

Methodist the messenger

Rev. Dr. Grace G. Cajuat, Pastor

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

fumcwaoffice@fumcwa.org

414-774-5500

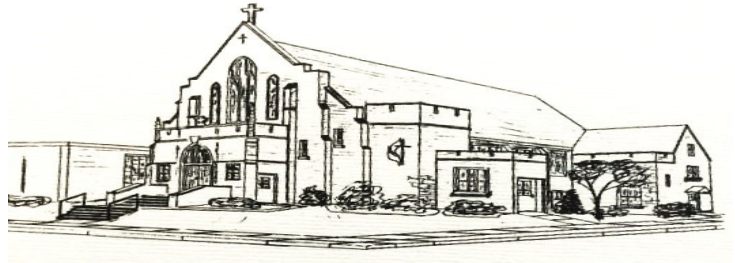
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God cares about you



and so do we

NOVEMBER 2024



Members & Friends of FUMCWA,

I admire Bishop Michael Curry for his faith-filled being, his ministry, and his compassionate prophetic voice preaching love. His often-quoted statement, "If it's not about love, it's not about God," is crucial to remember and inform our choice of civic leaders. Voting is a privilege I do not take for granted.

I grew up in the Philippines during the Marcos regime when bombings of opposition political leaders were normalized and openly known to be Marcos's response. No one could question him and his cronies and the corrupted government that made him and his family, loyalists, rich. I had loved ones involved in activism who were imprisoned. Martial Law was declared as he became a dictator. (Russian Navalny's death reminds me of those days.)

I was in Germany on a world tour with my chamber choir when we heard on the news Ninoy Aquino, Marcos's strongest and biggest threat, was assassinated on the tarmac of the airport. Even when a revolution ensued, the change didn't last.

In Jesus's teaching, leading is synonymous with serving, leading the people with the common good in mind. As the US, my adopted country, makes a decision that will impact not only the citizens of the US but also the world, Bishop Curry's words guide me in my civic actions. The principle of love must guide us to choose wisely who will lead and serve us as the best nation we can be.

As Christ followers and Wesleyan practitioners, our call is social holiness—to love our neighbors as we love ourselves. The good of all is the good for each of us.

There's a Facebook meme from Stephen Mattson that invites Jesus followers to ponder: "Christians should regularly ask themselves, "Is my faith more a reflection of my political, cultural, and socio-economic values and actions, or a reflection of the values and actions of Christ?"

May our faith in God through Jesus Christ, inspired and lived out with the Holy Spirit, compel us to act and vote in love.

Pastor Grace

A NOTE FROM OUR LAY LEADER

The Great Commission Will Change Us

It is great to be back to worship in person. If I haven't greeted you yet, I will over the next couple of weeks.

Earlier this year, I wrote, "The Great Commission of Jesus in Matthew 28 is what many of us Christians point to as our driver for building the kingdom on earth. We recall how the resurrected Jesus *"said to them, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.'"*

It is a powerful conviction to any disciple of Jesus to go into the world and make disciples. This scripture is the basis for the mission statement of the UMC, which says that we are "To make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world." First Church has a great history and awareness of missions into the world--locally, nationally, and internationally. I am so proud of our history and who we are!!

The wisdom of the great commission is not that other people are converted but rather that we are converted!! We are transformed as we are filled with the Spirit.

We have many opportunities to experience the Great Commission at First Church--from AWANA missions to Food Pantry to Coins of Love to hosting many visitors.

I also want to remind you again that our Future of Hope goals for 2023 continue to move us forward in 2024. Please continue to Pray, Participate, and Promote for the benefits of the kingdom and for each of us. I invite each of us to do this personally, and I ask our committees and various ministries to continue to work on their goals.

I close with excitement about our many ministries, still warmed by Trunk or Treat, and looking forward to Thanksgiving Basket ministry and all our Holiday outreaches.

What makes all this special is when we give **generously** of our resources, time, and prayer. It's all about LOVE.

Tom Bolton, 414-704-5478

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



The Church Financial Statement of Activities ending September 30, 2024:

	Year To Date Actual	Year To date Budget	Difference
Giving & Other Income	\$280,995.74	\$208,110.06	\$72,885.68
Expenses	\$280,683.21	\$343,992.15	\$63,308.94
Operating Income/ (Deficit)	\$312.53	\$(135,882.09)	

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 NOVEMBER 2024

“Gifting others because God first gifted us with Christ”

November 3, 2024, All Saints Sunday/Communion

Text: Matthew 15:32-38

Rev. Jason Mahnke preaches “Who Ate My Cookies?”

November 10, 2024, Twenty-Fifth Sunday after Pentecost

Texts: Hebrews 9:24-28; Mark 12:38-44

Mr. Tom Bolton, Lay Leader, preaches “Living Generously”

November 17, 2024, Twenty-Sixth Sunday after Pentecost

Texts: Hebrews 10:11-14, 19-25; Mark 13:1-8

God’s faithfulness and strength will hold us together.

November 24, 2024, Stewardship Celebration Sunday

Texts: Revelation 1:4b-8; John 18:33-37

Human rulers fail us. Christ alone is our rightful King and sovereign.

Stewardship Message: Don’t Keep Silent

by Rev. Jason Mahnke, Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation

I started preaching when I was just 18 years old. I was invited by my home pastor to preach, despite my age, because he knew I had a call to the ordained ministry. By the time I was 20, I had preached a whopping three sermons. With my call and this vast amount of experience behind me, I was invited to serve a small, rural congregation in Southeastern Wisconsin as their supply pastor — which basically meant I would visit the members in their homes and preach every Sunday. And so, in November of my junior year of college, I began to preach every Sunday for a congregation of 52 people. As I remember my first year there, I have fond memories of a group of faithful people who had to listen to probably the worst sermons ever given. Despite my inexperience, the congregation was very supportive — often offering a tip or an encouraging word. Particularly, I remember one gentleman who came up to me to give me a pat on the back one Sunday morning. After a particularly difficult sermon, he said that he truly enjoyed my messages. A little surprised, I responded by simply saying, “Really?” He continued by saying, “Oh yes. You know, you stand up every Sunday and try to tell us about God’s love and grace. But what I really like is that you’ve been preaching in the whole year; you’ve never mentioned money once.” Considering that comment, I suppose it could be seen as a bit ironic that my ministry as a part of the Foundation is helping congregations and pastors learn how to comfortably talk about money in relation to our faith (maybe even excitedly). What I’ve discovered, however, is that talking about stewardship is about focusing on love and grace. It is about helping people realize all the ways we are blessed by God, that God has given to us abundantly. God has given us so much, in fact, that we have enough to give generously in love for others. I encourage you to speak about stewardship boldly. Talk about how you have experienced God’s love, grace, and abundance. Share how generosity has transformed your life. Talk about the blessings others have experienced in your church made possible by your community’s generosity.



FUMCWA MINISTRIES

Church Library Ministry (The Bernice Nailen Memorial Library): Advent begins December 1st. To assist you in your Advent preparation and reading, the library cart for November and December will feature books on Advent and Christmas. The cart is located in the Gathering Room. You are invited to check out these resources.



Food Pantry Ministry: We are very appreciative of the food and personal care items that have been donated. Our numbers are running high, and we can use all the help you can give us. The items that are donated are those that are offered as extra items to those who visit our food pantry. The items that the Good Samaritan funds are used for are placed in the prepackaged grocery bags. It is always nice to have them select something of their own choosing, so we are happy to receive any non-perishable food items. If donating from your own pantry, please note the expiration date on the food item. Personal care items and cleaning aids are also welcome. Almost all needed

items can be found at Dollar Stores. Our food pantry is open on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of the month from 2:30 to 4:30 pm. December will be the exception this year because Christmas falls on the 4th Wednesday. Thanks again to all the volunteers serving the food pantry. This mission is so very important to our community, and those who are served are very grateful for the many items that are offered.

The October Good Samaritan Offering: \$197.00

PANTRY ITEMS NEEDED FOR NOVEMBER:

DISH DETERGENT, PANCAKE MIX (ADD WATER) OR PANCAKE SYRUP



United Women in Faith: We thank Dave Carlson for his wonderful presentation to our group on October 14th. Even though he is retired, he explained things relating to estate planning and also explained why some things take so long to go through the court system. On Monday, November 11th, at 1:00 pm, we invite everyone to the Fireside Room for a program by United Methodist Children's Services, "Rooted and Rising." It should be an interesting presentation.

Our Christmas Bake Shop will offer sweet treats and other items for sale on Sunday, December 8th, and will also include Linda Zeman's gingerbread cookies. Order forms will be available in advance. This information will be available in the bulletin and on the website soon.

We invite all women to our meetings, which are on the 2nd Monday of each month at 1:00 pm in the Fireside Room. The exceptions are July, August, and January when we do not meet. If you have any questions, please call Annette Intravaia at 414-257-4166 or the church office. We would love to have you join us!

United Women in Faith would like to express our sincere gratitude for the hard work, time, and devotion Lay Speaker Don Gilpin put into preparing the sermon for the United Women in Faith Sunday worship service. We truly felt honored and very happy that he did not hesitate to support us. Thank you, Don.

~Special thanks to Julie Bryson for agreeing to be our worthy liturgist.

~Thanks to Jane Henderson, who purchased and used her wonderful talent to arrange the beautiful carnations on the altar.

~Gratitude for Carmen Ilseman in preparing and presenting the meaningful Time with the Children.

Continued next page

~We are grateful to all of these women for being such an integral part of our church. Serving as Greeters and Ushers: Ruth Ann Werner, Barb Pier, Karen Connell, Mary Fenske, Carol Ward, Donna Wood, and Pat Nelson.

~Annette Intravaia, who is intentional and caring in her leadership as President of Unity Circle, many thanks.

~Alyssa was thoughtful and wise in choosing hymns for this service. All of the hymns had Women poets.

Thank you.

~Finally, thanks to Pastor Grace for sharing her faith and energy to challenge all of us to a greater faith.

Joanna Schachtely, UWF

Laurie Halvorsen, Senior Ministries Coordinator: The Senior League Christmas Luncheon is on Wednesday, December 4th, with punch at 11:30 am and the luncheon at noon. Tickets will be on sale for two more meetings in November for \$20.00 or in the office. You have an entrée choice of a stuffed chicken breast or Salisbury steak. The program is at 1:00 pm. Enjoy the sounds of the Milwaukee High School of the Arts Choir with your friends. **Come and enjoy food and fellowship with Senior League in our 49th year!**



Meetings in November 2024:

November 6th 12 Noon: Lunch: Chicken Cordon Bleu, Rice Casserole, Salad, Pistachio Fluff

Program: American Legion American Flag; POW MIA

Devotions: Val Holzman

November 20th 12 Noon: Lunch: Turkey, Mashed Potatoes, Stuffing, Squash, Pumpkin Bars

Program: "My Last Wishes"; Laura Molleson

Devotions: Charlene Buncich

Fireside Coach Trip: December 11th to see "Miracle on 34th Street" Cost is \$107.00. Two Pickups: Franklin: Arrive 8:50 am- Leave by 9:00 am. FUMC: Arrive by 9:15 am and leave by 9:30 am. There are still three seats available. If interested, please contact the church office (414-774-5500) by early November.

FUMCWA LOCAL MISSIONS



Just a reminder: November's second Saturday is early this month! Since November 9th is far from Thanksgiving, consider making a delicious breakfast casserole for a hungry family. Please bring it to church by 7:45 am on November 9th. Alternatively, you can drop it off by 2:00 pm on Thursday so Michelle can put it in the white fridge for warming up on Saturday. In October, we fed 118 people as new cooks joined the servanthood.

The **November Coins of Love** will be donated to the Stars and Stripes Honor Flight of Wisconsin, Inc. This organization honors veterans with a life-changing trip to Washington, D.C., to visit the memorials and experience a day of honor and thanks. Many of our oldest veterans have never been thanked for their service to our country. An Honor Flight brings the community together to thank these veterans with an all-expenses-paid trip to Washington, D.C.



September's Coins of Love - Thanksgiving Food Basket Ministry \$325.81

October's Coins of Love - MacCanon Brown Homeless Sanctuary \$150.41

Wesleyan Congregational Care Team (WCCT) From Laura Molleson: I recently purchased a devotional by Rick Warren, "The Purpose Driven Life: What on Earth Am I Here For?" In it was Russell Kelfer's poem, "You are who you are for a reason." As I read the following stanza, I felt it spoke about the *Purpose* of the Wesleyan Congregational Care Team.

*No, that trauma you faced was not easy.
And God wept that it hurt you so;
But it was allowed to shape your heart
So that into his likeness you'd grow.*



Yes, we all face traumas in life, but they are not meant to be suffered alone. That is why our care team was formed. We want to walk with you through those tough times. It can be as simple as asking us to pray for you or spending time with you while you sort through your troubles. If you'd like one of our care team members to contact you, simply reach out to Pastor Grace, Laura Molleson, or the church office.

~God cares about you, and so do we~

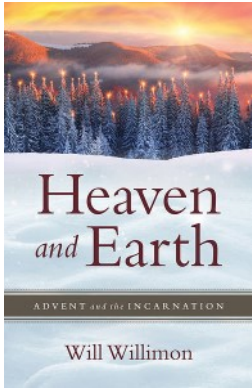
YOU'D LOOK GREAT IN WINGS! Happy November! I am excited to be stepping into the role of Prison Fellowship Angel Tree Coordinator. After faithfully serving as the coordinator for many years, Judy Affeldt is handing over the baton to me. I want to thank Judy for her many years of service and for helping me get up and running with the program. Her support has been invaluable! This year, we have received the names of approximately 30 children living in the FUMCWA neighborhood who have a parent who is incarcerated. We will be providing each child with two gifts on behalf of their incarcerated parent to show the love of Jesus Christ to the child. By providing these gifts, we will also help provide a connection between the parent in prison and their child/children. On Sunday, November 24th, look for the Angel Tree in the narthex, where you will be able to choose an angel tag bearing the name and gift wish of a child. There will also be an instruction sheet for you to take as a reminder of the details of this year's ministry. The gifts need to be purchased, wrapped, and returned to church **no later than 10:30 am on Sunday, December 15th**. Also, after the church service concludes on December 15th, please head over to the church library to help with delivering gifts to the children's homes. We always need delivery volunteers, and many hands make light work! It could be as simple as dropping off one or two packages on your way home from church. If you have any questions, please call or text me at 703-888-7090. In Christ's love, Pam Chesky Johnson



FUMCWA CHRISTIAN EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

Adult Christian Education Invitation: As fall progresses, the increasing darkness of the sky encourages some folks to read more. Fortunately, at First Church, we have several options for various interests. Sunday mornings at 9:00 am, Tom Bolton resumes his Discipleship class using **JESUS IN THE GOSPELS**. You are invited to join this ongoing discussion in the Confirmation Room. **CONTEXT- Putting Scripture In Its Place** by Pastor Josh Scott is being studied in the Lighthouse Room at 9:00 am on Sundays until Advent. Led by Val Holzman, the 6 "Bible Greatest Hits" are investigated in their context for the true meaning. Application to current cultural topics and debunking popular understandings of our day will happen. You are invited to get a possibly new perspective on gospel passages. And the monthly book discussion group meets in our library at 1:30 pm on Monday, November 18th. We will read a youth book, **WE ARE WATER PROTECTORS**, by Carole Lindstrom. This UWIF Social Action book offers an action option to protect our valuable clean water daily. Have fun listening and discussing with friends.

FUMCWA CHRISTIAN EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES



Advent Study 2024: As we approach Christmas, the Advent season offers us a chance to rejoice in the promises we celebrate: the HOPE that Jesus will come back and bring about a new beginning, the JOY that comes from worshipping Him today and always, the PEACE we experience with God now and hope for our world to experience, and the LOVE of a God who gave up His own Son. We invite you to be a part of our Advent Book Study as we prepare our hearts for the arrival of Jesus.

Heaven and Earth: Advent and the Incarnation by William H. Willimon

In this four-week Advent study, William Willimon introduces us to the God who does just that: he brings heaven to earth and changes everything. In Advent, we celebrate and anticipate the earth-shaking, life-transforming good news that God is coming to us. Watch out. Get ready. God is on the way. We can't make a fresh start on our own. For a different future, we need a gift, not of our making. We need a God who isn't confined by eternity, who cares about us and is willing to be present and take action with us, here and now. This study includes a video component.

In-Person Study Begins Sunday, December 1st, 9:00-10:00 am Lighthouse Room

Leader: Pastor Grace

The class runs from **December 1st - December 22nd**. Books will be available for sale in the church office.

Zoom Study Begins Tuesday, November 26th, 7:00-8:00 pm

Leader: Tom Bolton

The Zoom class will be held on **November 26th, December 3rd, December 10th, and December 17th**. Please contact the church office to register. Books will be available for sale in the church office.

Book Discussion Group: On Monday, November 18th, at 1:30 pm, the group will discuss ***We Are Water Protectors*** by Carole Lindstrom (Social Action). Winner of the 2021 Caldecott Medal and a number-one New York Times bestseller, this book issues an urgent rallying cry to safeguard the Earth's water from harm and corruption. Inspired by the many Indigenous-led movements across North America, it is a bold and lyrical picture book written by Carole Lindstrom and vibrantly illustrated by Michaela Goade about one young water protector who takes a stand to defend Earth's most sacred resource. The group meets in The Bernice Nailen Memorial Library. All are welcome.

FUMCWA EVENTS

Lance Lambert / Events Coordinator

All Saints Sunday / Special Service of Remembrance - Sunday, November

3rd: During our worship, we will remember those people who impacted our lives and have passed away with a special candle service. Please come a bit early to light a candle - or bring one from a past year. You may also bring a small photo of your 'saint' if you so desire. During this service, their names will be read to honor them.

Hey, let's have some "Dessert before Thanksgiving Ice Cream Social" - Sunday, November

17th: Come downstairs to the Small Dining Room following worship to build your Sundae, Banana Split, or Root Beer Float. There will be LOTS of toppings, and (thanks to Joan) Mint Chocolate Chip ice cream is back! This is a GREAT opportunity for fun and fellowship, so you might want to invite a friend or neighbor to church that day!! Continued next page



Thanksgiving Basket Distribution - Saturday, November 23rd: We will be handing out bags with everything necessary for a Thanksgiving dinner to some of our neighbors needing a little help. This is a wonderful outreach First Church has done for many, many years. Distribution is from 1:00 to 3:30 pm in our parking lot. I STRONGLY encourage our older youth to help with this event - and I guarantee you will feel good helping make the families' holidays happier. Dress for being outside.

Looking ahead... **Brunch in Bethlehem - Sunday, December 1st:** Please come to this annual event kicking off the Advent Season. Following worship, make your way to Fellowship Hall and enjoy a great brunch followed by a reminder of the Nativity Story as presented by the kids. This unrehearsed portrayal of the story of Christ's birth is usually quite "interesting" and is a wonderful way to usher in the holiday by remembering "Jesus is the Reason for the Season".

FUMCWA FAITH COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS



It's that time of the year again when you can place your order for **Poinsettias for Christmas Eve Services**. All orders and payments must be submitted by Sunday, November 24th. Please check the order insert in the Sunday bulletin for details. If you have any questions, feel free to contact the Church Office at 414-774-5500.



Dear Congregation, I want to express my heartfelt gratitude for the cards and prayers during this difficult time following the unexpected passing of my brother, John. Your support has brought me comfort and strength. Thank you for being there for me; it means more than words can say.

With warm regards,

Pat Nelson

Planned Giving Seminar: Join us for the FUMCWA Planned Giving Seminar on Sunday, November 3rd, after worship. The seminar will be held in the sanctuary from 11:30 am to 12:30 pm. Come and learn more about how you can contribute to the church and its ministries now or in the future. The seminar will be presented by Rev. Jason Mahnke, Director of Programming and Campaigns at WUMF.

**PLANNED
GIVING
SEMINAR**



Stewardship Celebration Sunday, November 24, 2024: Our fall Stewardship Appeal theme is "Celebrating Stewardship 2024." This theme points to the diverse and life-giving ministries at First Church, West Allis. It emphasizes giving to God first, trusting God to meet all our needs, and celebrating the joy of giving. The appeal ends on Stewardship Celebration Sunday, followed by a dessert reception. We will observe Stewardship Sunday by presenting our pledges and commitments during the worship service. If you will not be present on Stewardship Sunday, you can mail your pledge to the church office. Thank you for being part of this exciting and joyful congregation. Pray for our common work together as we continue to reach out with the Gospel.

Undesignated Gift Update: During 2024, our congregation received a very generous gift from an estate in excess of \$40,000. This gift was given without any limitations. We were able to follow a policy established in 2021 for handling these types of gifts. The process has the Finance Committee asking committee chairs and staff members for places where these funds could be put to best use. The Finance Committee reviews these requests and makes a recommendation to the Administrative Council who can accept or make changes.

Recently the Administrative Council approved the money to be split to seven areas that otherwise wouldn't have had funding. The seven uses for these monies include replacing some of the worn-out Christmas trees used to beautify our sanctuary during the Advent season, replacing the broken speaker in the sanctuary, additional microphones in the sanctuary to improve the online worship experience, updating the church's phone system so the church staff can be more efficient, performing delayed maintenance on the church parking lot, conducting a building use survey to determine the best use for funds and how to make our building work better for us and the community, and helping offset the pastoral housing allowance.

These are all items that need to be done and we could have found work-arounds. These are items that aren't going to be at the top of anyone's list of "need-to-haves" but sometimes it is good to be able to get some of the "nice-to-haves."



Charge Conference

The First United Methodist Church of West Allis (FUMCWA) will hold its **2024 Annual Church Conference** on **Sunday, November 24th, at 12 Noon in Fellowship Hall**. Rev. Heidi Loomis from Oak Creek Community UMC will be the presiding elder. The agenda for the Charge Conference includes the Approval of the Membership Audit, the 2025 Church Budget (including Pastoral Compensation), the Nominations Report for 2025, Lay Preachers' Certifications, and Audit Reports. All members are welcome and encouraged to attend.

