

Methodist the messenger

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God cares about you



and so do we

SEPTEMBER 2025



Gathering Sunday/Faith and Fellowship Trail, September 7th



Happy September, First!

Welcome back to the rhythm of the school year! I pray that you had some great adventures this summer and are rested or renewed enough to step into new things.

We are starting our own year here at First—Sunday School is back for children, youth, and adults. Music rehearsals are also starting. It's good to gather back and worship and celebrate God as a whole faith community.

This first week, some of our members will be on retreat to discern how we are called to church and live out our call to share the good news of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

I reflect on the concept of transformation, and the butterfly comes to mind. The beautiful wings and the delicate patterns of a butterfly don't show until after the caterpillar morphs into a cocoon that then struggles to get out of its restraints.

Following that transformation logic, is it really the transformation of the world as we see it that we are called to do? Or is it the transformation of the people's hearts and minds to really discover the creation we are gifted by God?

God created a perfect universe for us to steward, so says our faith's story. Living creatures are gifted to us to live and care for in harmony. I understand transformation, then that comes from *metanoia*, turning back to God and God's perfect creation.

We, as God's co-creators and partners, are tasked to act on our faithfulness to discover and realize what is already present—God's love for all, God's goodness in us, God's generosity through us. My hope for that retreat is for us to use our gifts from God in our context today and the relevance of God. What comes from our time hopefully continues our discernment as a whole community as we respond to the denomination's vision of "loving boldly, serving joyfully, and leading courageously."

Will you join me in living out this vision as we transform the world as disciples?

Pastor Grace

A NOTE FROM OUR LAY LEADER: Moving Through 2025 with Discipline

Hello Brothers and Sisters.

I want to talk a little about a couple of items this month. I'll bookend with items about Christian Education.

1. Nancy Lanman will be teaching another class on Social Principles for 5 weeks in the Fall. These discussions about Social Issues (this year focusing on Climate Issues) help take us back to the roots of Wesleyan teaching. As Methodists, this is important for us. For me, it also takes me back to my more passionate years. We are reminded that Jesus was passionate about His teaching. I responded to Sue and Nancy's summer questions that I am sometimes overwhelmed by the issues associated with climate change. It is the greatest issue facing our world today in many ways. I am overwhelmed these days because so many people are pooh-poohing the issue. There are many people who claim that we are not responsible for the severe environmental changes affecting our Earth. But we are very responsible. Science cannot be denied. I worked a lot on environmental issues and climate concerns as a teen and young man, working hard on Earth Day formation, authoring many articles about environmental diversity and reducing the use of chemicals. In my middle years, I pushed it to the back of my attention span but continued to support environmental causes in small ways. Now, approaching my senior years, I am reminded of how important advocacy for our earth becomes. I write regularly to elected officials on climate issues, and I support many environmental groups. That keeps me going. Classes like this also keep us going, and the discussion helps us all.

2. Many of us are attending a retreat in September to prayerfully discern our vision of First United Methodist Church. If you aren't able to attend, but want to **offer some thoughts**, please send me a note with ideas that you want me to share. What do you see in our future? How does God call us forward?

3. We have been working on goals and objectives for the congregation as a whole and in our committees for the past couple of years. Some may change or get amended after the retreat, but many will stay the same or grow, no doubt. Please continue to review goals and plans in your committees. Let's not get complacent. Let's stay fired up in our work!

4. After Deacon Lanman's class at 9:00 am for 5 weeks following our Fall kick-off, I will be facilitating a class that I have felt called to develop for several years. I call the class **ReConfirm**. Were you one of those kids that was preoccupied with other things--like boys or girls or sports--back during your Confirmation classes in 8th grade? Did you have a teacher who didn't engage you? Was it so long ago that you forgot lots of what you learned? Are you looking to renew your vows? Ready to fire up your discipleship? Then ReConfirm is the class for you. I will lead this class for anyone interested in reviewing Confirmation material. We will start on October 19, after Social Principles Class ends, at 9:00 am Sunday mornings in the Fireside Room. If there is enough interest, there will be a second session on Tuesday nights, via Zoom, at 6:30 pm. We will pause during Advent studies and Lenten studies and meet all other weeks for about 16 weeks in all.

A "ReConfirm" class in the United Methodist Church, as it's sometimes called, is essentially a repeat of a Confirmation Class, with lots of discussion. It's designed to help individuals deepen their understanding of Christian faith and United Methodist beliefs, and to take ownership of their faith journey. We will not have a textbook, but I plan to share handouts and use many videos. In essence, a United Methodist "ReConfirm" class is about strengthening one's faith, understanding the foundations of the church's beliefs, and making a conscious commitment to following Jesus Christ within the United Methodist tradition. I invite you to join us.

5. Regular ongoing Christian education is really important. Wesley placed great emphasis on this in the early Methodist movement. If you would like to see another class, and if you might be interested in leading a course or discussion group, please let me or any members of the Adult Education Committee know what you want.

Bless us all,

Tom Bolton, Lay Leader, 414-704-5478

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





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

	Year To Date Actual
Giving & Other Income	\$221,599.36
Expenses	\$238,426.34
Operating Income/ (Deficit)	\$(16,826.98)

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 SEPTEMBER 2025

September 7, 2025, Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost/Communion

Texts: Jeremiah 18:1-11, Psalm 139:1-6,13-18, Philemon 1-21, Luke 14:25-33

September 14, 2025, Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Texts: Jeremiah 4:11-12,22-28, Psalm 14, 1 Timothy 1:12-17, Luke 15:1-10

September 21, 2025, Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Texts: Jeremiah 8:18-9:1, Psalm 79:1-9, 1 Timothy 2:1-7, Luke 16:1-13

September 28, 2025, Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Texts: Jeremiah 32:1-3a, 6-15, Psalm 91:1-6, 14-16, 1 Timothy 6:6-19, Luke 16:19-31

A Brief Reminder from Lay Leader Tom Bolton:

Some of the Church Staff are working on Sunday mornings, but some are there to worship, and I am resolving to not bother them with work requests on Sunday- especially during worship. Would you please join me in not giving work requests and questions to staff members who are not working on Sundays? I am even going to try not to send texts or emails for Monday, but I know that it will be hard to wait. Let's make a good worship experience for everyone.

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

FUMCWA MINISTRIES

Church Library Ministry: Explore. Engage. Embrace. Enjoy.

Join us for Gathering Sunday's Faith and Fellowship Trail Event and help us celebrate the grand reopening of the Bernice Nailen Memorial Library! Step into a refreshed space that educates, entertains, empowers, and enlightens—a place where stories spark connection, resources inspire creativity, and every shelf invites community. Explore the expanded Church Library. Engage with fellow members. Embrace a fresh new chapter filled with possibility and purpose. Enjoy the joy of discovery. Please have a look at the Events section for complete details. We can't wait to welcome you!

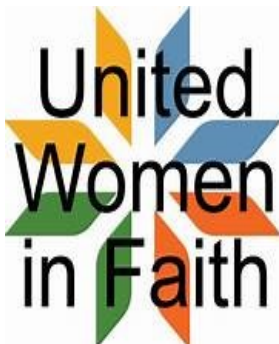


Food Pantry Ministry: We have been so blessed with some wonderful donations these past couple of weeks. We have received food donations from someone who uses the rest of her food allowance to purchase food for the food pantry. How great is that! We also received several boxes of canned goods that were donated from someone's apartment. Special thanks to Michael Odle, who donated New Testaments for those who want them. A wonderful monetary donation was also received from Sue Klescewski to use toward the needs of the food pantry. We are so appreciative of everything we receive. It helps those in need and also helps our funds to keep growing so that we can provide those needs for years to come. All non-perishable food items are accepted, but please note the expiration date! Canned meats, cereal, crackers of all kinds, Chef Boyardee, stews, chili, and small jars of pickles are some of the food items that go fast. As far as personal care items: men's and women's shavers, shampoo and conditioner, body wash, deodorant, and toothpaste are needed. We also welcome household cleaners such as dish soap, laundry soap, kitchen cleansers and sprays, aluminum foil, and kitchen storage bags. Again, we thank you for all the donations we continue to receive and for the support and love of this wonderful congregation.

The August Good Samaritan Offering: \$2,653.29

PANTRY ITEMS NEEDED FOR SEPTEMBER:

CANNED PASTA AND CRACKERS (ANY KIND)~ SHAVERS AND DEODORANT



UWF: We are starting a new year of programming and invite you to join us for our September 8th meeting at 1:00 pm in the Fireside Room. Pat Shapiro will be our guest speaker, and the program is on Bone Health. As we age, our bones get more fragile, and we all could use a little guidance on how to help with that process. Our next meeting on October 13th will be presented by Capt. Brian Saftig of the West Allis Police Dept. on Scams. All of us should be aware of what is happening because these scams keep changing! Please join our group starting in September, you will be glad that you did! Any questions, please call Annette Intravaia at 414-257-4166.

Laurie Halvorsen, Senior Ministries Coordinator: Hello, Happy Fall, everyone! We welcome a new caterer, Wild Carrot Creations, on September 17th to our program schedule. Believe it or not, we have only four more times that our Chefs Cheryl and Serena will be cooking for our group. Their last time be the Christmas luncheon on December 3rd. Cheryl started with Senior League 10 years ago, the same year I started as Senior Ministries Coordinator. Cheryl has been working since January 2025 in a new position in a hospital. She lives in a new home in Rome, WI, and commutes back and forth when she cooks for our group. We are very grateful!



Meetings in September

September 3: 12 Noon: Spaghetti, Garlic Breadsticks, Salad, Mint Ice Cream

Program: BINGO w/Prizes Devotions: Salud

September 17: Cheesy Potatoes & Ham, Caesar Salad, Pear Bars (Catering by Wild Carrot Creations-Colleen Bell)

Program: Social Security Benefits Overview; Elida Elizando Devotions: Don Gilpin

Coach Trip: Fireside "Oklahoma" Friday, October 3rd Leaves Franklin 8:45 am Leaves FUMC 9:15-9:30 am The trip is currently closed. We have started a waiting list and if you are interested, please call the church office. Cost \$110.00.

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

FUMCWA LOCAL MISSIONS



Second Saturday Servants: As Fall Begins, So Does Our Casserole Call!

Thanks to your faithful efforts, we served **147 hungry neighbors** in August—what a beautiful testament to your generosity and care. As the mornings grow cooler, our need for **hot breakfast casseroles** continues. Please bring your warm, ready-to-serve casseroles to the church kitchen by **7:45 am on Saturday, September 13**. Our efficient team of volunteers will be ready to pack them up and deliver comfort in every bite. Thank you for being part of this nourishing ministry. Your kindness makes all the difference

September's "Coins of Love" will support the Thanksgiving Food Basket Ministry, a mission we are proud to continue. We have already started planning and preparing. If you are not familiar with this ministry, we have been giving food to families in the West Allis area for Thanksgiving for over 50 years. We receive names of families who are having financial difficulties from WA/WM schools as well as from our church members. Each family receives a turkey and other food needed to prepare a Thanksgiving meal. Each basket costs \$65.00. The goal again is to give Thanksgiving Baskets to 180 families. This ministry is funded mainly by donations from this congregation. We hope that you will give generously.

July's Coins of Love - WA/WM School Supplies - \$842.30

August's Coins of Love - The MacCanon Brown Homeless Sanctuary - \$313.86



FUMCWA CHRISTIAN EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

Social Principles: A Reflection by Sue Klescewski

The past few Messengers have addressed the opportunities offered for adult education: Tom Bolton's summer session on videos and discussion of the Holy Land, and the display of articles related to the Social Principles class were available for your reading enjoyment in the Gathering Room before and after service. Both of these opportunities were well-received.

Have you thought about a class? Did you "dip your toes" in and look at the articles in the Gathering Room? Did you check out Tom's videos and discussion to see what it was all about? Think about joining us in the fall for one of the offerings.

I had never taken a class before, but when I read about the Social Principles class, I thought, "I can do that." Led by Deacon Nancy Lanman, I found myself participating, sharing my thoughts about the information and questions that she asked us to think about for the week. Well, that simply snowballed into taking the Advent book discussion facilitated by Pastor Grace, continuing the Spring Social Principles class, the Lenten class, and considering the book discussions facilitated by Val Holzman.

Surprisingly, I enjoyed delving into the materials and thinking more deeply about what all that meant to me in my life and with my faith. Our faith journey can be deepened by reading, listening, and participating with others, and being open to making changes within ourselves. Do I struggle with a complete understanding of the materials as I read them? Sometimes, but it is during the discussions that I find I do have something to share and questions to ask, or I simply sit and listen and absorb what others say. Non-threatening atmosphere, friendly exchanges, purposeful discussions, and a chance to grow are how I would describe my experiences thus far.

I am excited to continue the Social Principles discussion this fall regarding our Climate in Peril. Our recent heat waves, downpour rains and flooding, drought conditions in Texas, earthquakes in Alaska, wildfires, and carbon emissions that endanger our air quality, eruptions of long-dormant volcanoes, and much more threaten the Earth that God so lovingly created and gave to us.

Won't you join us this fall to treat yourself to new learning? Group learning can deepen understanding and shared perspective, strengthen our personal faith and spiritual growth, support and encourage, and build community, belonging, and outreach.

Book Discussion Group: September's book discussion will be held on Monday, September 15th, at 1:30 pm. We will discuss **The Light We Carry: Overcoming in Uncertain Times** by Michelle Obama (Nurturing for Community). In this follow-up to her acclaimed memoir, former First Lady Michelle Obama shares practical wisdom and powerful strategies for staying hopeful and balanced in today's highly uncertain world. She opens a candid conversation with readers, exploring the questions many of us wrestle with: How do we build enduring and honest relationships? How can we discover strength and community inside our differences? What tools do we use to address feelings of self-doubt or helplessness? What do we do when it all starts to feel overwhelming? A New York Times and USA Today bestseller. The group meets in the church library and welcomes everyone who loves reading!

Christian Education Sunday School Begins September 14: We're excited to welcome everyone back for a new season of learning, growth, and connection through our Sunday School programs!

Adult Christian Education Classes

Adult classes will begin on **Sunday, September 14, at 9:00 am.** Please see the attached flyer for full details on class topics and locations.

Youth Christian Education Schedule (Grades 5–12)

9:00 am – Choir Practice in the *Choir Room*

9:20 am – Bell Practice in the *Sanctuary*

9:40–10:10 am – Sunday School in the *Cokesbury Room*



FUMCWA EVENTS

Lance Lambert / Events Coordinator: Faith and Fellowship Trail (Gathering Sunday) - Sunday,

September 7th @ 9:00 to 10:00 am: Take a walk on the Faith & Fellowship Trail—a morning of connection and discovery. We'll begin in the Gathering Room with coffee, juice, donuts, and bagels (nothing fancy, just friendly). From there, you're invited to explore different ministries in our church through a scavenger hunt. Visit the Library, the Fireside Room (where ACE will share their vision), and more. Each stop offers a glimpse into the ministries that help our church thrive—plus a few treats and surprises along the way! Prefer to stay put? The Gathering Room will be open for conversation and connection. Complete your scavenger hunt card and turn it in before worship. Pastor Grace will draw two names during the service to receive a gift card! Whether you're new to our community or have walked through these halls for years, this is a chance to rediscover the joy of faith and fellowship. A backpack blessing will be held during the worship service for all youth returning to school in September. **All are welcome. All are invited. Let's walk together.**

Methodist Movie Matinee / Discussion - Sunday, September 14th @ 11:45 am: Our 1st film of the Fall season will be a tie-in with Deacon Nancy Lanman's class on Climate Change. We will view the documentary "Dammed If You Do" from the beautifully filmed PBS series, The Human Footprint. Dams seemed like a good idea at the time, but how are they affecting our environment? As always, the movie, popcorn, and beverages are **FREE!** Stay for a brief discussion and pizza after the film. A free-will offering will be collected to help defray the cost of the pizzas. Informative film and great fellowship, so please join us!

Celebration Potluck - Sunday, September 28th- Following Worship: All members of our FUMCWA community are cordially invited to a potluck in Fellowship Hall. We will have an opportunity to learn about the personal journey from Ethiopia to America of Samson, Nardos, and their children. Join us as we celebrate Samson's new employment with FedEx and the successful beginning of their process toward permanent residency in the US! Let us all join in the weaving of our own stories and spirits in faith with these new members of our church family. Come one and all - and bring a dish to pass!!

FUMCWA FAITH COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS



First Church is excited to offer **AWANA** again this year! This fun Bible Club for children ages 3K to Grade 8 meets Wednesdays from 6:15-8:00 pm, starting September 17th, at FUMCWA. Children participate in age-level clubs: Cubbies (ages 3-4), Sparks (K-2), Truth and Training (grades 3-6), and Trek (grades 7-8). Help us spread the word and invite other families as we begin our seventh year. Our goal is to reach boys and girls with the Gospel of Christ and train them to serve Him. Registration forms

are available online, through the church office, and in the Gathering Room. For questions or to volunteer, contact the church office (414-774-5500).

The Wednesday Morning Prayer Service offers an opportunity for a spiritual "midweek reset." We will come together to pause, reflect, and reconnect with God's presence. Through heartfelt prayers and moments of quiet reflection, the service revitalizes our spirits, providing comfort and inspiration to carry us through the week. We invite you to join us every Wednesday in the Fireside Room at 10:30 am.



**WEDNESDAY
MORNING PRAYER**