

February 2024
the VINE



Open Hearts.
Open Minds.
Open Doors.

**The people
of The United
Methodist
Church®**

Hello Grand Avenue Family,

I appreciate all the love, support, and consideration you have provided my family and me during this difficult time. My family continues to try and pick up the pieces and move forward from what is for us an unimaginable tragedy. No parent should have to bury a child and certainly not one so young, gifted, and full of life. This unthinkable tragedy is further exacerbated by the special nature of our family. All families are close but we were even closer than most. This unusual closeness was special and continues to make moving forward all the more difficult.

Looking back we have done everything together from the time the children were born until now. We never had babysitters; our kids were with us always. Sherri and I never even had an anniversary dinner without the kids being with us because we never wanted to be apart from them. We never desired "me time", our time was always all of us together. I still remember when the kids were young and I was coaching them in wrestling. We have an old family video of Jake, Nick, and AJ in singlets at a wrestling tournament. Sherri can be seen in the background pushing a double stroller with Matt and Luke followed by Krista and our foreign exchange student in tow.

This closeness and genuineness that God blessed us with not only connected us and our kids but has grafted in dozens of additional kids over the years. I see now through this tragedy that people were drawn to the special bond we had. We were organically one and together we were made complete. God provided us with extremely gifted and special children for which I am truly blessed.

Many of you have expressed concerns for me. First, know that I truly appreciate your concern but know that God has and will continue to sustain me. This is not just a dismissive theological quip. While it is painfully true that I miss Nick terribly and I'm still not sure what this world is supposed to look like without him, God has me. God truly is my rock and because I walk with the Lord I am okay.

I would ask that you continue to pray for Sherri whose suffering is unimaginable and continue to pray for my strength to minister to her.

Your Brother in Christ,

Pastor Vince

CELEBRATE

Happy Birthday

Jake Freeland	2/3
Nelson Benning	2/9
Melissa Strand	2/11
Nancy Haacke	2/14
Alexis Reichardt	2/16
Bob Graff	2/17
Kayla Klinski	2/17
Chris Killey	2/19
Will Kissinger	2/20
Renee Keller	2/22
Laura Didier	2/27

Happy Anniversary

Larry & June Caro	2/19
Gregg & Erica Lentz	2/26

VOLUNTEERS

Thank you, *Volunteers*, for serving in our ministry!

Date	Usher	Liturgist	Cupbearer	Coffee Host	AV
2/4	Larry Maechtle	Jan Young	Vicki Sepulveda	<i>Needed*</i>	Scott Penkivech
2/11	Larry Maechtle	Ardelle Dionne	n/a	<i>Needed*</i>	Scott Penkivech
2/18	Larry Maechtle	Mark Grams	n/a	<i>Needed*</i>	Scott Penkivech
2/25	Larry Maechtle	Rama Bharadwaj	n/a	<i>Needed*</i>	Scott Penkivech

**Please see sign-up sheet on the church bulletin board.*

MISSIONS & OUTREACH



Non-Perishable Donations

Thank you for your continued support of The Food Pantry! The most pressing current needs include:

Mac N Cheese
 Pudding & Jell-O
 Lg. Canned Fruit
 Hamburger Helper
 Manwich

Jam & Jelly
 Sugar
 12 Count Egg Cartons
 Vegetable Oil
 Toilet Paper

MISSIONS & OUTREACH, cont.



Upcoming Meal Week

Our next opportunity to serve meals at the Portlight Shelter is February 19th - 23rd. Please consider helping with this mission by volunteering to provide a side dish, serve a meal, or being a Meal Leader. Sign up using this [SignUpGenius link](#) or call Stacy in the GAUMC office at 262-284-9478. Thanks for considering being a part of this mission!

New Mission Update

We are thrilled to share that **we have been awarded a \$5,000 grant from the Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation to expand our Family Promise mission** to create a children's library and tutoring/book donation program.

Children who experience homelessness are 9 times more likely to repeat a grade, 3 times more likely to be placed in special education programs, and 7 times more likely to attempt suicide. We have been fortunate to serve these children with our current Family Promise urgent needs and meal programs but are ready to do even more to help them overcome these horrible odds.

The goals of this new ministry are to:

- Create a high-quality, well-rounded, up-to-date children's library at the homeless shelter. If you purchased a book for our giving tree, you have already participated in the very first step of making this goal a reality.
- Give children a book of their own as they leave the shelter for permanent housing.
- Establish a tutoring/homework assistance program for children served by all Family Promise programs to ensure children obtain the best future outcome possible.

The grant money will purchase children's books, school supplies, resource books for tutors, educational games, and learning materials for our tutoring/homework assistance program. More details coming soon and all are welcome to participate in this new program.

Volunteer Training

We are excited to announce that the Volunteer Training for Family Promise is here! The training is from Family Promise National and consists of two modules. The first is the history of Family Promise, and the second is about best practices and what it is like to serve meals at the shelter. All volunteers are encouraged to take the training and complete a new Volunteer Application.

Our church is offering an **exciting opportunity to do this training as a group while enjoying a delicious lunch on Thursday, February 15 at 10 am in Fellowship Hall** at GAUMC. (If you are not able to attend, the online training will be available for volunteers to do independently.) Please try to attend this training if you are a current meal volunteer or are interested in joining our existing Meal Mission or our new Library/Game/Tutoring Mission. Please contact Cheryl Wozniak at 414-477-3411 or Sandy Grams at 262-490-4856 with any questions.

FAITH GROUPS & ACTIVITIES

Six Week Lenten Study Group

11am - Noon on Fridays

February 9th & 16th and March 1st, 8th, 15th, & 22nd

We will be studying the book **“The Lord's Prayer: The Meaning and Power of the Prayer Jesus Taught”** by Adam Hamilton.

Many Christians know the Lord's Prayer by heart. We pray it at every worship service and other settings as well. We remember that this is the model prayer that Jesus had taught his disciples when they asked him how to pray. But do we really appreciate the meaning and power of its words?

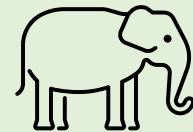
In this study, Adam Hamilton will explore the rich meaning of the Lord's prayer with us line by line. We will gain a greater understanding of what we are asking of God and what we are asking of ourselves through these words. Hamilton will also teach us how to use this prayer as a pattern for our own prayer life.

Books are \$14 each and are on the counter in the narthex by the sign-up sheet. Please read chapter one for the first class on Feb. 9th.

Social Principles

Tuesday, February 13th, 1:00 pm

Gathering Area at GAUMC



The Social Principles group will meet again in February. One of the topics to be discussed is **How do you eat an elephant?** Join us and find out!

Sister Circle

Thursday, February 15th, 7:00 pm

Christ the King Church, 420 W Whitefish Rd, Port Washington

Sister Circle is an ecumenical women's group that meets monthly and offers women an opportunity to share their faith and support one another.

In February, we will focus on Robin's Bear Ministry. Robin makes the bears from clothing of people who have passed away. The bears are made for those loved ones left behind to forever cherish as a memory keepsake.

We will be cutting, sewing, and stuffing the bears. Please bring a sewing needle and scissors. Please contact Mary at 414-828-4675 or mariwags@gmail.com with any questions.

FAITH GROUPS & ACTIVITIES, cont.



February Events

February 4th from 1:00-5:00 pm - Skiing/Snow Tubing at Sunburst

Come enjoy an afternoon of winter fun with friends as we hit the slopes together! We will meet at Lighthouse (513 W. Grand Ave. in Port) and carpool to Sunburst in Kewaskum. Students can choose between snow tubing, skiing, or snowboarding and Lighthouse will cover the rental/lift costs. Please come dressed for the weather and bring along some money for snacks if you would like. **Students must pre-register for this event - please talk to Christin ASAP if you want to go and are not already signed up!**



February 16th-18th – Quake Retreat in WI Dells

6 youth and 2 adults from Lighthouse will be attending the Quake Retreat in Wisconsin Dells from February 16-18. This will be an awesome weekend of worship, speakers, workshops, a service project, and of course, some waterpark fun! Please keep this group in your prayers as they travel, learn, play, and grow in faith together!

Lighthouse events are open to all students in grades 5-12 and, unless otherwise noted, take place at Lighthouse HQ (513 W. Grand Ave. in Port Washington).

Have questions about Lighthouse or want to get involved?

Contact Director Christin Flucke at 262-483-9582 or christin.flucke@lighthouseyouth.org



A huge THANK YOU to everyone who donated supplies to help us assemble more than 130 birthday kits!

THANK YOU NOTES

Dear Grand Ave Friends,
Thank you very much for your thoughts, prayers, and cards after my Dad passed away. He died early Christmas morning, which seems sad to say that, but we were ok with it. For us, it was very real that "Love came down on Christmas"...and took my Dad home with Him.

Rob & I are so thankful for all of you.
Friends in Christ,
Vicky Schafman



A huge **THANK YOU** to everyone who donated supplies last month to help us assemble more than 130 birthday kits! They have been distributed to both the Port Washington and Saukville food pantries and were received with great appreciation.

Thank you to the Meins family for sharing so many fresh eggs at church. Thanks for the kind and delicious gift. - Your Grand Avenue Church Family

Special Thanks to all of our church family who so willingly **support our church craft booth** at Port's Artisan Market (formerly the Shoppes of Port Washington).

Your prayers, craft donations, and volunteer work are greatly appreciated. 100% of the sales from the craft booth are donated to our church. **2023 was another great year with total sales of \$7,403.**

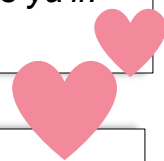
But the church craft booth is so much more than just a monetary benefit to Grand Ave Church. Through our presence at the market, we're able to be a witness to our faith and share about our church.

If you have any questions regarding our booth, please call me at 262-284-5316. Thanks ya'll! - Margaret Lueptow

Dear Grand Avenue Church Family,

Thank you so much for the generous Christmas gift. My first year in the office has been a joy thanks to your encouragement and kind words. I am blessed to work in such a loving church that is doing so many good works. Thanks again for thinking of me!

Blessings, Stacy Peters





United Methodist Corner

I have been asked by several of you to address this issue of the disaffiliation of churches from the United Methodist Church. It's an issue that has been on National T.V. as well as in national publications over the past year.

The disaffiliation of churches is the result of a long standing, deep conflict on the issue of human sexuality; namely our stance regarding the LGBTQA1+ community. The conflict was originally ignited in 1972 when by General Conference action the following words were added to the Book of Discipline, "The United Methodist Church does not condone the practice of homosexuality and consider this practice incompatible with Christian teaching". This statement in practice means that clergy cannot officiate at marriage services or host a gay marriage ceremony. Annual Conferences cannot ordain self-avowed practicing homosexuals.

This conflict hit its peak at the Special General Conference held in February of 2019 to deal with over 100 petitions on the issue of human sexuality. A key part of this Conference was to vote on a plan on human sexuality submitted by our United Methodist Council of Bishops. This plan was defeated by conservative delegates with the help of votes from delegates outside of the U.S. The Conference then voted to affirm the Traditional Plan which affirmed the church's current bans on ordaining LGBTQ clergy and officiating at or hosting same-sex marriage.

Another proposal was enacted during this Conference that paved the way for churches to disaffiliate from the United Methodist church and still keep their property. Up till then, any church that decided to leave the denomination had to leave their property behind because that property was legally held in trust as property of the United Methodist Church. The Conference created paragraph 2553 to be added to the Book of Discipline. This paragraph gives churches a limited option to disaffiliate for "reasons of conscience regarding a change in the requirements and provisions of the Book of Discipline related to the practice of homosexuality or the ordination or the marriage of self-avowed practicing homosexuals." To allow enough time for churches to go through the decision-making process of whether to disaffiliate, a deadline of December 31, 2023 was set.

At the time this paragraph was created, the Traditional Plan (bans affirmed against LGBTQA1+) was to be put in place. This is my view, but with the postponement of General Conference in 2020 and subsequent years due to the pandemic, many conservative churches did not want to take the risk that the language in the Discipline would be changed by the 2024 Conference which would take place after the December 2023 deadline for churches to disaffiliate.

Although there have been some progressive congregations who have chosen to leave, the vast number of disaffiliations have come from more theologically conservative congregations. As of November of 2023, around 7,500 of the 30,000 U.M. congregations in the U.S. have voted to disaffiliate. Many of these churches are from the South; Texas, Georgia and Florida. Some of these churches have joined the Global Methodist Church while others have either joined another denomination or decided to be independent.

United Methodist Corner, continued

The process of disaffiliating required by paragraph 2553 requires that a congregation go through a number of steps before they can officially depart. The exiting congregation is required to pay any unpaid apportionments as well as an additional twelve months of apportionments before they can be granted to disaffiliate with their property. Two-thirds of the professing members need to vote for disaffiliation. You can go to our Conference website (wisconsinumc.org) if you want to read further about the entire process for disaffiliating.

At our last Wisconsin Annual Conference meeting, over 90% of the delegates voted to affirm and give its blessing to the disaffiliation of 43 churches in our Conference. This split is going to have a big effect on the extent of our missional outreach. But now it's time for the United Methodist Church to look forward with hope and trust that God will lead us forward as disciples of Jesus Christ. Next month, I will address what the United Methodist Church is planning to do to move forward.

Blessings, Dave

CHURCH NEWS

Easter Flowers

Help decorate our church for Easter morning!

Please complete this form and place it in the offering box with cash or check payable to Grand Ave UMC and indicate "Easter Flowers" on the memo line.

Orders due Sunday, March 10th

	Qty		Total
Lilies	_____	@\$10.00/plant \$	_____
Tulips	_____	@\$8.00/plant \$	_____
Daffodils	_____	@\$8.00/plant \$	_____
Hyacinths	_____	@\$8.00/plant \$	_____
		Total enclosed \$	_____

Your Name: _____

EASTER SUNDAY IS MARCH 31st.

Please take your flowers home after Easter service.

Please contact Larry Maechtle 262-692-2390 with any questions.

Lenten Schedule

**February 14 - 7 pm Ash Wednesday Joint Worship at Christ the King,
420 W Whitefish Rd, Port Washington**

Ecumenical Series - 6 pm Soup Supper / 7 pm Worship:

February 21 - Living Hope, 851 W Dekora St, Saukville

February 28 - Parkside, 166 W Dekora St, Saukville

March 6 - Grand Avenue UMC, 505 W Grand Ave, Port Washington

March 13 - Christ the King, 420 W Whitefish Rd, Port Washington

March 20 - First Congregational, 131 N Webster St, Port Washington

CALENDAR

Monthly Events

Worship Service	Weekly Sunday at 10:00 am	Sanctuary
Choir Practice	Weekly Sunday at 11:20 am	Balcony
AA Meeting	Weekly Wednesday at 7:00 pm	FAC
Private Meeting	Weekly Thursday at 5:30 pm	FAC
ADRC Meal Distribution	Mon – Fri from 10:30 am – 12:30 pm	Kitchen
Trustees Meeting	Sunday Feb. 4 at 11:00 am	Fellowship Hall
Finance & Admin Council	Thursday Feb. 8 at 6:30 pm	via Zoom
Lenton Study Group – Ch. 1	Friday Feb. 9, 11:00 am – 12:00 pm	Fellowship Hall
Port Wash. Woman's Club	Monday Feb. 12, 10:00 am – 2:00 pm	Fellowship Hall
Social Principles Group	Tuesday Feb. 13 at 1:00 pm	Gathering Area
Ash Wednesday Service	Wednesday Feb. 14 at 7:00 pm	Christ the King
Family Promise Training/Lunch	Thursday Feb. 15, 10:00 am – 1:00 pm	Fellowship Hall
Lenton Study Group – Ch. 2	Friday Feb.16, 11:00 am – 12:00 pm	Fellowship Hall
Family Promise Meal Week	Mon – Fri, Feb. 19 – 23	Portlight Shelter
Stockbox Distribution	Tuesday Feb. 20 at 10:00 am	FAC & Parking Lot
Newsletter Article Deadline	Thursday Feb. 22	Office

GRAND AVENUE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

505 W Grand Ave Port Washington WI 53074 262-284-9478 www.portumc.com

Pastor:	Vince Pepin	pastor@portumc.org
Pastoral Assistant:	Dave Guse	senegaldave1@gmail.com
Administrative Assistant:	Stacy Peters	office@portumc.org
Lay Leader:	Dan Benning	bennida01@att.net
Council Chairperson:	Mark Grams	mgrams@wi.rr.com
SPRC Chairperson:	Mary Kae Geittmann	mkaeg214@gmail.com
Bishop: Rev. Hee-Soo Jung / District Superintendent:	Rev. Dr. Ebenezer Insor	

Ozaukee County Equity Roundtable Presents

NURTURING EMPATHY



Community United Methodist Church, Cedarburg
Saturday, February 3, 2024 1pm-3pm



Dr. Ruha Benjamin

Sociologist and Princeton Professor Dr. Ruha Benjamin will be sharing her presentation "From Artificial Intelligence to Collective Wisdom: building our capacity for empathy, justice, and Imagination in the digital age."

Beth Albright

Actress and director of Cedarburg Children's Theatre Beth Albright will give a presentation for parents and their kids focused on teaching by example.



Community United Methodist Church: W68N563 Evergreen Blvd, Cedarburg

For more information, please contact: ozaukeeequity@gmail.com

Orders are due in the church office on the 1st Sunday of each month. Please remember to include your payment. You can also order on-line at www.raiseright.com Your order of gift cards will be ready for pick-up at church on the 2nd Sunday of the month.

Questions? Contact the Kay Hamann at 262-284-3168 or khamann530@yahoo.com

*Each retailer makes a donation to the church for every gift card purchased.
For a complete list of over 700 participating retailers, go to www.raiseright.com*

RETAILER	QTY	TOTAL
Amazon \$25		
Amazon \$100		
Arby's \$10		
AutoZone \$25		
Barnes & Noble \$10		
Barnes & Noble \$25		
Bath & Body Works \$10		
Bath & Body Works \$25		
Bed Bath & Beyond \$25		
BP \$50		
BP \$100		
Burger King \$10		
Cousins Subs \$10		
CVS Pharmacy \$25		
CVS Pharmacy \$100		
Dick's Sporting Goods \$25		
Dick's Sporting Goods \$100		
Exxon \$50		
Fleet Farm \$25		
Fleet Farm \$100		
Home Depot \$25		
Home Depot \$100		
Jiffy Lube \$30		
Kohl's \$25		
Kohl's \$100		
Kwik Trip \$25		
Kwik Trip \$50		
Kwik Trip \$100		

RETAILER	QTY	TOTAL
Meijer \$25		
Meijer \$50		
Meijer \$100		
Mobil \$50		
Noodles & Company \$10		
Panera Bread \$10		
Panera Bread \$25		
Papa Murphy's Pizza \$10		
Pick'n Save(WI) \$25		
Pick'n Save(WI) \$50		
Pick'n Save(WI) \$100		
Piggly Wiggly (WI, IL) \$25		
Piggly Wiggly (WI, IL) \$50		
Piggly Wiggly (WI, IL) \$100		
Qdoba Mexican Grill \$25		
Sendik's Food Market \$25		
Sendik's Food Market \$50		
Sendik's Food Market \$100		
Speedway \$25		
Speedway \$50		
Starbucks \$10		
Starbucks \$25		
Subway Restaurants \$10		
Target \$25		
Target \$50		
Walgreens \$25		
Walmart \$25		
Walmart \$50		
Walmart \$100		

Total number of gift cards ordered: _____

Total amount due: _____

Name _____ Date: _____

*Make checks payable to
Grand Ave Church*