible Say About LGBTQ People?”*, resources from United Way and the Trevor Project, local LGBTQ-

friendly organizations and businesses, words of affirmation, pronoun stickers, pride stickers, and packets of wildflower seeds encouraging the recipient to “Grow with PRIDE.” Fidel from *El Café* also donated free drink cards.

*How are these bags meant to be used?* Whenever you - yes, you, member of PEUMC - see a home flying a pride flag, progress flag, or trans flag, or otherwise feature some sign of LGBTQ inclusion on their property - OR you just happen to know someone in your life who would benefit from the materials in this welcome bag, please let Pastor Caleb know. While anyone could take a bag and deliver it themselves, the preferred method is to first notify the pastor so that we are not double-delivering the bags to the same household by accident. These bags are located in the Lower Level hallway of the church. It is the pastor’s hope that we can build a network of people in our community - the “GREATER RAPIDS” area - who need a church that will include them and their children.

**NOTE:** A similar welcome bag that is not LGBTQ-specific is in the works. These second welcome bags will be deliverable to new residents. Again, this is not the sole work of the pastor. If someone new has moved in in *your* neighborhood, please let the pastor know and we can get the welcome bag to their new home!

Dear Church Friends  
I want to thank you for  
your many acts of kindness,  
and prayers during my recovery  
from my falls and surgeries.  
At times like this, your  
care means so much!  
Blessings to you all  
Maribeth

Card located in the lobby  
bulletin board.





# **THIS ARTICLE IS A SCAM!**

**from the General Council on Finance & Administration of The UMC – February 11<sup>th</sup>**

Across the U.S., churches and ministries are seeing a troubling rise in identity spoofing scams – particularly those that impersonate pastors or other trusted church leaders. These scams often arrive as emails or text messages that appear to come directly from a pastor and urgently request gift cards, financial assistance, or sensitive information. In many cases, congregants and staff come dangerously close to falling victim before realizing the message is fraudulent. Cybersecurity experts note that churches are frequently targeted because of their culture of trust, publicly available contact information, and limited technical safeguards. District superintendents and even bishops are not immune to these scams.

*For congregants to know:*

- The church office will *only* use official means to communicate with you: church office phone number & church office email. Same with the pastor (NOTE: pastor has a Southern Illinois – “618” – cell phone #). You must scrutinize the source of each message.  
*Does the email look funny to you? Is it an unfamiliar phone number?*
- The pastor will NEVER request from its members gift cards, money transfers, or sensitive information – esp. through email or text. The more desperate the text sounds the more parishioners need to be suspicious of the request. Don’t be afraid to not respond.

The church office receives scam emails and phone calls all the time, requesting us to provide sensitive information. Every couple of weeks “someone” in the congregation wants a PDF copy of the church directory sent to their email. This is the source of the first scam we fell for over a year ago: scammers get a copy of the directory and use the information to pretend to be the pastor.

Through lived experience, the church office has learned NEVER to give directories or other personal information out until the requester’s identity has been verified. This means that it is important for every member of the church to keep the church alert of changes in contact information. We will treat unfamiliar numbers and emails as suspicious. NOTE: Most scams come through as gmail (Google) accounts because these are free accounts; if you are considering starting your own email or switching to an another email, please reconsider from using a gmail account as your email (like [xxxxxx@gmail.com](mailto:xxxxxx@gmail.com)); it is very easy for anyone to create a fake email like [pastor.caleb@gmail.com](mailto:pastor.caleb@gmail.com).

Just recently, Pastor Caleb received a random text from a number in the Green Bay area that read (paraphrased): “*Call me old fashioned, but you never responded to my email and I find that to be rude and unprofessional.*” The text went on. The phone number was, of course, unfamiliar, and the texter did not identify their name. Thus, Pastor Caleb pressed “delete and report as scam.” *Could it have been a real person upset at the pastor?* Perhaps. But that is the price for not identifying oneself. Some emails/text sent to the pastor go unanswered because the source of the email cannot be verified. If you use these means to communicate with the church office or pastor, you must make sure your identity is known. When texting, it is very helpful to start of your texts with a simple “*This is XXX, just wanting to remind you of . . .*”

For your, and our, safety, the church office/pastor will *not* respond to messages that are anonymous.

This is all to say that we must take extra steps in communicating well in a world that likes to impersonate and scam others. Churches and pastors are not only not-immune to this but are also frequent targets of scams (both to and from).

# Events in April

## *Second Sunday Refreshments & Chemo Care Project*

April 12<sup>th</sup> will be the date of our next Second Sunday Refreshment after the service.

We invite you to stay after the service not only for refreshments & fellowship but to help us with our chemo care project. In January, we collected \$260 for Aspirus Riverview Hospital. With this money, items will be purchased to put together care packages that will be given to patients who are receiving chemotherapy in the cancer center. These packages will be put together during our refreshment time!

## Church Town Hall Meeting – NEW DATE!

**Sunday, April 26<sup>th</sup> – after the service**

We **highly recommend** – again! – that all PEUMC members attend this meeting, as your leadership will be updating you on our church's financial vitality.

## Second ¶ 213 Meeting Scheduled

Our 2<sup>nd</sup> of 3 meetings with the Rev. Dr. Scott Carlson has been scheduled for **Sunday, May 3<sup>rd</sup>** after the service.

At this meeting, our findings from the 4 work teams will be reviewed.

## Holy Week Events

### **Live Last Supper Service – Marshfield Wesley UMC**

(211 S. Maple Street, Marshfield, WI)

Monday, March 30<sup>th</sup> & Wednesday, April 1<sup>st</sup> – 7:00 – 8:00 PM

No admission or tickets necessary.



### **Maundy Thursday Service – Nekoosa U.C.C. (combined service)**

Thursday, April 2<sup>nd</sup> – 7:00 – 8:00 PM

### **Good Friday Service – PEUMC sanctuary**

Friday, April 3<sup>rd</sup> – 2:45 – 3:00 PM

## Easter Sunday

**8:30a – Easter Breakfast – Fellowship Hall**

**8:50a – Simple, Early Service – Fellowship Hall**

**10:00a – Regular Easter Service**



# Dates in April - May

## GATHERINGS

### MemoryShare:

Tuesday, April 7<sup>th</sup> @ 10:30A – *El Café*  
Tuesday, May 5<sup>th</sup> @ 10:30A – *El Café*

### Men's Breakfast:

No breakfast in April @ 8:00A – *El Café*  
Saturday, May 2<sup>nd</sup> @ 8:00A – *El Café*

**J.W.I.F. Friends:** Kitchen Cleaning & Snack Potluck – April 8<sup>th</sup> – 1:00 PM (snack potluck)  
Northeast District Rep. – May 13<sup>th</sup> – 12:15 PM (salad potluck)

**Leadership Council:** Sunday, April 19<sup>th</sup>, 2026 – after worship  
Sunday, May 17<sup>th</sup>, 2026 – after worship



**First Saturdays of each month.**

8:00a – *El Café*

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

Socialize with some devotions

NO BREAKFAST IN APRIL (Next: May 2<sup>nd</sup>)



**MemoryShare**

**First Tuesday of each month.**

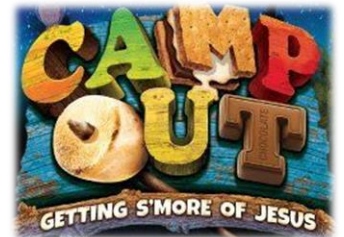
10:30a – *El Café*

A support group

for all who have lost a loved one.

**2026 Summer VBS in the works: Week of July 12<sup>th</sup>**

Sponsored by G.R.A.C.E. – hosted @ First Congregational



**Church Summer Camp Season** is right around the corner!  
Information about the various church camps, and the age groups, hosted at our United Methodist camps in Wisconsin can be found at [wiumcamps.org](http://wiumcamps.org) (or use the QR code to the left)

## Prayer Requests

**SUBMIT A PRAYER REQUEST ELECTRONICALLY**

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

OR you can use the online form available at [peumc.org/prayer](http://peumc.org/prayer) or this QR Code:



# Sundays in April

- Sunday, April 5<sup>th</sup>** – Easter Sunday / Baptismal Reaffirmation & Communion Sunday
- Sunday, April 12<sup>th</sup>** – Easter.2 / Holy Humor Sunday / Sunday School / Refreshments
- Sunday, April 19<sup>th</sup>** – Easter.3
- Sunday, April 26<sup>th</sup>** – Easter.4 / Town Hall Meeting

## April Scripture & Sermon Series

April 5 <sup>th</sup>	Easter Sunday Baptismal Reaffirmation / Communion Sunday	<b>SERIES:</b> <b>FROM FEAR TO FIRE</b>	John 20 <i>Resurrection of Christ</i>
April 12 <sup>th</sup>	Easter.2 – Holy Humor Sunday <i>Second Sunday Refresh. / Sunday School</i>		John 20-21 <i>Doubts &amp; Belief</i>
April 19 <sup>th</sup>	Easter.3		Acts 7-9 <i>Conversion of Paul</i>
April 26 <sup>th</sup>	Easter.4 <i>(Town Hall Meeting)</i>		John 16 <i>Paul &amp; Silas in Jail</i>

### April-May Lenten Sermon Series (Unit #7 - FINALE)

## FROM FEAR TO FIRE!

### the Making of a Spirit-filled Church

Resurrection Encounters Transform Ordinary people Into Courageous Witnesses

- |                                       |          |  |
|---------------------------------------|----------|--|
| <b>Week 1 – April 12<sup>th</sup></b> | Easter.2 | “WHEN FEAR LOCKS THE DOORS” (Jesus meets us in fear, not after we conquer it) JOHN 21                                    |
| <b>Week 2 – April 19<sup>th</sup></b> | Easter.3 | “WHEN GRACE INTERRUPTS VIOLENCE” (Conversion is not a moment – it’s a surrender) ACTS 7-9                                |
| <b>Week 3 – April 26<sup>th</sup></b> | Easter.4 | “WHEN PRAISE BREAKS THE CHAINS” (Liberation is communal – no one leaves the jail alone) ACTS 16                          |
| <b>Week 4 – May 3<sup>rd</sup></b>    | Easter.5 | “WHEN THE UNKNOWN GOD BECOMES KNOWN” (God is already present in every culture – Paul names what is already holy) ACTS 17 |
| <b>Week 5 – May 10<sup>th</sup></b>   | Easter.6 | “WHEN POWER MUST BECOME PARTNERSHIP” (The gospel confronts unjust systems, not just personal morality) BOOK OF PHILEMON  |
| <b>Week 6 – May 17<sup>th</sup></b>   | Easter.7 | “WHEN FAITH MUST CONTEND WITH CORRUPTION” (Discernment in a world of spiritual confusion) BOOK OF JUDE                   |
| <b>Week 7 – May 24<sup>th</sup></b>   | Easter.8 | “WHEN THE SPIRIT BREAKS THE BARRIERS” (The Spirit builds a church where difference is a gift) ACTS 2                     |

## Sunday School Dates:

April 12<sup>th</sup> – Lori H. / May 10<sup>th</sup> – Ellen M.

# April Worship Leaders

Communion: Candy Candles: Candy	Greeter(s)	Usher	Liturgist	Refreshments	Guest Relations
Sun., April 5 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Wide open and ready for your name!</b>			X	Kathy Mc.
Sun., April 12 <sup>th</sup>				X	Kathy Mc.
Sun., April 19 <sup>th</sup>				X	Diane
Sun., April 26 <sup>th</sup>				X	Sue

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

[office@peumc.org](mailto:office@peumc.org) / 715-887-3011 /



## College Care Packages

On Sunday, April 12<sup>th</sup>, the children of PEUMC will taking a noisy collection on behalf of our annual college care packages. We are raising funds for **Michaela, Korbin, and Lily**. We will collect funds throughout April so that the packages will be sent out early May.

## April Mission Projects

*There will be no designated April Mission Project, since we have several other projects going on at this time:*

- 1. Parsonage Stonework Project**
- 2. College Care Packages**
- 3. Peace w/ Justice – 4/19**

## ***SPECIAL OFFERING – PEACE WITH JUSTICE – APRIL 19<sup>TH</sup>***

**PEACE WITH JUSTICE** enables The United Methodist Church to have a voice in advocating for peace and justice through a broad spectrum of global programs. Half the funds stay in Wisconsin to support ministries that promote peace, fairness, and education. The offering provides grant money available to local churches like ours to work on initiatives that promote peace, challenge injustice, and empower underrepresented communities. Such projects have included local anti-violence coalitions, restorative justice community programs, advocacy for fair housing, immigration justice, or racial equity; training for congregations to engage in nonviolent community action, and other grassroots, justice-rooted ministries.

# United Methodist Bishops Call for Prayer & Peace in the New Iran War

for immediate release / Sunday, March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2026

WASHINGTON, D.C. – (condensed for space in this newsletter) – We urge leaders on every side to turn from the escalation of violence and seek paths toward justice, reconciliation, and lasting peace. We implore them to place the protection of innocent lives at the center of every decision. As our *Book of Discipline 2020/2024* states, “*The church deploras war and all other forms of violent conflict. . . . We reject the use of war as an instrument of foreign policy and insist that every peaceful and diplomatic means of resolution be exhausted before the start of armed conflicts.*”

## April Households



Throughout APRIL,  
our congregation is asked  
to pray for the following people:  
(randomly chosen on 3/26)

**Peter & Joann K. / Ellen & Skip M. / Kari L. /  
Lynn D. / Guy & JoAnn D. / Helmuth & Sandy /  
Samantha G. /  
Pastors Caleb & Doug**

## DAILY SCRIPTURE READINGS - 4/5 - 5/4

Below are daily scripture readings that are based on Sunday morning's lectionary passages.

These weekday readings help to connect one Sunday's readings to the next one.

*\*These will be printed weekly in our bulletins as well.*

4/5	<u>John 20:1-18</u>	<u>The Resurrection of Jesus</u>	4/20	<u>Acts 8:26-40</u>	The Ethiopian Eunuch
4/6	<u>Psalm 22:19-22</u>	Lament Turned to Praise	4/21	<u>Acts 9:19b-25</u>	Saul Speaks About Jesus
4/7	<u>Psalm 22:23-26</u>	Lament Turned to Praise	4/22	<u>Acts 9:26-31</u>	Saul in Jerusalem
4/8	<u>Psalm 22:27-31</u>	Lament Turned to Praise	4/23	<u>Acts 9:32-43</u>	Peter Meets Tabitha
4/9	<u>Isaiah 44:6-8</u>	Called to Be Witnesses	4/24	<u>Acts 16:1-5</u>	Paul Meets Timothy
4/10	<u>Isaiah 53:1-6</u>	Song of the Suffering Servant	4/25	<u>Acts 16:6-15</u>	Paul Meets Lydia
4/11	<u>Isai. 53:7-12</u>	Like a Lamb Led to Slaughter	4/26	<u>Acts 16:16-34</u>	<u>Paul &amp; Silas in Jail</u>
4/12	<u>John 20:19-31; 21</u>	<u>Thomas Doubts</u>	4/27	<u>Acts 16:35-40</u>	Paul & Silas Release
4/13	<u>Acts 1:42-47</u>	The Believers Share	4/28	<u>Acts 10:1-23</u>	Conversion of Cornelius, Pt. 1
4/14	<u>Acts 3:1-10</u>	Peters Heals a Crippled Man	4/29	<u>Acts 10:24-33</u>	Conversion of Cornelius, Pt. 2
4/15	<u>Acts 4:1-22</u>	Apostles vs. Jewish High Council	4/30	<u>Acts 10:34-48</u>	Conversion of Cornelius, Pt. 3
4/16	<u>Acts 4:32-37</u>	The Believers Share (Again)	5/1	<u>Acts 17:1-9</u>	Paul Goes to Thessalonica
4/17	<u>Acts 6:1-7</u>	Seven Men Chosen	5/2	<u>Acts 17:10-15</u>	Paul Goes to Beroea
4/18	<u>Acts 6:8-15</u>	Opposition to Stephen	5/3	<u>Acts 17:16-31</u>	<u>Paul in Athens</u>
4/19	<u>Acts 7:57-60; 8-14; 9:1-19</u>	<u>Saul's Conversion</u>	5/4	<u>Acts 22:1-21</u>	Paul Tells His Story

# United Methodists Top List of Affordable Housing & Shelter Providers

NEW BRUNSWICK, N.J. – A new report and searchable database are now available that catalogues affordable housing developments and shelters built on religious property in the United States. The database is the work of Nadia A. Mian, senior program director of the Ralph W. Voorhees Center for Civic Engagement at Rutgers University. The “Affordable Housing and Shelter on Faith Land” Database and Report examine which religions and denominations are building affordable housing and shelters. With 20 properties, The United Methodist Church tops the list of Protestant denominations. The report states “The data indicates that affordable housing built on faith land has increased over the past decade with the majority of projects being constructed on the East and West coasts. New York (19 projects) and California (20 projects) lead with the greatest number of developments with creative reuse projects and large affordable housing rentals. Our data also shows a strong preference for large affordable rental (46%) and supportive housing (925%) than home ownership (0.025%).”



Housing built on faith land is rarely just housing; we found many developments geared towards vulnerable populations such as seniors, domestic violence survivors, adults with autism, unhoused individuals and veterans, which also included community uses, amenities, and social service support.

## Probe Underway of Pastor Who Worked for Epstein

by Heather Hahn / March 12, 2026/ United Methodist News

NOTE: This article has been included in our newsletter as it pertains to news that has reached wider public interest and this article can give some further insight into what is happening from the church’s perspective.

TRIGGER WARNING: Victims of sexual abuse may find parts of this article upsetting.

Bishop Robert Farr has suspended a United Methodist elder from clergy responsibilities after learning this week that she worked for Jeffrey Epstein, the late convicted sex offender.

The Rev. Stephanie Remington, a member of the Missouri Conference that Farr leads, worked for Epstein first as an administrative assistant from August to December 2018 and then as a temporary property manager of his private island from January until May 2019.

That was when he was already a convicted sex offender, but before his second arrest in July 2019 on charges of sex trafficking minors. In August that year, Epstein was found dead in his jail cell in what authorities ruled a suicide.

The Missouri Conference said in a statement that in accordance with church legal procedures, “*the individual has been placed on suspension while the episcopal office reviews the matter.*”

The conference and United Methodist News both got a tip this week from the Rev. Elizabeth Glass Turner, a writer and editor who has been reviewing the Epstein files.

In the Epstein files released by the U.S. Department of Justice, her name appears in more than 1,800 records. Many of her emails deal with the day-to-day running of facilities on the island, including travel arrangements for guests and the kitchen renovations she was overseeing.

*“I never saw anything,”* she told United Methodist News. *“I knew him for the last nine months of his life.”*

Nevertheless, given the denomination’s commitment to address sexual misconduct and stand with victims of abuse, Missouri Conference leaders are taking steps to investigate matters further.

*“Clergy are called to uphold the highest standards of spiritual and moral leadership,”* the Conference’s statement said. *“Concerns of this nature are taken seriously and require careful review. We recognize the deep harm connected to Mr. Epstein’s crimes and remain in prayer for survivors who deserve healing and justice.”*

The United Methodist Commission on the Status and Role of Women wants to be mindful that with continuing news coverage, abuse survivors often experience renewed trauma as stories resurface: *“The church must respond with transparency, accountability and a pastoral presence that is grounded in trauma-informed care and centered on those who have been harmed,”* said the Rev. Stephanie York Arnold, the agency’s top executive. The agency’s mandate, she added, is to challenge the church toward the full and equitable inclusion of women. *“That includes ensuring that the church is a safe space where women and all people can grow spiritually and exercise leadership free from sexualization, discrimination, harassment and abuse,”* she said.

Anyone who has experienced sexual misconduct within the church is encouraged to contact the agency’s confidential toll-free hotline at **1-800-523-8390** for support, resources and guidance.

Status and Role of Women *“takes any report of potential sexual misconduct extremely seriously and believes all allegations should be thoroughly and transparently investigated,”* said the Rev. Stephanie York Arnold, the agency’s top executive. *“We grieve the devastating harm caused by Jeffrey Epstein and those who enabled his abuse,”* she said. *“Survivors deserve more than acknowledgment of harm; they deserve justice, accountability and a community willing to confront wrongdoing wherever it exists — even within the church.”*

In a July 2025 memo, the Department of Justice said it has identified more than 1,000 victims of Epstein’s sex trafficking.

Remington said she also takes sexual misconduct seriously. Earlier in her ministry, she helped write an online curriculum for sexual boundaries training to be used in churches.

Still, she acknowledges that she knew Epstein was a registered sex offender when she accepted a job in his employ. At the time, Epstein had already completed an 18-month sentence after pleading guilty a decade earlier to one count of soliciting prostitution and one count of soliciting prostitution from someone under the age of 18. Remington said her relationship with Epstein was strictly professional — with him being her boss and she the employee — though she credits the consideration he showed her when her father received a cancer diagnosis. She left her job with Epstein to care for her father.

Remington, 50, served as a pastor at a series of United Methodist churches in Missouri for more than 15 years. She took leave in 2016 after she and her husband, a fellow United Methodist pastor, divorced.

In 2017 and 2018, during part of the time she lived in the U.S. Virgin Islands, she worked remotely as research manager for the Lewis Center for Church Leadership — part of United Methodist-related Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington, D.C.

She now faces a complaint under church law that she failed to adequately keep the Conference informed about her work and ministry setting. *“The Missouri Conference had no knowledge of the individual’s association with Mr. Epstein,”* the Conference statement said.

The United Methodist Church’s connexional system is supposed to provide for regular contact between Conference leadership and their clergy — even those working outside of congregational contexts.

*The Book of Discipline*, The United Methodist Church’s policy book, details the rules guiding what the denomination calls **“extension ministries.”** These include positions *outside* conventional church walls, such as chaplains, nonprofit directors, counselors, general agency staff, and seminary instructors.

Paragraph 344 of the *Discipline* says clergy in extension ministries must annually submit a written report to their bishop, district superintendent and board of ordained ministry. These reports are meant to help evaluate how clergy are serving the mission of the church and fulfilling their ordination vows. All clergy in extension ministries also are to maintain membership in, and send annual reports to, a local church in their home Conference.

Remington said she did file a report last year and later told her district superintendent through ZOOM about her time in the Virgin Islands, including her work with Epstein. She said she was unsure if the district superintendent fully understood her mention of Epstein.

The Conference said in its statement that no information indicating this association was disclosed in any of her reports. *“The Bishop or district superintendent were not contacted about the individual’s interest in or acceptance of the Epstein-related position,”* the conference said.

*“Because this is an active matter, the Missouri Conference will not comment further while the supervisory response process is underway,”* the Conference statement said.

*NOTE (from Pastor Caleb):* The United Methodist Church has a just resolution process as its form of “church trials.” In essence, clergy are removed/suspended from their appointment immediately to prevent further harm during investigation/trial but treated as ‘innocent until proven guilty.’ The Church, of course, can only deal with the “defrocking” of clergy credentials; it cannot arrest, detain, or charge individuals with criminal activity. Legally, at this time, Remington cannot be charged with any crimes, since no evidence has yet been presented that she *participated in, directly facilitated,* or had any knowledge of *ongoing* criminal acts on the island. That is a separate matter for the civil authorities. So from a legal standpoint, there is no basis yet to call her guilty or criminally complicit. What the Church must investigate is a more complicated, moral question – she knew Epstein was a known sex offender (but his sex trafficking activities were not yet exposed) and she wrestled with the ethics of her own employment under him; she intentionally withheld this information from her report to her Conference. The Missouri Conference must ask itself: *Does working for a known sex offender show poor judgment for clergy? Did she fulfill her reporting obligations accurately to the Conference? Does her employment harm survivors or harm the Church’s witness? Does her own theological justification minimize the gravity of Epstein’s crimes?* Still, even if she is not legally complicit, survivors may understandably feel betrayed, re-traumatized, and confused about why a clergyperson would work for a known abuser. Every person, even within the Church, has a right to a fair trial. Survivors’ concerns must be honored even as the Church responds with transparency and care.

This is not the time to comment (as many have done on the internet): “she deserves death” or “she should have done to her what Epstein’s victims went through.” This “eye-for-an-eye” treatment, however satisfying to our perceived sense of “justice,” is not biblical or Christ-like. The grace of God expects people to receive *reparative/restorative* justice. This should take the form of removal of clergy credentials, appropriate legal repercussions (as the civil courts see fit), and counseling.

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



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

### **Home Delivered Meals Drivers**

Pat & Kathy McGrath  
Sue Mitchell  
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. Anyone interested in helping with this program may contact Becky Taylor (715-887-2163) for more information. **THANK YOU!**

# APRIL

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
29-Mar	30-Mar	31-Mar	1	2	3	4
	Live Last Supper Wesley UMC Mfid 7:00-8:00P		Live Last Supper Wesley UMC Mfid 7:00-8:00P	Maundy Thurs. Service – Nekoosa UCC 7:00 – 8:00p	Pastor's day off  Good Friday Service 2:45-3:00a	Easter Egg Hunt 10:15A  (no men's b-fast in April)
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
<b>EASTER</b> 8:30a Easter Breakfast 8:50a Simple Early Service 10:00a Regular Service		Elections GO VOTE!	UWIF Kitchen Cleaning and Snack Potluck - 1:00P		Pastor's day off	
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
<b>HOLY HUMOR</b> Service 10:00 AM Sunday School 2 <sup>nd</sup> Sun. Refresh. / Chemo Care Project	Sunday School and noisy offering: College Care Packages ←				Pastor's day off	
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
Service 10:00 AM Special Offering: Peace w/ Justice / Leadership Council after service					Pastor's day off	
26	27	28	29	30	1-May	2-May
Service 10:00 AM Town Hall Meeting – after service		Port Home Group: Perkins Restaurant 5:30P			Pastor's day off	Mens' Breakfast at 8:00A @ El Café
<b>Birthdays:</b> Sue M. – 4/3, Pastor C. – 4/10, Sandy R. – 4/11, Collin & Ethan B. – 4/13, Sandy K. – 4/16, Brynlee M. – 4/18, Midge H. – 4/20, Aaron H. – 4/23, Jerene S. – 4/24, Natalee H. – 4/26			<b>April Mission Projects:</b> (no designated mission for April)  1. Parsonage Stonework Proj. 2. College Care Packets 3. Peace w/ Justice Sp. Offering		<b>Church Office Hours:</b>  <b>Connie:</b> Monday – Friday : 8:00a – 12:00p <b>Pastor:</b> Monday – Thursday : 9:00a – 12:00p	