



January 2024

Messenger

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE UNITED METHODIST COMMUNITY OF FAITH IN MEDFORD AND RIB LAKE WISCONSIN

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*"For where two or three
are gathered together
in my name, I am there
among them"*

Matthew 18:20 (NRSV)

Dear Laity, Clergy, and Congregations of the Wisconsin Conference,

We want to express our deepest gratitude for your commitment to our shared mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. We know the disaffiliation process throughout The United Methodist Church and our local faith communities has been difficult. In acknowledging this challenging season, we also hold true to the power and glory of God, that in our "proclaiming the good news of God's grace and by exemplifying Jesus' command to love God and neighbor," our connection is strengthened.

Together, we are meeting physical and spiritual needs locally. We celebrate persons responding to God's call to serve (lay and clergy).

Because of our United Methodist connection, we celebrate:

- 100% apportionment payment to the general church
- Missional support through the Advance Specials and Special Sunday Offerings
- Wisconsin Conference Licensing School
- Harmony Choir
- Beloved Community Initiative
- Bolivia partnership
- Board of Laity – Certified Lay Ministers program
- Camps and camp scholarships
- New Ministry Plants, including chartering new congregations
- UMCOR Disaster response
- ...and so much more!

Because of our collective time, talent, gifts, service, and witness, we can celebrate and will continue celebrating all that will emerge in 2024.

As we look to the future, let's remember the importance of our United Methodist connection and our profession as disciples of Jesus Christ. **Thank you** for doing your part as a layperson, clergyperson, or faith community member in the Wisconsin Conference; you are strengthening our connection as we focus on God's faithful future.

With great appreciation,
The Wisconsin Conference Appointive Cabinet

Bishop Hee-Soo Jung

*Barbara Certa-Werner, Clergy Assistant to Bishop
Tsuker Yang, North Central District Superintendent, Dean of the Cabinet
Park Hunter, North East District Superintendent
PyungAhn "Peace" Kim, North West District Superintendent
Amanda Stein, South West District Superintendent
Ebenezer Insor, South East District Superintendent
Sue D'Alessio, Director of Connectional Ministries
Scott Carlson, Director of Congregational Development*

Attendance

Date	Rib Lake	Medford
12/3	23	39
12/6	13 Advent Service	--
12/10	11	34
12/13	--	?? Advent Service
12/17	17	54
12/20	19 Advent Service	--
12/24	13 Morning Service	49
12/24	30 Evening Service	--

PASTOR'S MESSAGE

Jesus said, "I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing." --John 15:5

We have just traveled through the Advent and Christmas seasons. Soon, the decorations will come down and be stored until next year. The colors of the season will give way to the drabness of winter. We will be through with the gift giving and the celebration. What will we do now?

Just because the Christmas season is over does not mean the task at hand is finished. God calls us to share the love and grace of God that we receive through Jesus with the world. That is a 24/7, 365 day a year task. We are on 24 hour call for this task. We just never know when God will require our services. We need to be ready whenever the opportunity arises.

We need to be ready because we never know when the opportunity might arise. There are people in need every day, and they might cross our paths when we least expect them to. A person in need is always an opportunity to share God's love. We are the vessels through whom that love flows into the world.

Jesus says that He is the vine and that we are the branches of that vine. The vine is the base and the branches grow from that vine. We are the branches that reach out to the world. We are the branches on which the love of God grows. God's love flows through us.

It is not always easy to be the branches. The branches of the vine have to endure weather - both good and bad. The branches sometimes have to endure droughts. As the branches, we have to endure both the positive and negative aspects of life. These can make it either easier or harder to share God's love. We have to be ready for whatever comes our way.

As I write this, it looks like we will not have a white Christmas. They are saying that this will be one of the warmest Christmases ever. We certainly never expected a Christmas like this. There are many who desire that white Christmas. We have to live with what we get - an unexpected Christmas.

May you always be ready for what comes your way. Let us be ready for whatever comes in the new year.

Blessings,

Pastor John

Home Phone: (715) 748-0477

Office Phone: (715) 748-2165

Cell Phone: (715) 560-3606

Email: pastor@medfordchargeumc.com

Office Hours: Tuesday-Thursday, 8 a.m. - 12 noon

If you would like to become a member of the Medford or Rib Lake churches, please speak with Pastor John.

MEDFORD and RIB LAKE EVENTS of JANUARY 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
31 1st Sunday after Christmas (R) 9:00 am - Worship (M) 9:15 am - SonShine Kids (M) 10:30 am - Worship (M) 2:00 pm - Oasis	1	2 (M) 6:00 pm Lay Servants / Worship Team	3 (M) 6:00 pm Choir Practice	4	5 Office closed	6
7 Baptism of the Lord Holy Communion (R) 9:00 am - Worship (M) 9:15 am - SonShine Kids (M) 10:30 am - Worship (M) 2:00 pm - Oasis	8 Office closed	9 (M) 6:00 pm SPRC	10	11 (M) 9:00 am <u>Life Group:</u> "When You Pray" (M) 10:30 am Keenagers @ Historical Society (M) 5:30 pm <u>Life Group:</u> "When You Pray"	12 Office closed	13
14 2nd Sunday after the Epiphany (R) 9:00 am - Worship (M) 9:15 am - SonShine Kids (M) 10:30 am - Worship (M) 2:00 pm - Oasis	15 Office closed	16 (M) 6:30 pm SALT	17 (R) 9:00 am Food Pantry (R) 2:00 pm Ad. Council (R) 4:00 pm Food Pantry (M) 6:00 pm Choir Practice	18 (M) 9:00 am <u>Life Group:</u> "When You Pray" (M) 5:30 pm <u>Life Group:</u> "When You Pray"	19 Office closed February Newsletter Pictures and Articles Due	20
21 3rd Sunday after the Epiphany (R) 9:00 am - Worship (M) 9:15 am - SonShine Kids (M) 10:30 am - Worship (M) 2:00 pm - Oasis	22 Office closed	23 (M) 6:00 pm Building Maintenance Team	24 (M) 5:00 pm Sticker Day (M) 6:00 pm Choir Practice	25 (M) 9:00 am <u>Life Group:</u> "When You Pray" (M) 5:30 pm <u>Life Group:</u> "When You Pray"	26 Office closed	27
28 4th Sunday after the Epiphany (R) 9:00 am - Worship (M) 9:15 am - SonShine Kids (M) 10:30 am - Worship (M) 2:00 pm - Oasis	29 Office closed	30	31 (M) 6:00 pm Choir Practice	1 (M) 9:00 am <u>Life Group:</u> "When You Pray" (M) 5:30 pm <u>Life Group:</u> "When You Pray"	2 Office closed	3
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The Event Calendar is subject to change. Watch the weekly announcements for updates.

PEOPLE SERVING, LEADING, PRAYING, LISTENING, & CELEBRATING

Weekly Volunteer Schedule

Greeters

January 7 (M) TBD
 January 14 (M) Craig Butor / James Zajicek
 January 21 (M) Eunice & Steve Mayer
 January 28 (M) Bill & Sue Breneman

Worship Leaders/Liturgists

January 7 (M) Cheryl Ketelhut (R) Karon Dallmann
 January 14 (M) Crystal Ludwig (R) Carol Punzel
 January 21 (M) Steve Mayer (R) Deb Polacek
 January 28 (M) Bill Breneman (R) Dorothy Nelson

Slideshow

January 7 (M) Crystal Ludwig
 January 14 (M) Cheryl Ketelhut
 January 21 (M) Carrie Ziembo
 January 28 (M) Jordan Ludwig

Coffee Fellowship (sign-up sheet in the fellowship hall)

January 7 (M) TBD
 January 14 (M) TBD
 January 21 (M) Carrie Ziembo
 January 28 (M) TBD

Altar Flowers (sign-up sheet in the fellowship hall)

January 7 (M) TBD
 January 14 (M) TBD
 January 21 (M) TBD
 January 28 (M) TBD

****You are responsible for finding a replacement if you are unavailable on your day.**

*****Please call or email Crystal or the office with any changes so the newsletter and slides are current, and so the correct people receive the worship info each week.**

Crystal: connection@medfordchargeumc.com
 715-965-4006

Office: mcumc@medfordchargeumc.com
 715-748-2165

The Medford United Methodist Church nominations committee is still trying to fill positions. We currently have two open positions on the SALT board. We also need team leaders for the Congregational Care ministry Team and the Discipleship Ministry teams. We will need a new treasurer and a new membership chair.

If you feel you can fill any of these, please let Pastor John know.

Prayer Requests

Health Concerns:

Kelli Ray; Chyrel Houston; Marge Blair; Jean Romang; Barb Schief; Judy Troyk; Brenda Clark; Craig Butor; Dennis Lind; Hal Swenson; Krist Punzel; Don & Donna Hoefferle; Dennis Jones; Jerry Hubbard

Mission/Missionary/Community:

"Beds from Christ" volunteers and recipients; the Medford Charge as we reach out to our communities; government leaders

Others:

Pastor John Hazen; Bishop Jung and the Cabinet; DS Tsuker Yang

pray
continually
1 Thessalonians 5:17
medfordchargeumc.com



JANUARY BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES



Jan 4 (M) Patricia Zittlow (B)
 Jan 5 (M) Marge Blair (B)
 Jan 7 (M) Stanton Braun (B)
 Jan 10 (M) Stephen Van Wylen (B)
 Jan 12 (R) Robert Lueck (B)
 Jan 13 (M) Holly Butler (B)
 Jan 15 (R) Bill Nelson (B)
 (R) Val Polacek-Uber (B)
 Jan 17 (M) Astrid Kjesbo (B)
 Jan 22 (M) Jill Pickreign (B)
 Jan 22 (M) Shirley Werner (B)
 Jan 26 (R) Donna Hoefferle (B)

****Please submit corrections or additions to the church office by calling 715-748-2165 or emailing mcumc@medfordchargeumc.com**

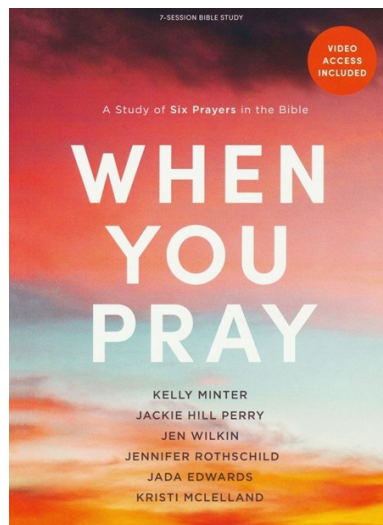
Life Groups – Learning Together

L - Live

I – in

F – Faith

E - Everyday



Do you have trouble thinking of words to say to God when you pray? Are you afraid some emotions are too intense to express to God? Do you reach the end of a day only to realize you haven't prayed at all?

You're not alone. Prayer is the way we relate to God, but sometimes it's a struggle. Throughout God's Word, we encounter many voices who teach us how to pray. Join six beloved Bible study teachers, Kelly Minter, Jackie Hill Perry, Jen Wilkin, Jennifer Rothschild, Jada Edwards, and Kristi McLelland in this study.

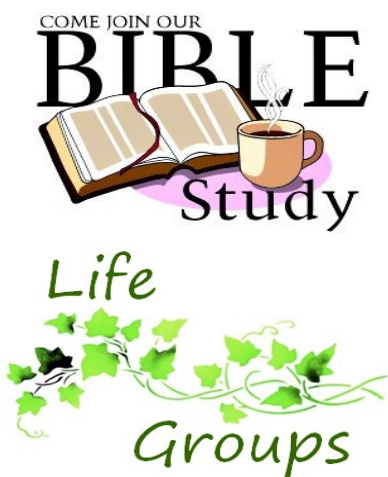
Learn that God welcomes your praise and lament, your thanksgiving and intercession. You'll see examples of how to pray when you're alone and when you're gathered with others. Above all, you'll notice there's no one right way to pray. The videos are approximately 25-40 minutes long with discussion to follow.

description from ChristianBook.com

The 7-week study begins Thursday, January 11- February 22. Groups will be at 9 a.m. & 5:30 p.m.

Books are not required, but if you would like to go deeper in the study, you can order one. Both Amazon and Christianbook.com have this book. The price is around \$25.

Please contact Cheryl or Jean to for more information about this Life Group.



On Wednesday, December 13, Keenagers met at Abbyland Restaurant in Curtiss. 19 people were present and a large collection of food for the Rib Lake Food Pantry was collected. Steve Mayer led us in many Christmas carols and good time was had by all!

Our January gathering will meet on Thursday, January 11, right after the Life Group which usually ends at 10:30 am. We will meet at the Taylor County Historical Society (fairgrounds), tour from 10:30 to noon, and then go to Medford Cafe for lunch.

Keenagers is open to all those aged 50 years and older. Please contact Sue Breneman with any questions. 719-775-1443

BEDS FROM CHRIST 2023 UPDATE

2023 has been an exciting, as well as challenging, year for the Beds from Christ program. This year has experienced a growth that doubled previous years referrals and bed deliveries. Previously, the program has consistently averaged 29 to 30 delivered beds each year at an expenditure of \$8,000-\$12,000. This year our purchased beds totaled \$22,366. Where did all that money come from? Aspirus Community Benefit Fund provided \$8,000, the sale of the trailer at a financially critical time gave the program \$4,950. When the Lords Acre Sale donated \$3,700 the program was at another financial low. The remainder of the money came from YOU! Your donations, along with other Taylor County individual gifts made it possible to meet every request received. These funds provided every recipient with a new mattress, frame, mattress protector, sheets, pillow(s) and comforter. Additionally, between our congregants and the quilters of Our Saviour's Lutheran Church, everyone received additional bedding.

Here's what 2023 looked like for Beds from Christ:

We made a difference in lives of 64 individuals and/or families.

We delivered 56 beds, including cribs in the Medford and Rib Lake area.

We received referrals from: Taylor House, Stepping Stones, Taylor County Human Services, Salvation Army, Medford Area School System, Oasis, and other churches and individuals.

We helped individuals who were sleeping on floors, in lawn chairs, recliners, and bug infested mattresses.

We helped our youngest individual - a newborn; and our oldest - age 77.

We provided beds for a young man ageing out of foster care, a mom and newborn sleeping on the floor, three moms and children leaving domestic situations, a disabled women sleeping in a worn hospital bed, a man who had been living in a camper, a family of 6 that lost their home and car, three families that needed to leave bug infested homes, a blended family with 8 children in need of 7 beds, a young gal just starting out who could not afford a bed but donated \$60.00 to BFC, six non-English speaking individuals, and other persons in economic crisis.

We made a difference because the people of Medford United Methodist church care and support this program. Thank you!

RIB LAKE CHURCH NEWS

2024 Quarterly Missions

1st Quarter -
Beds from Christ

2nd Quarter -
Never Forgotten
Honor Flight

3rd Quarter -
Stepping Stones

4th Quarter -
Northwoods Veterans
Homestead

**You can share your
church life
stories and photos in
The Messenger!
Send them to...**

**connection@medford
chargeumc.com**

**The mission of Rib
Lake UMC is to
help all people
to know and grow
in Jesus.**



Our vision is to build
a church family by
providing
opportunities to
worship God,
connect with others,
and serve the
community.

Rib Lake Community Food Pantry

Thank you so much for your generosity! The recent donations from the Keenagers and previous donations from the Medford UMC congregation have helped make this Christmas Season a little brighter for our families. God Bless the Giver and our Receivers.

Anything your family enjoys eating is a good candidate for donating!

Some items always in need of are:
cash for buying meats and dairy; peanut butter, catsup, mayo.
Why cash? We can purchase meats, etc. from Feed My People
cheaper than you can buy it in the store.

First Quarter Mission



Beds from Christ is a mission of Medford United Methodist Church, whose goal is to provide bedding to those in need within Taylor County.

Visit our YouTube channel!



YouTube

[Subscribe](#)

youtube.com/@medfordunitedmethodistchurch

If you have an event or meeting that you would like included on the monthly calendar and the slides, please contact the church office with all necessary information.

**715-748-2165 or
mcumc@medfordchargeumc.com**

SALT MEDFORD CHURCH NEWS

What Christmas Means to me:

The letters in the word Christmas will mean different things to different people. Take time to listen to this Christmas meditation. May it give you time to pause during this busy time, and possibly allow you to compose your own meditation.

C is for Christ, the person I should strive to be like, if only for a fraction of my time here on Earth, would make the world a better place.

H stands for Home, a place that welcomes everyone.

R - Remember it is greater to give than receive. I used to hate Christmas concentrating more on what I was getting or not getting. Building up expectations only to be let down. NOW, there is more joy in giving!

I - I am responsible for my actions especially when dealing with those around me. I try to be nice to everyone.

S stands for smile, something I always try to wear, to brighten even the darkest days.

T - Teacher, is what I am and will be every day of my life. Share your talents with the world around you.

M - Music, always have a song in your heart and We Methodists should always Sing loud and strong with all the verses.

A stands for Andrea and Eunice, the best gifts I could ever receive. No returns, refunds, Or exchanges. Never take these gifts for granted.

S stands for Share life’s good fortunes with the less fortunate as in Beds from Christ and The Rib Lake Food Pantry and even strangers in need. I like to pay for the car behind me in a drive thru or at the gas pumps. Try it, it’s fun!

I hope and pray this Christmas is filled with love and joy.

Merry Christmas,
Steve Mayer

Contact a SALT member with any comments, questions,
or concerns about our church.

		<u>Your member are:</u>	
Bill Breneman	(719) 775-1442 wkbreneman@gmail.com	Steve Mayer	(715)482-1313 seamayer@tds.net
Stan Schmidt	(715) 748-6042 craftsandfishing@tds.net	Your Name Here?	
Brenda Bengtson	(715)785-7480 bengtson7230@yahoo.com		
Dennis Jones	(715) 748-0329 or (920) 287-1718 jonesnancy157@gmail.com	“You are the salt of the earth ...” -- Matthew 5:13	

MEDFORD FINANCES

The Finance Team met in October, reviewing finances for the year and trends in donations/expenses. To support the budget for 2023, average giving of \$9,467 per month would be needed. Expenses have increased in some areas (i.e. utilities, insurance) while budget allocations in others have been lower or not expended to help bridge the gap. Overall, our average giving through October has been approximately \$6,400 per month. As you can see, we not able to meet monthly expenses. **The shortfall has been met by withdrawing from church savings.**

The SALT Board met recently and put together the budget for 2024. That budget would require \$9,646 per month to meet expenses. In the newsletter each month, you see a Finance Report showing the current status of the checking account. In addition, a Monthly Assets report showing savings accounts balances and the mortgage liability, although not printed in the newsletter, is reported to the SALT Board, along with a complete budget page and monthly giving. If you are interested in seeing any of these additional documents or have any questions, please contact anyone on the Finance Team. Your support is vital to the Medford United Methodist Church!

Medford UMC Finance Team:

Jim Flood & Steve Mayer, Financial Secretaries

Stan Schmidt, Auditor and Member

Kristi DeBruyne, Treasurer

Checking Account:

	<u>Month</u>	<u>Year-to-Date</u>	
Beginning Balance 11/1/2023	\$7,837.43	\$4,115.79	1/1/2023
November Receipts	<u>10,226.97</u>	<u>130,802.52</u>	
	18,064.40	134,918.31	
November Checks	<u>11,898.25</u>	<u>128,752.16</u>	
Balance 11/30/2023	\$6,166.15	\$6,166.15	

Designated funds held in checking at 11/30/2023

Betty Jensen Flower Fund	914.28
Beds From Christ	668.41
4th Qtr Missions	156.05
Book Sales	45.69
Sunday School	<u>142.77</u>
Total	<u>1,927.20</u>

Checking account balance as of 11/30/2023	\$6,166.15
Designated funds held in checking	<u>1,927.20</u>
Total available to spend in checking:	<u>\$4,238.95</u>

Apportionments due for 2023:	\$14,086.00
Apportionments paid YTD	2715.00
Apportionments paid in November	<u>0.00 *</u>
	<u>2,715.00</u>
Balance remaining to pay:	<u>\$11,371.00</u>

*Paid \$0 toward apportionments this month; \$0 designated; \$1,174 per month would meet 2023 apportionments.

**THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
287 E ALLMAN STREET
MEDFORD WI 54451-1122**

Medford Charge Office

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www.medfordchargeumc.com

www.facebook.com/medfordwisconsinumc

Rib Lake UMC, Sunday Worship at 9:00am

1300 Church Street

Rib Lake, WI 54470

Phone 715-427-3670

Medford UMC, Sunday Worship at 10:30am

287 E Allman Street

Medford, WI 54451

Phone 715-748-2165

John Hazen, Pastor 715-748-0477 or 715-560-3606

Crystal Ludwig, Connectional Ministry Coordinator 715-965-4006

Diane Pernsteiner, Charge Treasurer / Office Manager

Address label



**The mission of Medford UMC is to
make new disciples of Jesus
Christ for the transformation of
the world.**

By the grace of God we reach
out to all those who need hope,
comfort, support, and the love
of Jesus Christ.



January 2024



**The mission of Rib Lake UMC is to
help all people to know and grow
in Jesus.**

Our vision is to build a church
family by providing opportunities
to worship God, connect with
others, and serve the community.



If you would like to unsubscribe from our
newsletter or feel that you have received it in
error, please contact the Charge Office to be
removed from the mailing list. Thank you.

715-748-2165

mcumc@medfordchargeumc.com