The Current of The River of Life January 2021



February 17 **Drive-thru Praver**

Beloit Campus: Clinton Campus: Noon

We are still in the planning stage. The imposition of ashes will be available.



2345 Prairie Avenue Beloit WI

402 Church Street Clinton WI

Good Friday & Caster Service Details to be announced....

United Methodist Church in Beloit and Clinton

Loving People Into Taking Their Next Step Wth Jesus

BELOIT CAMPUS

2345 Prairie Avenue Beloit, WI 608.362.8866

OFFICE

2375 Prairie Avenue **Beloit, WI** 608.362.8866 Fax 608.362.0554

CLINTON CAMPUS

402 Church Street Clinton, WI 608.676.4646

LAY LEADERSHIP 2021

Lay Leaders

Tom Alverson

Ad Council Chairperson

Shellie Olson

Armed Intruder Chairperson

Barb Kuska

Annual Conference Lay Members

Bob Scheets Carol Scheets

Board of Trustees Chairperson

Lee Kuska

Decorating Committee Chairperson

Tracy Maxwell

Finance Chairperson

Jesse Calkins

Homeless & Human Trafficking Chairperson

Hospitality Chairperson

Diane Gemignani

Memorials and Wills Chairperson

Marietta Axmear

Missions & Outreach Co-Chairpersons

Diane Gemignani & Ellen Butchart

Youth Ministry Team Chairperson

Karen Parssinen

Staff Pastor Parish Relations Chairperson

Marlene Erickson

Stewardship Team Chairperson

Tom Alverson

Covid Task Force Chairperson

Pastor Brenda Whitford

Tech Team Chairperson

Derek Bergh

United Methodist Women Chairperson

Marlene Erickson

CLERGY STAFF

Brenda Whitford, Pastor 608-482-0021

pastorbrenda@rolumcwi.com

Retired Pastor Keith Putney 608-774-3162

CHURCH OFFICE

608.362.8866

Christina Bergh Office Manager

cbergh@rolumcwi.com

Tom Alverson Worship Leader

talverson@rolumcwi.com

Bonnie Moore Receptionist

bmoore@rolumcwi.com

MUSIC STAFF

Lois Ulvin Judith Paddock Marge Johnson Director of Music Organist Pianist



Please contact the office if you or a friend would like a prayer shawl. We have many shawls to share.





You can watch worship online in two ways:

- * On our church website
- * Through Facebook

The benefit of a "Facebook Premiere" (similar to a Facebook Live) is that we can comment in real time. So, as we watch at the same time, we can interact with the video together. This gives at least a little more sense of the community of our church family as we see each other's comments.

From the Pastor



Your faith should influence your politics; your politics should not influence your faith.

As a pastor I try not to be particularly political. It's important to me that every church member feel that I care about them regardless of their political affiliation, or lack thereof. I do, however, think it is really important that if you are a politically active person, that your faith should influence your politics. I do not claim any political party,

although I do tend to lean a certain way politically. I do believe it is possible for people of faith to espouse any political ideology. More important is which part of your belief system you value most. As followers of Jesus Christ, as those who call him Lord and Savior, we must make sure we are following him as we decide our positions politically.

You may be reading this days before president-elect Biden is inaugurated or days after. You may feel that, finally, things will get better for our country, or you may feel that things will soon get much worse. It's okay that we disagree about the way the government should be run. Because it is following Jesus that is most important.

"What would Jesus do" was a popular saying some years ago, that became cliché, yet that thought is extremely important for our faith. Regardless of your political beliefs, in the midst of tremendous division in our country, what would Jesus do? How would Jesus treat others? How would Jesus restore relationship? How would Jesus bring about the Kingdom of God, where God is King and Jesus is Lord and Savior?

If Jesus were on earth today, I do not believe he would choose any of our political parties. He would certainly not condone violence to get our way politically. He would shake his head and tell us that we are not following him. Love God with all of your heart. Love your neighbor as yourself. Do to others as you would have them do to you. He might quote the prophet Micah and tell you to seek justice and love kindness, while walking humbly with God. It has become quite clear, to me anyways, that political parties are about power. Jesus said to be a servant.

On January 10th we remembered our baptisms. We remembered that we are claimed by God. We live under the grace of Jesus Christ and are given power by the Holy Spirit to Partner with God to build his Kingdom. It is not a Kingdom of our power, but a Kingdom of love and peace and kindness.

So, absolutely, be political. Work to make our world better by electing officials of integrity and work to change the laws of our country for the better. Hold our public servants to a high standard. Make sure that all you do is through your faith, so that it gives glory to God.

Stay strong in faith, until we can meet in person together, Love, Pastor Brenda

Nan Bolar and Karen Parssinen are doing an incredible job each week leading Sunday School on YouTube. If you know a child that would like to participate, contact the office and Karen will take them materials each week. Adults would be blessed watching as well! You can find the videos on our Website under the Ministries/Children's Ministry drop down menu. You can also find the videos on our YouTube channel "River Of Life UMC Beloit."

















Virtual Sunday School with Photos of Mrs Bolar & Miss Karen and kids doing craft activities

THE RIVER OF LIFE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH LEADERSHIP TEAM January 2021

Administrative Council

Shellie Olson, Chair Tom Alverson Jesse Calkins Marlene Erickson Diane Gemignani Donna Hammett Tracy Maxwell Sarah Parsons Karen Parssinen Chrissy Bergh Pastor Brenda

At Large Members

Ellen Butchart Margaret Hansen Sam Paddock Pat Sands Roger Sands

Lay Leaders

Tom Alverson

<u>Lay Members of Annual</u> <u>Conference</u>

1. Bob Scheets
2. Carol Scheets

Circuit Laity Rep

Kelly Clark

Finance

Jesse Calkins, chair

Lynn Caple
Paul Dubler
Tom Michels
Shellie Olson
Sam Paddock
Bob Scheets
Carol Scheets
Chrissy Bergh
Pastor Brenda

Staff Pastor Parish Relations Committee Marlene Erickson, chair

Class of 2021

- 1. Mary Alice Harris
- 2. Steve Austin

Class of 2022

- 1. Julie Hartje
- 2. Kathy Dearth

Class of 2023

- 1. Ann Williams
- 2. Beth Cudney
- 3. Marlene Erickson

Lay Leader Pastor Brenda

Trustees

Lee Kuska, chair

Class of 2021

- 1. Jim Churchill
- Brenda Folyer
 3.

Class of 2022

- 1. David Clark
- 2. Sheryl Horvath
- 3. Kathy Rodgers

Class of 2023

- 1. Dennis Boschma
- 2. David Haas
- 3. Lee Kuska

Tom Alverson Pastor Brenda

Leadership Development (Nominations)

Class of 2021

- 1. Tom Alverson
- 2.

Class of 2022

- 1. Jesse Calkins
- 2.

Class of 2023

1.

2.

THE RIVER OF LIFE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH LEADERSHIP TEAM January 2021

PROGRAM COMMITTEES Nurture

Decorating Committee

Tracy Maxwell, chair Carol Allen Sheryl Horvath Kathy Smith Kathy Weiser

Discipleship

This Team needs to be developed

Homelessness and Human Trafficking:

Memorial Committee

Marietta Axmear, Chair Sandy Calkins Sandy Ovist Dolly Sonneson Lee Kuska (Trustees Rep.) Chrissy Bergh Pastor Brenda Whitford

Mission & Outreach

Ellen Butchart, Co-Chair Diane Gemignani Co-chr Robin Vieth Austin Delores Hahn Joanne Johnson Clara Welch

This Team needs to be developed

Radical Hospitality Committee

Diane Gemignani, chair Carol Allen Cindy Ferger Betty Hannum Sheryl Horvath Beverly Osbourne

Scholarship

Shellie Olson Karen Parssinen Pastor Brenda

Stewardship Team

Tom Alverson, Chair Jesse Calkins Irma Davis Tom Hamlett Brian Lutzow Shellie Olson Pastor Brenda

Youth Ministry

Karen Parssinen, Chair Robin Vieth-Austin Nan Bolar Lora Cawkins Donna Hammett Tina Henthorn Kelly Lutzow Carolyn Lynch Linda Matthews Tracy Maxwell

Beverly Osbourne Sarah Parsons Cindy Peters Pastor Brenda

Worship - Beloit

Tom Alverson
Judy Paddock
Lois Ulvin
Bob Parssinen
Bruce Cawkins
Irma Davis
Pastor Brenda

SHORT TERM TEAMS

Armed Intruder

Barb Kuska, Chair
Tom Alverson
John Butchart
Paul Dubler
Marlene Erickson
Julie Hartje
Sue Kiser
Lee Kuska
Pastor Brenda

Re-Open After Covid Team:

Tom Alverson
Julie Hartje
Lee Kuska
Shellie Olson
Bob Scheets
Lois Ulvin
Ann Williams
Chrissy Bergh
Pastor Brenda, Chair

Committee Accomplishments for 2020 & Goals for 2021

MEMORIAL AND WILLS COMMITTEE

The Memorial Committee had a goal in 2020 to update all pending memorial gifts. This was done by contacting the responsible party listed on each memorial and have them designate where it should We then made sure the area chosen was contacted.

-Marietta Axmear, Chairperson

HOSPITALITY

The Hospitality Committee has been providing support for our drive-in services. We've been greeting, finding people to help with parking, and helping with the end of service. It's been a joy to see everyone who comes through! We will continue with this role until we hear differently. If anyone would like to help or become a member of the Hospitality Committee, please contact Diane Gemignani at 608-290-5274 or dianegem23@gmail.com.

MISSION COMMITTEE

So many people are working from home to support our mission endeavors! Members are turning in pop tabs and food items at the drive-in services, they are continuing to make plarn to support the people who are making homeless mats, and lots of money is getting turned in to support our Loose Coin Offerings. Monthly pancake breakfasts to support families in need are up and running at the Clinton campus.

Our goals for 2021 are to get Bags of Hope back up and running, to organize another Adult Mission Trip to MMDC in September, and to provide support to other missions in our community and around the world.

We are always looking for new members! If you are interested, please contact Ellen Butchart at ebutchart@hotmail.com or Diane Gemignani at dianegem23@gmail.com.

UMW

Due to Covid 19 restrictions, UMW activities were severely curtailed during 2020. In person meetings were: The Ark Encounter by Carol Connors, The Prison Ministry in Wisconsin by Cathy and Carl Olson and one board meeting. Our Spring and Fall Rummage sales together with the Christmas Cookie Walk were cancelled. However, we were able to support local, national and global ministries with gifts of \$500 each to Domestic Violence Center of Beloit, Caritas, UM Children's Services of Wisconsin and Heifer International for a total of \$2000. The brightest spot was awarding a scholarship to Emily Hartje!

River Of Life United Methodist Women's UMW Goals for 2021

- 1. Praying through use of the Prayer Calendar at Unit Meetings.
- 2. Encouraging everyone to visit or invite visitors from other UMW Units.
- 3. Presenting at least two programs from the Program book at Circle meetings.

-Carol Connors

Committee Accomplishments for 2020 & Goals for 2021

CLINTON CAMPUS

Seems like the year 2020 just got started for us all, then came into play a pandemic called "Covid-19". A pandemic that a lot of thought would only be a few short weeks has lasted 44 weeks and counting.

I had just completed looking at the calendar layout of what was forth coming in 2020. Easter, Good Friday services, Fall Festival, and much more; going over the in-house mission of The Bags of Hope and Blankets of Warmth, getting ready to contact the organizations to see how things are going with them and if they are in need of supplies. Not knowing the severity of the pandemic, we were getting the information on how quickly this was causing folks to become sick. We, like many, needed to stop doing in-person worshiping. Not only did it effect in-person worshiping, it stopped in-person gatherings in restaurants as well as putting a stop to our Second Saturday Mornings Pancake Breakfast, and the planning of a new fund raiser for us.

We have started back up, as of September 2020, serving the Second Saturday Pancake Breakfast Drive-Thru style. The folks would rather be able to come inside to eat rather than drive through. We keeping praying for the day that we can be back in-person. Margaret Hansen and Cheryl Funk have been making more blankets for the Blankets of Warmth. We are seeking sewers to sew the blankets and if you don't sew, help to cut and assemble the blankets. If you are interested in helping out with this project, please call the office, 608-362-8866 or email me at, talverson@rolumcwi.com. We did participate in the Clinton Outreach Food Pantry to fill Christmas Baskets and we collected 268 boxes of Red Jell-O between the two campuses. Thanks to everyone to make the collection a huge success!! We also participated in this year's Christmas Light Night. We decorated the outside of the front of the church. It was a good night. We still somewhat got to decorate the church and also participate in the community annual Christmas festivity.

Stay Healthy! Stay Safe! Wash your hands! Practice Social Distancing!

God's Love and Blessings, Tom Alverson Site Worship Leader



Reopening Update

Now that there are two vaccines approved for preventing Covid-19, the Reopening Team will be discussing when it will be appropriate to begin worshiping in person again. We can see the light at the end of the tunnel: we just don't know how long the tunnel is. We need to be patient a little longer to keep our church family safe. We all are longing to return. Keep praying!



GIVING Because our Giving Is Worship

You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God. This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of the Lord's people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God." (2 Corinthians 9:10-12)

God established a design for worshipping when God revealed to Moses the plan for the Tent of Meeting (aka Tabernacle). Central to that worship was sacrificial giving. God required gifts of animals and grain be brought to the Tabernacle to be sacrificed and offered to God because it was pleasing to God. These gifts were the first fruits of the agricultural work of the people representing a tithe (10%) of their production.

God knew that an institution like Temple worship would require resources to be sustained. We read in the Old Testament that the people's gifts of meat and bread, cooked in a way pleasing to God, directly provided food for the priests, guards, and caretakers of the temple and the spiritual leaders of the tribes. Sharing the fruits of the harvest became the large feasts we read about in Jesus' time.

In the modern Christian church, we maintain this pattern of giving designed by God. Now, people are called to give in a way pleasing to God: first fruits representing 10% of each family's productivity. Though, in modern times, it is money rather than agricultural produce.

These gifts to God, offered and dedicated in our worship services, are used to maintain the institution of the church by supporting its ministry and mission. This includes worship, congregational care, spiritual development, hospitality & outreach, and missions by way of support for clergy and staff, building maintenance and other budgetary items.

What we can conclude from this is that we give first because it is a gift pleasing to God. As a result of our giving to God in worship, we also support all aspects of the important work of the church.

Jim Wells, Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation

I included this article from Jim Wells, Director of Stewardship & Capital Campaigns, Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation. His article helps to sum up the means of the Stewardship Campaign that we have just recently done and how your pledge makes a difference in many lives. Within the next few weeks our Stewardship Team will be totaling out the results from the campaign. The complete results will be available in the February newsletter. A quick reminder, if you have not had the opportunity to mail in or drop off your pledge card, please do as soon as you can. Thank You in advance. I can say that at this time our campaign is running well. We are about \$32,000.00 short of meeting the pledge for the Operating Expenses for 2021. Thank You to each and everyone that have sent in their pledge card.

Stay safe! Stay Healthy! Maintain Social Distancing!

Tom Alverson Stewardship Chairperson

Mission News and Ministry Opportunities

Special Offering:

January 19th: Human Relations Day

LOOSE COINS:

January: Northcott Neighborhood House, Milwaukee Eighteen people without internet currently have the bulletin and sermon mailed to them each week. Call the church office if you would like them mailed to you as well!

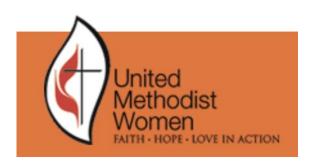


The River of Life is designated as the church supplying shampoo and conditioner to Caritas for the month of January. Since communication is slower than usual with the covid situation I'm sure they will be happy to receive our donations even if we slip into February. Please deposit your gifts in the bins provided at both churches.

-Pat Sands

Drive In Worship

We have heard from many people that they have found Drive In Worship to be very meaningful during this time of not worshiping in the sanctuary. We hope to have another one soon, but because of the difficulties of winter, we will need to wait until the current snow and ice melt. There will certainly be upcoming Sundays that will allow for Drive In Worship, but it will be short notice, which will come through email and VoiceShot.



Thank you

The UMW thanks all those who made Advent and Christmas a wonderful and memorable season. It was great to see the sanctuary so beautifully decorated. The weather didn't stop all those who brought Bethlehem to Beloit. The novel way of continuing the tradition of lighting candles on Christmas Eve lives on through YouTube. We thank all who worked so tirelessly to make all these inspiring things possible. We also thank those who supplied the technology from those who held the camera to those who rolled up the extension cords. If these events were a movie, the credits would roll on for several minutes. Thank you all from the bottom of our hearts.

Knitting Together

ROLUMC can always use prayer shawls for general church ministries. Call the church office at 608.363.8866 for details.

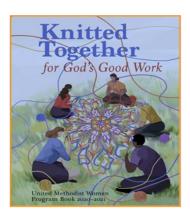
Sandy Ovist can be contacted at 608.290.0112 regarding the ROL knitting and crochet group.







Hello United Methodist Women! Welcome to 2021 and 365 days of being able to serve the Lord with gladness. (Psalm 100:2)



Knitted Together for God's Good Work!

Knitting is quite popular right now. There are knitting groups, knitting websites, knitting on social media and commercials aplenty. To be sure, the general public sometimes calls any handwork knitting, but that's okay because all handwork is joining one material to another.

The Apostle Paul, in Ephesians 4:16, says "From him the whole body grows, fitted and held together through every supporting ligament. As each one does its part, the body grows in love." **New English Translation** (The phrase "fitted and held together" is translated as knit or knitted in several other versions.)

This year the UMW theme seeks to knit us together as disciples as we work to resist evil and injustice while proclaiming the saving grace of Christ Jesus. This knitting together includes Bible study, action for social justice. and actual knitting with needles and fiber for the betterment of the community.

-The UMW Theme for 2021

-Carol Connors

UMW Prayer Calendar

The UMW Prayer calendar is a wonderful weekly engagement calendar. There is the usual space to write appointments and reminders, but the calendar is far more as there is a Bible passage for daily reading.

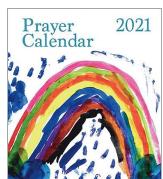
A Mission Focus is listed for each day. Just think, that's seven mission areas per week which adds to over 300 mission endeavors to pray for in a year. Each week also includes a drawing by a child who participates in one of the mission programs. The calendar also includes names, addresses and birthdays of UM missionaries and staff both current and retired. Sending birthday cards to God's servants would be a ministry in itself.

Order your Prayer Calendar from: Unitedmethodistwomen.org.

Perhaps you'd like to give it a try and send a card to the person listed. You may send an e-mail card or USPS. The post office sells a stamp for \$1.20 which allows you to send a regular letter (1oz) anywhere in the world. That is a real bargain that not many people know about.

Claudia Genung (birthdayJanuary 27) Missionary to Japan cgenung@umcmission.org 9-16-5 Sumiyoshi-Yamate Higashinada-ku Japan

-Carol Connors



UMW Mat Project

Early in 2020 we launched the Mat Project as a mission service of the United Methodist Women. Making sleeping mats for the homeless quickly spread throughout our generous congregation. Your response with plastic grocery bags was incredible and this is one of the major blessings in this project, all of those bags were saved from the landfills and put to good use. Many people gathered at a work day where we cut the bags into strips of "plarn" that were used to crochet the mats. Some people went on to crochet the mats that were delivered to the Rock County services for the homeless and to the Gifts shelter for men in need in Janesville. The supply we have now will be distributed to various missions in Rockford. III.

I choose not to try to thank everyone individually, because inevitably someone will be left out and we certainly do not want to slight anyone. All of you, including several men who stepped forward showing interest, are greatly appreciated. I do want to give special thanks for 3 extraordinary women who have gone above and beyond all expectations. Joanne Johnson, Delores Hahn, and Phyllis Carpenter have consistently worked at producing many, many mats. Thank you, ladies.

We have come to a time where we need to suspend the project for a while. We have quite a reserve built up, and we will let you know when it is time to resume production. If any of you have bags saved please dispose of them in a way that they can be recycled. The only store I found in town that is accepting them is Walmart. They have a deposit area at the main entrance. Piggly Wiggly and Woodman's do not offer that service at this time.

-Pat Sands

Our first Live Nativity was a HUGE SUCCESS!! Thanks to all who organized, participated, and came to drive through! We collected over 300 items for Caritas and the Clinton Food Pantry, and \$266 was donated. The donations will be split between costs and the two food pantries. More pictures can be seen on our Website and Facebook in the prelude to the worship service on January 3rd.





















Feb. 2 Susan Kiser Arvilla Wentworth

<u>Feb. 3</u>

Mary Rowlette

Feb. 4 Joan Rice

Feb. 6 Bruce Cawkins

Feb. 8

Ann Hegge

Feb. 9

Patti Novy

Feb. 11

Emma Miller

Feb<u>. 14</u>

Annette Henz

Feb. 15

Dakota Knutsen **Tony Ward**

Feb. 16

Shania Knutsen

Feb. 17

William Churchill

Feb. 18

Lori Sturdevant Stephen Wadle

Feb. 19

Candace Jacobson **Charles Weiser**

Feb. 22

Kathryn Parsons

Feb. 23

Kathryn Dopp

Clay Ward

Feb. 26

Stephanie Klett

Linda Lyman

Feb. 27

Phyllis Carpenter

Doris Davis-Gaustad

Feb

Kelly Lutzow

Feb. 29

Mary Van Meter

Four beautiful children have been baptized into the faith recently. Welcome to the church family, beloved children of God!



Tru, Armoni and Mikyah Longman, children of Shaun and Stephanie Longman were—baptized on December 20th. The recording of their baptisms was played during the January 10th livestream and is available to watch on our website.



Charles Weiser, the son of Cole and Samantha Weiser (with sister Emmy) was baptized on November 29th. The recording of his baptism was played during the December 20th livestream and is available to watch on our website.

Baptism Remembrance Water

On January 10th we had a Drive Thru Prayer time where people were given a vial of "Holy Water" to remember their baptisms. There are quite a few vials left. They are in the Beloit office. You are welcome to pick one up when you see someone is in the office, or call and we'll place one in the tote for you.

If you know of someone who has a need, please call the office: 608-362-8866



FINANCIAL CORNER

MONTH OF: DECEMBER

Week 1	\$ 17,374.00
Week 2	\$ -
Week 3	\$ 6,441.16
Week 4	\$ 7,279.26
Week 5	\$ 16,965.00
АСН	\$ 2,880.00

\$2,230.96 was the amount we collected for Christmas that will be split between Caritas and the Clinton Food Pantry!! Thank you!!!

Total: \$50,939.42

Experience the Bible in a whole new way!

REFLECTIONS Bible Study

Beginning Saturday January 16th 7:30am via Zoom



Join Bob Parssinen in a weekly Bible Study using videos from The Bible Project.

Call or email the church office to sign up or for more information.

Calendar



9:30 am Beloit Worship Service Online & Facebook

Sunday School

Available anytime!! See the link on our website

Tuesday

10:00 am Men's Coffee Hour (FH) 1:00 pm Staff Meeting (O) 4:30 pm Bell Choir Rehearsal

Wednesday

10:30 am Bible Study (Zoom) 6:30 pm Bible Study (Zoom) With Pastor Brenda

Saturday

7:30 am Bible Study (Zoom) Bible Project with Bob P.

Issue deadline:

February 5th
The next issue of the
Current will be available
February 14th

happy moments, PRAISE GOD.

difficult moments, SEEK GOD.

quiet moments, WORSHIP GOD.

painful moments, TRUST GOD.

every moment, THANK GOD.

FEBRUARY 2021

	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28						

Calendar of Events (also posted on the Web & Facebook)

January 18 Martin Luther King Day

6:30 pm Stewardship (via Zoom)

January 25 6:00 pm Trustees (via Zoom)

January 26 6:30 pm Ad Council (via Zoom)

February 2 11:00 am Missions & Outreach (FH)

February 14 HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY February 15 6:00 pm Stewardship (via Zoom)

February 17 Ash Wednesday Drive-thru Beloit @ Noon

Ash Wednesday Drive-thru Clinton @ 2 pm

Just a reminder

River of Life Beloit and Clinton Campus Buildings and Office Buildings are closed due to the public health emergency.

