

# *The Current of The River of Life*

Spring

CLEAN UP

## Yay! Spring is Here!

The joy of Easter means new hope, new life and--

Time to finally get outside and enjoy warmer weather, birds singing,  
fresh new growing flowers...

and...

Time for spring cleaning inside and out.

The Trustees invite the congregation to grab their work gloves,  
bring a water bottle, maybe a rake, (a lawn chair for a break)  
a trash bag, etc.

**Saturday, May 1 from  
9:00 until 12:00 noon**

Come help make our church ready for a new season of celebrating God's love for us.

There are many jobs available:

- Pressure wash ramps at the office
- Clean out and organize garage
- Prune plants around office
- Attack those weeds and thistles
- Pick up trash from the grounds
- Repair and paint red wall nicks
- Sand, stain, varnish handrails for east hall
- Wash plastic windows on the entrance canopies
- Haul away plant debris
- Etc., etc....

Masks social distancing for inside work will be a must.

**Rain date: Saturday, May 15 - 9 until 12 noon**

April 18, 2021

[www.rolumcwi.com](http://www.rolumcwi.com)

Vol. 18 Issue 15

# United Methodist Church in Beloit and Clinton

*Loving People Into Taking Their Next Step With 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**

Kathy Rodgers

### **Decorating Committee Chairperson**

Tracy Maxwell

### **Finance Chairperson**

Jesse Calkins

### **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 Director of Music

Judith Paddock Organist

Marge Johnson Pianist



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

*Seventeen 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.*

## Our condolences to the Family and Friends of...

Dan Kreisman  
Val Dunegan



### People we have prayed for....



Jesse, a loved one with a cancer diagnosis, Wilma, Adam, Tracy, Barbara, for our shut-ins, Andrew, Carol, Marlene, Evie

### Parking Assistants Needed

Would you like to help park cars during our Drive In Services, and help people find distanced places to sit when we bring out the lawn chairs? We could use a few more people to help "usher." Contact Diane Gemignani or the office if you would like to bless people in this way.

### Lawn Chair Worship

Beginning on Sunday, April 25<sup>th</sup>, during Drive In Worship, you will be able to get out of your car and sit in a lawn chair outside! The details are still being worked out, but there will be a new parking pattern. When you arrive on the 25<sup>th</sup>, let the first usher know if you will be staying in your car, placing your chairs in front of your car, or sitting in the designated sitting area. Those in the sitting area will need to be masked.

### Vacation Bible School

After missing Vacation Bible School last summer because of Covid restrictions, we are hoping to have VBS again this summer! The Youth Ministry Team is considering several different options, so watch for details coming soon. If you would like to participate in the planning or help lead or assist, contact Nan Bolar or Karen Parssinen.

# From the Pastor



My five-year-old granddaughter said something sweet several weeks ago while we were talking by Facetime. She was walking around her house, showing me things and talking about them. Every now and then she would turn her dad's iPhone so I could see her brother, and I would say, "Grandma loves you!"

All of the sudden she put the phone close to her face and she surprisedly asked, "Are you my brother's grandma too?"

I found that very interesting that she hadn't considered that I was grandmother to anyone other than her. She knew she shared her Momo, Grampie, Nana, and Pawpaw (her maternal grand and great-grand parents) with her brother and cousins. We have talked about how I am her dad's mother. It seemed very endearing that she thought I belonged to only her.

It also reminded me of how many people think about their faith. It is not uncommon for people to think and behave as though God belongs to only them. It is also surprisingly easy for Christians to look down on people who are different than we are, and assume God loves others less.

Jesus was very clear: we are to help others know the incredible love of God. The entire biblical witness insists on the importance of giving what we have received in matters of faith. Abraham was told he was blessed to be a blessing. The Israelites were to be a special nation so others could know God through them. Jesus actually said, "Go and make disciples!"

God loves you. You are extraordinarily special to God. God belongs to you and you belong to God. And just as I love my grandson as much as I love my granddaughter, God loves others as much as God loves you.

God wants us to love others that much too.

In this time between Easter and Pentecost, during worship we will be watching the disciples turn into apostles: we will be watching students turn into the ones teaching about Jesus. Use this time to really internalize how much God loves you, so that you can share God's love with others.

Holding you in my heart,

Love, Pastor Brenda





**MAY 1**

Dennis Boschma  
Elzbieta Cudney  
Shelby Ward  
Liam Woody

**MAY 2**

Alan Wilson

**MAY 4**

Jacob Christensen  
Kathy Smith

**MAY 5**

Linda Mathews

**MAY 7**

Laverne Hays

**MAY 8**

Mindy White

**MAY 9**

Rev. David Carlson

**MAY 10**

Joanne Klett

**MAY 12**

Peggy Lund  
May Opperman

**MAY 13**

Diane Mitchell

**MAY 16**

Trey Caple

**MAY 23**

Steve Austin

**MAY 24**

Jacque Patch  
Mark Tudor

**May 26**

Eva Hoff

**MAY 29**

Tony Bachim  
Dale Gemignani

**MAY 30**

Kennedy Maxwell  
Claire Parsons

**MAY 31**

Dick Moon

Note: If your name is not on our lists, please call the office so we can update our records.

**HAPPY ANNIVERSARY!**

**May 1**

Doug & Tina Henthorn

**May 26**

Tom & Joan Michels

**May 31**

Robert & Patti Novy



**Before Entering the Church Building**

Just as a reminder, if you need to go into the Beloit Campus church building, please contact Tom Alverson as the church building is currently locked and alarmed 24/7.

In the past, the church was locked and the alarm system was off during the day for when folks needed to go into the church to do their work. Being continually locked and alarmed was put into place when the building was temporarily closed due to Covid-19. Although small groups are being allowed to meet in the church, it is important to know who is there, when, as we work at keeping the church sanitized before, during and after those small groups meet. It is also important to know who is there, when they are there, for security reasons, so we can double check building security after people have been inside.

If you need to go into the Beloit Campus church building, please contact Tom Alverson: 608-346-1424 via phone call or preferably text to let him know that you need to go into the church so he can disable the alarm system. You may also call the office. If you are a small group and want to meet in the church, please contact the office and a Building Usage Form will be mailed or emailed to you. If at all possible, please submit this form two weeks prior to the event. This gives the proper staff time to be notified of the needs for your group and allows the alarm system to be programmed as to when your group will be meeting.

Thank you for your understanding and your help!

Tom Alverson  
Security

## How to Donate Your Stimulus Check to Help Someone in Need



If you're fortunate enough to still be receiving a steady paycheck during the pandemic and also have an emergency fund, then you may be fortunate enough to not need the government's COVID-19 stimulus check.

What you do with your stimulus check is up to you. Maybe you need to make some repairs or buy a new appliance, and the stimulus check is just what you need—and spending it can help a local business. Or maybe you're concerned about your job and you know it makes more sense to save it, just in case.

However, if you find that you can donate your stimulus check, even if it's a portion of the check, you might be able to do some real good in someone's life. Think about how you want to use the money, and you might be surprised to discover that you can do yourself a little good while using your stimulus check to help others.

The big news right now is how the COVID-19 pandemic has essentially shut down life as we've known it and as a consequence, the economy. Congress approved stimulus checks to millions of Americans, and the Treasury is in the process of executing delivery.

However, not everyone may need it. In fact, rather than saving or investing the checks, you might be interested in doing a little extra good in the world. Whether you decide to donate a portion, or even all, of your check, there's a good chance you want your stimulus check to be as effective as possible.

Jesus has Risen! We've all been given a new start to life, a new beginning. What better way to be able to help out others in need. You can help out those who are struggling to make ends meet. You can help church maintain it's creativeness, your ministry programs and to help develop new ministry programs to help those in need, for both the community and folks in your church.

Our church is doing many things to make a difference in our communities. One newer mission ministry is the free Pancake Breakfast at the Clinton Campus. Offered the second Saturday of every month, this breakfast is the same day folks go to the food pantry to get their food supplies. Anyone can come to the breakfast. Before Covid-19, we were serving up to 20 families a month. What a blessing it has been on this journey, not knowing when these folks may or may not had a hot cooked meal, or even if the breakfast was their first meal of the week.

You could bless people by giving to our Blankets of Warmth program, our Bags of Hope program, or to God's Fund that we use help those in need. You could designate a gift to the youth or adult mission trip, to Vacation Bible School, Sunday School or Knowledge Flows, our tutoring program. You could also designate a gift to a new ministry or mission that has yet to be developed. You could even give to UMCOR or one of our other Advanced Special Offerings. There is so much you could do!

If you feel so inclined to donate part or all of your stimulus check, make your check payable to the church and in the memo section, let us know what it is designated for. And let us know that this is part of your stimulus donation.

Thank You and Blessings,  
Thomas Alverson  
Stewardship Chairperson

# Mission News

## Caritas/Clinton Food Pantry

April Loose Coin offerings will be divided between the two food pantries **Caritas** (serving the greater Beloit area) and the **Clinton Food Pantry**. It goes without saying that the demands on these relief agencies have been greater than ever during the pandemic, so they need our continued support.

To contribute to the Loose Coins offering, you can put coins, cash, or a check (made out to the church with "Loose Coins" on the memo line) in an envelope and slip it in the mail slot at the church office, mail it, or bring it to a drive-in service. Write your name and offering-envelope number on the envelope to have it included in your church giving record.

Looking Ahead....

May Loose Coins will go to the **Conference InGathering**. This is a gathering of supplies and money at Annual Conference, which will be donated this year to the Midwest Mission Distribution Center (MMDC). In addition to the Loose Coins giving, the Mission Committee will be collecting disaster response items for the InGathering, starting now through the month of May. The items our church will be collecting are the following:

- Adult tooth brushes (individually packaged)
- Bars of soap, 3-4 oz.
- Dish soap, 16-34 oz.
- Scrub brushes, with or without handles

Items for the InGathering may be placed in the bins provided at both churches. These items, plus Loose Coins money received in May, will be delivered to the Annual Conference InGathering to be donated to MMDC.

-Ellen Butchart

### LOOSE COINS:

#### **APRIL:**

*Caritas/Clinton Food Pantry*

#### **MAY:**

*Conference In Gathering*

#### **JUNE:**

*Blankets of Warmth*



Still collecting SOUP

## Reopening Update:

The Reopening Team met April 13th to continue considering concerns related to in-sanctuary worship. We want you to be aware of the following decisions:

1. We are grateful to all who turned in their Reopen Survey. It is not too late to turn it in: all additional responses would be helpful as we move forward.
2. We continue with our target date of June 6th for our first in-sanctuary worship services.
3. Committees and small groups may meet in the church, provided participants wear masks, stay distanced, and sanitize as they arrive and are leaving. Contact the church office to schedule your committee or group.
4. A Worship Covenant will be shared before we are back in the sanctuary with our safety guidelines.

As we continue to anticipate returning to in-sanctuary worship, we will have more opportunities for drive-in worship, including adding the option of bringing lawn chairs and either sitting outside your car or in a lawn chair section in the parking lot.

The Reopening Team has always taken the safety of our congregation very seriously as we work to make the difficult decisions of proceeding through this pandemic. Thank you for your grace.

-Pastor Brenda

### Pastoral Care

Pastoral Care visits can resume! Pastor Brenda qualified under category 1a of the Covid vaccine distribution as a Spiritual Care Provider. She has completed her vaccination series and is available to resume in-person visits. If you or someone you love have received both vaccine doses and would like a home or facility visit, please let the office know so it can be scheduled.





# Hello United Methodist Women!

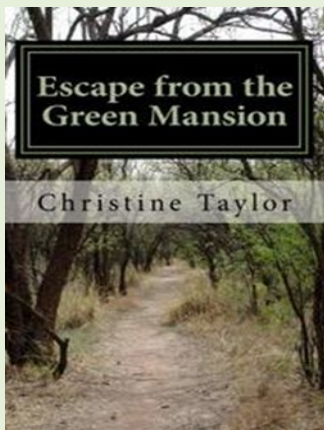


Flowers appear on the earth; the season of singing has come, the cooing of doves is heard in our land.

— Song of Solomon 2:12



Escape from the Green Mansion: Ordinary Church Women and their Extraordinary Rescue of San Francisco's Brothel Slaves Paperback – by Christine Taylor (author)  
CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, Dec 10, 2014 - 278 pages  
ISBN-13:9781726257077, ISBN-10: 17625707X (Out of Print)



Escape from the Green Mansion is a collection of historical events, anecdotal accounts of actual people and biographies of determined Christian women.

The book can be divided into three parts:

Part I deals with the general history of the California Gold Rush and the rise of Chinatown and prostitution in San Francisco. (1842-1876)

Part II Tells of the horrific conditions for Chinese women and the heroic efforts of Presbyterian and Methodist women to rescue them from the unscrupulous people who controlled their very lives. (1814-1905)

Part III Describes the great Great San Francisco Earthquake of 1906 and the ensuing changes in Chinatown and its brothels as well as changes in the church missionary programs.(1906-2014).

As shocking and sad as these events from past are, the news in 2021 is even more shocking. Yes, physical conditions in brothels have changed and prostitutes are now called sex workers, but the industry lives on and the racism of 1814-1906 is alive and well.

To this reviewer, the most shocking thing in this book was the blatant hatred of the Chinese by good Christian ministers and their good Christian parishioners. These Christian folk thought that the women should be rescued from their horrid conditions, but they didn't want Chinese in their community. Unfortunately this attitude is prominent in 2021 newscasts. However, the voices and actions of concerned Christians can still be seen and heard.

This is a sad and disturbing book, yet an uplifting story of the Presbyterian and Methodist women who spoke out against racism as well as prostitution. It is a book of dedication, determination, fearlessness and devotion to the calling of Christ to love your neighbor and to spread the gospel.

**Escape from Green Mansion** was part of the 2019 UMW Reading Program. The book is available from the UMW-ROLUMC library.

—Carol Connors

(Continued on pages 10 & 11)

## Mail Box Birthday Blessings

Trisha Manns was our UMW missionary in February. She was happy to get a birthday card and gift from us and sends her thanks and greetings. She was very excited about sharing her youth ministry in a Still in Mission Zoom meeting on April 1. This writer has accepted Trisha's invitation to attend. April Mail Box Birthday Blessing...

**Serna Samuel** Regional Missionary Grenada  
Birthday: April 18  
[seranlizsamuel@gmail.com](mailto:seranlizsamuel@gmail.com)  
PO Box 1266  
Kingstown  
St. Vincent and the Grenadines



Serna lives on an island in the Caribbean. See map. A special international stamp can be purchased at the post office for \$1.20 An email birthday greeting is free! Surprise her with a birthday greeting and surprise yourself with a blessed feeling!

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Tie a little string around your finger  
Dates and events to remember...

August 18-19 (tentative) fall rummage sale  
December 4 (tentative ) Cookie Walk  
Ongoing Circles can meet at the church  
Ongoing Pledge to Mission Offering for 2021

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## Social Justice a Major Tenant of UMW UMW for Social Justice

**Attend** Faith Talks. Faith Talks is a monthly webinar available on Zoom. The context of the meeting becomes a podcast. A webinar is a meeting where you listen to speakers as opposed to a Zoom meeting where you participate. Anyone can attend these meetings. Go to [unitedmethodistwomen.com](http://unitedmethodistwomen.com) and sign up. It's free and very informative. The April Faith Talk is about attacks on Asian/Pacific Islanders and matches nicely with the book review included in this issue of the Current of the River of Life.

**Pray** for UMW personnel in Washington, DC as they contact government figures to advance social justice.

**Be** a good example as you go about daily life.

### UMW for Climate Justice

UMW is organizing a UMW Climate Justice Federal Legislative Day for UMW members and friends on April 14th, 2021. Our goal will be to urge our Wisconsin House Representatives and Senators to pass legislation that prioritizes climate justice through a just and equitable transition. Write to congress to put a moratorium on utility shutoffs.

—Carol Connors

## Knitted Together for God's Good Work - UMW 2021 Theme

If you know me at all, you know that I love the fiber arts and especially knitting. So you can understand why I am so interested in this year's theme.

The March/April 2021 issue of the Response UMW magazine featured an article entitled "Knitting a Better Future." It is a fantastic article about the work of Evangelical Methodist Church in Bolivia in teaching women to spin and knit so that they can not only be self-sufficient, but also gain much needed self respect.



It is accompanied by a YouTube video that lets you see a workshop that teaches the women these skills. The Federacion Femenina Metodista or Methodist Women's Federation is a global partner of UMW. Our Mission Giving supports this wonderful organization.

Here is a link to this video. You will have to key it in, but that's not hard.

<https://youtu.be/6G53W3t0Kr8>  
—Carol Connors

## UMW BOOKCASES

The Board of UMW is so pleased that Fran Patch, Master Woodworker has built a lovely bookcase for our UMW Library. He is donating his expertise, material, time and energy as a gift to us. The bookcase will be located in the area of Fellowship Hall where card tables and leather furniture are located. The bookcase is made of walnut based on a design we found on Amazon. The finish matches our table tops in Fellowship Hall. We will work on a sign that will be hung above the bookcases, which will identify them as The UMW Library.



Thank you so much Fran and God Bless YOU from all the women of UMW.



# Financial Corner

Month of:  
March 2021

## Current month :

Operating Income \$ 46,119.33

Operating Expense \$ 30,056.58

## Year to date: 2021

Operating Income \$ 136,922.68

Operating Expense \$ 84,120.49

## Designated giving year to date:

Apportionments: \$ 2,758.50

Gods Fund Balance: \$ 1,445.90

Bags of Hope Balance: \$ 3,716.20

Blankets of Warmth Balance: \$ 1,016.31

Thank you to those that donated to  
missions!!!

So far we have received \$ 760.00 from Easter  
donations to be split between RVCP and  
Sparrow Nest!!!

**We are excited to announce that people  
can now donate to the River of Life United  
Methodist Church online!**

Easter 2021 was a glorious morning! The sun came up as we were worshipping our Risen Lord at the Drive In Sunrise Service at the Clinton Campus . Everybody got a fabulous breakfast to go. The birds were singing and the parking lot was packed for the 9:30am Beloit Campus Sunrise Service. Thanks to all of our volunteers who assisted in this wonderful morning! Happy Easter!!







The Chancel Choir mourns the loss of two of our dear and loyal choir members, Lynne and Dan Kreisman.

Lynne lost her long battle with heart failure on December 8, 2020, and Dan succumbed to a second bout of cancer on April 5, 2021.

Lynne was a longtime member of our downtown church and of our choir. When Lynne and Dan met and married, our choir and then Pastor Jim Rowlette participated in their wedding in Woodstock, Illinois. Dan, who was a Woodstock theater actor

and singer, quickly became part of our extended choir family, as he became our narrator and occasional bass soloist for cantatas.

Since that time we've been so honored to have them return for each and every Easter and Christmas cantata, with Dan at the microphone delivering narration while Lynne has sung soprano.

We will miss their collective beautiful spirit along with Dan's velvety voice and corny humor and Lynne's sweet persona and classy sense of style.

In the words of Dan's daughter Kim, "It brings us a great sense of peace to know that Lynne was waiting for dad with open arms. I know that they'll be forever in Heaven together watching over all of those they loved."

Kim closes her communique with this: "May you all spend extra time with your loved ones – whenever you can. Peace and love to you all."

-Lois Ulvin & Ellen Butchart

## 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.

*Please drop off your pop tops  
which benefits  
Ronald McDonald's House*



WHEN WE PUT  
OUR PROBLEMS IN  
GOD'S HANDS,  
HE PUTS HIS  
PEACE IN OUR HEARTS.

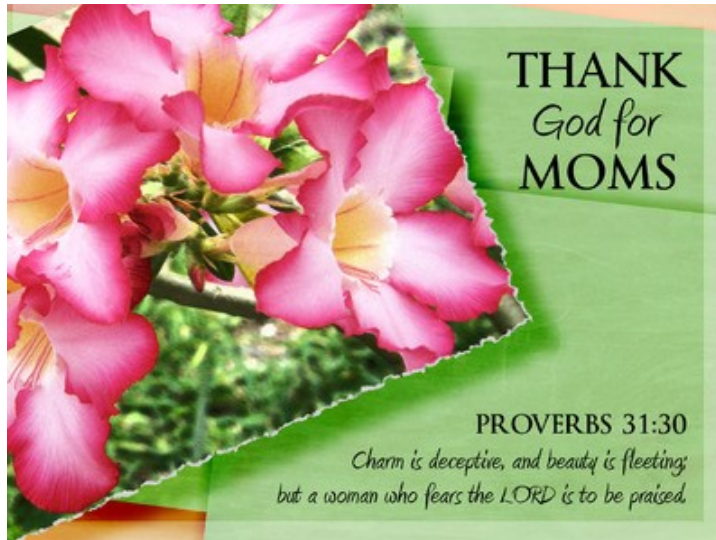
Karen Parsinnen and Diane Gemignani brought some Easter cheer to our tutoring students and our adventurers.





## SUNDAY SCHOOL

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."



Louise Junig has returned home! We are so glad you are back in Beloit, Louise moved away to be closer to her children, but she missed us, so she moved home to Beloit. The choir gave a surprise welcome home!



# Calendar

MAY 2021						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						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	29
30	31					

**Sunday**  
9:30 am Beloit Worship Service  
Online & Facebook

**Sunday School**  
Available anytime!!  
See the link on our website

**Monday**  
1:00 pm Card Club (FH)

**Tuesday**  
10:00 am Men's Coffee Hour (FH)  
1:00 pm Staff Meeting (O)  
5:00 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.

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

- April 19 6:30 pm Stewardship (Zoom)
- April 20 6:30 pm Finance (Zoom)
- April 21 9:30 am Martha Circle (FH)  
1:00 pm Mary Circle (FH)
- April 26 6:00 pm Trustees (Zoom)
- April 27 10:00 am Missions & Outreach (FH)
- May 1 9:00 am Workday (Beloit church)
- May 4 6:00 pm Youth Ministry Team (Zoom)
- May 7 5:00 pm Deadline for *The Current*
- May 9 Happy Mother's Day!
- May 15 9:00 am Rain date for Workday (Beloit church)



### Special Offering:

**APRIL:** Native American Ministries  
**MAY:** Peace With Justice

### Issue deadline:

May 7th  
The next issue of the Current will be available  
May 16th

## Just a reminder .....

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