

Methodist the messenger

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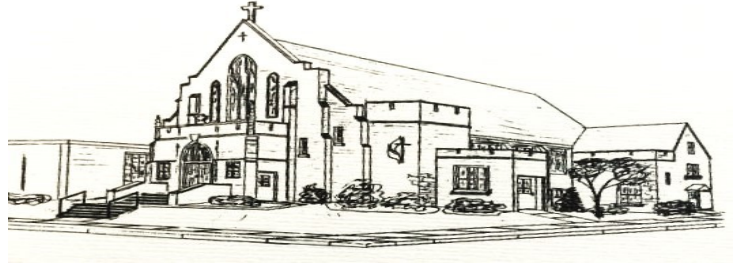
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God cares about you



and so do we

JULY 2025



You're one of the unicorns!

On Sunday, June 22nd, we saw Bishop Dan Schwerin's State of the Church address to the Wisconsin Annual Conference on Pentecost Sunday, June 8th. He was truthful and provided an honest assessment of our current state as a presence here in Wisconsin and Northern Illinois (the two conferences he is responsible for), as well as the declining number of churches that can afford a full-time elder. Hence, our church is one of the unicorns!

First West Allis has undergone many iterations over the past few years as the nation has experienced numerous upheavals and changes. As much as we think the pandemic is over, we are still feeling and experiencing the impact of COVID-19 with the loss of loved ones, loss of jobs, loss of connections, and communities as we knew them before the shutdown.

I read and study the latest articles on what churches and leaders of churches need to do to be vital. I'm glad to report that we are doing many of the suggestions. We are looking at and asking questions about the needs of our neighborhood. We are looking at our most significant asset (our building) and how best to utilize it for the good of a greater base, at the same time being able to sustain itself. We celebrate what we do well and continue to hone those ministries.

Yes, it may be different than what we had before. There may be fewer people. There may be new seekers. But the needs are many, and the faith of the people is strong. We, as the church, are discerning and looking for different ways to be church, one that we can identify, claim, share, and welcome all. There is diversity. Inclusion is a choice. Through it all, God is here. God will always be here.

I am grateful for you. What are you grateful for?

See you Sunday!

Pastor Grace

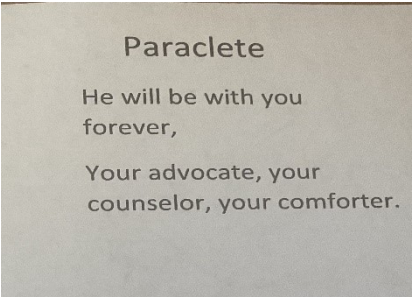
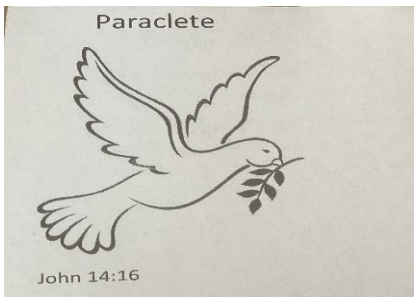
A Message From Our Lay Leader, Tom Bolton

Disciplines and Pentecost

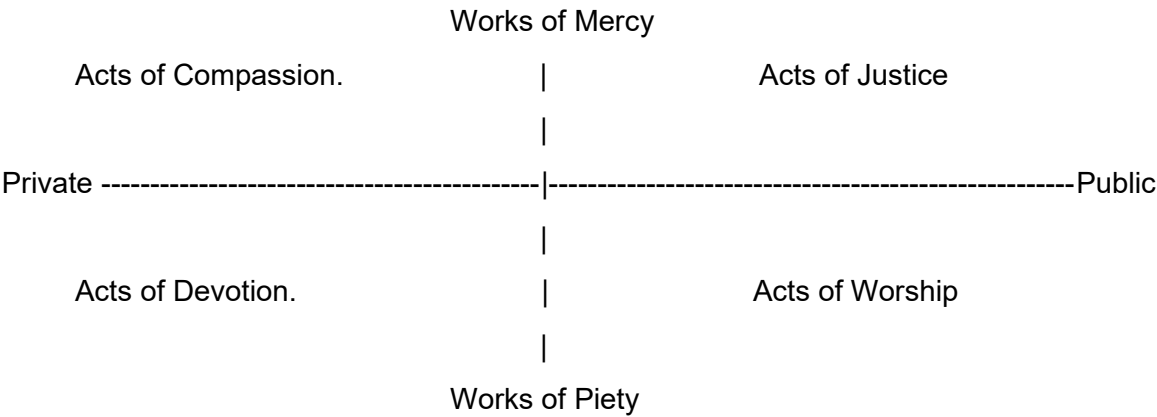
Blessings to all my cohorts in this journey.

We are in Ordinary Time again. If you want to learn more about that, I invite you to visit with our Deacon Nancy Lanman. She and Sue Klescewski are staffing a table in the Gathering Room before and after worship this summer to share information with you about the Social Principles class, and to share articles about social justice. But Ordinary Time doesn't mean it is unimportant; it has to do with the numberings and designations of the Sundays.

I am still full of passion following Pentecost (Celebrating the birth of our church and the Holy Spirit filling our lives) and then a great Trinity Sunday with passionate teaching by Pastor Grace on June 15. I pray that you are feeling the presence of the Holy Spirit (Paraclete) in your life each day, and that you listen for His voice each day. Here is a photo of the cards I gave to kids and adults on Pentecost Sunday. I think I have a few left if you want one.



As I said last month, I like the way we use quadrants in our Lay Servant Classes:



Have you been thinking this month about the practices and disciplines that go in these quadrants? And why do you suppose that Acts of Justice are the hardest for many to pursue? Why are acts of worship becoming less common in our modern society? Where do our daily devotions and Christian Education fall?

In my ministry, I place a strong emphasis on acts of compassion, particularly in the areas of feeding the hungry (Morning Glory meals, Food Pantry, phone calls, and listening). We have many opportunities at FUMCWA. For Acts of Justice, I do a lot of advocacy letter writing and publishing, but I want to emphasize to you the importance of prayerful consideration of what God calls you to pursue in social issues. It can be a lengthy process to discern, but don't let it paralyze you. Be mindful of what Jesus would say.

For Acts of Devotion, I do daily Bible reading and Morning Prayer worship, and use several devotionals. I try to read new commentators regularly, and I have learned to spend time just listening for the voice of God.

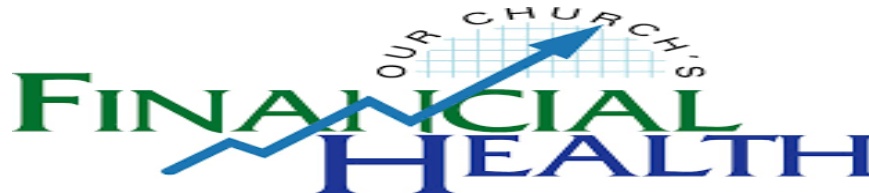
For Acts of Worship, I think regular participation in corporate worship is most important for me. Be in Church when you are able and online when necessary. Find ways to worship each day. For me, that is most often mid-morning. Sometimes, I worship with others in classes and various groups as well. Continued next page

I place a great emphasis on Adult Christian Education in my activities and writing. Once again, I encourage you to participate in classes regularly. We have many, but we always look for new ideas. Share your ideas, please!

I look forward to seeing you in Church!

Tom Bolton, Lay Leader 414-704-5478

God loves you and so do we. Discipleship Never Ends.



The Church Financial Statement of Activities ending May 31, 2025:

	Year To Date Actual
Giving & Other Income	\$173,531.09
Expenses	\$173,151.36
Operating Income/ (Deficit)	\$379.73

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.



SCRIPTURE READINGS & THEMES JULY 2025

July 6, 2025, Fourth Sunday after Pentecost?Communion

Texts: 2 Kings 5:1-14; Psalm 30; Galatians 6:1-6,7-16; Luke 10:1-11, 16-20

July 13, 2025, Fifth Sunday after Pentecost

Texts: Amos 7:7-17; Psalm 82; Colossians 1:1-14; Luke 10:25-37

July 20, 2025, Sixth Sunday after Pentecost

Texts: Amos 8:1-12; Psalm 52 or Psalm 82; Colossians 1:15-28; Luke 10:38-42

July 27, 2025, Seventh Sunday after Pentecost

Texts: Hosea 1:2-10; Psalm 85; Colossians2:6-15; Luke 11:1-13

FUMCWA MINISTRIES

Church Library Ministry (The Bernice Nailen Memorial Library): Summer is here. Let's all read. It's a great time to read to children. Listen as your children read. Share books and reading. Reading helps prevent the "summer slide" where children lose ground academically over the summer when they are not using and increasing their reading skills. Visit your church library.

"There are many little ways to enlarge your child's world. Love of books is the best of all."

– Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis



Food Pantry Ministry: Thank you for the wonderful response to our requested items for the month of June. Our items requested for July will be chicken noodle soup and tomato soup (regular size). The personal care items are shampoo and conditioner. We appreciate any non-perishable food items. Please note the expiration dates. The personal care items most needed are shavers, shaving cream, deodorant, hand lotion, body wash, shampoo, conditioner, and liquid hand soap. Household items most needed are laundry soap, foil, spray disinfectant cleaners, and dish detergent. We are thankful for your support with all of these items and for

the monetary gifts that we receive. We are blessed ten times over as we welcome our guests and hear wonderful comments about how grateful they are for the food pantry and items that are offered. Thank you for being a part of that!!

June Good Samaritan Offering: \$378.90

PANTRY ITEMS NEEDED FOR JULY:

CHICKEN NOODLE SOUP AND TOMATO SOUP /SHAMPOO AND CONDITIONER

Laurie Halvorsen, Senior Ministries Coordinator: Thank you to everyone who attended our Senior League Celebration 50th Anniversary Party on Wednesday, June 4th. We had 77 people attend the party: Senior League members and First Church friends. Many people worked hard, and some behind the scenes, to put on such a special day. Thank you to Cheryl and Dave Spaude and Serena and her husband for making our lovely meal, and thanks to Barb Sorenson for assembling our lovely table decorations. My appreciation goes to Deb Semrad for helping me plan and order the 50th anniversary Senior League gift tote bag. Thank you always to our table setters: Nurse Pat, Pat Nelson, and Lynne Albrecht. My gratitude to all for such a memorable occasion that we will never forget.

Meetings in July

July 2: 12 Noon: Brats, Burgers, Potato Salad, Chips, and Ice Cream Cones

Program: Healthy Living for the Brain; Presentation by Virginia Zerpa

Devotions: Val Holzman

July 16: 12 Noon: BBQ Pulled Pork Sandwiches, Loaded Potato Salad and Cookies (Charlie's Catering)

Program: Magic Mason; Magician Show

Devotions: Karen Johnson

Please Note Beginning in July we are now on the UPDATED Program Schedule 2025

Come join Senior League in our 50th Year for Fun, Food & Fellowship in 2025!



FUMCWA LOCAL MISSIONS



Second Saturday Servants: During the heat of July, we understand that asking you to turn on the oven may be a lot to ask. However, we're counting on your delicious breakfast casserole to bring joy to our neighbors in need. We invite you to prepare a casserole for our Second Saturday Servants on July 12. Please bring it to the church by 7:45 am so we can pack everything up and get ready to go. Thanks to your kindness, 130 neighbors enjoyed a hot breakfast casserole last month. Let's do it again—with love and eggs!

July's Coins of Love will support West Allis/West Milwaukee School District School Supplies for Kids. School supplies are crucial for a successful academic experience but can be expensive, particularly for low-income families and teachers who often have to spend their own money on classroom supplies.



May's Coins of Love - Ingathering 2025 Wisconsin Annual Conference \$428.30

June's Coins of Love - Philippine Center Free Medical Clinic \$277.35

Our **Wesleyan Congregational Care Team** wishes everyone a wonderful summer. However, we recognize that some individuals may still face difficulties at any time of the year. Please know that we are always available to take the time to listen and pray, whether you are facing problems at home, dealing with a medical concern, or simply feeling lonely or lost. Our team of empathetic caregivers is available to listen and pray with you. Simply let Pastor Grace or the office know of your need, and we will be in touch with you in person or by phone.

"God Cares About You & So Do We"



FUMCWA CHRISTIAN EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES



Adult Christian Education: It seems as if the summer season has finally decided to stay with us! Our team is hoping that with the change of season, you might have also thought about the larger and perilous changes in global climates that are far from being welcomed – ponder recent tornadoes and flooding over much of our nation!

If you have stopped by our Gathering Room for coffee and conversation recently, you have likely learned that our Social Principles display offers our members both moral insight and concrete ideas to guide us in the direction of critical repairs.

The articles and UMC handouts we have chosen for your summer reading are both introductory and full of projects to not only help us stop and take notice, but also to face reality and put our faith and discipleship to work. We are excited to announce that the youth will be joining us for our fall study! Information and handouts include materials for adults and youth. Continued next page

God knew this was coming a long time ago and did not create us without the wherewithal to meet this crisis, and others we have created. We need to wake up to our often-selective reflections on this existential crisis and our reluctance or avoidance of facing our responsibilities to mend our ways. As people of faith, we can show others how to get started, first with small steps, but ones that lead to significantly larger ones, and with others, we can inspire them to join us! Let's do this with the energy for missions that we have grown here!

FUMCWA EVENTS

Lance Lambert / Events Coordinator:

Summer is a very busy time for most families as they plan for sports activities, vacations, and family get-togethers. It's also when I plan for one of our biggest events - the All-Church Picnic.

I'm going to need some help this year to make this event happen on Sunday, July 20th @ Hoyt Park in Wauwatosa from 1 - 5 pm. Once again, there will be food, games, FREE swimming at the awesome Hoyt Pool, great fellowship + S'mores!



Last year, I was blessed with help from some of our youth in setting up the picnic site by putting up our tent and arranging (heavy) picnic tables and covering them with tablecloths. I'll need this kind of help again this year, 3-4 people. If you can help at the park around 11 am, please contact me as soon as possible.

Alas, we finally traded in our 15-year-old van, and our new vehicle is just a tad too short to transport the 3 - 8' tables we need from the church. If anyone has a van or truck that could transport tables to the park around 11:30 am and then return them to the church after the picnic, that would be greatly appreciated.

Sandwiches, chips, lemonade, and water will be provided. I'm asking people to bring either a salad, side dish, or dessert to share (enough for 6-8 people), and sign-up sheets will be available in the Narthex for the next couple of weeks. Though I'm not personally opposed to 30 different desserts, I'm asking people to sign up by category for balance.

Looking forward to another GREAT picnic! Please save the date and consider bringing a friend or neighbor to experience the warmth and friendliness of FUMCWA! (PS - Pray for good weather!!!)

FUMCWA FAITH COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS



The **Scholarship and Endowment Committee** has had a busy last few months! We met in May to review the applications from the West Allis High Schools. We were proud to award eight \$1,000 scholarships to very deserving recipients. In June, we met to review and award scholarships to our church member college students. Congratulations to Abby Page, Thomas Harper, Jakob Noll, Ava Roberts, Claire Rauls, and Andrew Rinka. Each student was awarded \$2,000 to go towards their college tuition. It was also approved by the committee to give \$700 to the church to be used for Vacation Bible School.



Thank you to Jim Henderson and Ken Ilseman for replacing the malfunctioning electrical box that was connected to the upstairs camera and the rear balcony monitor in the church. We really appreciate your knowledge and expertise. The Tech Team



Join us for ROAD TRIP VBS: ON THE ROAD WITH GOD, based on Joshua 1:9 – "The Lord your God is with you wherever you go." Kids (Travelers) will embark on exciting adventures with Navigator and puppet Scout, exploring Bible stories that highlight God's constant presence. This free, fun-filled journey offers engaging activities, games, and lessons that explore God's love and faith. Spread the word and invite friends, neighbors, and grandchildren to join us for a memorable week! VBS runs from July 21-25, 2025, Monday to

Friday, 9:00 am to Noon. Registration forms are available in the narthex or by calling the church office (414-774-5500). Please register by July 13. Don't miss out!

On the Road with Jesus!

As you head off on summer adventures—whether near or far—remember: *Jesus is always with you!* This summer, we invite you to bring "Flat Jesus" along for the ride. Snap a photo of Him with you wherever you go, and help us stay connected as a church family, even while we're scattered on different paths.

Here's what to do:

- Pick up your "Flat Jesus" from the narthex.
- Take Him with you on your travels—or to everyday moments like baseball games, walks with the dog, swim lessons, or quiet time with a book.
- Snap a photo and email it to the church office. Be sure to include your name(s) and where the photo was taken.
- Share your photo on your personal Facebook and tag First United Methodist Church of West Allis so your friends know the origin of The Flat Jesus fun.
- Look for your photos displayed in the Gathering Room throughout the summer!

Whether road-tripping, visiting loved ones, heading to worship, or just soaking up the sunshine at home, Jesus is your perfect companion. And who knows—carrying "Flat Jesus" might even spark a meaningful conversation along the way.

Let's celebrate the joy of knowing that wherever we go, **Jesus goes with us**. We can't wait to see all the places He visits this summer—through your stories and smiles!

