



HILLTOP HERALD-JUNE 2021 MONONA UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

THE CHURCH EMERGENT

For the short-term, we will continue to worship virtually and place limits on in-person gatherings. If you wish to schedule a group or event at the church, inside or outside, please contact Kay for the updated building use guidelines and forms. Masks and distancing will still apply to all gatherings.

The office is open and staffed 9am-2pm, Monday through Friday. Pastor Laura and Mark Buffat are available for pastoral care both virtually and in-person for vaccinated individuals. We have cloth face masks available in our entryway to pick up if you are in need of one.

OUR WEBSITE

Check out our improving website: www.mononaunitedmethodistchurch.org

- Join us for virtual Worship services on Sunday mornings at 10am by clicking the link on the front page of our website.
- We have a **Giving** tab on our website to make a donation with your credit card or through your checking account.

VIRTUAL ANNUAL CONFERENCE JUNE 18-19

Radical Inclusion Racial Justice

Monona UMC will be represented this year by Pastor Laura, Patsy McDonald and LeeAnn Sinclair, our Lay Members to Annual Conference. Please pray for our delegates and our whole Annual Conference as they make decisions for our Conference for the upcoming year.

PASTOR'S COLUMN

"The Way Forward"

"Every day it is our responsibility to bear witness to God's greatness and the divine will for actual flourishing for all living creatures. And when our world rebels against the well-being of people and the planet, we must stand strong and speak up within the prophetic tradition of our faith."

Drew G. I. Hart, "Who Will Be a Witness"

Reading Lutheran Pastor Nadia Bolz-Weber's Pentecost sermon (<https://thecorners.substack.com/>), I was moved by her confession that no one really knows how to do this re-gathering part. We are tasked with both faithfully holding our collective grief of the last 15 months and looking ahead to the freedoms that are opening before us. Both in the church and in our personal lives so much feels like stumbling in the dark toward a light that is still some distance away.

There is the pandemic, of course, though in many ways this is the most straightforward of our challenges. We are also emerging within a new historical and racial reckoning, political polarization, and deep economic and power inequities. What is the role of the church, of pastors, of all Christians in times such as these?

While this is new territory for us, the witness of history can be a source of inspiration and hope. I remember in the first months of the pandemic finding a place of grounding in Martin Luther's admonition to pastors to "not flee" from the bubonic plague but to remain as witnesses and ministers to the God's providence, writing in 1527,

"A man who will not help or support others unless he can do so without affecting his safety or his property will never help his neighbor ... No neighbor can live alongside another without risk to his safety, property, wife, or child ... Anyone who does not do that for his neighbor, but forsakes him and leaves him to his misfortune, becomes a murderer in the sight of God."

<https://hail.to/laidlaw-college/publication/z0YvCh2/article/otABdxy>

Similarly, while reading through the history of Methodism during the years preceding the American Civil War, I came upon these words from Rev. A. W. Stewart in the frontier publication the *Northwestern Christian Advocate*, May 10, 1854,

"In attending to the functions of their office as 'ambassadors of Christ,' ministers of the faithful cannot avoid speaking of politics. Their province is to treat every subject connected with man's happiness here, and his hope hereafter. Nor is the exercise of this duty optional – a necessity is laid upon them."

William Blake, "The Cross and the Flame"

For our time, these words take on urgency, not simply for pastors, but for all Christians, for the very practical reason that fewer people are in church on a regular basis. For too long, the Church has focused on building up the institution, fragmenting along theological lines of belief, ideology, and interpretation, and the promise of a final restoration in heaven. The result is that these concerns have little resonance with growing numbers of people both inside and outside the church, and no power to address the pressing justice issues of our day.

Thankfully, the emerging Church – across ecumenical lines – is again heading Jesus' lived example and the voice and urging of the Holy Spirit to reclaim a love of God, love of neighbor, and love of creation that is rooted in the realities of this world. By our baptism we are ALL called as ministers of the gospel to live out the Kin-dom of God in our world. One of the lessons of these last 15 months is that the whole church – in both our gathering AND in our scattering – has a role in bringing Christ's beloved community into existence.

It has been an honor and privilege to journey with you during this season of transition. I am grateful for breakthroughs we have shared and pray for those yet to come as you continue to be Christ's "hilltop" church, spreading God's light and hope and grace to all in Monona and beyond.

Grace and peace,

Pastor Laura

BIBLE PASSAGES & THEMES 10:00AM ONLINE SERVICE

To close out my time with you, we will entertain a brief 3-week sermon series from the book of 1 Samuel, exploring themes of leadership and calling and then apply those lessons to the church today...

June 6 - 1 Samuel 8:1-22

“Be Careful What You Wish For”

June 13 - 1 Samuel 16:1-13

“God’s Vision”

June 20 - 1 Samuel 17:1a, 4-11, 19-24, 32-49

“Strength Within”

June 27 - Mark 5:21-43

“Healing the Church”

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. They may be dropped off on Fridays during office hours, 9am-2pm. Thanks for brightening up our worship space.

MISSION OF THE MONTH

The River Food Pantry-COVID-19 Emergency Food Program

The River plans to continue to operate its COVID Food Program for the duration of this community emergency. The River will not allow shoppers inside of the facility. Instead, prepare boxes of groceries, including perishable and non-perishable foods, which will be available for pick up curbside.

The COVID-19 Emergency Food Fund is helping to provide:

- **Boxes of groceries**, including perishable and non-perishable food, for hundreds of local households to pick up curbside at The River.
- **Pre-bagged lunches for children** delivered through MUNCH—The River’s mobile lunch program—to 9 low-income neighborhoods 6 days a week.
- **Ready-to-eat meals for families** to take home through our newest program, called FAM(Family At-Home Meals).

Please consider supporting this fund to help the most vulnerable members of our community receive the resources they need during this challenging time. Please mark your check, or electronic giving “The River Food Pantry-COVID-19 Emergency Food Program”.

Weekly updates on The River’s operations and other ways you can help can be found in the Sunday bulletin or on their website at www.riverfoodpantry.org.

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

CARING COORDINATOR COLUMN

Glimmers of normalcy. What pleasure and joy it was! Just after noon on Friday, May 14th, our volunteer team gathered in fellowship for the first time in over 15 months to sort and pack snack bags for Nuestro Mundo Community School (NMCS) kiddos. A little over 90 meal bags were packed and delivered. These backpack meal bags, along with food and fuel gift cards that have been distributed over the last several months, provides needed blessings to many NMCS families. Families that have endured much hardship since the beginning of the pandemic. Sandra Rivera, NMCS social worker, cannot begin to express the deep and profound gratitude she, the children, and parents feel because of MUMC's generosity. Thank you to all who contribute time and money to this vital ministry!

More normalcy to report! The Monona Community Festival (July 3 & 4) is back! So that means our annual July 4th community service and engagement fundraiser event is also back after a year's hiatus. This year the 4th of July lands on a Sunday. I am looking for volunteers to join a steering committee to help plan and execute this year's event. Volunteers needed the day of, too. Proceeds will benefit the school weekend backpack nutrition program at Nuestro Mundo. Tentative plans involve parking cars in our lot, serving fresh popcorn, and water and lemonade in paper cups to families and kids as they make their way past the church in route to Winnequah Park for the fireworks and 4th festivities. Free-will- donations will be collected. As always, I'm sure our hill will be a popular viewing spot for families with younger children. Let me know if you would like to help in any capacity. The more the merrier! markbmumc@gmail.com

Caring & Coordinating,

Mark Buffat

BREAKTHROUGH PRAYER FOR JUNE

Spirit of God, the winds of change continue to blow, clearing a path toward renewal and hope. We ask that you give us the courage to continue trust your guidance and prompting as we step out in faith. Move us from words to actions, from dreams to plans, and from silence to witness. Lead us boldly into the future of shalom you desire for us. Break through anything that might hold us back and use your church, gathered or scattered, for unimagined new purposes. AMEN

HILLTOPPERS

The Hilltoppers group will meet on **Monday, June 14 at 11 AM** in fellowship hall. We will be observing social distancing and mask guidelines in effect at that time. There will be no food at this meeting.

Our speaker will be Steve Reeder, Loss Prevention officer with the UW Credit Union. He has been in the banking business for 27 years and his program will address Scams targeting our Senior Population. He asked that attendees bring questions about scams that have targeted themselves or potential scams that they have heard of and to be wary of them.

Anyone is welcome to attend.



Congratulations to our high school graduates this year:

- Spencer Buskager
- Danielle Wilken

JAVA JIVE

Equal Exchange uses an alternative chocolate supply chain which does not depend upon the exploitation of children, farmers, or the earth. Even in 2021, most of the chocolate on store shelves is made from cacao harvested using unethical practices. Equal Exchange has built an alternative trade model that gives farmers more economic power and democratic participation.

The farmer cooperatives that they work with receive a fair price for their cacao and do not use forced labor. The cacao is not produced with toxic pesticides or chemical fertilizers. The result is ethically sourced, organic chocolate which provides dignity and a decent quality of life to producers. This is the chocolate that you want to eat!

Karelyn Hopkins - a Team Coordinator of Monona UMW/AFT Mission Project

SUBSTITUTE OFFICE ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

The SPRC is looking for some volunteers to learn the secretary job so that Kay can have more regular vacations. Computer skills and availability during daytime hours is needed. You will be trained. Please contact the church office if this is something you could help with.

REQUEST FROM FINANCE COMMITTEE

The Finance Committee is looking for volunteers to support the financial health of our Church by completing our Church's annual financial audit. It has been more than a year since we have had this completed, so this is another important project for our Church. For more information about this opportunity, please feel free to reach out any Finance Committee member or directly to Dan DeBraal, Phyllis Stertz or our Church Secretary. This opportunity will require reasonable computer skills and a comfort dealing with numbers. Please prayerfully consider supporting our Church by volunteering.

BOOKS IN THE ENTRY

We have some books from our library and previous Adult Sunday School classes that you are welcome to take, read and return. The UMW book shelf is also available to check out a book.

MUMC 21 DAY RACIAL EQUITY HABIT BUILDING CHALLENGE

For 21 days this June, the Church & Society committee invites you to set an intention to look through a lens of racial equity. Each day from **June 6 through June 26**, make time to read, listen, watch, notice, connect, engage, act, reflect, and/or stay inspired through the resources listed at <https://www.eddiemoorejr.com/21daychallenge>. Watch the MUMC Facebook page for daily suggestions, too.

We will kick off our racial equity habit building challenge on **Sunday, June 6**, with a **Fight for Voting Rights presentation via Zoom at 11:30 a.m.** Maribeth Witzel-Behl will walk us through the history of voting rights in the United States, and in Wisconsin, from the founding of our country to today.

You will also want to mark your calendar for a virtual presentation of the **American Players Theatre performance of The Mountaintop at 6:30 p.m. on Sunday, June 13.**

Watch for Zoom link details in the This Week at MUMC e-mail messages that go out on Mondays (you may need to check the promotions tab in your in box for these e-mail messages).

Ready to get started? Subscribe to the daily prayers for anti-racism at <https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/articles/praying-for-change-daily-prayers-for-anti-racism>.



APT VIRTUAL PERFORMANCE OF "THE MOUNTAINTOP"

By Katori Hall

Directed by Ron OJ Parson

Sunday, June 13th @ 6:30pm. We will gather in Fellowship Hall to watch this streamed performance. SEATING IS LIMITED to the first 35 people and RESERVATIONS ARE REQUIRED. Call or email Kay in the office to reserve your seats! Masks will be required for this event.

Summary

The night before his assassination, Martin Luther King, Jr. returns to the Lorraine Hotel after delivering his last impassioned speech, "I've Been to the Mountaintop." A mysterious maid delivers his room service, though she seems to have more on her agenda than a simple meal. As their conversation progresses, true intentions come to light in a story written to humanize Dr. King, to help us understand that you don't have to be superhuman to be a hero. A riveting, poetic journey through Martin Luther King Jr.'s missing minutes on April 3, 1968.

Featuring Gavin Lawrence as Dr Martin Luther King, Jr. & Sola Thompson as Camae. The show runs 1 hour and 45 minutes

CODED BIAS FILM AND DISCUSSION

We are invited to join First Unitarian Society (FUS) for their June First Friday Film - "Coded Bias."

"Coded Bias" (90 min) is a documentary film directed by Shalini Kantayya and premiered at the 2020 Sundance Film Festival. It follows researchers and advocates, principally MIT computer scientist and founder of the Algorithmic Justice League Joy Buolamwini, as they explore how algorithms encode and propagate bias. It touched on other ethical issues in Big Tech, including surveillance via facial recognition, and the perils of computer-based judgment in human evaluation. Others featured in the documentary include: "Weapons of Math Destruction" author Cathy O'Neill and members of "Big Brother Watch," including Silkie Carlo.

After the film, FUS will host a brief community discussion via Zoom at 7 pm on **Friday, June 4**.

Register by Thursday, June 3, at noon at <https://forms.gle/mmK2bsCjorK9TUJ4A> to receive links to both the film and the after-film discussion. These links will be emailed to you on June 3 around 1 pm.

Please Note: Given that this film is 90 minutes long, you will need to start watching it by 5:30 pm on Friday, June 4, if you want to finish in time for the after-film discussion starting at 7 pm.

THANK YOU

A Huge Thank You to all the Donors and Volunteers, along with the Red Cross staff for our successful Seeds of Peace Blood Drive in May. The need is great and on-going! To help with this, we will host another Seeds of Peace Blood Drive on **Tuesday August 17**. We will need donors and volunteers so watch the future newsletters for more information.

WEEDS IN THE PATIO

If you are looking for a reason to go outside and enjoy the weather, stop by the church and pick some weeds that are already growing in the sidewalk and patio cracks. Rest on the bench or gather with a few friends at the tables. Take a walk through the garden to see what's growing.

RIVER FOOD PANTRY

The River is currently accepting 18-count egg cartons until further notice. Also, The River is NOT accepting clothing or household items. If you have items to donate, please check with either Agrace or Boomerang. You are welcome to drop off egg cartons, paper bags, non-perishable food, or personal hygiene items at church daily from 9am until 2pm. The River Food Pantry is our Mission of the Month for June. Please check out the article in this newsletter.

...PLANT BASED EATING...

The Hilltopper program on May 10, 2021

For the second time this year, fifteen Hilltoppers, adhering to Covid protocol, met in person at the church. Andrea Miller, Dietitian with HyVee Stores, provided the program about Plant-Based Eating. The program was arranged for by the MUMC Church & Society Group as part of the 2021 Earth Day observance.

Using the Social Principles of the United Methodist Church as our guide, the MUMC Church & Society Group looks at contemporary social and ethical issues and strives to respond to those issues from the perspective of the Christian Faith. While the Covid pandemic is grabbing the immediate attention all over the world, hovering above it is the even more important issue of the ailing Mother Earth.

In his book *A Life on Our Planet, My Witness Statement and A Vision for the Future*, the great British naturalist David Attenborough talks about the “most costly environmental catastrophe in history.” While describing the spiraling decline of our planet’s biodiversity, caused by unsustainable human life styles, Attenborough is also sharing ideas for healing interventions that could prevent the most devastating predictions about the demise of our natural world from coming true.

One of the most important life-style changes humans could make, says Attenborough, involves our food choices. While God created us to be herbivores, “gave us every plant yielding seed and every tree with seed in its fruits for us to eat,” over time, we have become omnivores nourishing ourselves more with meat-based diets. As the world’s population grows, animal agriculture imposes greater and greater burdens on Mother Earth. Industrial meat production takes huge tolls on the environment, using enormous amounts of water, energy and land, for growing animal feed with very poor nutritional returns, while producing a colossal amount of toxic waste products including methane, a byproduct from farm animals’ digestive systems, a greenhouse gas many times more destructive than carbon dioxide because of how effectively it contributes to the dangerous overheating of the earth.

Statistics show that cutting the consumption of great amounts of factory farmed animal products and replacing these with smaller amounts of high-quality products from humanely raised livestock, in combination with intake of greater amounts of plant-based foods, with their vitamins and minerals, micro nutrients, and fibers, has an enormous healing effect on Mother Earth and on humans as well.

For the benefit of all of us, here are some of the details we learned about plant-based eating:

1. Plant-Based Eating is not a diet with strict rules. It is not vegan or even vegetarian. While it focuses on fruits, vegetables, plant proteins and whole grains, it can include dairy and animal protein in moderate amounts.
2. Aim for 5 servings of fruits and vegetables daily. Variety is key.
3. All forms of fruits & vegetables count, fresh, canned and frozen. If canned: look for NO SALT; UNSWEETENED applesauce; fruit in JUICE or in LIGHT SYRUP.
4. Plant Proteins are present in whole grains, beans and other legumes, nuts & seeds like quinoa, and in many vegetables. Whole, dried or raw. Some processed as butters, or mixtures of ingredients.
5. There are many different kinds of grains. Go for 100% WHOLE GRAINS, which contain not just starch but also fiber and proteins. Get breads with a mixture of grains, including seeds and nuts. Breads of sprouted grains are very nutritious.

6. How much good quality of protein is needed for an adult? Multiply your weight in pounds by 0.36 grams, (equals 7g protein recommended/20 lbs of body weight per day). Note: most foods are only part protein.
7. Think of meat proteins as an accessory rather than the focus of the meal. Use lean versions. Include variety in your meals, beef, poultry, pork, seafood. Buy fresh or unseasoned frozen meat.
8. Other animal- based proteins: Eggs (one per day). Dairy: very nutrient rich. 2-3 servings/day. One serving means 8 oz. cow's (or soy) milk; 1.5 oz cheese; 8 oz. yoghurt. No sweeteners.
9. Plan your meal around one or several vegetables. Consider the protein available in the veggies. Then add meat if you want, in smaller amounts. Add veggies or mushrooms when making patties or meatballs.
10. Plant-based eating often leads to improved health outcomes such as lower levels of obesity, reduced risk of heart disease, and lower blood pressure.
11. Plant-based eating usually results in lower proportion of calories from fat, fewer overall calories, and more fiber, potassium and vitamin C.

In summary, by choosing to eat more plant-based foods, we can drastically cut our carbon footprint, save precious water supplies, and help ensure that vital crop resources are fed to people, rather than industrial livestock. With the wealth of plant-based options available, it has never been easier to eat with the planet in mind.

Watch for more on Plant-Based Eating events in coming months.

Church & Society, Siv Goulding

YARD SIGNS

You can still get a yard signs that say Together Online to display in your yard. They cost \$13. Please contact the church office to get your sign.



JUST BAKERY

We can still enjoy the wonderful goodies from Just Bakery. Search for “Just Bakery” online to view their many products. You may call 608-598-0420 to place your order. Due to COVID-19 their store front is no longer open but their products are available for delivery in Dane County for a \$5.00 charge or you may pick up your order curbside on Saturdays (9:00 - 2:00) at 1708 Thierer Rd. Madison.

FOOT CLINICS

Did you know that Monona UMC is hosting the NewBridge Foot Clinic in our Fellowship Hall three Tuesdays a month? NewBridge is partnered with Registered Nurse Gail Owens and Nail Technician Susan Hasey to provide foot care for older adults 60+. The cost is \$20 and we ask that you bring two towels. Appointments are required by calling (608) 512-0000.

WHO IS MAJM?

We are Madison Area Jail Ministry!



What do we do?

For more than 50 years, **Madison Area Jail Ministry** has served incarcerated men and women in the Dane County jail, providing spiritual care, prayer, Bible study and worship, devotional materials, court presence, family outreach, tutoring and re-entry support.

A ministry of presence, MAJM's Chaplain Todd Marcotte serves in the jail full-time, with support from part-time volunteer chaplains.

15,000 men and women come through the jail in Madison every year, on average 600 there per day, many of whom seek and find hope and life through MAJM.

Learn more about **Madison Area Jail Ministry**. Sign up for the monthly **MAJM E-newsletter**.

AGRACE HOSPICECARE

Agrace Offers Virtual Grief Support

Agrace is offering a professionally led, virtual (accessible with a tablet, computer or smartphone) grief support group in June. ***Bridges Support Group*** is for adults grieving the death of any loved one. It meets **June 9 and June 23**, from 9:30 a.m. to 11 a.m. Pre-registration is required.

Bridges meets online and is open to the public. There is no fee for people whose family member was in hospice care in the past 12 months; fees for others can be lowered or waived, if needed. Call (608) 327-7118 with questions or to register.

Agrace Seeks Volunteers in Dane County

Volunteers are needed to assist customers, operate the cash register and sort donations at the Agrace Thrift Stores in Madison, pack donated merchandise in donors' homes, or make companionship visits to local Agrace hospice patients in patients' homes, nursing homes or assisted living centers.

Agrace will host volunteer orientation **Thursday, June 3 or Monday, June 14**, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at its Madison campus. **Pre-registration is required for either session.** Call (608) 327-7163 or visit agrace.org/volunteer to fill out an application.

\$ Financial Report \$

Cash Flow April 30, 2021

<u>General Fund</u>	<u>Month</u>	<u>Year to Date</u>
Income	\$ 20,625	\$ 95,675
General Operating Expenses	18,646	79,252
Net Surplus (Shortfall)	\$ 1,979	\$ 16,423

A STEWARDSHIP MESSAGE

CELEBRATE: LIGHT AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL

Psalm 118:24 *"This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it."*

Where and when do you stop and celebrate? How do you "rejoice and be glad" in the day the "Lord has made?"

Today I stop to rejoice in the rain that is coming down, that we very much need. I celebrate the sun from this weekend that brought so many smiles. I rejoice in all of our churches who have and are continuing to do ministry despite the difficulties of the times. I celebrate the faithfulness of our congregations to continue to give of their time, talents, and treasures.

How are you celebrating God's continued blessings in your lives?

What is your response going to be?

How are you going to give to others because God has given to you?

We are so blessed. So, we are called to be a blessing to others. Volunteer in ways you feel comfortable. Attend church, in whatever format you wish. Donate to your church, other nonprofits, and causes close to your heart. Pray. Always Pray.

Celebrate! Because "This is the day that the Lord has made."

Rev. Krystal Goodger,

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

MONONA UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

606 NICHOLS ROAD
MONONA, WI 53716

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

Monona UMC Church office 222-1633 (Fax 222-2395); Office Hours: Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Homepage www.mononaunitedmethodistchurch.org

Pastor Laura Crow 608-616-2325 pastorlauramumc@gmail.com

Kay – secretarymumc@sbcglobal.net

Mark – markbmumc@gmail.com

Virtual Worship 10:00am