



October 2025

# Monthly Newsletter

From the United Methodist Church of Whitefish Bay



## CONTENTS

October Mission  
Focus - 1

Building  
Community - 2

Notes From the  
Board - 3

Causes for  
Celebration - 4

Community  
Updates - 7

Looking Ahead - 11

October  
Birthdays - 12

## October Mission Focus - “Midwest Mission”

“Midwest Mission” is one of 7 organizations used by the “United Methodist Committee on Relief” (UMCOR) to organize and distribute needed supplies to people who suffer poverty or who have suffered a disaster. MM prioritizes four main areas: Disaster relief, health, small business and education.

The supplies are either purchased by MM or donated through Methodist congregations. Supplies include medical supplies, sewing machines, tools, and bicycles, among other items. However, the majority of what they supply are various personal kits which are assembled and packed at either of their two permanent locations in Illinois and Iowa or at off site locations at churches like ours. The supplies are then sent to trusted non-profit organizations who then distribute them to people within the USA and around the world.

Education relief includes the “Student Kit.” Last May 11 we packed 50 of these kits. The kit includes notebooks, ruler, pencils, sharpener, erasers, colored pencils, crayons, and a scissors. Missions Committee is setting up the opportunity on Sunday, Oct. 26 to pack 500 of these kits.

More information and a link to sign up for this event will follow in future “Weekly Connections”. If you have any questions in the meantime please email John Wierschem at [jjwiers@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jjwiers@sbcglobal.net).

# Building Community: The Social Principles of Our Church

## *A Letter from Pastor Gary Holmes*

Dear Friends,

Have you ever wondered what it really means to live out our faith in the everyday moments of life? Not just in worship on Sunday morning, but in the choices we make with our money, the way we treat one another, how we care for the earth, and even how we enter into conversations about the world around us?

This October, our worship will focus on the **Social Principles of the United Methodist Church**. These are not meant to be rules handed down, but rather a prayerful guide — a way of asking how our love for God and neighbor takes shape in a complicated world.

Over four weeks, we'll consider what it looks like to build Beloved Community right here and now:

- On **World Communion Sunday (October 5)**, we'll remember that God created the world and called it good, inviting us to live in harmony with all of creation.
- On **October 12**, we'll reflect on how our faith shapes the way we use resources — practicing generosity and justice instead of being caught up in greed or scarcity.

- On **October 19**, we'll celebrate the gift of community, remembering that God created us to belong to one another and to bear each other's burdens.
- And on **October 26**, we'll step into the tender space of faith and public life, asking how Jesus calls us to engage with love, grace, and courage, even when the world tells us not to "talk politics."

In a time when our nation and world can feel so divided, I believe this series offers us hope and direction. Together, we'll listen for God's call to be a people of peace, justice, and love — a Beloved Community shaped not by fear, but by Christ.

I look forward to walking this journey with you in worship and prayer. May God continue to guide us as we seek to live faithfully in the world God so loves.

With hope in Christ,

Pastor Gary





# Notes From the Board

On Sep 16th, the Servant Leadership Board (formerly Accountable Leadership Board) met for the regular monthly meeting. In attendance were SLB members: Tom Van Cleave, Sam Swartzberg, Hui Zhang, Chris Kitchens, Vee Jefferson and Tom Groble. Also in attendance were Gary Holmes, Erin Norris, Laurie Jeffery, Dick Steinmetz, Jean Erickson, Kathy Schluter, Claudia Deede and Jenny Fisher.

The following is a summary of key discussions and actions:

- **Devotion and Pastor's Report:** Pastor Gary Holmes led a devotional discussion focusing on the humility and servant role of leadership. Specifically, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: let's put aside our personal egos and agendas, remembering that we are here to serve as servant of God and His people; and to listen intently to one another and to the needs of the community.
- **Guest Engagement Pathway:** Pastor Gary walked through a guide with steps to create deeper connections with guests and make them feel comfortable in our church family as we explore their needs. The four steps comprise: 1. Outreach - invitation to visit UMCWFB; 2. Hospitality - create a warm and

welcoming first experience with follow-up steps; 3. Connectivity - cultivate deeper relationships of needs and how UMCWFB's identity/programs assist them on their spiritual journey; 4. Spiritual Journey Pathway (Connect, Grow and Serve) - help them find spiritual growth to live out their faith at UMCWFB.

- **Outreach Strategy and Fall Welcome Picnic:** Jenny Fisher outlined a strategy to meet community needs by identifying events/programs to better serve them through multi-channel messaging, personal invitations and involvement in organizations and networks outside of UMCWFB. A key tenet is to form meaningful relationships with our community through volunteering, joining networks, inviting guests and hosting events. Tom Groble mentioned opportunities via Carpenter Shop, Tree of Life and NSSS to connect families to UMCWFB. There were more than 20 guests out of 230 people that attended our Fall Welcome Picnic.
- **Misc:** The Annual Church Conference will be held on Tuesday, Dec 9<sup>th</sup> at 7:00pm. The next Council of Ministries meeting is Sunday Oct 12<sup>th</sup>.





# — Causes for Celebration —



## Ribbon Cutting Celebration

On Sunday Sept 21, we gathered together to celebrate the completion of the Narthex renovation and Sanctuary sound system upgrades, in the context of our recent Capital Campaign theme of **"Connect our Past to Reach our Future"**. To express gratitude to God and the congregation, honor those who contributed and share the vision: *"This isn't just a renovated space - it is a place for connection, fellowship, and welcome."*

Our ribbon cutting celebration symbolized that **"We're Opening Doors and Opening Hearts" as we build a Beloved Community.**

We want to express our gratitude to Russ LaFrombois (architect and visionary); Tom Van Cleave (project director); Catalyst and their Contractors; Finishing team; Scott Longden & Jon Welstead (Sanctuary sound); Building Change Priority Committee; Capital Campaign Committee; and to all of you, our congregation, for your patience and support.

Finally, we want to lift up Pastor Gary Holmes for his encouragement of how our space could truly be transformed into a warm, welcoming and inviting place.





# Wednesday Night Faith, Food, and Friendship Kick-Off a Success!

We are overjoyed that hundreds of community members joined us for our first month of our new season of Wednesday Night Faith, Food, and Friendship.

We are thrilled to welcome a new chef, Gretchen Kniffin, who has been preparing delicious made-from-scratch meals for people to enjoy together. We are also excited to welcome a new set-up and clean-up leader, church member, Lea Gorham.

Our youth choirs, youth group, and children's ministry program (KICKStart), are off to a fun, successful start, and our faith-focused adult classes and Bible study has been overflowing with abundant attendance.

Thanks be to God so many families and community members join us for midweek faith enhancement. A heartfelt thank you to all of the volunteers that make each week such a thriving success!







# Fall Welcome Picnic Celebration

God showed up in an incredible way for our fall worship kick-off and our Fall Welcome Picnic on September 10th. We enjoyed beautiful weather, soul-feeding spiritual worship, joyful music, delicious food and heart-warming fellowship. We loved seeing our members and guests enjoying time together. Our Welcome team did a wonderful job of showcasing ways for community members to get connected in our faith community and serve in the world. We are especially thankful to our dedicated planning teams and volunteers that made the picnic such a success.

Praise be to God for an amazing day to begin a new season of faith-building worship and community fellowship!



# UMCOR Milwaukee Flood Relief

The United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) and the Wisconsin Conference of the United Methodist Church (WCUMC) are working in the Milwaukee area to mitigate flood damage to homes for families without other resources.

Three members of UMCWFB have worked two different days to remove damaged drywall and debris from homes. Future work days may be scheduled.

The current need is to raise funds purchase tools and supplies to furnish a second disaster response trailer for WCUMC. Thank you for any help you may offer.





# Community Updates

## Youth Boba and Brushes

We had such a fun time at our Boba & Brushes youth event! We painted a beautiful fall-themed canvas of a wheelbarrow full of pumpkins, and the kids' talents really shone through. We enjoyed delicious boba tea and refreshing boba lemonade, along with plenty of tasty snacks to share. A special thank you to the parents who came to help and to Pastor Gary and Pastor Claudia for visiting. It made the evening extra meaningful to have you with us. It was a night filled with laughter, creativity, and connection, and we're already looking forward to our next gathering, our Fall Movie Night on October 19!



## UMCWFB Golf Outing

The weather cooperated and nine community members had a great time golfing at Mee Kwon Course on September 20th. The longest drive was 235 yards, a respectable distance.





# Fall Luncheon fulfills “Celebrating Women” theme

United Women in Faith (UWF) members and guests gathered Sept. 9 for a delicious salad buffet and to learn about UWF’s small interest groups known as “Circles.” Linda Dindzan, a local author, gave her perspective as the writer of the book, “A Certain Man.” Stay tuned for the details about our Holiday Luncheon on Tuesday, Dec. 9!





## 34th Year for UMC's Tutoring Ministry at Marvin Pratt

The tutors met to plan the start of their 34th year of working with the children at Marvin Pratt. For more information, call or email Loretto Steinmetz at 414-550-2957 or [ldsteinmetz@wi.rr.com](mailto:ldsteinmetz@wi.rr.com).



## Lydia's Treasure Update

Lydia's Treasure is back and ready for all those great things you've been saving to bring! Before dropping off donated items, please contact Lydia at

[mpaull53223@gmail.com](mailto:mpaull53223@gmail.com) or 414-759-1437.

We appreciate the notice so that we might thank you and be ready to add your

treasures to our shelves. And if you love to poke around our little mission gift shop –

NEW things are arriving just about every day. Every day, every purchase, every donation, support mission in at least one way. With your help, since 2015, Lydia's Treasure has given over \$80,000 to more than two dozen different missions. Our designated mission from now through December is UMCWFB's Feed My Starving Children mobile pack even in late April. Come visit us Sundays before and after 10:30 worship, Mondays and Tuesdays during NSS4S sessions 10:00-3:00 and Wednesday evenings 4:30-7:30.

## Hannah Circle Was Jamming in September

These lovely ladies popped in the church kitchen to help make 5 of our delicious jams and jellies available at the Holiday Fair.

We made Pepper Jelly, Cantaloupe Peach, Bourbon Peach, Bumbleberry (mixed berries) and Blueberry jam. These will be available for \$5.00 for 4 oz. Jars and \$7.00 for 8 oz jars. Come to the Holiday Fair November 8th!

Join us for a repeat (with different recipes) on October 23rd at 1:00 in the church kitchen. Contact Nancy Batchelder if you can come ([batchelder.nancy@gmail.com](mailto:batchelder.nancy@gmail.com)).



# Church Hosts Two Justice Events

Our church hosted two Justice events in September. Both were well-attended and well-received and enhanced our church's reputation as a justice-focused church.

"A Binding Truth" on September 12 featured a documentary and panel discussion about racial reconciliation and the importance and challenges of addressing our nation's history of racial injustice.

"Immigrants in Crisis: Our Stories" on September 21 provided a panel discussion on the truth about immigrants, the enforcement actions being employed against them, and the trauma and disruption these tactics have caused to their families and communities.



## Men's Ministry Gray Guys

In September, the Gray Guys' projects focused on getting Lydia's back in business by installing the immovables including shelves, slat boards and cabinets.

The Gray Guys have two dates in October: Thursday, October 7 and Tuesday, October 28, both 9am to noon.





## Second Term Classes for NSS4S

October means second-term classes begin for North Shore School for Seniors!

There are great courses to choose from during the second term of North Shore School for Seniors! Second-term classes begin Monday, Oct. 20 and run through Tuesday, Nov. 11. All classes are on Mondays and Tuesdays, meeting from one to four times at our church.

Class info and online registration is at [nss4s.org](http://nss4s.org) and catalogs are available for pickup at the church. Topics covered second term include history, languages, arts & crafts, local interest, nature, exercise and more. Choose from classes such as Assault on the U.S. Constitution, The Civil War Through Biography, Driving to Ukraine, Native American Wisdom, Mysticism Then and Now, WWII in the Pacific, 1968 –The Year that Changed the World, and All About Hummingbirds.

Email questions to [nssbxt@gmail.com](mailto:nssbxt@gmail.com) or phone (414) 292-0960. All are welcome! NSSS is an adult outreach program of UMCWFB.



## Pumpkin Patch

Get ready for Halloween or Fall decorating by purchasing your pumpkins at our church pumpkin patch! Proceeds benefit missions and our music ministries programs! We need volunteers to sign-up to sell pumpkins. If you can spare an hour or two, sign-up in the Narthex.





# HAPPY BIRTHDAY

# October



1 Alexis Halliburton  
J. D. Davis

2 Jack Boehm  
Bill Rinehart II

3 Sandy Hansen  
Meg Lybeck-Smoak  
Jeff Woods

4 Bennett Feix

5 Nancy Anderson  
Emily Henley  
Tom Groose

6 Heather Kotecki  
Mary Paull

7 Lynette Janssen  
Barbara Margenau  
Tabetha Steege

8 Abby Monte  
Dylan Rice

9 Kate Veierstahler  
Anthony Mortellaro

10 Evan Hawkins

12 Kyle Trimble  
Chris Felix

13 Dick Marx

14 Mary Middleton  
Laurie Jeffery

16 Melanie Berg  
Lennox Mabry

18 Carleen Sook  
Anne Summers  
Kelley Daugherty  
Laurie Douglass

19 Niesa Walker  
Elliot Hatch

20 Michael Rupp  
Sam Zhang  
Ruth Alt

21 Dave Hokeness  
Joyce Owusu-Ayim  
Jason Janczak  
Kathleen Smith

23 Sam Aeschbacher

24 Suzie Webster

25 Scott Chiapetta

26 Bob Batchelder

27 Jodie Lambert-Belke

28 Lisa Kurtz  
Jamison Gaffney

29 Roger Koenke  
Jen Boehm  
Sarah Milia  
Betsy Frunceck  
Leona Jordan

30 Charles Ward  
Anina Wines

31 Dennis Funk

