

Methodist the messenger

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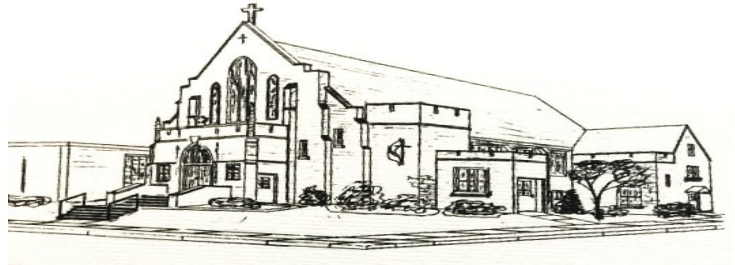
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God cares about you



and so do we

AUGUST 2025



Dear fellow Jesus followers,

I hope you are having a good summer. Thank you for taking us along as you take pictures with Flat Jesus! It's been great "being" with you. Know that we, as the body of Christ, are with you wherever you are.

I've often said we humans long to belong. Belonging is an integral component of who God created us to be. God created us to be God's presence on earth, enjoy the beauty and wonders of the universe, and care for one another and our surroundings. As we experience life, we are discovering our reason for being.

As children of God, we live out our faith. Our faith tells us we are made whole. Gifted with a will, our life experiences the wholeness of being alive—with joy and sorrow, goodness and evil, greed and generosity, and so forth. Our faith journey calls us to remember God's gifts and goodness as constant, even as we veer away from them or turn our backs on them when we lose sight of God, our God origin, and our innate goodness.

That's why we are church. Our journey continues with every breath we take. And that's constant. Jesus invites us always to remember our belonging to God; to surrender our fears; to live beyond our self-imposed limitations due to fear, and to flourish as co-creators enveloped in love, grace, mercy, and justice.

The question lies in how we shed those fears with courage and become and act on the goodness in us and for all. How do we see the goodness of others? How do we share the abundance of God's generosity? How do we continue to *become*?

I hope you join this faith community in becoming as we believe and belong. Together, we reflect and share God's good news!

Pastor Grace

A NOTE FROM OUR LAY LEADER

Our Vision: Can you See Me Now? We've been thinking about and examining individually and in small groups our Vision of First United Methodist Church of West Allis. Now we are at the time when we need to work collectively in a large group to discern what our Vision really is these days. Pastor Grace has been organizing this for some time, and I want to ensure you have all the necessary information, as I believe this is really important. You have hopefully seen this, but I want to call attention to this opportunity again:

You are invited to join us for an **All-Church Retreat** at the **Siena Retreat Center in Racine, taking place from September 5th at 5:00 pm to September 6th at 3:00 pm**. Choose to stay overnight or attend as a daytime participant. We will have **Guided Visioning**: Our time together will be led by a Siena Center Facilitator, who will help us listen, reflect, and discern together. Please be thinking about what we are seeing collectively as our vision for FUMCWA. Where is the Spirit leading us now? What are our strengths, skills, and gifts that may support this? Where are we feeling most led? How does this relate to our new Conference Vision statement? **There are more details on a flyer that has been distributed**, but if you missed it, call me or the Church Office to get more info. **RSVPs were due by August 1**. To reserve your spot, please contact the church office and submit your check. If cost is a barrier, **scholarships may be available**—please don't hesitate to ask. If you missed this info before and you do want to go, please **call right now** and see if you can still be added to the list. This sounds important and fun to me.

Also.....

So even to old age and gray hairs,

O God, do not forsake me,

until I proclaim your might to another generation,

your power to all those to come. Psalm 71:18 (NSV)

I have been pondering this a lot recently. We are called to proclaim Jesus and a message of hope to all around us and to future generations. It is a call to action!

And More....

If you are available on Wednesdays, please join us at mid-week prayer at FUMCWA at 10:30 am. It is a beautiful place to be on Wednesday mornings.

Our Wednesday Food Pantry and our Second Saturday Servants Ministries are important missions in our area and neighborhoods. Please help support these missions. We are called to ACTION in Galatians and throughout the New Testament. Hear the call.

Loving you, Tom Bolton, Lay Leader, 414-704-5478

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

The Church Financial Statement of Activities ending June 30, 2025:

	Year To Date Actual
Giving & Other Income	\$196,117.66
Expenses	\$206,324.46
Operating Income/ (Deficit)	\$(10,206.80)



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.

Worship TOGETHER

SCRIPTURE READINGS & THEMES AUGUST 2025

August 3, 2025, Eighth Sunday after Pentecost/Communion

Texts: Hosea 11:1-11, Colossians 3:1-11, Luke 12:13-21

August 10, 2025, Ninth Sunday after Pentecost/Hymn Sing

Texts: Isaiah 1:1, 10-20, Hebrews 11:1-3, 8-16, Luke 12:32-40

August 17, 2025, Tenth Sunday after Pentecost

Texts: Isaiah 5:1-7, Hebrews 11:29-12:2, Luke 12:49-56

August 24, 2025, Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost

Texts: Jeremiah 1:4-10, Hebrews 12:18-29, Luke 13:10-17

August 31, 2025, Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost

Texts: Jeremiah 2:4-13, Hebrews 13:1-8, 15-16, Luke 14:1, 7-14

Vacation Bible School was held from July 21 to 25, 2025. Our church was buzzing with energy as 30 young Travelers embarked on a journey of faith during our Vacation Bible School, themed **“Road Trip: On the Go with God!”** Guided by the powerful reminder from *Joshua 1:9*— **“The Lord your God is with you wherever you go”**—children, youth helpers, and adult volunteers came together for a week full of spiritual growth, joyful learning, and unforgettable fun. Thank you to everyone who prayed for a successful and meaningful VBS. Your support paved the way for a heartwarming and faith-filled experience for all.

We extend sincere thanks to the following individuals for making this week truly special: Barb Sorenson, MaryAnn Sorenson, Nathan Sorenson, Ilsa Roberts, Adrienne Coover, Jenny Rutter, Riley Kamps, Brian Shutta, Val Holzman, Darlene Schuler, Bonnie Chesky, Carole Schumm, Pat Nelson, Liz Coover, Kiersten Schelman-Bernard, Salud, Michelle Fuller, Karen Jesse, Connor Coover, Abby Page, Pam and AJ Johnson, Joan Carter, Samson and Nardos, and Deb Semrad.

A special shout-out to **MaryAnn, Nathan, Eric, and Natalie Sorenson** for planning and preparing the delicious food for our VBS Thursday Night Picnic. This added joy to the week’s celebration!



FUMCWA MINISTRIES

Church Library Ministry:

"Feed your spirit with the bread of books." -Edwin Markham

The Bernice Nailen Memorial Library has both fiction and non-fiction titles for your study, enjoyment, and learning. Whether August finds you ready to delve into a deep topic or ready to escape with a novel, your library has something for you. Visit the Bernice Nailen Memorial Library to find a variety of resources for everyone in the family.



Due to increasing numbers, we are asking for help from the congregation in a number of ways. All non-perishable foods are welcome as long as they are not expired. Please note the expiration date if donating from your pantry. Foods most needed: chunky soups, canned meats, cereal, crackers, pickles (any variety), stews, chili, milk that does not have to be refrigerated, Chef Boyardee, and ketchup. Dollar stores typically carry most of these items.

Also needed are personal care items: razors, body wash, shampoo, conditioner, liquid hand soap, deodorant, and shave cream.

We also need household cleaning aids: kitchen spray disinfectants, Comet, dish detergent, laundry detergent, aluminum foil, and scouring pads. These items can also be purchased at the Dollar stores.

Any help you can give us is greatly appreciated. Thank you so much for your support.

July's Good Samaritan Offering: \$347.18

PANTRY ITEMS NEEDED FOR AUGUST:

KETCHUP AND CHUNKY SOUPS ~ LAUNDRY AND DISH DETERGENT

Music Ministry: We are excited to begin the fall music season at church. New singers and ringers are always welcome. If you are interested in joining a choir, please see Alyssa or Raymond Roberts.

Asbury Bell Choir begins Thursday, August 28th, at 6:30 pm

Chancel Choir begins Thursday, August 28th, at 7:30 pm

Celebration Ringers begins Tuesday, September 16th, at 7:30 pm

Learn to Ring Bell Choir begins Tuesday, September 23rd, at 6:30 pm

Children's singing and ringing choirs will resume alongside Sunday School on September 14th. Please contact Alyssa or Raymond with any questions. We look forward to seeing you!





UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH: Our Executive Committee will be meeting during this month to plan for our 2026 calendar year. Our first Unity Circle meeting will be on September 8th at 1:00 pm in the Fireside Room. We would like to have you join this community of women who are interested in supporting one another, increasing our faith, and expanding our knowledge. We are growing and enjoying the opportunities to share our ideas and experiences. Please consider joining us in September. If you have questions about our group, please call Annette Intravaia (414-257-4166).

Laurie Halvorsen, Senior Ministries Coordinator: Our Summer continues at Senior League with great food and entertainment! Join us every first and third Wednesday of each month, and bring a friend. We are an ecumenical fellowship group that has been meeting in the same church now for 50 years, we welcome everyone!

Meetings in August

August 6: 12 Noon: Rib Sandwiches, Seasoned Potatoes, Veggie Tray, Texas Sheet Cake

Program: Naomi and the Munchkins; Piano Students ~ Devotions: Laura Grabowski

August 20: 12 Noon: Summer Salad and Dessert Potluck (No Hot Dishes, Please). Please bring one dish: salad or dessert.

Program: West Allis Historical Society ~ Devotions: Betty Frey

Coach Trip: Fireside "Oklahoma" Friday, October 3rd, Cost \$110.00. Leaves Franklin 9:00 am FUMC 9:30 am. Reservation Required and Payment due by August 20th.

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



FUMCWA LOCAL MISSIONS



Second Saturday Servants: **When the Heat Rises, So Does Hunger:** With August comes the sweltering sun, and for many of our neighbors' children, the absence of school meals means empty stomachs and heavier burdens at home. Let's respond with love. Please bring a hot breakfast casserole or breakfast sausages to our church kitchen by 7:45 am **on Saturday, August 9**. Your gift of food becomes a gift of hope. And guess who'll be lending a hand? **Flat Jesus** will be there with our faithful volunteers, spreading joy, grace, and a whole lot of compassion.

August's Coins of Love will support funding for The MacCanon Brown Homeless Sanctuary. The purpose of MacCanon Brown Homeless Sanctuary is to create a day-time homeless sanctuary and multi-resource center for homeless and at risk homeless adults in Milwaukee's impoverished Amani neighborhood (Milwaukee's 53206 zip code).

June's Coins of Love - Philippine Free Medical Clinic - \$562.35

July's Coins of Love - WA/WM School Supplies for Kids - \$338.73



Greetings from your **Wesleyan Congregational Care Team (WCCT)**. We hope everyone is having a wonderful summer. Our weather in Wisconsin has been relatively calm. We can't say the same for the rest of our country. Hearing about all the destruction, devastation, and loss of innocent lives can bring about some deep emotional feelings and cause us to have a lot of questions in our hearts.



If you are struggling with these emotions or having any other personal struggles that you believe talking with and praying with someone would help, we are here for you. The care team at the WCCT is comprised of trained, caring professionals who are here to walk with you through any of life's difficult moments. We promise to hold your concerns in deepest confidence and with compassionate care.

To connect with one of our care team members, please reach out to Pastor Grace, Laura Molleson, or the church office.

FUMCWA CHRISTIAN EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

Adult Christian Education Opportunities: "Can we live without cars?"

Pastor/author, G. Travis Norvell, in the July issue of Christian Century magazine teaches us that if we fail to take time to exercise our muscles for moral discernment, we are apt to overlook important parts of our discipleship journeys, in this case, that our use of various modes of transportation can be "expressions of beloved community!" In his review of two recent books that explore this topic, he realizes that "the one unspoken requirement for church membership is driving!" I bet few of us would have guessed that! He notes that "church life is almost always dependent on car ownership or at least being able to operate a car." He then asks us a critical question of moral understanding, "What if church life was planned instead around the one-third of people who are nondrivers rather than the two-thirds who are? What if at least one nondriver was asked to be a part of every church board or governing body? What if, before every church decision, the question was asked, 'How will this impact the nondrivers in our community?'"

Thoughtful reflection and discussion of critical issues such as this one, ones that are reflections of whether we are faithfully responding to the critical challenges of climate change, including normal, everyday behaviors like driving our cars, need to be happening! Do we realize that even what seem small acts can actually be big signs of transformation in our thinking that bring these needs to people's active consideration and eventual improvement?

Over the last two Sunday coffee gatherings, a short introduction to our fall study of the Social Principle relating to Creation in Crisis was handed out. It asks three short questions, one of which, we want to hear your responses to, in a brief sentence or two! We still await these and want to share them with others in a coming bulletin insert! Let's not wait any longer to get our social ethics in gear and revved up to make beloved community here at FUMCWA newly and amazingly enlivened!! Who is stirred up and wants to see those two books, one about "The Fifteen Minute City," and the other about what happens when "driving is not an option?" And, for your delight and enjoyment this summer, without the need of a car, you can continue to attend Tom Bolton's series of videos and displays all about the Holy Land and its sacred sites!

FUMCWA EVENTS

Lance Lambert / Events Coordinator:

Community Concert - Friday, August 8th - 6:00 pm: Come to the sanctuary as the West Allis-West Milwaukee Sinfonia presents "Skylight Music of Summer Nights". This concert is free (a free-will offering will be taken). Plan to attend this evening of wonderful music and support for community arts.



Hymn Sing Worship Service - Sunday, August 10th - 10:30 am: Join your church family as we praise God through song. This is always a fun and uplifting worship service.

Sunday, August 24th - 10:30 Worship: "Come for the Bottle Band / Stay for a Hot Dog". It's always a treat to hear our "famous" Bottle Band perform. Come to worship and be prepared to smile! After church, Lance will be serving up "End-of-the-Summer" hot dogs and chips (the ones I owe you from Father's Day). Join your church family for a "dog" and fellowship as summer winds down. Fun and Free!!

FUMCWA FAITH COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

From Richard Rinka, Finance Chair:

I don't know about everyone else, but for me, 2025 has gone by quickly. It doesn't seem like enough time has passed for some feedback on the church's finances. In keeping with our commitment to transparency regarding the church's financial situation, this is a mid-year update.

We have been blessed to have a giving congregation whose generosity allows us to have lots of programs and ministries in both the church and the community. We should all be thankful for what we are able to do. The members of the Finance Committee are always thankful for the generosity that this congregation continues to show every day, every month and every year. We all want to keep these going, and the Finance Committee continues to be committed to finding ways to make this happen.

In 2024, we had a pretty good year, when compared to recent years. We still had expenses exceed our income but it wasn't as much as in previous years. In 2025, we have slipped a little bit back to old trends. Looking at the numbers at the end of June, it appears that we will probably end the year with our expenses exceeding our income by somewhere around \$50,000. If you are one of the people that look at the table of numbers that is in the Messenger every month, you may be saying, 'we have been positive until this month and now we are not that far behind why is that?' Well, the answer is that we have some members who pre-pay their pledges or make special contributions early in the year and that does not typically happen late in the year. The impact of this is that in the second half of the year the giving is less than in the first half.

One piece of good news is that we are not anticipating any additional major expenses that would create any additional drag on our budget.

I would guess that some of you are probably wondering why the Finance Committee is not asking for additional contributions, well, that's not our job. We are just to make certain that we are able to be faithful to the service and purpose of our congregation.

If you have any questions about this or would like to talk about our finances, please feel free to reach out to anyone on the Finance Committee. I'm also certain our Stewardship Committee people would also be happy to talk with you if you have questions about giving.