

# Methodist the messenger

Rev. Ron Kral, Interim Pastor

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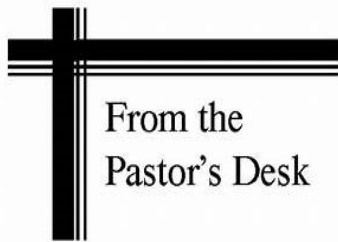
**MAY 2024**



*God cares about you*



*and so do we*



From the  
Pastor's Desk

Members & Friends of FUMCWA,

The month of May is upon us, which means we *should* be able to put the snow shovels away and get ready for summer. The month of May this year also hosts the celebration of the feast of Pentecost - often called the “birthday of the Church.”

If you define “church” as an organized body of believers, I suppose the Pentecost event *may* count as its birthday, but there clearly was a body of believers prior to Jesus’ crucifixion. Similarly, a solid argument could be made that even with the coming of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost, those early “believers” were not too well organized.

Yet, something powerful and life-changing did occur that day as those followers were huddled in that room. What happened is that they burst forth under the influence of the Holy Spirit to invite others to join them on a journey to change the world. That clearly was something—the “birth” of a movement that is still alive today.

When I first arrived here at First UMCWA, my attention was immediately directed to an impressive booklet entitled: “Celebrating 100 Years of Worship, Fellowship, and Service in the Heart of the Community.” So, I paged through it. However, I was drawn to read it again as I pondered Pentecost - the birthday of the Christian church. I did so because this document delightfully celebrated the years of life and service that this church has experienced. The Spirit has been alive here! The Spirit IS alive here!

Having just had a birthday in April (thanks to all who so graciously made it special), I was reminded that with each birthday comes the recognition that nothing stays the same - change is the only unchanging thing. And, it’s been said that an essential trait a person needs to age well is an openness to change - you’d have to in order to accumulate birthdays with any degree of grace. So, while change may be unexpected, uncontrollable, and uncomfortable, it also is the only way to engage with life and grow.

And that is one of the many, many things I have grown to appreciate here. While this congregation has many wonderful traditions and “ways we’ve always done things,” as well as its rich history of doing a wide variety of ministries, missions, programs, and initiatives, there still remains a healthy sense of “Sure, we could try that!” This is a gift that is often underrated, but it is the key to vitality. It’s proof that you’re alive and determined to thrive.

So happy Pentecost to the Church Universal and to First Church West Allis!

Grace & Peace,

Pastor Ron

## A NOTE FROM OUR LAY LEADER

### Rejoice! He is risen Indeed!



I am thinking about how important it is for us to be joyful as we share the Gospel with others. I am rejoicing because I know I am saved and I look forward to eternal life. I am also joyful with all the blessings in my life.

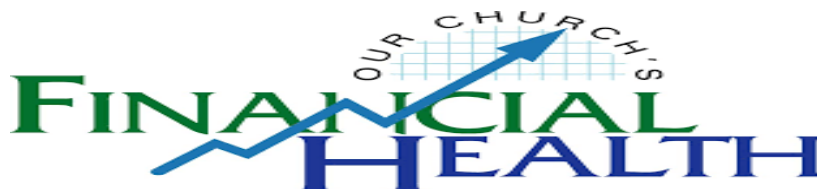
One reminder to start this month: Please be prepared, if you are a chair of a committee, to share progress reports on your "goals work" at the next Council meeting. If you have lost track of your goals, please check in with the minutes or with me or David Affeldt.

I have been reviewing notes from some classes I took last year on how to be a more effective Sunday School teacher. One of the great things about First Church is all the Christian education offerings we have throughout the year. We are exceptionally blessed! We have classes at a variety of levels and in a variety of styles. But if you are looking for something different, please let me know, and I will share it with the Adult Christian Education Committee. I was reminded to share more fully about discipleship as I reviewed my notes.

What is a disciple? I have read many books about discipleship in the past few years. One of my favorite definitions comes from Aubrey Malphers: "A disciple is one who has trusted in Christ as Savior. In short, he or she is a believer in Christ, maybe deeply committed or maybe not yet fully committed." I would add to it that we Disciples are committed to continuous learning from Jesus. We study and grow in the Gospel regularly. As Methodists, we apply discipline to our Christian life. We share our learning about Jesus and the Way with others. I am so glad to share discipleship with you here at First Church! Thank you for sharing with me.

Tom Bolton, Lay Leader, 414-704-5478

God loves you and so do we.



The Church Financial Statement of Activities ending March 31, 2024:

	Year To Date Actual	Year To date Budget	Difference
Giving & Other Income	\$131,000.54	\$69,370.02	\$61,630.52
Expenses	\$96,695.91	\$114,664.05	\$17,968.14
Operating Income/ (Deficit)	\$34,304.63	\$(45,294.03)	

Our hope with prayers is that members will continue to give generously as we envision a better and brighter future with goals and strategies to keep FUMCWA healthy, growing, and vital. God cares about you and so do we. Thank you for your financial support to the life and the mission of FUMCWA.

Easter Special Offering: \$6,130.00

# Worship TOGETHER

## SCRIPTURE READINGS & SERMON SERIES - MAY 2024

### Holy Spirit Sermon Series: "The Breath of God"

#### **May 5, 2024 Sixth Sunday of Easter**

Text: Genesis 1:1-5,

Hymn: TFWS # 2120 "Spirit, Spirit of Gentleness"

Title: "The Breath of God" (# 393 - "Spirit of the Living God")

Nothing which is, could be, without the Holy Spirit of God.

#### **May 12, 2024 The Ascension**

Text: Acts 1:1-11, John 14:26

Hymn: TFWS # 2117 "Spirit of God"

Title: "Left Standing"

The disciples were seemingly "left standing" when Jesus ascended into the skies, but even if they didn't know it at the time they were not alone.

#### **May 19, 2024 Pentecost Sunday**

Text: Acts 2:1-21

Hymn: UMH # 393 "Spirit of the Living God"

Title: "Sparks Went Flying"

Apprehensively waiting, the disciples were transformed and inspired by the coming of the Holy Spirit and moved to launch the Church.

#### **May 26, 2024 Trinity Sunday (Memorial Day)**

Text: 1 Corinthians 12:1-11

Hymn: UMH # 336 "Of All the Spirit's Gifts to Me"

Title: "The Whole Is Greater"

The Holy Spirit is the element of the Trinity which, though "unseen", is experienced most powerfully through the expression of It's gifts in our lives.

**2024 Vacation Bible School:** VBS Camp FUMCWA Firelight is a free week-long event for children from 3K to Grade 5 at FUMCWA. It will take place July 15th-19th from 9:00 am to noon. Led by the Camp Counselor and Lumen, the lightning bug puppet, Campers will learn how to face their fears by trusting in God. Camp FUMCWA Firelight offers a variety of activities such as music, drama, storytelling, games, arts and crafts, science, and snacks. Campers will also learn Bible stories that demonstrate how to accomplish great things in God's name. They will learn to trust God in any situation, know that God is always with them, and share the good news of God's love through Jesus. In June, VBS Camp FUMCWA Firelight information and registration forms will be available in the Narthex and in the church office. Please invite your friends, neighbors, and grandchildren to join us for a fun-filled week with many special activities and surprises.



## FUMCWA MINISTRIES

**CHURCH LIBRARY MINISTRY:** For the month of May, the Church Library has set up a book cart in the Gathering Room featuring books on women's thoughts, concerns, struggles, and contributions. We draw strength and inspiration from the women who came before us – and from those remarkable women among us today. We encourage you also to visit **The Bernice Nailen Memorial Library** any time during the week during church hours. Library Volunteers are available to assist on Sundays from 11:30 to 11:50 am.



**THE FOOD PANTRY MINISTRY:** Thank you to all who have been contributing to this great mission. We are now serving numbers in the 50s. We will be making some changes in the next couple of months due to the increasing numbers. I know God will be with us as we make these changes and continue to help those in need in the West Allis community. Your help with the items of the month and monetary giving will also help keep this mission going. The items for May are pineapple (chunks or slices) and laundry detergent. Most items can be purchased at the Dollar Store or Dollar Tree. All nonperishable food items are accepted, but please note the expiration date. Any household cleaning item or personal care item is also accepted. Please place items in

the Mission Corner in the boxed section for Food Pantry. Items can also be dropped off in the office. Thank you for your love and support! April's Good Samaritan Offering: \$1290.00

### Pantry Items for May:

**Pineapple (chunks or slices) and Laundry Detergent**

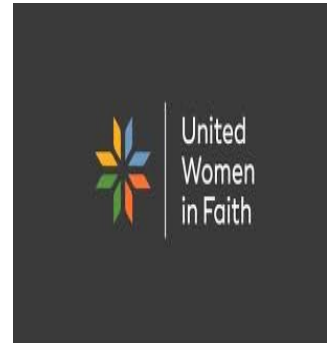
**UNITED METHODIST MEN (UMM)** will be sponsoring a team to participate in the World Vision Global 6K for Water. Please consider walking, sponsoring a walker, or just donating! Join the world's largest 6K for water—from wherever you are! The Global 6K is great because you can do it anywhere! Walk or run the distance by yourself or with your family and be part of this global movement to change lives. Whether you join from the treadmill or your favorite trail, the neighborhood, or the track... when you and thousands of others around the world walk, jog, or stroller-run your way to 6K, you will bring life-changing, clean water to those who need it most. Now more than ever, clean water is essential to protect vulnerable children and families. Will you join us? Contact Raymond Roberts for more information and the day and time for this May event.





**MUSIC MINISTRY:** As this singing and ringing season comes to a close, we would like to express our gratitude to everyone who participated in the Music Ministry. Raymond and I are thankful for the time and talents many share to provide music for worship. We extend a heartfelt thank you to Erica, Lance, the singers, ringers, instrumentalists, choir helpers, music librarians, and dedicated families for attending choir practice and Sunday School each week. We hope you enjoy a restful break during the summer months and look forward to gathering again closer to fall.

**UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH (UWIF):** On April 8th, Unity Circle invited Sojourner Family Peace Center to provide us with information about their organization. Our presenter, Lindsay, was amazing and we were so moved by all that they do. They served about 10,000 women this last year and expect those numbers to rise this year. One in four women will experience domestic violence in their lifetime. One in ten men will experience domestic violence. A person is 99.836% more likely to survive domestic violence if they connect with Sojourner. The primary goal is to ensure the safety of people experiencing domestic violence. They work to provide a pathway to peace for survivors and abusers through opportunities to make positive and lasting changes for themselves and their children. Thirteen co-located partners make it possible for survivors to access an array of services under one roof to achieve safety, healing, and well-being. If you would like to help with this great organization, please contact them at 414-276-1911. The Sojourner 24-hour Domestic Violence Hotline is 414-933-2722.



Our **May 13th** meeting will be at 1:00 pm in the Fireside Room. Jane Henderson will be giving us a demonstration on arranging potted plants and other spring planting tips. We welcome all who would like to join us. Our June 10th meeting will be a Salad Luncheon. We will have a sign-up sheet at our May meeting for the type of salad you will be bringing. Our group welcomes all women who are looking for Christian fellowship, enlightening programs, sharing experiences, and giving support to one another. We would love to have you join us. If you have questions about our group, please call Annette at 414-257-4166.

**Laurie Halvorsen, Senior Ministries Coordinator:** Our attendance at Senior League has been fantastic this year! We are averaging 45-50 people at each meeting. Remember that we are an ecumenical fellowship Senior group that meets twice a month on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays for \$10.00 with no membership dues. Come and join us and bring a friend.

**Join us for Fun, Food, and Fellowship in our 49th Year with Senior League in 2024!**

#### **Meetings in May 2024:**

**May 1 12 Noon** Baked Potato Bar and Strawberry Shortcakes  
Program: Dog Therapy Program  
Devotions: Don Gilpin

**May 15 12 Noon** Chicken Adobo, Rice, Mix Veggies, Watermelon, and Cookies  
Program: "Women of Note" Musical Chorus  
Directors: Laurie Halvorsen, Barb Taylor; Accompanist: Alyssa Roberts  
Devotions: Salud



**Fireside Coach Trip "Nonsense" Friday, June 7th: \$106.00, including gratuity. Sign up at the Senior League meetings or in the church office by May 10th if interested. Leave Franklin by 9:00 am, FUMC by 9:30 am. Everyone is welcome.**

## FUMCWA LOCAL MISSIONS



**Second Saturday Servants:** Last month, eighteen people made breakfast casseroles, which we delivered to the mission site. Unfortunately, we could only deliver 90 meals. We would like to help more people in need in May, which is why we are making May a "MORE" month, standing for May Others Receive Enough. To achieve this, we are inviting you to bring a hot casserole to the church by **7:45 AM on Saturday, May 11th**. If this time does not work for you or if you will be out of town, you can bring the casserole to the church by Thursday, May 9th, and place it in the white refrigerator located in the kitchen. We will warm it up on Saturday. Thank you for your support!

**Coins of Love:** May's Coins of Love will support the Ingathering at the 2024 Wisconsin Annual Conference (June 7-10). The coins will be used to purchase items for Personal Dignity Kits and Home Care Kits. Your support is appreciated.



March Coins of Love - Baskets of Hope (Heifer) \$749.92

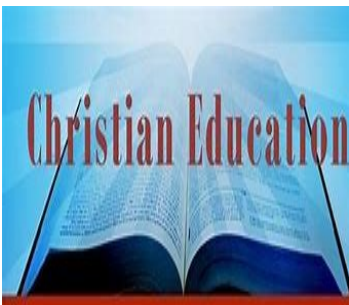
April Coins of Love - WIUM Pine Lake Church Camp \$137.20



The UWIF (United Women in Faith) of First Church is collecting items for Community Projects for Seniors, which will benefit seniors in need. The items needed include toilet paper, rolls of paper towels, and facial tissue (boxes of all sizes). Additionally, they are accepting bar soap, kitchen dishcloths, bath washcloths, and 13-gallon trash bags.

UWIF encourages other members to donate these items as well. Please bring the items to the church by May 13<sup>th</sup>. You can drop items off in the church office during the week or in the box in the Narthex labeled **UWIF Spring Product Collection Drive**. Your generosity is greatly appreciated.

## FUMCWA CHRISTIAN EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES



**The Adult Christian Education Committee** believes learning should be a lifelong endeavor. We should always be seeking to grow in wisdom, relationships, and our walk with God. Our experiences shape us into the person we are today, and our actions today will help shape our tomorrow. The ACE Committee is committed to providing opportunities for individuals to study Scripture and grow in knowledge and faith. Starting on June 2nd, from 9:00-10:00 am in the Lighthouse Room, we will be holding a Summer Adult Sunday School class where we will watch **The Chosen, Season 2**, and compare it with Scripture after each session. We encourage you to consider joining the class. We also invite you to plan to join us on Sunday mornings in the Fall for Adult Sunday School! During the 9:00 am hour, before our 10:30 am worship service, we will meet together to grow spiritually and relationally with those around us. Keep an eye out for upcoming Fall ACE classes.

**Book Discussion Group:** On Monday, May 20th, at 1:30 pm, the group will discuss ***High Conflict: Why We Get Trapped and How We Get Out*** by Amanda Ripley (Leadership Development). Bestselling author and award-winning journalist Amanda Ripley investigates how good people get captured by emotionally unhealthy, over-the-top conflict and how they break free. Ripley begins by exploring real-world examples of such conflict, from political feuds to gang warfare and personal vendettas, then dissects how those involved dismantled the stakes and transformed high conflict into something good. As the book asserts, people can and do escape high conflict. Individuals and entire communities can short-circuit the feedback loops of outrage and blame if they want to. The group meets in The Bernice Nailen Memorial Library. All are welcome.

## FUMCWA EVENTS



Lance Lambert / Events Coordinator:

**Mother's Day - May 12th - before worship:** To commemorate her mother in 1907, Anna Jarvis delivered 500 carnations to St. Andrew's Methodist Episcopal Church in Grafton, W. Virginia, where her mother had taught Sunday School for 20 years. It became a tradition at St. Andrew's. After years of urging by Anna and department store magnate John Wanamaker, Congress in 1914 proclaimed the 2nd Sunday in May "Mother's Day". *We will celebrate all mothers on the 12th with free carnations in the narthex. Pick one up if you're a mother, for your mother, to remember your mother, or simply because you have/had a mother.*

**Methodist Movie Matinee/ Discussion - May 19th -after worship / Sanctuary:** Our film will be ***Pay It Forward*** - rated PG13. Trevor (Haley Joel Osment), who lives with his alcoholic single mom (Helen Hunt), begins 7th grade in Las Vegas. His Social Studies teacher (Kevin Spacey) assigns the class to put into action a plan to change the world for the better. Trevor comes up with his "pay it forward" plan that blooms and changes lives. *Movie, popcorn, and beverages are FREE. Stay for a brief discussion and pizza (a free-will offering to help defray the cost of pizzas). Friends and neighbors are welcome!*

**Ice Cream Social - May 26th—following worship:** What's another word for "Spring"? ICE CREAM, of course! Stop by the Small Dining Room to build a sundae or banana split or have a Root Beer Float, and most of all, enjoy fellowship with your Church Family!! This event was good in the winter and even better now that warmer weather is here. Free will offering.

## FUMCWA FAITH COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

**From Joe Pitterle, Stewardship Chair:** Dear Church Family, Echoing Richard Rinka's message a month ago, I'd like to uplift the spirit of giving that this Church has seen for generations. Without our generous members, the many ministries that are supported would not be able to have the impact they do, nor would we have the resources for the beautiful worship services. Thank you to all for sharing these financial gifts, especially in a time when so many other things are a pull on our financials. While the church saved for rainy days, as Richard alluded to, we are seeing a few rainy years in the form of our income to our expenses, with the past few years our income accounting offsetting 80% of our expenses. Despite doing an amazing job holding the line on expenses, we do need to close the gap on income in order to plan for a long-term future. Our Finance and Stewardship Committees will be working on this, but in the meantime, if you are in a position to increase your giving, make any special gifts or pledges to either the general church budget, apportionments, etc., this would be a great time for it. We appreciate the commitment you put into First Church, and we want to say Thank You and God Bless to each and every one of our members!



Join Pastor Ron on  
Sunday, May 19th, from  
9-10 am in the  
Small Dining Room for  
an update on the UM  
General Conference

Rev. Barry Watson served as our church pastor from 2004-2006. His family is planning to surprise him with 80 birthday cards for his 80th birthday. If you would like to send him a card, please mail by May 15th to:

Amy Kesler (Barry Watson)  
5380 S Greentree Drive  
New Berlin, WI 53151

Questions: [akesler861@gmail.com](mailto:akesler861@gmail.com)