



## The Current of The River of Life

January 2024

2345 Prairie Ave, Beloit, WI

Vol. 41 Issue #01

# River of Life United Methodist Church

*Loving People Into Taking Their Next Step With Jesus*

Worship Location - 2345 Prairie Ave, Beloit, WI 53511

Office Location - 2375 Prairie Ave, Beloit, WI 53511

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**Pianist**

**IT-Production Manager**

**Teaching Pastor**

## LAY LEADERSHIP 2023

**Lay Leader**

Pat Sands

**Ad Council Chairperson**

Shellie Olson

**Armed Intruder Chairperson**

Barb Kuska

**Annual Conference Lay Members**

Bob Scheets & Carol Scheets

**Board of Trustees Chairperson**

Kathy Rodgers

**Decorating Committee Chairperson**

Tracy Maxwell

**Finance Chairperson**

Jesse Calkins

**Hospitality Chairperson**

Diane Gemignani

**Memorials and Wills Chairperson**

Marietta Axmear

**Missions Committee Co-Chairpersons**

Diane Gemignani & Ellen Butchart

**Youth Ministry Team Chairperson**

Karen Parssinen

**Staff Pastor Parish Relations Chairperson**

Kelly Clark

**Stewardship Team Chairperson**

Pastor Brenda

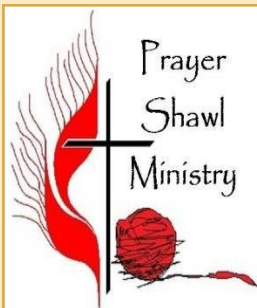
**Tech Team Chairperson**

Derek Bergh

Not ready to come back to in  
person worship yet?

Or out of town for the weekend?

The Beloit Service is on the website, on  
Facebook, and also on our YouTube  
channel.



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

# From the Pastor's Desk



I hope your Christmas was wonderful - full of love and joy and peace. We had many fabulous celebrations at the church including the Cantata, the Cookie Walk, the Festival of the Nativities, the Birthday Party for Jesus and Christmas Eve! I am grateful for the countless people who made each of these events happen. I hope the things that we did together filled your spirit and brought you closer to Jesus. I encourage you to keep that love and joy and peace close to your heart as we enter the new year.

My favorite part of the narration of our Christmas Cantata says, "Truth be told, some of us leave Christ in the manger all year long and miss out on the power and presence of the risen Christ in our lives." Even if it is not true that you only think of Jesus once a year, I do wonder if many of us receive all of the love, joy and peace that God intends for us.

Perhaps we need to make a New Year's resolution this year - not for the typical things like dieting and exercise that people usually give up on by February. Many of us would benefit from a resolve to spend more time with Jesus.

There are a lot of things you could do to spend more time being with Jesus. Some people enjoy daily devotional books. I personally prefer to spend time reading my Bible. I recently finished reading the New Testament and journaling my reflections or verses that stuck out to me. A few years ago, I copied the entire New Testament. (Yes, I have several notebooks that comprise the New Testament in my own handwriting!) Perhaps you want to spend more time outside basking in God's gift of nature. There are many ways to be mindful with Jesus. Many church members need to spend more time in worship. A Bible study would help many. Whatever piques your interest will take you further.

"Peace, abiding peace, joy, abundant joy, love unconditional love, this is my gift to you. Simply receive my peace, joy, love. There's nothing that you must do." That's from Mark Hayes in our Christmas Cantata, but describe the teaching of Jesus. In this new year, put yourself in a place where Jesus' peace, joy and love flow.

I'll see you in church, where we grow together,

Love, Pastor Brenda

**Pastor Brenda will on vacation after worship on Dec 31st through January 15<sup>th</sup>.  
If you have a pastoral emergency, please contact Pastor Keith.**

## The wonder of a child on Christmas Eve



To My Dear Friends of The River of Life United Methodist Church,

I would like to say, Thank You to all of you, that arranged the beautiful celebration of my taking the next step to continue teaching others to take their next step with Jesus. My new appointment will enable me to continue those teachings.

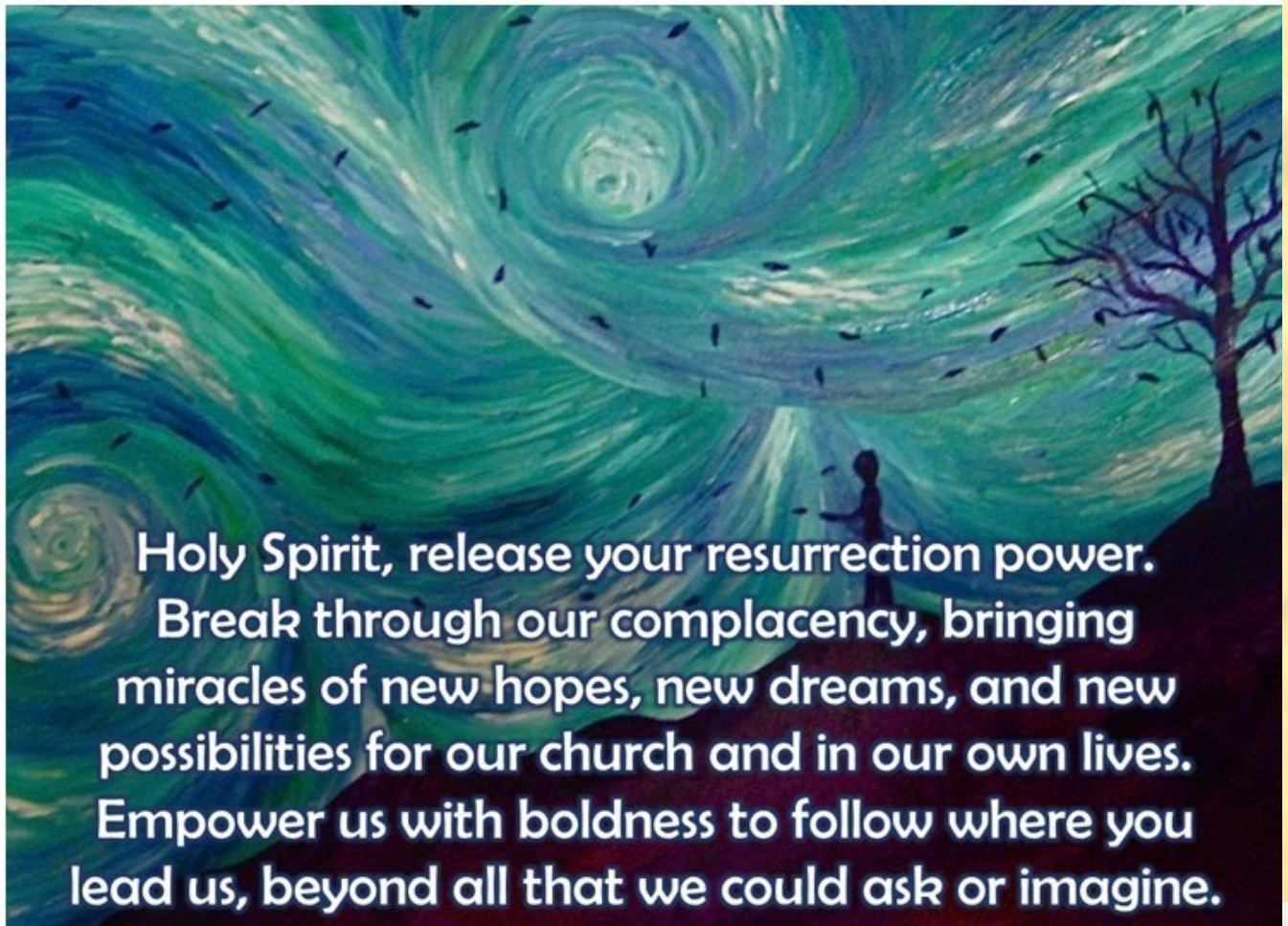
Thank You for the beautiful cake and gifts.

In Loving Christ Name,  
Tom Alverson



Thank you for all the Christmas cards sent to the office! They were displayed nicely throughout the season!  
Merry Christmas & Happy New Year!

~ROL Staff



Callen Lynch, son of Sean and Carolyn, Sister of Elsie and grandson of Dale and Diane Gemignani and David and Cindy Lynch, was baptized on November 12<sup>th</sup>. Welcome to the church family!



## People we are praying for



- |                |           |
|----------------|-----------|
| † Ace          | † Kerri   |
| † Amber        | † Kyleigh |
| † Austin       | † Linda   |
| † Bob          | † Linda   |
| † Chuck        | † Marge   |
| † Daniel & Max | † Marlene |
| † Darla        | † Matt    |
| † Don          | † Rose    |
| † Doug         | † Steve   |

Our condolences to the  
Family and Friends of...

- † Carolyn Johnson
- † Lynda Moon

### Circle Calendar

All women are invited to become a member of a Circle. We encourage you to come and enjoy fellowship with the ROLUMC women's community. Here are the meeting times, dates and contact persons. Please join us for a time of joy, learning and service.

**Martha Circle** will meet January 17 at 9:30  
in Fellowship Hall weather permitting.

**Mary Circle** will meet January 17 at 11:30 am  
for lunch - Location TBD





## Happy birthday Jesus!!

Our birthday party for Jesus was a huge success!!  
Thank you everyone who donated gifts, money, time, and/or energy to make this a success!





**Adult Mission Trip to  
Midwest Mission Distribution Center  
Chatham, Illinois  
April 3 - 5, 2024**

Join our team volunteering at the Midwest Mission Distribution Center! You can choose to stay on-site at the dormitory or stay 7 miles away at the Comfort Inn and Suites in Springfield, IL. We leave Beloit the morning of Wednesday, April 3, and carpool to Springfield, IL. We will work on Thursday and Friday, and return to Beloit on Friday evening, Apr. 5.

If you stay in the dormitory, the cost of the trip is \$160 plus the cost of one lunch and three dinners at area restaurants. If you choose to stay at the motel, the cost of the trip is \$75 plus the cost your room at the Comfort Inn and the cost of the previous meals. The Comfort Inn room will be approximately \$115 per room per night. You are welcome to arrange to share a room with another person on the trip.

Please do NOT let the cost of the trip keep you from signing up! There is money available in a fund specifically to help people with the cost of participating in the adult mission trip.

Please let Diane Gemignani know if you are interested in the assistance.

Payment Schedule is:

\$50 deposit due by February 1, 2024\*

Balance due by March 31, 2004\*

If you have any questions, contact Diane Gemignani (608-290-5274 or [dianegem23@gmail.com](mailto:dianegem23@gmail.com)).

If you would like to sign up for the trip, fill out the slip below, include the non-refundable \$50 deposit, and mail it to Diane Gemignani, 1005 Milwaukee Rd., Beloit, WI 53511.

**The deadline to sign up is Feb. 1, 2024.** – We can add people after this date only if there is room at MMDC.

-----  
*I am interested in joining the Adult Mission Trip to Midwest Mission Distribution Center on April 3 - 5, 2024. (I understand the \$50 deposit is non-refundable, but it is transferable if someone else can take my place.)*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail

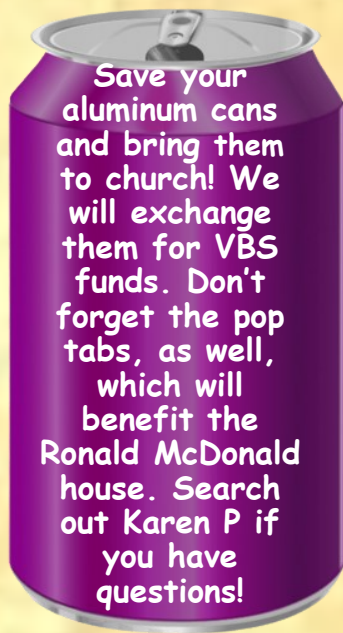
\_\_\_\_\_  
Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
Home Phone

\_\_\_\_\_  
Cell Phone

\* Please make checks out to ROL-UMC with "Adult Mission Trip" in the memo.





### Knit & Crochet With A Mission Group



January 31 at 1:00 in the Office Workroom

All knitters & crocheters are invited! Questions?

Call Sandy Ovist at 608-362-6583

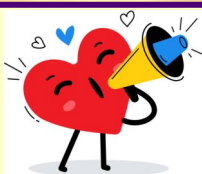


### *Fresh Flowers for the Sanctuary*

Would you like to provide flowers for worship?

You may bring in flowers for no reason, or there can be a sentence in the bulletin that states the special occasion for which the flowers are being provided.

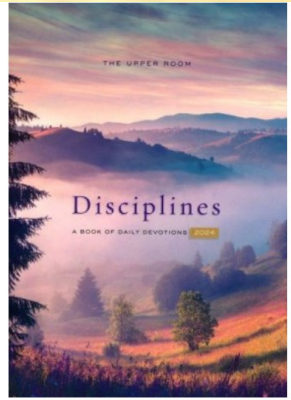
**Look for the flower sign-up sheet in the Fellowship Hall.**



Please remember to fill out your Connect Cards with your most current information so that we can verify your information is accurate in our computer systems.

These phone numbers are used for our Voice Shot software which is used to notify members of upcoming meetings and church service cancellations.

Please contact the office by January 15, 2024 to order your copy!  
Cost is \$14 due at time of order



## *The Upper Room Disciplines 2024: A Book of Daily Devotions*

*By: The Upper Room*

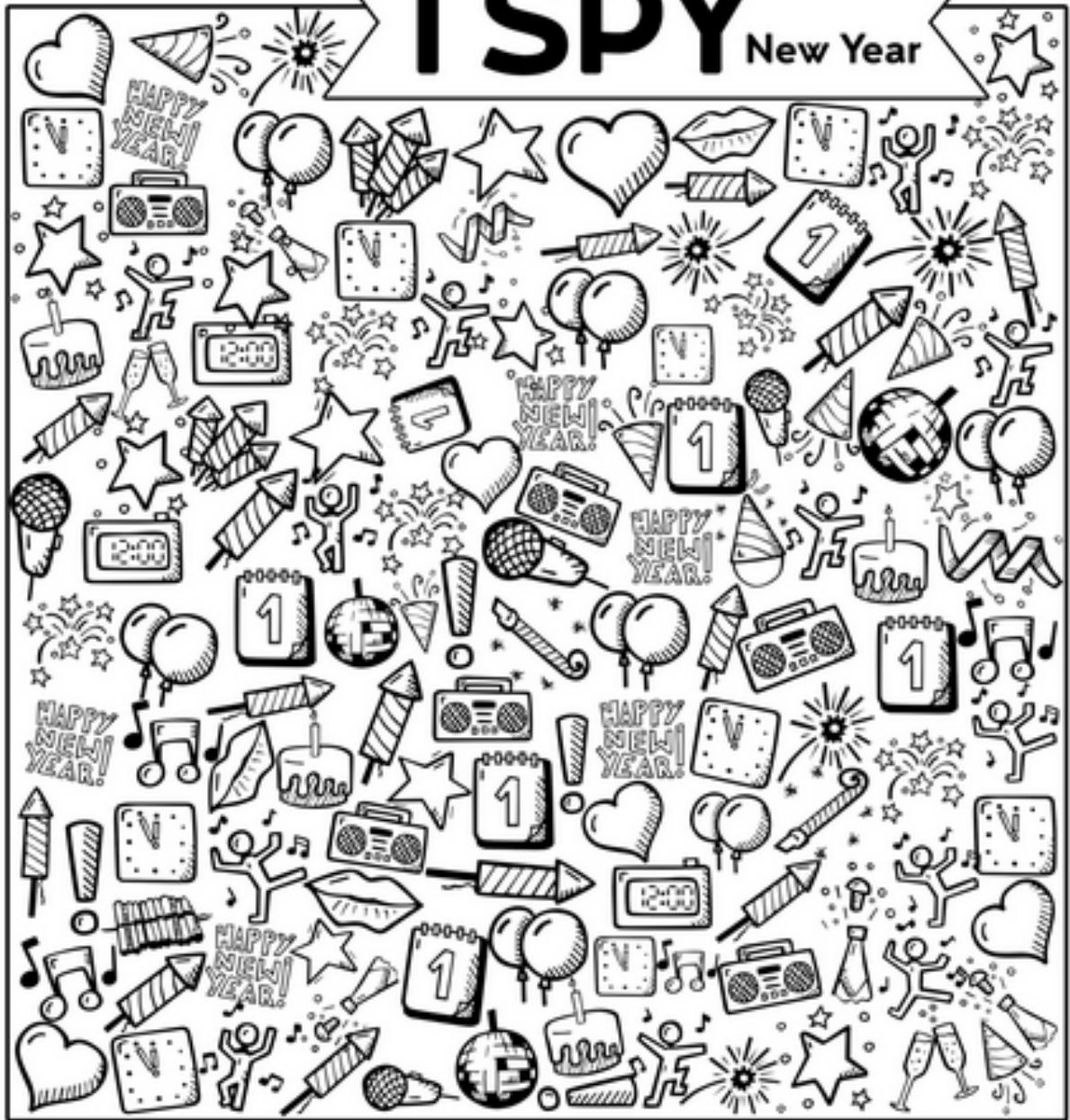
Challenge yourself to a deeper relationship with Christ each day with *The Upper Room Disciplines*. Readings in this year-long devotional will awaken and strengthen your awareness of God's presence in your daily life. Each week a different Christian thought leader offers daily meditations and prayers that will help you engage in God's Word.



**Thank you Lois & Chancel Choir  
for all your hard work and  
dedication on another successful  
Christmas Cantata!**



# I SPY New Year



- |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
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| 1 | 6 | 7 | 1 | 3 | 6 | 7 | 4 | 7 | 4 |
| 3 | 2 | 4 | 6 | 2 | 7 | 3 | 9 | 6 | 3 |

# Festival of the Nativities

Thank you to everyone who brought in their Nativity Scenes to share with others! What a great turn out for this new event!





**The Cookie Walk was a huge success.**

**We were able to give \$1,000 in gifts cards to the teens served by Project 16:49.**

**Thank you to everyone who baked and bought cookies for the event!**



The choir had a 90th birthday party for Louise Junig after practice on Dec. 21. Louise has sung in the Chancel Choir for many many years and also was a founding member of the Bell Choir for several decades. She shared that she has given up a few things, but the choir is still very important to her. She enjoys it very much.

**Happy Birthday to Louise!**



# Missions

Loose Coins for January go to **Family Promise of Greater Beloit**. This is the organization formerly known as Hands of Faith which provides homeless families temporary shelter, but also extensive support services to ensure families can remain secure in housing and employment.

In their new facility at 1006 Bluff St., Family Promise of Greater Beloit has nine guest sleeping rooms, two living room areas, a computer/resource room, and laundry and bathroom facilities. In addition to shelter, Family Promise focuses on three areas of support for families:

**Prevention** -- More than 40% of American families are said to be one unexpected expense away from financial distress. Family Promise of Greater Beloit aims to prevent families from spiraling into homelessness during a crisis. Their support strategies include providing government funded rental assistance and landlord mediation as well as community-based approaches.

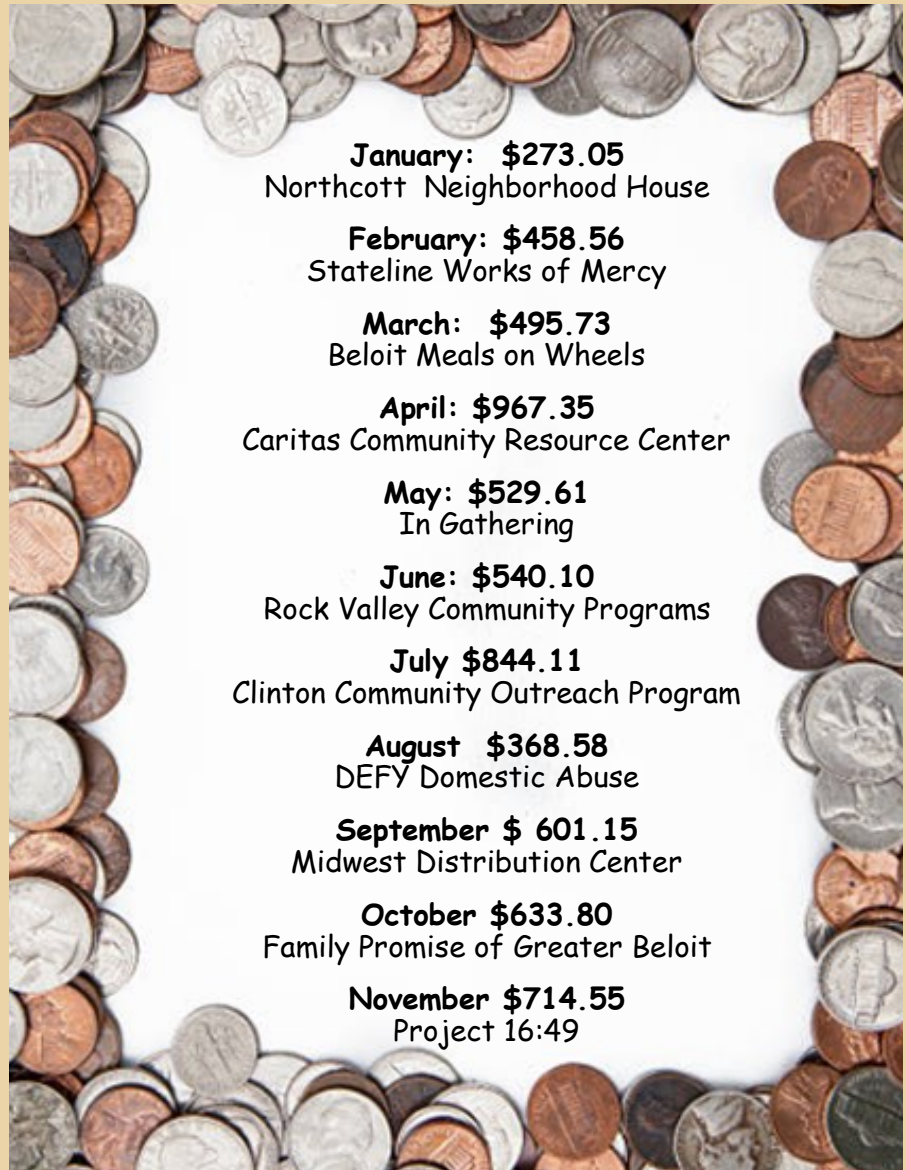
**Emergency Shelter** -- While families are receiving emergency shelter and food, they receive case management and look for housing and jobs.

## **Graduate Support Services** --

Homelessness has many causes, and housing stability involves many solutions. To make sure that families who secure housing remain housed, Family Promise taps into the resources of its business partners and volunteers for financial literacy initiatives and mentoring, childcare and job training, food assistance, furniture and clothing donation, and health and wellness programs.

Please be generous with your Loose Coins contributions. In addition to coins in the offering plate, please consider including a check or bills marked for Loose Coins.

Thank you!



**January: \$273.05**  
Northcott Neighborhood House

**February: \$458.56**  
Stateline Works of Mercy

**March: \$495.73**  
Beloit Meals on Wheels

**April: \$967.35**  
Caritas Community Resource Center

**May: \$529.61**  
In Gathering

**June: \$540.10**  
Rock Valley Community Programs

**July \$844.11**  
Clinton Community Outreach Program

**August \$368.58**  
DEFY Domestic Abuse

**September \$ 601.15**  
Midwest Distribution Center

**October \$633.80**  
Family Promise of Greater Beloit

**November \$714.55**  
Project 16:49

# WATR

## Wednesdays at the River

- † **Tutoring** is back January 3rd after a short Christmas Break! It is from **4:00-5:30pm**. If you would love to be considered to impact a student as a tutor, contact Karen Parssinen.
- † **Dinner** is served every Wednesday at 5:30 pm. A donation of \$5 is encouraged but not necessary.
- † The **Adult Bible Study** continues at 6:15 pm.

### WEDNESDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY

The Wednesday Morning Bible Study meets from 10:30-11:30 am via Zoom. We are currently studying the Bible Book of *Matthew*.

**Contact Pastor Brenda for the Zoom link.**

### WEDNESDAY EVENING BIBLE STUDY

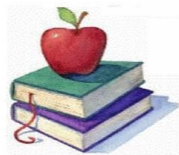
The Wednesday Evening Bible Study meets at 6:15 pm in person, in the couch area of the Fellowship Hall. We are doing an old-fashioned read and discuss model comparing John with the other three gospels.

**Contact Pastor Brenda if you would like to participate.**

### SATURDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY

The Saturday Morning Bible study meets on Zoom at 7:30 am. Bob Parssinen leads the group using videos from *The Bible Project*.

**Contact Bob or Pastor Brenda for the Zoom link.**



## Tutoring

**Make a difference in children's lives on  
Wednesdays after school!**



**I would LOVE to be a tutor!**



**I would LOVE to provide snacks!**



**I would LOVE to teach a life lesson!**

**Let Karen Parssinen know today!!**

Tutoring is a wonderful way that you can make an impact on children's lives. Sign up to be a tutor today!



### REMEMBER TO "LIKE US"

Our Facebook pages are active and there you'll find current postings on upcoming events, activities, church happenings, and lots more.

### OUR FACEBOOK LINK

The River of Life United Methodist Church.  
[www.facebook.com/theriveroflifeumc](http://www.facebook.com/theriveroflifeumc)

Don't forget to "Like" us to stay up-to-date.



**Firm**

**Focus**

## **Core Strength & Balance**

**Friendly**



**Tuesday & Thursday 9:00—10:00 am**

A low-impact exercise class has begun in our Fellowship Hall. Focus is on improving balance through core strengthening. Class is on Tuesday and Thursday mornings from 9:00-10:00. Individuals dress in comfortable clothing, bring their own weights, and water.



# November 26, 2023 we celebrated three things!

1. Consecration Sunday and welcoming new members!
2. Annual Fall Harvest Dinner
3. Well wishes to Tom Alverson as he becomes Lay Supply (Minister) to the Community of Christ UMC in Darien.





# GOD AT WORK

So far, 62 Pledge Cards have been returned, totaling \$237,820 toward operating expenses and apportionments!

\$10,346 is pledged to the building fund.

In January, the Finance Committee will be evaluating the budget in light of pledges. It is not too late to turn in your pledge card. Mail it in or drop it off today.



# GOD AT WORK

*For we are his creation, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared ahead of time so that we should walk in them. Ephesians 2:10*

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

I/We choose to partner with God to help build the Kingdom of God by giving to our church:

General Fund \$ \_\_\_\_\_ per (week) (month) (year)

Building Fund \$ \_\_\_\_\_ per (week) (month) (year)

Apportionments \$ \_\_\_\_\_ per (week) (month) (year)

Please return on or before November 26th to River of Life UMC, 2375 Prairie Ave, Beloit

Three sides of our  
**GOD AT WORK**

Kingdom Tower.

We had 496 Duplo® Legos® to illustrate those who made a difference in our faith, the work that we do in faith, and our commitment to carry forward our faith



Can you unscramble these anagrams to find some familiar New Year themed words?



Anagram	New Year word
rbnaetoilce	
jranyau	
skoefriwr	
oaidhyl	
erftuu	
slago	
agstrte	
iorutsenlo	



# Calendar

Pastor Brenda will on vacation after worship on Dec 31st through January 15<sup>th</sup>. If you have a pastoral emergency, please contact Pastor Keith.

January 1		Office Closed for Holiday
January 2	6:00 PM	Youth Ministry Meeting
January 11		Office Closed
January 16	6:30 PM	Finance Meeting
January 17	9:30 AM	Martha Circle (FH Weather Permitting)
January 15	11:30 AM	Mary Circle (Location TBD)
January 22	5:30 PM	Trustees Meeting
January 23	4:00 PM	Hospitality Committee
January 23	6:30 PM	Ad Council
January 29	6:30 PM	Stewardship Meeting
January 31	1:00 PM	Knitting With A Mission
February 6	6:00 PM	Youth Ministry Meeting

**Issue deadline:**  
**January 29**  
 The next newsletter  
 will be available on  
**February 4**

<b><u>Sunday</u></b>		<b><u>Wednesday</u></b>	
9:30 am	Beloit Worship	10:30 am	Adult Bible Study (Zoom)
11:00 am	"The Chosen" Movie Series w/ Bob Parssinen	3:00 pm	Tutoring (1:30 1st & 3rd Wed)
11:00 am	Confirmation	6:15 pm	Adult Bible Study (FH)
<b><u>Monday</u></b>		<b><u>Thursday</u></b>	
12:30 pm	Card Club (FH)	9:00 am	Exercise Group
<b><u>Tuesday</u></b>		4:00 pm	Choir Rehearsal
9:00 am	Exercise Group	<b><u>Saturday</u></b>	
10:00 am	Men's Coffee Hour (FH)	7:30 am	Bible Study (Zoom)
1:00 pm	Staff Meeting (O)	5:30 pm	Saturday Worship

# HAPPY BIRTHDAY

**January 2**

Eleanor Burnside  
Lora Cawkins

**January 4**

Katie Ward

**January 12**

Wilma Shultz

**January 15**

Sandy Ovist

**January 18**

Steve Haas  
Eric Stoner

**January 20**

Tru Longman  
Shirley Sweet

**January 22**

Marlene Erickson  
Albert Kohls  
Kellyse Lutzow  
Doug Mitchell  
Nadine Stoner

**January 25**

Betty Kohls

**January 26**

Elsie Lynch

**January 27**

Don Parish

**January 28**

Nancy Bryant  
Mark Hammett

**January 30**

Zachary Christensen  
Kaitlyn Freeman

**February 2**

Susan Kiser

**February 5**

Stephen Buckler

**February 6**

Bruce Cawkins

**February 7**

Raven Strother

**February 8**

Ann Hegge

**February 9**

Dave Buckler  
Patti Novi

**February 11**

Emma Miller

**February 14**

Annette Henz

**February 15**

Dakota Knutsen  
Tony Ward

**February 16**

Shania Crandall

**February 17**

William Churchill

**February 18**

Lori Sturdevant  
Stephen Wadle

**February 19**

Candy Jacobson  
Charles Weiser

**February 22**

Katie Parsons

**February 23**

Lonna Fields  
Clay Ward

**February 26**

Stephanie Klett  
Linda Lyman

**February 27**

Heather Buckler  
Doris Davis-Gaustad

**February 28**

Kelly Lutzow

**February 29**

Mary Van Meter

# HAPPY ANNIVERSARY!

**January 16**

Don & Deanna Parish

**January 23**

Bill & Kathy Rodgers



*Empowering Rock County's unaccompanied homeless youth to take action to achieve their goals*

December 22, 2023

River of Life UMC  
2375 Prairie Ave  
Beloit, WI 53511

To our friends at River of Life,

Thank you for your generous gift of \$714.55 from your November Loose Coin collection. We are grateful for your continued commitment to helping provide life-changing support and opportunities for our community's homeless youth at a critical time in their lives. Youth like Carter...

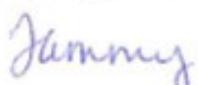
Carter is one of our transitional living home residents. He called Project 16:49 after being kicked out of his family's home when he attempted to defend himself and his mother from an abusive partner. He was staying with a friend, but the family could only accommodate him for a few days. Because his family has struggled with homelessness throughout his life, Carter is very far behind in his education and had not been attending school. He didn't view graduation as 'in the cards' for his life, though it is something he very much wants.

In the few weeks Carter has been with us, his outlook has significantly improved. He immediately fit in with the other residents, and appreciates the friendship and peer support. He is excited to get back into school and earn his diploma. He picked up a temporary job right away, and is looking for something permanent. He is beginning to identify goals. More importantly, he is beginning to believe achieving those goals is possible.

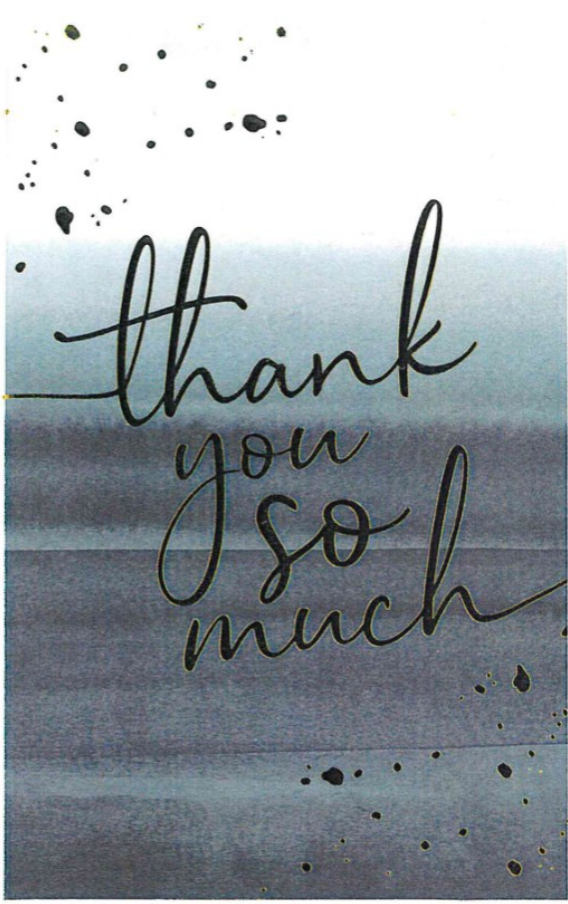
Though this part of his journey is just beginning, Carter has the potential and desire to change the direction of his life. Thanks to your gift, he also now has opportunities and support to make it happen.

On behalf of all of our youth and myself, please know how much we appreciate your trust and support of the work being done at Project 16:49; and most of all, your belief and investment in our youth.

Wishing you much joy this holiday season,

  
Tammy DeGarmo  
Executive Director

*Thank you for ensuring our youth are safe, warm and cared for this holiday season. Merry Christmas!*



Dear Pat and church members,  
 I am so humbled by your generosity and thankful for your commitment to help our families experiencing homelessness! Your support makes such a positive impact - Such a blessing!  
 With kindest personal regards,  
 ♥ Robin

From Beloit School District Home Beloit Learning Academy Homeless Liaison Robin Stuht.

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	9			4			3

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		9			3		1
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		6	4	1		5	
	1		9		8	6	