

Methodist the messenger

Celebrating 70 Years of The Methodist Messenger (1953-2023)

God cares about you



and so do we

First United Methodist Church 7520 W. Lapham Street, West Allis, WI 53214

fumcwaoffice@fumcwa.org

414-774-5500



Centenary Celebration of the Church Building (1923-2023)

SEPTEMBER 2023

CONTENTS:

**PASTORAL LETTER
LAY LEADER MESSAGE
CHURCH FINANCIAL REPORT
HIGHLIGHTS OF FUMCWA
UPCOMING EVENTS
UPDATES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Dear FUMCWA Family in Christ,

September Christian Greetings!

Summer is over, and fall is around the corner. *Back to School* is the common theme all across the board. Let us offer prayers for and shower blessings upon students, teachers, parents, families, and communities. We bless them that they will have an excellent academic year. FUMCWA is back to two worship services beginning on Gathering Sunday (9/10) but moves into a "Courageous Conversation" around various aspects of church worship experiences that would leverage us to emerge as a solid and vibrant worshipping community. John Wesley said: "*Worship is a means of God's grace - 'grace' flowing into and from people.*" This means we are called to excel in experiencing and expressing God's grace in and through worship.

DISCIPLESHIP & EVANGELISM

Remember how Jesus called his first disciples, Simon and Andrew (Mark 1:17): "Come, follow me, and I will show you how to fish for people." When we recall Jesus' last words on earth to his followers in Acts 1:8: "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people everywhere - in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." Jesus' ministry on earth began with evangelism and concluded with evangelism. Further, discipleship and evangelism are like two sides of the same coin. Disciples are evangelists, and evangelists are disciples. As disciples, we experience faith; as evangelists, we express or share our faith.

A FUTURE WITH HOPE

The HOPE initiative for FUMCWA is God's people being reinvigorated toward Health, Growth, and Vitality (HGV). We are called to intentionally expand our outreach and connect with our communities through simple, creative, and various ways. We are challenged to be visionary, passionate, strategic, and realistic. In summer, we have focused on the Book of James, which has nurtured and invited us to put faith into action. Church-going Christians are known for being part of hands-on Christianity, God's call, and our commitment. As faithful witnesses, we trust God for fruits/results.

PRAYER: May the Lord bless us; May we all be well; May the Lord watch over us; May the Lord keep us safe and secure. Amen!



“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.” Jeremiah 28:11

As we start a new worship year, it seems like an especially good time to pray and ponder privately to hear God’s plans for each of us. We offer many opportunities to serve in missions. I don’t want to pressure anyone, but rather I hope you will share with God to hear where he leads you.

At the same time, I invite you to consider opportunities for Christian Education. We offer many here at First Church, and there are other opportunities you might pursue online or in the neighborhood too.

Also, be thinking about what you want to see more of and perhaps less of in worship. We will be surveying everyone to find out your preferences and desires in worship.

While none of us is perfect, God has plans for each of us. God cares about each of you, and so do I.
Tom Bolton, Lay Leader



FUMCWA - Hospitality Plan for September to December: Our church hosted successful webinar sessions in August that were attended by members of our congregation as well as members from other churches. As a result, we have decided to put our faith into action, as outlined in the Book of James. Those who participated in the webinars are currently exploring ways to make our church a welcoming place for everyone, where we can share God's love and care through various

means such as Everyday Invite, Momentum Invite, and Ministry Invite. We believe that our church has the potential to transform people's lives and make a positive impact in our community: (1) Why do people need Jesus and His love? (2) Why do people need a church? (3) Why do people need our church - FUMCWA? We invite people of all ages, races, and nations to join and gather together in this venture and adventure and make a difference in the lives of people and communities around us. God cares about you and so do we!



The Church Financial results for FUMCWA for 2023 are as follows:

	Year To Date Actual	Year To date Budget	Difference
Giving & Other Income	\$224,048.16	\$143,891.51	\$80,156.65
Expenses	\$225,836.73	\$285,063.59	\$59,226.86
Operating Income/ (Deficit)	\$(1788.57)	\$(141,172.08)	

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!

HIGHLIGHTS OF FUMCWA



SEPTEMBER SERMON THEMES/SCRIPTURES

9/3 Parking Lot Worship, James 5:19-20, "Patience in Correction"
9/10 Gathering Sunday, Preacher: Rev. Stephen Jenks, Marquette University
9/17 Mission Sunday: God's Mission, Church Mission & Our Mission
9/24 Sermon Series: Lessons from Biblical Leaders*

*Pastor Sam begins a new sermon series on Sunday, September 24, on "How Effective Leaders Motivate Themselves and Others" based on The Book of Nehemiah. You are invited to read The Book of Nehemiah in the next few weeks. Today in the church, the Holy Spirit has bestowed gifts and graces upon each of us to help strengthen the body of Christ.

Parking Lot Worship Service and Communion - Sunday, September 3rd at 10:00 am: As the response to the Parking Lot Worship has been very positive and encouraging, we will hold one more outdoor worship with Holy Communion in the church parking lot on the first Sunday of September (September 3). The weather will be considered as always. All are welcome and please bring friends and family members to bless our church neighbors with our singing, praying, preaching, sharing, and supporting of each other. For online viewers, a short service will be recorded and shared on Facebook and posted later on YouTube.

September 10th "Gathering our Families and Friends" Sunday: Join us in Fellowship Hall between services (9-10:30 am) for a "kickoff" to our new church year! Enjoy delicious donuts, bagels, fresh fruit, coffee, juice, and water. Don't miss the magic show featuring "Magic Mason" from 9:30-10:00 am. Mason is a skilled magician who has received multiple scholarships to attend magician events. He specializes in card, coin, and rope tricks that will be fun for all ages.



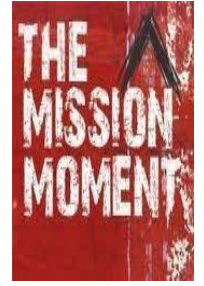
As the new school year begins, we want to extend a special blessing to all students. To keep this blessing close, we'll give you a backpack tag. We welcome all members to join our church programs and events and invite family and friends to be a part of our worship community. We're excited to invite you to "Gathering our Families and Friends" Sunday, September 10th, where you will discover more about First Church and always experience God's love and a wonderful time of fellowship. Please plan to join us!

FAITH COMMUNITY UPCOMING EVENTS

MISSION SUNDAY - PEANUT BUTTER - September 17, 2023: As peanut butter never feels lonely without bread, churches never feel lonely without missions - missions to people and communities. Jesus said: "Go..." Go into various communities and make an impact! There is an immediate need to address the lack of food by providing breakfast with bread and peanut butter. On Mission Sunday, 9/17, at both services, we invite all members to BRING A JAR OF PEANUT BUTTER (of any size) to worship as an offering to people in need. Just as bread needs delicious peanut butter, the world needs church missions. Come with your jar of peanut butter, and let us celebrate God's missions together through FUMCWA!



September Mission Moment: Second Saturday is happening earlier than usual this month, and we are in need of more breakfast casseroles as some of our cooks have retired due to health issues. If you're able to help, please consider baking a casserole to feed our hungry neighbors. Please bring casseroles to the church by 7:45 am on September 9th.



Here's a great recipe for Breakfast Potatoes that's always a hit:

- 1 bag of frozen diced potatoes
- 1 can of cream of chicken soup
- 1 pint of sour cream
- 1/2 bag of chopped onions
- 2 cups of shredded cheddar cheese

Mix all of the ingredients together, then spread them in a greased pan. Bake uncovered at 350 degrees for one hour.

September's "Coins of Love" will support the Thanksgiving Food Basket Ministry. 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 48 years. We receive names of families who are having financial difficulties from WAWM 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 \$60.00. 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 Coins of Love: Stains Memorial Children's Home \$423.57

August Coins of Love: Goodness Foundation in India \$259.29



Food Pantry: The food pantry is in great need of large grocery bags with handles. Our supply is almost gone. If you have some bags that you can spare, please drop them off in the narthex or the office.

Thank you for the items that have been donated. All non-perishable food items are welcome. Our guests are so appreciative that they can select extra items of their choosing. Please remember to check the expiration dates. Also welcome are personal care items and household cleaning products. Our community needs are great, and we are blessed to be able to provide food, essentials, and a listening ear to those who visit our food pantry. We have a wonderful and loving crew and a congregation that cares, and we thank you all for your support.

United Women in Faith (UWIF): The first meeting for UWIF for the 2023-2024 year will be on Monday, September 11th, at 1:00 pm in the Fireside Room. All women who are interested in fellowship, strengthening their faith, finding support in their daily life, and sharing concerns they may have, are welcome to join us. We will meet on the second Monday of each month at 1:00 pm in the Fireside Room. Please join us, and if you have any questions, please call Annette at 414-257-4166. We will have more information about upcoming events after the executive board meets.



UWIF will be hosting the South East Annual Fall Meeting on Saturday, September 23rd, from 8:30 am-2:30 pm. We welcome anyone that is willing to help with this event to contact Annette.

SCIENCE CAFE with FUMCWA - October 17, 2023, 6:00-7:30 pm: Come join us for the Science Cafe Program, an educational initiative sponsored by The Clinical and Translational Science Institute (CTSI) and hosted by FUMCWA. This program aims to enhance public health by engaging in dialogues about current medical and health issues based on the latest scientific developments. The event will take place in a relaxed, non-academic setting. We welcome everyone, both members and non-members, to attend the first FUMCWA-sponsored Science Cafe on October 17, 2023, from 6:00 - 7:30 pm, preceded by dinner at 5:30 pm in Fellowship Hall. Topic: Hypertension & Stroke with overview of Cardiovascular Issues. Presenters: Marcie Berger, MD and Stacy Gardiner, MD. Please register at <https://is.gd/Sciencecafe>. Please contact Pastor Sam if you have questions.



Book Discussion Group: On Monday, September 18, at 1:30 pm the group will discuss the book: **Together: The Healing Power of Human Connection in a Sometimes Lonely World** by Vivek H Murthy M.D. Murthy's book highlights the importance of human connection and how loneliness can have a hidden impact on our health and society. Murthy argues that loneliness is a public health concern that contributes to many of the epidemics we face today. However, as social creatures, our innate desire to connect with others is the solution to this crisis. The book's four key strategies have immediate relevance and application to our lives. The group meets in The Bernice Nailen Memorial Library. All are welcome.

HOLY LAND JOURNEY 2024: Pastor Sam will lead/host a **Holy Land Journey 2024 - April 2 - 12, 2024**. In this journey, we will explore the Life of Jesus, His times, His land, and His Hebrew Faith. We will see the Sea of Galilee, Capernaum, the Mount of Beatitudes, the Church of the Fish and the Loaves at Tabgha, the Chapel of the Primacy, Magdala, the Wedding Chapel in Cana, Tel Megiddo, Caesarea, Jericho, Qumran, Bethlehem, the Church of the Nativity, Shepherds' Field, Yad Vashem, Israel's Holocaust Memorial, the Mount of Olives, the Palm Sunday Road, the Garden of Gethsemane, Mount Zion, House of the High Priest Caiaphas, the Upper Room, Hezekiah's Tunnel, Jerusalem, and much more! **Brochures are now available in the narthex for more details and registration information.** This journey is in partnership with *Educational Opportunities Tours*, a Christian Travel Service.

FAITH COMMUNITY UPDATES, NEWS, ANNOUNCEMENTS



First Church is excited and blessed to offer **AWANA** again. This fun Bible Club for children ages 3K to Grade 8 meets on Wednesday evenings at FUMCWA during the school year from 6:15-8:00 pm, **beginning September 13**. Children are spiritually and physically challenged in a fast-paced learning environment geared toward their age level. There is the Cubbies program for children ages three and four; for kindergarten through second grade, the Sparks program; for grades three through six, the "Truth and Training" program; and for grades 7 and 8, the Trek program. Please spread the word and invite other families to join us as we begin year five. As the AWANA pledge states, the AWANA Club's goal is "to reach boys and girls with the Gospel of Christ, and to train them to serve HIM." Come out and be part of the fun! Registration forms are available on the website, by contacting the church office, and in the narthex. If you have any questions, want more information, or want to volunteer to help, please contact Deb Semrad at 414-774-5500 or jdsemrad@att.net.

The Bernice Nailen Memorial Library: Welcome back to the fall schedule. As a reminder, you are always welcome to check out library materials using the easy self-checkout instructions. And now that fall is here, we will have volunteers in the library each Sunday morning from 9:00-9:30 am to assist you. We hope to see you in the library.



Adult Christian Education Invitation: As Christians, followers of Jesus Christ, we are encouraged to grow in knowledge and faith. The Bible frequently refers to us as in a race. In Hebrews 12:1, we are directed to "throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles and... run with perseverance the race marked out for us". Can you think of anything in your life that hinders you from growing spiritually? That would be "anything that draws our attention away from Jesus and the path he has made before us" (Disciplines, August 14, 2022). So how do we know the path and find the markers along it that keep us on it? By joining a group of fellow Christians studying the Bible. Together we become more focused on the goal of knowing Christ and loving one another. We encourage you to join a class this fall on Sunday morning or weekday morning/evening, as offered in our Adult Education flyer. Discover the joy of growing in knowledge and faith on the path God has appointed for you to run.

Alyssa Roberts, Music Ministry Director: We are excited to begin the fall music season at church. New singers and ringers are always welcome.

Asbury Bell Choir begins Thursday, August 31, at 6:30 pm
 Chancel Choir begins Thursday, August 31, at 7:30 pm
 Celebration Ringers begins Tuesday, September 5, at 7:30 pm
 Learn to Ring Bell Choir begins Tuesday, September 26, at 6:30 pm



Children's singing and ringing choirs will resume alongside Sunday School on September 17. Please get in touch with Alyssa or Raymond with any questions. We look forward to seeing you!

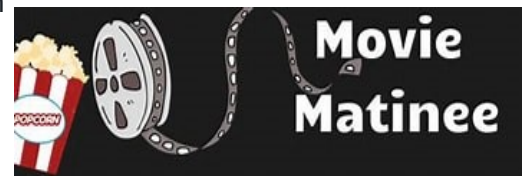


Thank you, Pastor Sam, and to the Congregation for your prayers and support over the past two years as I have been dealing with medical issues. Your cards, emails, and phone calls have made all the difference in aiding my recovery. I am still not able to walk, but the pain is lessening and for that, I am truly grateful. I hope to start therapy to regain my strength after the grafting procedures are complete and healed. God has blessed me abundantly with the care and support from this church family. Debbie Niespodziani

"Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer." Romans 12:12

A CALL FOR GREETERS: Do you feel called by the Holy Spirit to join our ministry of greeting guests at one of our worship services once a month? We need people to greet at the back, front, and elevator doors to welcome everyone who enters with a spirit of hospitality. The only requirement is a friendly smile and about 30 minutes of your time. All are welcome; parents or grandparents with a child are encouraged to be greeters. And if standing is a problem, we can arrange for you to have a chair. Call Bonnie Chesky at 414-391-6224 to be included in this vital ministry.

Lance Lambert - Events Coordinator: Join us on **Sunday, September 24th, for the Methodist Movie Matinee & Discussion.** After the second service in the sanctuary, we'll be showing a free, inspiring film that you can enjoy with some popcorn and a beverage. We're starting the season with a reprise of "Queen of Katwe," a Disney film based on the true story of a Ugandan girl who discovers her incredible talent for chess and changes her life. This film celebrates the human spirit. After the movie, stick around for some pizza and a brief discussion of the film. A free-will offering will be taken to cover the cost of the pizzas. Friends are always welcome, so please come and join us!



Community Engagement Initiative is a new ministry group that is emerging. Its primary focus will be to connect our faith community with community outreach by partnering with community agencies. This new initiative is an extension of so many of the existing missions and ministries of the church, so it is essential that we are not duplicating, replicating, or infringing upon the current efforts of our church. This initiative is closely tied to the church's Mission, Vision, Values, Health, Growth, and Vitality, especially the 1-3 year vision. We already know our church is deeply connected to our community, and our community knows this as well through the Health Department relationship Pastor Sam has cultivated, Parking Lot Hot Dog Ministry, Second Saturday Servants, Morning Glory Ministries, Thanksgiving Food Basket Ministry, AWANA, to name a few. We believe there are areas of opportunity, and interest, in offering this type of content to our church members and, on a larger scale, our community. Along with the other Health/Growth/Vitality goals and the Art of Hospitality, these all tie into creating an environment that further puts First United Methodist West Allis on the map of people seeking a place to go, learn, and worship. "Community" includes our Faith Community and the Community around us. "Engagement" means engaging people 'within the four walls' and 'beyond the four walls.' If we can continue to be a leader beyond our four walls, we will have more people worshipping within them as well! Research shows that people who are searching are searching for: 1.) A Church; 2.) Things to do; 3.) Hope. The best way we can invite them are through three types of invites:

Everyday Invites - these are automated and run in the background 24/7, where we constantly invite people looking for a church to ours. Share a Facebook post, share a newsletter, share a joy from a recent experience you had with our church; it is more contagious than you think!

Momentum Invites - for people searching for things to do and are built around special services and events (we have events through the fall and Christmas Eve, but also additional content as we are looking to cultivate through the Community Engagement Initiative)

Ministry Invites - built for people who are looking for Hope



If each of these three invites brought one member per month, we'd have 12 new families before the end of the year. What can you do to help with these invites? What content can we offer that would build momentum? We are excited to embark on this journey of growing our church through members and what we can offer. To learn more about the initiative and to participate, please contact Joe Pitterle and Raymond Roberts.

Laurie Halvorsen, Senior Ministries Coordinator: We have one more coach trip to the Fireside this year to see Scrooge, The Musical, on Wednesday, December 13th. The cost is \$102.00, including gratuity, and this trip is open to everyone! The sign-up sheet is in the church office and at our Senior League meetings. Checks can be made out to "The Senior League." The coach leaves Franklin at 8:50 am and First Church at 9:30 am. Reservations are required.

Meetings in September:

- September 6 12 Noon** Pansit (Rice w/Pork & Veggies), Egg Rolls and Cookies
Program: Bublr Bike Presentation
Devotions: Barb Pier
- September 20 12 Noon** Chicken Fajitas, Street Corn Salsa, Jell-O & Churros
Program: Exploit No More: Sex Trafficking; Martha Kannas
Devotions: Salud



Join us for Fun, Food, and Fellowship in 2023 in our 48th Year with Senior League!

CONCLUDING WORDS: *Brothers and Sisters in Christ, we are blessed with people, volunteers, resources, church building, ministry opportunities, hopes and dreams, and with A Future with Hope. Psalm 119:114 reads: "I have put my hope in your Word." This means that when we put our hope in the promises of God, we will see miracles and wonders in the life of FUMCWA. Let us come together, claiming the promises of God for the sake of harvesting the fruits. May it be so!*

David Affeldt,
Chair, Church Council

Sam Royappa
Lead Pastor