

March 2026

# *the VINE*



Dear Grand Avenue Church Family and Friends,

March is the season of Lent and it is important for us as Christians to truly embrace the meaning of this season. I think there is a natural tendency to look forward to Easter, but in doing so we lose the benefit that Lent holds for us in our Christian walk. Lent, from its inception in the 4th century, was a period of self-imposed sacrifice for the purpose of drawing closer to God. This ancient tradition was designed for the disciple to reflect on the life, ministry and sacrifice of Jesus. This was designed to purify or prepare them for His glorious resurrection. Historically, this sacrifice would often involve periods of fasting or seeking to abstain from negative or unhealthy things (e.g., alcohol). This practice was instituted as a means to draw closer to God.

Unfortunately, today our Lent observance seems to have lost the true value for which it was instituted. Often the Lent sacrifice of today is less about our relationship to God and more about a means for self-improvement. While I acknowledge that giving up sweets or coffee might improve physical health, the focus should be on things that improve our spiritual health. The true spirit of self-denial is to remove things that keeps us from reconciling to God and institute things that promote reconciliation. We should seek to remove things that command our attention at the expense of God, internally and externally. Additionally, we should add things that draw us closer to God (personal prayer and Bible study).

It is important that we recognize Lent is a season of spiritual renewal. A time to prepare and make ourselves straighter, in preparation for meeting the risen Lord. As we enter this season let us be mindful of the reason for the season and truly dedicate ourselves to a personal spiritual renewal.

Your Brother in Christ,

*Pastor Vince*

## CELEBRATE

### *Happy Birthday*

Brian Mc Garry	March 2	Jennifer Davis	March 14
Erica Lentz	March 3	Edna Koskamp	March 14
Tim Paulson	March 3	Cathy Smith	March 16
Grace Prom	March 4	Ava Johnson	March 26
Madison Zwicker	March 5	Valerie Nichols	March 28
Jan Griesmeyer	March 10	Mary Young	March 31

## VOLUNTEERS

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

Date	Usher	Liturgist	Cupbearer	Coffee Host	AV
3/1	Larry Maechtle	Ardelle Dionne	<i>Needed*</i>	<i>Needed*</i>	Scott Penkivech
3/8	Larry Maechtle	Lin Lohr	n/a	<i>Needed*</i>	Scott Penkivech
3/15	Larry Maechtle	Cathy Guse	n/a	<i>Needed*</i>	Scott Penkivech
3/22	Larry Maechtle	Mary Downing	n/a	<i>Needed*</i>	Scott Penkivech
3/29	Larry Maechtle	Nancy Haacke	n/a	<i>Needed*</i>	Scott Penkivech

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

### Thank You Volunteers!

A huge thank you to the Worship Planning Team and to everyone that volunteered or donated food for our Ecumenical Lenten Supper and Service on February 25<sup>th</sup>! Your faithful service is a powerful testimony. **Thanks for all you do!!**

### Liturgists Needed for Palm Sunday March 29<sup>th</sup>

We need several people to help read our Passion Narrative on Palm Sunday. Please let the office know if you are interested in doing a reading.

## MISSIONS & OUTREACH



### Non-Perishable Donation Needs

Pudding Snacks, Canned Fruit, Fruit Cups, Applesauce, Boxed Potatoes, Beef Stew, Soups, Pasta, Pasta Sauce, Canned Chicken, Oatmeal, Peanut Butter, & Toilet Paper.

## MISSIONS & OUTREACH, cont.



### Meal Week Thank You

Thank you to Sandy and Mark Grams, Dave & Cathy Guse, Rama Bharadwaj, Jeff Killey, Barb Jones, Ed & Gwen Frier, John & Cheryl Wozniak, and Ann & Peter Schmidt for providing meals for the Portlight Shelter guests in February. Our next opportunity to serve meals will be the week of May 11. We welcome you to join us in this mission.

### Current Shelter Needs

Gift Cards, toilet bowl cleaner, Febreze Air Mist Air Freshener, Laundry Detergent Pods, dryer sheets, Mister Clean Magic Erasers, Clorox Cleanup Spray, men & women's Deodorant, and couch covers.

[Portlight Shelter Amazon Wish List](#)

## FAITH GROUPS & ACTIVITIES

*One Voice  
in Prayer  
Community  
Prayer Group*



1st Wednesdays

9:30 am - 10:30 am

at Christ the King Lutheran Church  
420 W. Whitefish Rd Port Washington

For more information  
Contact Leslie Braun  
[lesliebraun050@gmail.com](mailto:lesliebraun050@gmail.com)  
(262) 227-8905

**Sister Circle - Thursday, March 19<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 pm**

**Christ the King, 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 March, we will continue discussion of our book, *The Resolution for Women -New Revised Edition* by Priscilla Shirer. Please read Part III: This is what matters to me, Sections: Honoring My Husband, Loving My Children. Questions, please contact Mary at 414-828-4675 or [mariwags@gmail.com](mailto:mariwags@gmail.com).

# FAITH GROUPS & ACTIVITIES, cont.



## March Events



### March 1st from 6:30-8:00 pm – Lighthouse Life Night

Lighthouse Life Nights will be offered once a month and will be a mix of games, conversation, and activities centered around a particular topic for each night. This semester, we will continue walking through the Bible together and digging into the Gospels and other New Testament themes as we explore God's story of love and redemption for the world.

### March 8th from 6:30-8:00 pm - Lenten Service Planning

Lighthouse will have the opportunity to host one of our ecumenical midweek Lenten services again this year. Our meeting on this night will consist of looking at the Gospel story we'll be sharing about and then crafting a unique worship service focused around that message. Everyone's input and help with the service is important and appreciated!



Also, be sure to mark your calendars for the **Lenten service at Lighthouse on Wednesday, March 11th**. A chili supper will be served over at GAUMC starting at 5:30 (let Christin know if your family is able to help provide something and/or help serve), and then we'll head over to Lighthouse at 6:30 for the worship service.



### March 22nd from 7:00-8:00 pm - Easter Baskets for Family Promise

Lighthouse will once again be partnering with Family Promise to assemble Easter baskets for the children they are currently serving. Come help us put together these baskets filled with fun treats and toys as a way to share God's love with our neighbors this Easter.

### March 29th from 6:30-8:00 pm - Lighthouse Life Night

*Finally, we wanted to extend a huge THANK YOU to everyone who donated supplies to help us assemble 184 birthday kits (a new record)! The kits were distributed to the Port Washington Food Pantry, Ozaukee Food Alliance, AND new this year, Family Sharing in Grafton thanks to a collaboration with Vineyard Church as well. These kits are always greatly appreciated by the clients at the pantries, and our students enjoy putting them together.*



*Lighthouse events are open to all students in grades 5-12.*

*Have questions or want to get involved?*

Contact Director Christin Flucke at 262-483-9582 or email [christin.flucke@lighthouseyouth.org](mailto:christin.flucke@lighthouseyouth.org)

# FAITH GROUPS & ACTIVITIES, cont.



## Adult Service Trip

Sunday, August 2 - Tuesday, August 4

### Serve in Chicago

Jesus calls us to love our neighbors near and far. Every year, we send youth on service trips, then see pictures and hear stories of the amazing opportunities they've had to grow in faith by serving others. **This year, adults get a turn too!**

Grow in faith and fellowship with others as we spend three days and two nights in Chicago. We'll share the love of Jesus at various service and meal sites, learn from existing ministries, and laugh, pray, and worship together.



### Details

- ✓ For adults from all Lighthouse partner churches
- ✓ Cost: \$200 per person
- ✓ Leaving after worship on Sunday, August 2
- ✓ Returning Tuesday evening, August 4
- ✓ Downtown Chicago free time on Tuesday afternoon
- ✓ No experience or special skills needed! There will be a mix of projects to meet all ability levels.

### Where are we staying?

- ✓ Jesus People USA
- ✓ Meals included
- ✓ Dorm-style housing with bunk beds and shared bathrooms



### Interested?



**SIGN UP BY MARCH 29**

[lighthouseyouth.org/chicago2026](http://lighthouseyouth.org/chicago2026)



## *Lent Series: Tell Me Something Good*

### **MARCH 4**

5:30 PM Supper | 6:30 PM Service at Parkside Community UCC

The good news is...great love for God and neighbor (woman with alabaster jar washes Jesus' feet; do for the least of these)

### **March 11**

5:30 PM Supper | 6:30 PM Service at Lighthouse Youth Ministry (supper at Grand Avenue UMC)

The good news is...the impossible is possible (feeding of the 5,000 in Mark; God can accomplish abundantly more than we ask or imagine)

### **March 18**

5:30 PM Supper | 6:30 PM Service at First Congregational UCC

The good news is...protection and care for the vulnerable (Jesus blesses children, care for those on the margins)

### **March 25**

5:30 PM Supper | 6:30 PM Service at Living Hope ELCA

The good news is...rooted in justice, mercy, and faithfulness (Jesus refuses to condemn woman caught in adultery; you have neglected the more important matters of the law-- justice, mercy, and faithfulness)

YOU ARE INVITED!

*These events are a collaboration of First Congregational UCC, Grand Avenue UMC, Parkside Community UCC, Lighthouse Youth Ministry, Christ the King ELCA, and Living Hope ELCA*

# GRAND AVENUE CHURCH HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE

Join us for a meaningful journey through Holy Week as we reflect on the profound events leading up to the crucifixion, share a special Last Supper service, and come together to meditate on the sacrifice of Christ. We then celebrate the joy of the Resurrection on Easter Sunday, starting with a warm, fellowship-filled breakfast, followed by a powerful worship service to rejoice in the victory of life over death.

Plan to experience this sacred week with us!

**10 AM**

March 29 | Palm Sunday  
Passion Narrative

**6 PM**

April 2 | Maundy Thursday  
Last Supper Service

**12-5 PM**

April 3 | Good Friday  
Prayer Vigil

**8:30 AM**

April 5 | Easter Sunday  
Breakfast

**10 AM**

April 5 | Easter Sunday  
Worship Service

Grab a postcard from the Narthex to invite a friend to join us!

# CHURCH NEWS, cont.

## Easter Flowers

**Help decorate our church for Easter!**

Please complete this form and place it in the offering box with cash or check payable to Grand Ave UMC.

**Orders due by Sunday, March 15<sup>th</sup>**

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

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

EASTER SUNDAY IS APRIL 5<sup>th</sup>

Please plan to take your flowers home after Easter service.  
Contact Larry Maechtle at 262-692-2390 with any questions.



## Jigsaw Puzzle Exchange

Help fill the time on those cold winter nights by doing a new-to-you puzzle! A Free Jigsaw Puzzle Exchange is now available in the Church Library. You can take a puzzle and bring it back when you are done or donate a used puzzle of your own.

We accept puzzles of all levels, even children's puzzles. Please secure the puzzle pieces in a zip-lock bag inside the box or tape the box shut to keep pieces from escaping. If a puzzle has a missing piece, please note that on the box - not everyone likes a puzzle with missing pieces.

## CHURCH NEWS, cont.

“For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me.” - MATTHEW 25:35



### UMCOR Sunday is March 15<sup>th</sup>

In 2025, UMCOR responded to 115 humanitarian crises around the world. These responses were strengthened by gifts to the UMCOR Sunday offering, which helps to cover administrative costs so that donations given throughout the year go directly to those in need. For more than 80 years, the generosity of United Methodists to UMCOR has ensured that resources are available in times of crisis.

**You can give a special offering to UMCOR this month by marking your offering as "UMCOR SUNDAY".** These gifts ensure UMCOR can respond swiftly to disasters around the world and is a source of hope and healing for those left most vulnerable.

[SPECIAL  
SUNDAY]

UMCOR SUNDAY

“You have been a refuge for the poor,  
a refuge for the needy in distress,  
a hiding place from the storm,  
a shade from the heat.”

—ISAIAH 25:4, CEB

# CHURCH NEWS, cont.

## Here I am, Lord!

Dan Benning, Lay Leader

James 2:14-17:

*14 What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save them? 15 Suppose a brother or a sister is without clothes and daily food. 16 If one of you says to them, "Go in peace; keep warm and well fed," but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it? 17 In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.*

2026 is a year of opportunity, faith, and love as we put our words into actions. Each time I walk through the doors of our gathering space, our church building, I am reminded that our faith is about our church family and what we do to further God's mission for us. I am sharing information about our congregation so that we recognize how we are putting our faith into actions. Keep in mind that we as Christians can and should always be looking for opportunities to do more.

- Grand Avenue United Methodist Church (GAUMC) has a membership of 120 with an average of 45-50 in worship each Sunday.
- GAUMC has paid our apportionments in FULL for many years and plans to continue to make this a priority.
- GAUMC is engaged with an ecumenical youth ministry, Lighthouse, that was formed by five local congregations to be able to provide a youth ministry in our community. Each congregation has two representatives on the Board of Directors and provides \$5000 annually for operational expenses. A part-time Program Director has been hired. <https://lighthouseyouth.org/>
- GAUMC is actively involved with area congregations (primarily ELCA and UCC) for ecumenical services each Wednesday night during Lent, at Thanksgiving, and during a summer outdoor worship service.
- GAUMC is very active in studying and acting on the UMC Social Principals. The group meets monthly and has hosted several outreach and educational events.
- Jeff Killey has taken the initiative to start working with other members of the congregation to form a group that will focus on understanding our demographics in Ozaukee County, brainstorm ideas on how to best reach our neighbors, and implement 3-4 ideas this year. They will also be looking for ways to increase volunteerism within our congregation.
- GAUMC has an active partnership with the local Family Promise homeless program where we provide meals to their homeless shelter clients, created and stocked a children's library which is restocked as needed, and provides mentoring and tutoring to children of residents.

## CHURCH NEWS, cont.

- GAUMC is home to the Ozaukee County food distribution program that provides meals each weekday. We continue to host the Stock Box program that distributes food to lower income seniors each month.
- GAUMC partners with the local food pantries to collect food items and clothing, especially during the winter months.
- GAUMC has been blessed with an endowment fund that has risen to nearly \$100,000.
- GAUMC is financially stable and strong with undesignated operating cash reserves of \$65,000.
- GAUMC's facilities are sound and in good condition. Maintenance has not been deferred.
- GAUMC has a parsonage that is currently rented out after we moved from a full time to a part time pastor.

One of the most inspirational songs I have heard is "Here I Am, Lord". As we read through the lyrics and listen to this melody, I pray that you will stop and focus on what God is calling you to do. Whether it's to go around the world or across the street, I pray that you will listen to His voice and that you will say, "Here I am, Lord!"

1) I, the Lord of sea and sky,  
I have heard My people cry.  
All who dwell in dark and sin,  
My hand will save.  
I who made the stars of night,  
I will make their darkness bright.  
Who will bear My light to them?  
Whom shall I send?  
Chorus:  
Here I am Lord, It is I Lord?  
I have heard You calling in the night.  
I will go Lord, if You lead me.  
I will hold Your people in my heart.

2) I, the Lord of snow and rain,  
I have borne my peoples pain.  
I have wept for love of them,

They turn away.  
I will break their hearts of stone,  
Give them hearts for love alone.  
I will speak My word to them,  
Whom shall I send?  
(Chorus)

3) I, the Lord of wind and flame,  
I will tend the poor and lame.  
I will set a feast for them,  
My hand will save  
Finest bread I will provide,  
Till their hearts be satisfied.  
I will give My life to them,  
Whom shall I send?  
(Chorus)

"Here I Am, Lord," Dan Schutte, 1981, OCP Publications.



# United Methodist Corner

I recently read a very insightful article about John Wesley's view on Lent. It was written by Taylor Burton Edwards who is the Director of Worship Resources for Discipleship Ministry of the United Methodist Church. We know that millions of Christians, including United Methodists observe the spiritual discipline of Lent by prayer, reading and meditating on Holy Scripture, fasting, worship and works of mercy. I was surprised to learn from the article that this was not always the case for United Methodists.

In John Wesley's prayer book for the Sunday Service for the Methodists in North America, he excludes the season of Lent. The first Sunday of Lent is listed as the 12th Sunday after Christmas. Wesley even excluded Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday and Good Friday from the prayer book. What was Wesley's reasoning for this exclusion? He never explicitly addresses the reason for the omission. But Burton says that we can draw some conclusions when we take a look at the context surrounding Wesley's Prayer book. For North American Christians.

The prayer book was offered at a time when Methodist Societies were still alive and well. These societies agreed to follow three simple rules: refrain from evil; do good and observe the ordinances of the Lord which include the Lenten spiritual practices. Within these societies, classes of around a dozen people were organized. They covenanted with each other to meet weekly to help oversee one another's discipleship in love. Why would you need the Lenten season when these classes were practicing these disciplines week after week? When the societies disappeared and the Methodist classes diminished, there was a need, once again, among American Methodists to follow the Anglican tradition and restore the Lenten Holy days.

But from my view, we cannot treat Lent like we do Christmas decorations. Once the decorations are taken down, we don't have to give them much thought about them until the following Christmas. We need some complementary practices that will enable us to continue our devotional and discipleship practices throughout the year. I am thankful for the short-term studies we have had at Grand Avenue. But I believe that the Church needs even more complementary approaches that enable us to grow in God's grace, be transformed by His love, and be reenergized to take our witness and God's mission to the world. May God's Spirit leads us towards that new day of renewal and new life.

In Christ's Love, Dave

# CALENDAR

## March Events

Worship Service	Weekly Sunday at 10:00 am	Sanctuary
AA Meeting	Weekly Wednesday at 8:00 pm	FAC
Private Meeting	Weekly Thursday at 5:30 pm	FAC
ADRC Meal Distribution	Mon – Fri from 10:30 am – 12:30 pm	Kitchen
Community Prayer Group	Wednesday, March 4 at 9:30 am	Christ the King
Lent Study Group	Wednesday, March 4 at 11 am	Fellowship Hall
Community Lent Supper/Service	Wednesday, March 4 at 5:30/6:30 pm	Parkside UCC
PW Woman's Club	Monday, March 9, 11 am – 2 pm	Fellowship Hall
Social Principles	Tuesday, March 10, 1 pm	Fellowship Hall
Lent Study Group	Wednesday, March 11 at 11 am	Fellowship Hall
Community Lent Supper/Service	Wednesday, March 11 at 5:30/6:30 pm	Lighthouse Youth
Friendship Club	Wednesday, March 11, 6:30 pm	Fellowship Hall
UMCOR Sunday	Sunday, March 15	
Stockbox Distribution	Tuesday, March 17 at 10:00 am	FAC & Parking Lot
Lent Study Group	Wednesday, March 18 at 11 am	Fellowship Hall
Community Lent Supper/Service	Wednesday, March 18 at 5:30/6:30 pm	First Congregational
Sister Circle	Thursday, March 19, 7 pm	Christ the King
Newsletter Articles Due	Monday, March 23	Office
Lent Study Group	Wednesday, March 25 at 11 am	Fellowship Hall
Community Lent Supper/Service	Wednesday, March 25 at 5:30/6:30 pm	First Congregational
Palm/Passion Sunday	Sunday, March 29, 10 am	Sanctuary

### GRAND AVENUE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

505 W Grand Ave Port Washington WI 53074 262-284-9478 [www.portumc.com](http://www.portumc.com)

Pastor:	Vince Pepin	<a href="mailto:pastor@portumc.org">pastor@portumc.org</a>
Pastoral Assistant:	Dave Guse	<a href="mailto:senegaldave1@gmail.com">senegaldave1@gmail.com</a>
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Bishop: Dan Schwerin / District Superintendent: Rev. Dr. InSun Lee



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# RaiseRight formerly ShopWithScrip

Orders are due in the church office on the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of each month. Please remember to include your payment. You can also order on-line at [www.raiseright.com](http://www.raiseright.com) Your order of gift cards will be ready for pickup at church on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of the month.

Questions? Contact the Kay Hamann at 262-284-3168 or [khamann530@yahoo.com](mailto: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](http://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*