



December 2023
the VINE

Dear Grand Avenue Church Family and Friends,

I hope everyone had a wonderful Thanksgiving. After Thanksgiving, the boys and I spent the weekend at Deer Camp which is always a nice opportunity to spend quality time together. I didn't get a deer, but I had a great time with the boys.

Now that the Thanksgiving holiday is over we move into December and the Advent Season. This last month of the year marks the beginning of winter and the end of 2023. For many of us, myself included, this holiday season is one in which we hustle and bustle putting up decorations, planning holiday events, shopping, and gift wrapping. The pace of the season can be all-consuming and overwhelming. With all the commotion we often forget that the preparation and anticipation are intended to be centered on Jesus Christ.

The mercantile focus leading up to Christmas makes it easy to forget the significance the Advent season holds for us Christians. Advent is a season designed for us to center our hearts and minds on Christ in preparation for celebrating His birth and the mindful acknowledgment of His imminent return. This appropriately can be viewed as a season of both expectation and preparation that should be centered on Jesus. After all, this is the reason for the season.

So as we prepare for this Christmas season let us not forget to prepare our hearts in anticipation of receiving our Lord Jesus Christ.

John 3:16:

“For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.”

Your Brother in Christ,

Pastor Vince

GRAND AVENUE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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

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Bishop: Rev. Hee-Soo Jung / District Superintendent: Rev. Dr. Ebenezer Insor		

CELEBRATE

Birthdays

Lila Lentz	2	Mark Davis	21
Dan Benning	7	Michael Lueptow	21
Amelia Bastianello	9	Amanda Penkivech	21
Joyce Kirkendall	10	Ava Lentz	22
Henry Weltin	14	Mike Vernon	25
Emily Betker	16	Michael Lentz	26
Beth Davis	16	Barb Jones	27
Carol O'Mara	17		

Anniversaries

Mark & Beth Breuer	16
Scott & Sue Penkivech	23
Gordon & Ardell Dionne	24
Dan & Lynn Benning	29
Mike & Geny Vernon	29

VOLUNTEERS

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

Date	Usher	Liturgist	Cupbearer	Coffee Host	AV
12/3	Larry Maechtle	Sandy Grams	<i>Needed*</i>	Bonnie Pachner	Scott Penkivech
12/10	Larry Maechtle	Marc Eernisse	n/a	<i>Needed*</i>	Scott Penkivech
12/17	Larry Maechtle	Jan Young	n/a	Dave & Cathy Guse	Scott Penkivech
12/24	Larry Maechtle	<i>Several needed*</i>	n/a	<i>Needed*</i>	Scott Penkivech
12/31	Larry Maechtle	<i>Needed*</i>	n/a	<i>Needed*</i>	Scott Penkivech

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

CHRISTMAS SERVICES

Celebrate Christmas Eve at Grand Ave UMC

Sunday, December 24th

10:00 am – Traditional Sunday Worship

7:00 pm – Candlelight Service featuring the choir

The choir will sing the first verse of Silent Night in German.

They will also be singing one of their own selections.

(We will be closed on Monday December 25)

MISSIONS & OUTREACH



Non-Perishable Donations

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

Fruit Cups
Canned Fruit
Hash Browns
Jell-O & Pudding
Spaghetti Sauce

Canned Peas
Ketchup
Salad Dressing
Vegetable Oil
Laundry Detergent



All monetary donations made through December 25th, 2023 for Gift A Child will be matched by our generous sponsors up to \$1,900 in total. Please make checks payable to: The Food Pantry-Gift A Child or put Gift A Child in the memo or on the envelope.
Mail to: The Food Pantry
1800 N Wisconsin St, Port Washington 53074



Kiwanis



MISSIONS & OUTREACH, cont.



Thank You

Thanks to all who donated to or served at our November meals for the Portlight Shelter. Guests have voiced their appreciation for the tasty meals and the kind volunteers.

Thanks also go to those who have supported our Family Promise mission by donating items to the urgent needs barrel at church and by providing monetary donations. We were able to provide the following in November:

- a carryout meal of pizza and salad on a community night that no one had signed up for
- beverages for our week of meals
- toilet paper
- laundry detergent
- numerous cleaning supplies
- garbage bags
- a 2-month supply of diapers for a newborn who arrived while mom was a guest at the shelter and is now making the shelter home.

Looking ahead to 2024, we are scheduled to serve meals the weeks of February 19, May 13, August 19, and November 11th.



Giving Tree

Our Family Promise giving tree is up in the narthex.

You can take an ornament to donate an unwrapped gift to this year's Jingle Bell Bash, so parents can pick out a gift for their children and children can pick out a gift for their parents.

All gifts will be wrapped by volunteers and put in a bag for families to take home and open on Christmas morning. **Please have gift donations (ornament tags) under our tree by December 10th.**

You can also take a book tag if you wish to donate an unwrapped book to enhance the children's library at the Portlight Shelter. **Please have book donations under our tree by December 24th.**

Community Meal Nights

The Week of December 18th and 25th are Community/Volunteer Single Night Meal Weeks. If you are interested in providing meals during this week you can sign-up via [signup genius](#) or call the church office to sign up.

FAITH GROUPS & ACTIVITIES



December Events



Sunday, December 10th from 6:00-8:00 pm
Christmas Movie Night

Put on your ugly Christmas sweater or your favorite pjs and settle in for a classic Christmas movie complete with delicious cookies and hot cocoa.

Lighthouse events are open to all students in grades 5-12 and, unless otherwise noted, and 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

MEET SOME NEW MEMBERS

Grand Ave Welcomes Jean Butler

Jean Butler and her husband moved to Port Washington from Minocqua with a bit of encouragement from her daughter, who lives in Port. Jean might say it was more like gentle insistence than encouragement, but we say we are very happy to welcome her into our Grand Ave family! 😊 And Jean is happy to be two hours closer to her family.

Jean was born in Janesville, grew up in southern Wisconsin, and later ended up in Little Arborvitae, where she and her husband ran a resort for 28 years! But that's the end of the story. She began her career as a nurse, had three children, and realized it was hard to raise children and be a nurse full time. From there she went into her second career --selling real estate! If that isn't a diverse, interesting change, throw in her third career (i.e., end of story) running a resort!

If you're looking for a cribbage or bunco partner, Jean's your gal. Look for her at the senior citizen center playing these games. She also enjoys reading and likes being active.

Jean grew up in the Congregational Church, but has been a Methodist for 60 plus years. Attending church regularly has shaped and reinforced her faith. She very much believes that God is with you, that He is always there! While she is not a committee person, she is very willing to get involved as a volunteer for coffee hour, bake sales, Family Promise --- if something is going on, she is there to help!

Please introduce yourself to this petite brunette with a great smile! 😊 We welcome you to our church, Jean.



MEET SOME NEW MEMBERS, cont.

Say Hello to Carol O'Mara



You've seen Carol O'Mara at church just about every Sunday for the last year or so... she's the one with a ready smile. It's time now to learn more about her! 😊

She came to Port Washington from Mansfield, Ohio, where she had lived for 45 years. After shoulder surgery for rotator cuff, her daughter who lives in Port wanted Carol to move here. She also has another daughter living in Canada. Her husband was in the Air Force, which led to many other places to live, most notably in Alaska for five years. Sadly, he passed away eight years ago.

Carol was an elementary teacher in Lexington, Ohio, after teaching in several other spots, including Puerto Rico and Okinawa! Now retired, she loves to read, play bridge, and

exercise --- 5 days a week she exercises!

She began her faith life as a Methodist ... and (despite marrying a Catholic – many of us can relate!) remained a Methodist for about 60 years. THEN she went to the Congregational Church. Ask her that story some time. 😊 Interesting fact: her grandfather was an itinerant pastor. Growing up in a family that went to church every Sunday has shaped her faith – it's natural for her to volunteer, to be active in the church life. She wants to be involved at Grand Ave, so just ASK HER, she's open to whatever!!! Welcome to Grand Ave, Carol!

Greetings to Val Nichols

Val Nichols grew up in Cedarburg and attended the Methodist Church there for many years. Wanting a change, she came to GAUMC just to see and feel what we had to offer--- and it is a blessing for us that she liked the “friendliness, caring, and positivity of the individuals as well as the leaders of Grand Ave”. She chose to stay and become a member here, saying that the JOY shared each week during “Passing of the Peace” and being a part of a Study Group has appealed to her.

Take note: Val is willing to be a liturgist once in a while, and definitely wants to continue to grow her relationship with God by participating in study groups.

Val has been a life- long teacher, spending many years in Wisconsin and Arizona teaching. As an English teacher, she has shared her love of literature and writing with middle school and high school students. Ask her about her own writing --- she has published a book for children entitled “Loaves and Fish: The Rest of the Story”, and has shared her writing talent with many others.

Val credits her mother with shaping her faith daily, not only by regularly reading the Upper Room, but also by doing -- her mother often invited immigrants to their home for lunch.

We welcome Val to Grand Ave; in turn she wants us to know that she is SO grateful that God has directed her to our church. She looks forward to GAUMC growing and being a church that DOES and not merely WATCHES. Be sure to greet Val Nichols and introduce yourself.





During this holiday season you can “purchase” love lights in memory or in honor of a loved one or someone who has inspired you in your life. The December 17th and Christmas Eve bulletins will list for whom and from whom the love lights were given. Money received from love lights will go toward our conference mission apportionment.

We all have friends and relatives that have inspired us, so let’s have some fun remembering and honoring those dear to us in a meaningful and beautiful way during the holiday season with a Light of Love.

In honor of _____

and/or

In memory of _____

Amount Enclosed: _____

Given by: _____

Please return this form with your cash or check payable to Grand Ave UMC by Sunday December 10. You can place it in the offering box or mail it to the church office at 505 W. Grand Ave., Port Washington. WI 53074.





United Methodist Corner

One of the key words in Wesleyan theology is salvation. Wesley wrote in his sermon on The Way of Salvation, “Those two little words, faith and salvation (I’ll address our understanding of faith in next month’s column) include the substance of all the Bible, the marrow, as it were, of the whole scripture”

The meaning of this word salvation has often been misunderstood. When we hear the word salvation, we tend to think of being saved for the future bliss of heaven. It’s the place where we go after we die. The fire and brimstone preachers would preach on the need to be saved from the fire of hell and damnation. When Wesley spoke of salvation he meant being saved in the present moment. He argued that scripture said, “ye are saved” as opposed to you will be saved in the future. Salvation does not stand at a distance. It’s not something we wait for while we passively live out our lives. Salvation has an impact in the way we live our lives today.

Salvation, in Methodist terms, consists of two parts; justification and sanctification. God’s grace and mercy draws us into a relationship with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. The word justification means “pardon”. Justification means to forgive us of our sins and make us right with God. “It is while we were yet sinners (unable to do any good on our own) that Christ died for us” (Roman 5:8). Christ’s saving grace reconciles to God to whom we have been estranged.

The other part of salvation is sanctification. Sanctification is closely linked, inseparable from justification. Sanctification is about growing in the knowledge and love of God. It is about being renewed in the image of Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit. Salvation also means “healing or wholeness.” Whereas justification is something God does for us without any effort on our part, sanctification is something that requires our trust and cooperation. Growing in Christ Jesus is not an automatic progression. It is what I call a journey of faith; with its ups and downs, peaks and valleys, detours and unexpected surprises.

I had a relative who said to me years ago that he found it troubling that he tried be faithful his entire life while someone on their deathbed can confess to the Lord and be saved. I wish I had said to him then what I have come to believe now. Salvation is more than just seeking to be saved for heaven. I cannot speak for others, but I believe that knowing Christ and allowing the Spirit to work through me all these years is the real treasure I would have lost, if I had waited to the end to turn my life over to the Lord.

Blessings, Dave.

CHURCH NEWS

Weather Closings

With winter weather approaching, any church closings due to inclement weather will be posted on the following: FOX6 TV News Milwaukee, AM 920, Newstalk AM 1130 WISN, FM 95.7, FM 97.3, FM 100.7, and FM 106.1, www.tmj4.com, and our [Grand Avenue Church Facebook page](#).

Charge Conference

Thank you to our Circuit Leader, Rev. Carissa Martinelli, for presiding over our 2023 Charge Conference and to everyone that brought food, washed dishes, and assisted in making our Charge Conference and Potluck Celebration a tremendous success.



CALENDAR

Monthly Events

Worship Service	Weekly Sunday at 10:00 am	Sanctuary
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
Advent Study Group	Friday Dec. 1, 8, & 15 from 11am-noon	Gathering Area
Awesome Women's Dinner	Monday Dec. 4 at 6pm	Plier's Full Circle
Old World Christmas Trip	Wednesday Dec. 6, 10am-3pm	Bus to Elkhart Lake
Choral Hymn Sing	Sunday Dec. 17 at 9:30am (before worship)	Sanctuary
Stockbox Distribution	Tuesday Dec. 19 at 10:00am	FAC & Parking Lot
Newsletter Article Deadline	Thursday December 21	Office
Christmas Eve Services	Sunday Dec 24 at 10:00 am – Traditional	Sanctuary
	Sunday Dec 24 at 7:00 pm – Candlelight	Sanctuary

Note: There will be no Social Principles or Admin Council meeting in December.



Open hearts. Open minds. Open doors.
The people of The United Methodist Church™

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*