



HILLTOP HERALD-MARCH 2021 MONONA UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

NO IN-PERSON GATHERINGS

We will not be meeting for worship or group activities for the time being. The church office is open 9am – 2pm. Pastor Laura and Mark Buffat are available for pastoral care by phone. Please don't hesitate to reach out if you are in need of anything. We have **cloth face masks** available in the entryway to pick up if you are in need of one.



SPRING FORWARD

On **Sunday, March 14**, Daylight Saving Time begins. Please set your clocks ahead 1 hour.

UMCOR SUNDAY

March 14 is UMCOR Sunday. When we give on UMCOR Sunday (formerly One Great Hour of Sharing), we empower the United Methodist Committee on Relief to act as the arms and legs of Christ's church. Our giving lays the foundation to help the most vulnerable in their darkest days. We believe that all people have God-given worth and dignity — without regard to race, religion or gender. Your support makes it possible for UMCOR to direct 100 percent of all other contributions to the projects our donors specify, instead of using this money on administrative or fundraising costs.

UMCOR's specialized ministries - responding in disaster, fighting hunger, alleviating poverty, providing relief supplies around the world, and offering hospitality to immigrants and refugees - all bring hope, support and aid to people who need to be surrounded by the love of Christ.

NEW UPPER ROOMS ARE HERE

The *Upper Room* is a great little devotional book that you can use for daily reading. The new March-April issue has arrived and is in the entryway. Feel free to take one home. If you would like one mailed to you, please contact the church office.

YARD SIGNS

We received our yard signs that say Together Online. You are welcome to purchase one for \$13 to display in your yard. Please contact the church office to reserve your sign.



PASTOR'S COLUMN

"A View from the Outside"

One of the blessings of being an intentional interim pastor is the ability to serve multiple congregations in a wide variety of settings in a relatively short period of time. Each has helped me grow in my own faith journey and ministry. And each has also given me hope for the broader Christian "big C" Church.

Until being appointed to serve you at Monona UMC, I have never been part of a United Methodist congregation, so I want today to lift up some of the amazing "Methodist" things I have observed with my outsider's eyes that I find hope-filled...

Twice a month, District Superintendent Scott Carlson hosts a 90-minute gathering on Zoom for all people serving churches in the district. I don't know if these gatherings took place pre-COVID, but they have become fairly common and wide-spread in the last year. I have participated in similar gatherings with UCC and an ecumenical mix of clergy.

One observable thing about the UMC calls is the diversity (both present and absent) among the faces on the screens. Each time we gather, about 50% of the people are men and 50% are women. Also, about 50% are international (primarily Korean, Hmong, or Hispanic) and 50% are white European. Visibly missing are those who are black and those who are openly gender non-binary (either in their appearance or use of preferred pronouns). These are reflections of the historic roots of the UMC, the strength of being a global denomination, and its current struggle with questions of LGBTQ inclusion.

It is a reminder that the church is a human system, imperfect, incomplete, and yet capable of learning and growth. We need each other and we more accurately reflect the beautiful diversity that God imagines when we work ecumenically and globally.

Recently I participated in a District-wide training session for clergy and lay members of the Staff Parish Relations Committee (SPRC). Again, every church I have served has had some kind of committee like this. Each has functioned a bit differently – and ALL would have benefited from the conversations on conflict resolution and healthy communication that was provided. This was definitely something I will add to my tool box to share with other congregations.

One of the scenarios we discussed was anticipating the excitement and concerns that might be present when a cross-cultural appointment is made in a congregation for the first time. What might the pastor need to know about the congregation? What might the congregation need from the pastor? How do you effectively bridge differences in language, theology, cultural experience and expectations?

Having grown up in a Catholic congregation, we seemed to rotate through a number of international priests on a fairly regular basis. As I remember it, some adapted fairly quickly; others never seemed to quite catch on to who we were. I hadn't thought of these priests in a very long time, and what struck me now was that adaptation was always exclusively one-directional – the new priest adapting to US and the way WE did things. Maybe it is because I was a child, but never can I recall an expectation for US to adapt to the style of the new priest. Whether or not the new priest "fit" was always centered on OUR needs and expectations.

I wonder if the global nature of the UMC and the opportunity to really welcome cross-cultural appointments in a congregation and in a district can be leveraged as a way to help predominantly white congregations explore the hard questions of deep-seated racial bias and stereotypes that plague our community. What would it look like to take a deep dive into a true cross-cultural exchange, learning and adapting to one another, to practice de-centering whiteness? I wonder what such a partnership might do to open wide our understanding and appreciation for the larger body of Christ. I wonder how the church's example of unconditional love, radical hospitality, and embrace of differences might spill over and create healing in our communities.

If this is ever a question the church wishes to explore, I can say that in a short time I have met some amazing clergy already in your district that could be valuable resources for such an exploration.

Grace and peace,

Pastor Laura

BIBLE PASSAGES & THEMES 10:00AM ONLINE SERVICE

March 7 - Exodus 20:1-17, 1 Corinthians 12:27-13:13

“Being Present to Church”

March 14 - Luke 10:25-37

“Being Present to Neighbor”

March 21 - John 3:11-21

“Being Present to the World”

March 28 - Mark 11:1-11

“Palm Sunday”

BREAKTHROUGH PRAYER FOR LENT

Renewing God, in this season of Lent, we ask that you use these 40 days to break through our lives, our church, and our community with new ideas, new hope, and the future you desire for us. Break through anything that might hold us back and use your church, gathered or scattered, for unimagined new purposes. AMEN

“LET'S TALK ABOUT RACISM”

We continue our overview of systemic racism in our country, using the discussion of the book *Stamped: Racism, Anti-Racism, and You* by Jason Reynolds and Ibram Kendi which began on January 28th.

Join us for our last two Thursday nights at 7:00pm on Zoom.

- **February 25** – Section 5, Chapters 21-24
- **March 4** – Section 5 continued: Chapters 25-28

Please use the following link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88600931200?pwd=ZmlHRWYrU3Jpb2JndDdHbWg3WlRFdz09>

Meeting ID: 886 0093 1200

Passcode: 479075

LENTEN RESOURCES...

We hope you are enjoying the “Lent in a Bag” activities that were distributed at the beginning of Lent. We welcome your thoughts and feedback on how you are using the materials to help us plan for and improve future resources. We continue to gather on Zoom on Wednesday evenings for a time of reflection and prayer. This is a great way to be present with one another during this season of Lent:

Mid-Week Reflections:
March 3, 10, 17, & 24
On Zoom @ 7:00pm
Meeting ID: 819 6025 7891
Passcode: 787305

Looking ahead to HOLY WEEK...

- Sunday, March 28 - **Palm Sunday Worship @ 10:00am** via Zoom & YouTube: Host Rick Siferd (see below ways to join the liturgy for Palm Sunday!)
- Thursday, April 1 – **Maundy Thursday “At-Home” Liturgy & Kit** (see below to register to get your kit!)
- Friday, April 2 - **Ecumenical Good Friday Worship @ 1:00pm** via Zoom: Host Lake Edge UCC
- Saturday, April 3 - **Holy Saturday Fair Trade & Bake Sale @ 9:00am-11:00am**
- Saturday, April 3 - **Prayer Walk from Monona UMC @ 10:00am**
- Sunday, April 4 - **Easter Worship @ 10:00am** via Zoom & YouTube: Host Rick Siferd

PALM SUNDAY...

- Help us create a virtual “Parade of Palms” by sending in a picture of yourself holding up a “palm” You can make a palm branch, pick up a palm branch from church after March 15, or show us the “palm” of your hand! Email or text photos to Pastor Laura by March 23rd!
- ***If you or your children want to be included in the Palm Sunday drama, please contact Pastor Laura by Monday, March 1st!*** All ages and abilities are welcome!

MAUNDY THURSDAY

We are creating a “Jesus’ Last Supper” liturgy and materials “kit” for you to use in your home on Maundy Thursday, April 1. **To receive your kit you need to REGISTER by Sunday, March 14** so we can be sure to order the correct amounts of materials. To REGISTER, please send an email to the office (secretarymumc@sbcglobal.net) with the following information:

- Your Name
- Your Email Address and Phone #
- # of people in your family who will be participating
- Any dietary restrictions (e.g., gluten-free, dairy-free, nut allergies, etc.)

Kits will be available to pick up on Palm Sunday and through Holy Week during business hours. If you are not able to pick up your kit, please include a note that you need delivery. There are NO on-line components to this liturgy; everything you need for a meaningful service and conversation around your table will be included in the “kit.”

MISSION OF THE MONTH

About Goodman Community Center

The Goodman Community Center (GCC) is here for the whole community. People from all walks of life and all ages come for programs and services that make their lives — and our community — stronger. Whether people come take a class, use the food pantry, host a party, drop off children, all are welcome here.

Goodman started as the Atwood Community Center at 2425 Atwood Avenue and has served the community as a full-service center since 1943. It was affiliated with the newly formed United Neighborhood Centers until 1999 when it became an independent nonprofit.

In 2008, a new building was opened at 149 Waubesa Street and took a new name — the Goodman Community Center. While the Center continues to love a sense of place on the near east side, programs and services now reach throughout Dane County.

GCC is the largest neighborhood center in Madison. It currently houses a preschool, 4-year-old kindergarten, afterschool programs for all ages (including countywide Girls Inc.), an alternative high school, an older adult program, food pantry, fitness center. We also rent our rooms out to individuals, private corporations and community groups on a daily basis.

Since opening the new building in 2008, GCC has served around 25,000 people each year through our programs, services and facility rentals. The GCC estimates that they have touched more than 200,000 lives since our founding in 1954.

Please consider supporting this wonderful organization that works to strengthen our community in many ways. Please mark your check or online giving, “Goodman Community Center”.

Thank you and many blessings.
The Mission Team

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.

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. Kay has scheduled vacation for the week of March 8 so would love to have someone trained by then. Please contact the church office if this is something you could help with.

THANK YOU

Thank you to everyone for the prayers, cards and phone calls, even food. It was very much appreciated and I am on the mend from my hip replacement surgery.

May God bless you richly.

Anna Mae Wilken

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.

ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL SUNDAYS 11:30am

Our current study is on Sermon on the Mount, A Beginner's Guide to the Kingdom of Heaven By Amy-Jill Levine. Amy-Jill Levine is E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Professor of New Testament Studies at Vanderbilt University Divinity School, Department of Religious Studies, and Graduate Department of Religion. She is a Jew with an amazing expertise into Jesus' ministry with his fellow Jews. If you want to get a feel for the author here is a link to an interview with her: <https://images.app.goo.gl/xHDDzoNKuEnD1nPP8>

The book is available on line from a variety of book sellers. Please order your own book. The link for the Zoom gathering is:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81468001864?pwd=bkk0ZEFLTjR1RFByeThzNm1KRXBJdz09>

Meeting ID: 814 6800 1864;

Passcode: 954489

IN SYMPATHY

Our sympathy goes to Nan Williams and her family, upon the death of her sister, Lyn.

CARING COORDINATOR COLUMN

The Caring Ministry Team and Stephen Ministry Leadership Team are connecting with the congregation by making phone calls, writing an email, or sending a good old fashion handwritten note. You too can participate in this connecting and reconnecting ministry! If there is someone you have not seen, nor heard from in a while, or that God has put on your heart or in your mind, pick up a pen or dial your phone and make a connection!

When I read Sara Whalen's obituary, an active and beloved Monona community member who recently passed, I learned of her volunteer work with Luke House – The Community Meal Program.

Luke House has been feeding Madison's hungry at 310 South Ingersoll Street since 1986. Their mission is simple: feed the hungry, no questions asked. Folks show up and they are fed. No paperwork. No screening. Free meals are served nine times a week, all-year-round, rain, snow, or shine. At each meal, they serve between 60 and 120 guests.

All of Luke House funding is from private donors. They rely on help from community volunteers and 35 local churches. Luke house receives no money from the city, county, state, or federal government.

I cannot help but wonder, who will fill the void left by Sara?

Go to their website <https://www.lukehousemadison.org/> to learn more and to see a picture of Sara on their home page.

Caring & Coordinating, Mark Buffat

MADISON JAIL MINISTRY UPDATE

Matthew 25: 36-40: *I was in prison and you came to visit me. I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.*

During its more than 50 years of service, 160 churches have supported Madison Area Jail Ministry (MAJM). As a result of Covid-19, churches experienced a significant decline in collections during 2020, which resulted in a 44% reduction in revenues. Revenues have improved as churches transitioned to virtual services.

Chaplain Todd Marcotte continues to provide spiritual care in the Dane County Jail during the pandemic. The jail put several volunteer programs on hold to limit risking exposure to the virus by inmates and staff. However, Chaplain Todd has continued to serve the incarcerated, their families and the deputies. He is certainly a Beacon of Hope to those he serves.

So many people have been involved in this ministry. Electronic communications and social media were developed for MAJM by volunteers. Inmates are now able to view worship videos on their tablets. Dr. Rosemary Russ of the Tutoring Project worked with the jail to make virtual tutoring available during the pandemic. Each tutor is trained and will help inmates who may be illiterate, working on their GED, writing resumes, writing a letter to the courts, writing a letter home, or even writing a memoir.

We thank all who are involved with the jail ministry and also the churches who have donated winter jackets, men's clothing, books, Christmas cards, and their prayers. If you have a heart for those imprisoned, talk to me about joining the Friends of the Jail Ministry. For more information go to Madisonjailministry.org. We are a Ministry of Presence, bringing the Light of Christ to those in darkness.

Marilyn Hearden

ALTAR FLOWERS

We welcome donations of flower 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.

SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE

The Czerepinski Scholarship is awarded to a graduating senior of a local high school who is a member of Monona UMC. The Price scholarship gives preference to graduating seniors and members of Monona UMC, although others continuing their education may be considered. All applicants will be evaluated on the basis of academics (40%), community service (20%), service to the church (20%) and moral character (20%). The awards are to help with tuition, books and supplies.

The Czerepinski fund was established by the estate of Henry Czerepinski, a member of this congregation. The Price endowed scholarship was established by long-time members, Alton and Roma Price.

Applications, with instructions, can be picked up at the church office or emailed to you. The applications are due back in the church office by **Wednesday, March 31**.

JAVA JIVE

A few Sundays ago Pastor Laura's sermon was about filling someone's bucket, various ways to do it with physical needs or with a smile or surprise or encouraging words etc. Sometimes our buckets need to be filled in the same way.

I read an EEx article that reminded me of "Filling Buckets". EEx alternative trade model provides a Fairtrade Minimum price to their farmer coops, which they can always count on and also a premium payment for organic. This has been a powerful "count on" resource during this pandemic for coop members and surrounding communities, helping them in ways that wouldn't exist if trying to make it on their own. And so buckets were filled.

In Peru an EEx cacao coop used their fair trade premium to provide food, masks and cleaning supplies to another community in need. Another coop used their premium to purchase PPE for medical workers in their community. And another coop transported medical supplies and medicines in a truck to a community at a time when roads and logistics of transporting were difficult. And the stories continued. So, many buckets were and continue to be filled!!

We here at MUMC help fill MANY small farmer buckets by providing a market place for their products. And our buckets are filled with excellent products that we enjoy and we can fill someone's bucket with an AFT treat or gift of a product and on and on buckets are filled. ☺

We have a wonderful AFT team with sustainable leadership. Team members, Jackie Hull and Karelyn Hopkins will be co-coordinators of this UMW AFT Mission starting March 1st. Jackie will be coordinator March-May.

I have enjoyed the working relationship and friendships and fun we have with this Wonderful Mission for God's People locally and globally and for our GREAT Planet. Together we continue to build community in our team and in our church and out into the world. Thanks be to God.

Kay Mackie - an AFT team Mission member

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.

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.

...LET'S CELEBRATE MOTHERHOOD IN A SPECIAL WAY...

on Mother's Day, May 9, 2021



Motherhood is an ancient concept, that existed way before Adam and Eve ever walked on the earth. While the Bible tells us that God is the creator of all of life, early peoples understood that all life was brought forth from the earth. Is it so strange then that people came to think of the earth as Mother Earth and showed their love and respect for her and all of her offspring in numerous ways?

From our Wednesday evening zoom get-togethers, we know there is a lot of love for Mother Earth in our congregation. So, this coming Mother's Day we would like to celebrate motherhood in an extra-ordinary way by celebrating our Mother Earth.

We are asking those of you who are passionate photographers to share your images of the wonders of nature with the congregation during that service. We are especially looking for nature photos that make us think of the earth as mother of all of God's creation. If you have stories to go with your photos, please include these as well.

We are eager to get started on this project, so please start sending your photos to Siv Goulding at jspf Goulding@gmail.com. If you have questions, call at 608-839-3512.

Church & Society

RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVE

Monona United Methodist Church will host our second blood drive on **Tuesday, May 18, 1:00-6:00pm**. Blood donors and volunteers are needed. Please contact the church office for more information.

Volunteers Needed:

- 2 volunteers at 11:30am to help unload
- 3 volunteers, per shift 12:30 – 6:30pm to help with registration, escort donors and in refreshment area

General Donor Information:

- At least 17 years old (16 with parental permission)
- General good health
- Plan for about an hour
- Rapid Pass on the day of donation saves 15 minutes
- Bring donor card or government ID
- Power Red donation: type O, B- and A-
- Questions on eligibility 1-866-236-3276



**American
Red Cross**

AGRACE TRIFT STORES NEED VOLUNTEER CASHIERS

Volunteers are needed to help Agrace's thrift stores stay open. The stores generate funds to support programs for Agrace patients and families. If you want to do something meaningful and fun during the pandemic, please consider volunteering as a cashier at any of their Madison or Janesville locations. For details call (608) 327-7163 or email volunteer@agrace.org.

AGRACE OFFERS FREE VIRTUAL GRIEF SUPPORT GROUPS

From January to May, Agrace will host free, bi-weekly online family grief support groups. For details or to register, visit agrace.org/supportgroup or call (608) 327-7135.

\$ Financial Report \$

Cash Flow January 31, 2021

General Fund	Month	Year to Date
Income	\$ 32,825	\$ 32,825
General Operating Expenses	20,615	20,615
Net Surplus (Shortfall)	\$ 12,210	\$ 12,210

A STEWARDSHIP MESSAGE
CHANGE: IS IT TIME FOR CHANGE?

“Even now,’ declares the LORD, ‘return to me with all your heart, with fasting and weeping and mourning.” Rend your heart and not your garments. Return to the LORD your God, for He is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love, and He relents from sending calamity. Who knows? He may turn and relent and leave behind a blessing — grain offerings and drink offerings for the LORD your God.’ ~Joel 2:12-14

With February comes the cold dark days of Lent. Are you ready? Are you ready to seriously look inside yourself? Are you ready to be honest about what is godly and what is not? Are you ready to change?

Change is a great theme word for Lent (and all of 2020). Many things changed health, wealth, and politics. It changed without us trying and definitely without us wanting it to change. But in Lent, things change because we make them change. It is our time to change our habits, minds, action, and internal/external words to become more like Christ.

Do you need to change your change? Think about how much you give to the church. Should/can you give more? Maybe your answer is “I don’t know.” Think about this: How much do you spend each month going out to eat. How much money do you spend on coffee? How much money do you spend on fun item, hobbies, and events? Now compare those numbers to the amount you give to God each month.

Do you need to make a change?

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

MONONA UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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MONONA, WI 53716

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

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Virtual Worship 10:00am