



HILLTOP HERALD-JANUARY 2024 MONONA UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

ADULT GAME DAY

Our Game Day continues! Join our growing good times and fellowship on **Friday, January 5 at 10 A.M. to noon** in Fellowship Hall. Bring a family favorite game to teach us. Games for any number of players are especially fun. Hope you can join us! --Kay Cowing

GIVING TREE/FAMILY SUPPORT PROGRAM THANKS

Wow! You helped make Christmas and the whole year special for families in the Monona school community by providing almost \$1,200 in gift cards. The schools will be able to help families throughout the year with a gift card for groceries and gas. Thank you so much for your generosity and flexibility with this new donation process.

FALL STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN

"Giving Together"

Thank you so much for your support of the 2024 Stewardship Campaign. Our pledges so far have totaled \$230,000 or 84% of budgeted revenue. Your giving makes it possible for the ministries of Monona UMC to continue to be a light in our community and beyond.

Your Stewardship/Finance Team

NEW UPPER ROOMS ARE HERE

The Upper Room is a great little devotional book to center on a Bible verse and read a short meditation and prayer. The new January / February issue has arrived, and is in the entryway. Feel free to take one.

HUMAN RELATIONS DAY

Sunday January 14

Your generous gift supports neighborhood outreach and advocacy through Community Developers and UM Voluntary Services, both related to the General Board of Global Ministries, and at-risk teens through Youth Offender Rehabilitation, General Board of Church & Society. This is one of the special offerings of the United Methodist Church. To support this offering, please write "Human Relations Day" on the memo line of your check.

CHURCH DIRECTORY

We are in the process of creating a new in-house church directory with phone/ address listing. Please make sure your family information is updated with the church office.

Please sign up if you would like the printed version of the directory. There is a sheet on the table in fellowship hall. We will send the access to the online version to your email addresses.

PASTOR'S COLUMN

Dear Friends:

As we continue to celebrate the season of Christmas, I share this poem written by our bishop. I pray that we all can claim the joy of Christmas!

Pastor Paul

Christmas Blessings

By Bishop Hee-Soo Jung

The birth of Jesus
We are reborn deep
within our hearts and spirits.
Come to us with light
Come to us with life
Come to this shabby place with peace
Come to the eternal now, right within us...

The coming of Jesus
Let there be hope for the world,
Let even a small smile express happiness.
To a lonely person, come as a friend,
Come to Bethlehem
Yes come....
Come to the heart of the broken world.

The coming of the Savior
It brings joy to us,
so everyone rejoices together.
The Savior has come,
let us sing and let the world sing
Christ light,
Dawning within us the divine presence.

May we bless one another today
It's not a slow heart.
With a bright face, bless each other
Let me bless my friends
who have gone down different paths,
With a loving heart, we wish them to bless.
May we all be blessed because of Jesus

BIBLE PASSAGES & THEMES 10:00AM SERVICE

January 7 - 1st Sunday after Epiphany

“The Power of Baptism” Mark 1:4-11

January 14 - 2nd Sunday after Epiphany

“God’s Call” I Samuel 2:1-10

January 21 - 3rd Sunday after Epiphany

“God Calls Again” Jonah 3:1-5, 10

January 28 - 4th Sunday after Epiphany

“A New Teaching?” Mark 1:21-28

WORSHIP VOLUNTEER SIGNUP

We have a Volunteer Sign Up Genius listing with the volunteer jobs needed each week. We would especially like to fill the **Ushers** position. Please check your schedules and sign on using the link below. You can also send an email to the church office you’re your requested dates.

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904094DA8AE22AB9-volunteer>

THE CRY ROOM IS BECOMING THE WELSEY ROOM

We are renaming the room near the front entrance to the Wesley Room. It is a convenient place for distraction-free contemplation during worship.

OUR SYMPATHY GOES TO

--The family and friends of Fran Lerdahl, who passed away December 20.

--Mark & Sally Buffat and their family upon the death of Mark’s dad on December 27.

OUR WEBSITE

Check out our website: www.mononaunitedmethodistchurch.org

- We have the recorded mini-service available for an online Worship experience as well as our in-person worship. Check our website for more information.
- We have a **Giving** tab on our website to make a donation with your credit card or checking account. To make donating easier, use our QR Code.



MISSION OF THE MONTH

ST VINCENT DE PAUL'S 32nd ANNUAL RECYCLE THE WARMTH

Our mission in January will support the 32nd annual *Recycle the Warmth* Blanket Drive. St. Vincent de Paul is an organization committed to helping neighbors in need without regard to religion, race, or ethnic background. This drive helps provide blankets and bedding throughout the year to all those who seek help. We need your help in making this possible.

The official drive will take place the weekend of **January 26-28**. You may purchase new blankets or donate your gently-used blankets and bedding. Bring the blankets to church or drop the off at any of the St. Vinny's Thrift Stores in the Madison area. Blankets are also available to purchase at the St. Vinny's Thrift Stores.

You may also donate funds to purchase new bedding. Please mark your check or offering envelope with "Blanket Drive."

Thank you for your generous support of this mission. Mission Team

MUMC MEN'S GROUP

All men of the church are invited to the Men's Club breakfast that will take place on **Saturday, January 13** at 9:00 am at Denny's on Broadway in Monona. Come and enjoy great food and fellowship.

READ 'EM & MEET

The book club will meet on **Sunday, January 14** at 2pm to discuss, *Our Souls at Night* by Kent Haruf at the home of Phyllis Stertz. **Visitors and new members are always welcome to attend.**

HILLTOPPERS

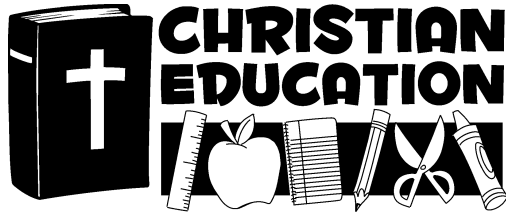
We will not be meeting during the months of January, February and March due to the potential of inclement weather.

Elgin is planning on stepping down as leader due to age and some other ailments so volunteers are needed to carry on this group. He is also treasurer so will be looking for someone to do that job also.

THANK YOU

*The Monona Monday Morning Quilters are pleased to present the enclosed check as a thank you for allowing us to use your hall as a sewing space. We appreciate the ability to gather and sew in a warm and inviting setting. A special thank you to Kay DeBraal for setting up the room and welcoming us to the church.

Monona Monday Morning Quilters



CHILDREN'S SUNDAY SCHOOL/CONFIRMATION

Our Children's Sunday School program meets Sundays at 9:00am until 9:50am in Fellowship Hall.

Our Confirmation class, made up of eighth and ninth graders, meets Sundays at 9:00am until 9:30am in Pastor Paul's office.

ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL

Sundays at 11:30am starting on January 7

This time we will study ***Inspired: Slaying Giants, Walking on Water, and Loving the Bible Again.***

*If the Bible isn't a science book or an instruction manual, what is it? What do people mean when they say the Bible is inspired? When New York Times bestselling author **Rachel Held Evans** found herself asking these questions, she embarked on a journey to better understand what the Bible is and how it's meant to be read. What she discovered changed her--and it can change you, too.*

Evans knows firsthand how a relationship with the Bible can be as real and as complicated as a relationship with a family member or close friend. In Inspired, Evans explores contradictions and questions from her own experiences with the Bible, including:

- If the Bible was supposed to explain the mysteries of life, why does it leave the reader with so many questions?*
- What does it mean to be chosen by God?*
- To what degree did the Holy Spirit guide the preservation of these narratives, and is there something sacred to be uncovered beneath all these human fingerprints?*
- If the Bible has given voice to the oppressed, why is it also used as justification by their oppressors?*

Drawing on the best in biblical scholarship and using her well-honed literary expertise, Evans examines some of our favorite Bible stories and possible interpretations, retelling them through memoir, original poetry, short stories, and even a short screenplay.

Undaunted by the Bible's most difficult passages and unafraid to ask the hard questions, Evans wrestles through the process of doubting, imagining, and debating the mysteries surrounding Scripture. Discover alongside Evans that the Bible is not a static text, but a living, breathing, captivating, and confounding book that can equip us and inspire us to join God's loving and redemptive work in the world.

Before her untimely death in 2019, Rachel was featured in numerous newspapers and TV shows. She served on President Obama's Advisory Council on Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships, and kept a busy schedule speaking at churches, conferences, and colleges and universities around the country.

We meet in the church library or the Wesley Room, depending on the number of people who attend the class. We **buy our own books**. There are plenty of low cost used books available on the market. **ALL ARE WELCOME.** *Siv Goulding*



UNITED METHODIST WOMEN INFORMATION

Friendship Circle will meet on **Wednesday, January 10** at 1:30pm in the fellowship hall.

Faith Circle will meet **Thursday, January 11** at 1pm in Fellowship Hall at the home of Anna Mae Wilken. Members should read chapter 3 of your study book, *Signs and Wonders*. Call Jan Wanek at 395-2433 with any questions.

UMW Executive Committee will meet on **Monday January 22** at 1pm in the fellowship hall.

JAVA JIVE

Posted on the Equal Exchange website

THANK YOU!!! WE DID IT TOGETHER!!!

Your purchases made this year's holiday sale a success! During the same 5-day period as last year, the number of orders we received and shipped to customers all over the country was up 11.6%, from 1,983 to 2,214 ☐

In just coffee alone, we estimate that we sold roughly the annual harvest of 9 family farms ☽

Additionally, in kitchens and community centers across the country, folks are enjoying:

- 116,440 cups of tea ☽
- 116,605 servings of chocolate
- 25,958 cups of cocoa ☐
- 1,680 bottles of olive oil ☐

This energy is what keeps us able to continue working with our small farmer partners around the world and keep our operations going strong. Our community is made up of farmers, worker-owners, our sister fair trade partners, Interfaith supporters, retailers, and ALL OF YOU! We're building this food system together.

THANK YOU! WE COULDN'T DO IT WITHOUT YOU!

Fair Trade Coordinators
Jackie Hull c 608-576-7837
Karelyn Hopkins c 608-577-3185

ALTAR FLOWERS

We welcome donations of flowers for our altar on Sundays. If you would like to give flowers on a particular Sunday, please contact the church office or use the volunteer Sign Up Genius link found in this newsletter. Flowers may be dropped off on Fridays during office hours, 9am-2pm or on Sunday mornings. Thanks for brightening up our worship space.



END OF YEAR CONTRIBUTIONS

We will try to do our best to find any donations that have been postmarked by December 31, 2023 and to credit them to 2023. If you receive your end of the year statement from the church, and believe a particular donation should be for 2023, which wasn't included in that statement, we will be happy to give you an amended statement. Please call the church office if you have any questions.

EASY AUTOMATIC GIVING

Make giving to the church very easy and save the church some time. The automatic transfers are completely safe and secure, and cost you nothing. You control the amount and frequency of the withdrawals, and can cancel any time. Transfers done electronically, along with any additional donations you make, will be listed on your normal periodic statement from the church. Just fill out the form in the church office.

ADULT AND PEDIATRIC CPR, AED AND FIRST AID CLASSES

Monona UMC is hosting CPR, AED and First Aid classes and you are invited to attend a class for free. Please contact the church office if you are interested. There will be portion completed on your computer and an in-person portion. **The next dates include January 13, February 3, 10 and 24.**

RIVER FOOD PANTRY

The River is currently getting most of the eggs already in cartons and only need egg cartons on a limited basis. Monona UMC is still collecting all sizes, as we still have a few alternatives to take them.

Paper grocery bags are always in high demand for The River. They also will take any non-perishable and shelf stable goods. Some other highly requested items for The River include:

- 100% juice products
- low sugar cereals
- Tuna Helper and tuna
- disposable diapers all sizes, (including adult sizes)

\$ Financial Report \$

Cash Flow November 30, 2023

<u>General Fund</u>	<u>Month</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>
Income	\$ 21,453	\$ 251,586
General Operating Expenses	28,472	254,556
Net Surplus (Shortfall)	\$ (7,019)	\$ (2,970)

STEWARDSHIP - ACTIVE DISCIPLESHIP

A University chaplain had an interesting conversation with a student that came to see him one day. He writes:

“I was wondering what I ought to do about the exam,” she said, “then I looked at this bracelet” (here she gestured to the “What Would Jesus Do?” bracelet on her wrist), “and I said to myself, ‘I am going to just say a little prayer, relax, and look after myself.’”

And I thought to myself, “I can think of at least a couple of other things Jesus might tell you to do — like get over to the library and get busy studying for this exam.”

Devoid of specific content, insubstantial, vague “spirituality” may be our contemporary Christian undoing. We have rendered Jesus into someone so vague, amorphous, and flimsy that he makes little claim upon us. Jesus has become a fashion accessory, something tied to our wrist, a comfort, never a challenge. What would Jesus do? Whatever we do, it appears.

This short story reminds me of what a challenge Christian Discipleship. It is easy for us to become a member of a church, attend several times a year, give a little money, and to sit back and relax because we all know that God’s grace is free. And yet, we forget that while God’s love is given to us freely, if we allow it to grab ahold of us, it changes our lives. Our priorities are no longer our own, but God’s. We pray that “God’s will be done,” not only in a general sense, but particularly in and through our own lives. This means becoming an active part of our community of faith. Giving our energy to worship, instead of being a passive observer. Actively loving and serving our neighbor, instead of just praying for them and hoping for a miracle. Spending time with God in prayer and study. Letting generosity be the top priority in our finances, not just giving what’s left over after we’ve gotten ours.

Christian Discipleship is a difficult enterprise. Thank God we have grace to support us and strengthen us. And thank God we have a community of faith to help us along and to hold us accountable.

Rev. Jason Mahnke

Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation, 888-903-9863 or www.wumf.org

The Life and Ministry of God's People In Monona United Methodist Church

January 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>NEWSLETTER DEADLINE Newsletter Deadline January 21 Information arriving after the above date may not be in the February newsletter. Remember, you can email to secretarymumc@sbcglobal.net</p>						
	<p>1 New Year's Day Office Closed</p>	<p>2 11:00 Staff Meeting</p>	<p>3 11am Upstairs Narthex in Use 2-4pm Caregivr support 5:30 Girl Scouts</p>	<p>4 6:30pm C&S hosting Ecumenical Planning Group-hall</p>	<p>5 Pastor's Day Off 10am Game Day-fellowship hall 11am Upstairs Narthex in Use</p>	6
<p>7 <u>See schedule below</u> 8:45 Choir Rehearsal 11:30 Adult Sunday School</p>	<p>8 11am Upstairs Narthex in Use 5:30-7pm Girl Scouts</p>	<p>9 9:30-12:15 NewBridge Foot Clinic F.H. 11:00 Staff Mtg 2:30 Church & Society</p>	<p>10 11am Upstairs Narthex in Use 1:30 Friendship Circle – fellowship hall</p>	<p>11 1:00 Faith Cr-at Anna Mae's home</p>	<p>12 Pastor's Day Off 11am Upstairs Narthex in Use 1-3pm Mah Jongg-Wesley Room</p>	<p>13 8:30am-3pm Revive CPR-fellowship hall 9am Men's Grp Breakfast-Denny's 10am-12pm Girl Scout Troop-upstairs</p>
<p>14 <u>See schedule below</u> 8:45 Choir 11:30 Adult Sunday School Rehearsal 2:00 Read 'Em & Meet</p>	<p>15 Office Closed 11am Upstairs Narthex in Use</p>	<p>16 9:30-12:15 NewBridge Foot Clinic F.H. 11:00 Staff Mtg</p>	<p>17 10-11:30am RSVP Knit/Stitch-hall 11am Upstairs Narthex in Use</p>	<p>18 6:30pm Accountable Leadership Board</p>	<p>19 Pastor's Day Off 11am Upstairs Narthex in Use 3-4:30 Girl Scout Troop</p>	20
<p>21 <u>See schedule below</u> Newsletter Ddln 8:45 Choir Rehearsal 11:30 Adult Sunday School</p>	<p>22 11am Upstairs Narthex in Use 1pm UMW Executive Board Meeting 5:30-7pm Girl Scouts</p>	<p>23 9:30-12:15 NewBridge Foot Clinic F.H. 11:00 Staff Mtg</p>	<p>24 11am Upstairs Narthex in Use</p>	<p>25 5:30pm Community Meal- fellowship hall</p>	<p>26 Pastor's Day Off 11am Upstairs Narthex in Use 1-3pm Mah Jongg-Wesley Room</p>	27
<p>28 8:45 Choir Rehearsal 11:30 Adult Sunday School</p>	<p>29 10am-2pm Monona Quilters-F.H 11am Upstairs Narthex in Use</p>	<p>30 11:00 Staff</p>	<p>31 11am Upstairs Narthex in Use</p>			

SUNDAY SCHEDULE

9:00 Sunday School for children and Confirmation Class
 10:00 Worship
 11:00 Fellowship
 1:00 El Libertador Worship in Spanish



MONONA UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

606 NICHOLS ROAD
MONONA, WI 53716

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

The HILLTOP HERALD is produced monthly for distribution to the members and friends of Monona United Methodist Church.

Monona UMC Church office 608-222-1633

Office Hours: Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Homepage www.mononaunitedmethodistchurch.org

Pastor Paul Johnsen 920-246-2855 pjohnsen58@gmail.com

Kay – secretarymumc@sbcglobal.net

Mark – markbmumc@gmail.com

Kirstin - kirstinroblemezzo@gmail.com

Worship 10:00am

JANUARY 2024

COMMUNITY - WIDE MEAL

Our next Community Meal is on **Thursday, January 25 at 5:30 p.m.** in Fellowship Hall

The menu will feature sloppy joes and pasta salad. We want to give our neighbors an opportunity to spend time together and get to know each other. We encourage our regular participants to attend. All are welcome.



Community Meal