

UMCWFB

CONNECT. GROW. SERVE.

OCTOBER 2026



FAITH IN ACTION

Connect with God and others. Grow in faith, understanding and love.
Serve our neighbors on Milwaukee's North Shore and beyond.

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A Season For The Journey

A Reflection From The Pastor

Dear Church Family,

There is something exciting about fall. The familiar rhythms return. Calendars begin to fill with opportunities to gather, learn, serve, and reconnect. The church comes alive with the energy of a new season, and I love the possibilities that autumn brings to our life together.

But as we enter this busy season, I want to invite you to pause for a moment and consider a question: How is your spiritual journey going?

It is easy to measure the changing seasons by what is happening around us. But what about what is happening within us? Are we growing in faith? Are we making room for God? Are we finding meaningful connections with others? Are we becoming more attentive to the ways God is inviting us to live and love?

The Apostle Paul writes in Philippians 3:13-14:

"...I forget about the things behind me and reach out for the things ahead of me. The goal I pursue is the prize of God's upward call in Christ Jesus." (CEB)

Paul reminds us that faith is not simply something we have; it is a journey we continue to pursue. There is always more to discover about God's grace, more room for our hearts to grow, and more ways to share Christ's love with the world. That is at the heart of our vision as a congregation: Building Beloved Community by connecting, growing, and serving in our relationship with God and others.

This fall, I hope you will make your spiritual journey a priority.

Join us for worship, where we gather to encounter God's presence, hear the good news of Jesus Christ, and find strength for the week ahead. Whether you are returning after a summer away or looking for a place to begin, there is a place for you. In our hearts, deepen our connections with one another, and discover fresh ways to live out the love of Christ.

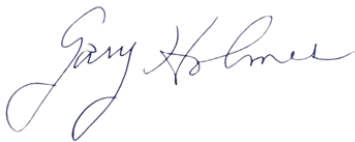
And don't overlook Wednesday nights! Our Faith, Food, and Friendship gatherings offer a wonderful opportunity to share a meal, build relationships, and participate in classes that nurture faith and encourage spiritual growth. Sometimes the most meaningful steps in our journey happen around a table, in conversation with someone who listens, or while exploring a question of faith together.

You don't have to have everything figured out. You don't have to be at a particular place in your faith. You simply have to be willing to take the next step.

As the leaves change and the days grow shorter, may this be a season of renewal for each of us. May we make room for God to do something new in our hearts, deepen our connections with one another, and discover fresh ways to live out the love of Christ.

The journey continues—and I look forward to walking it with you.

With gratitude and hope,
Pastor Gary Holmes




**WEDNESDAY NIGHT
FAITH-FOOD-FRIENDSHIP
SCHEDULE**

5:00-6:00 pm Chef Catered Dinner - \$10 adults
All kids and first time guests eat free!
Fellowship Hall (Church Basement)

5:45-6:55 pm Youth, Kid's Choirs and Children's Activities

Infants/Toddlers: Nursery (2nd Floor)

Kindergarten - 2 Grade: Choir - 5:45-6:15pm (room 222)
KICKStart (crafts/games) (room 222) - 6:20-6:55pm

Grades 3 - 6: KICKStart (crafts/games) (room 221) - 5:45-6:15pm
Choir (Sanctuary) - 6:20-6:55pm

Grades 7 - 12: Youth Praise Team (Sanctuary) - 5:30-6:10 pm
Youth Group (Youth Room 2nd Floor) - 6:15-7:00 pm

6:00-6:55 pm Adult Faith Classes

Book Study: Journey Towards Freedom Book Discussion on "Steps"
Book by John Ortberg, led by Pastor Gary Holmes (Chapel)
(begins Sept. 23)

Bible Study: "Stories of Women in the Bible"
led by Pastor Mel Vance (Wesley Room)
(begins Sept. 23)

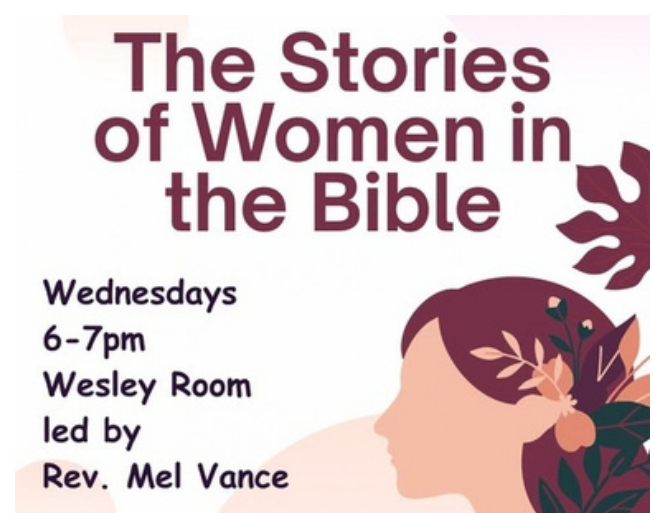
7:00-8:30 pm Adult Chancel Choir - Sanctuary



**PARENTING
TOGETHER
SMALL GROUP**

WEDNESDAYS 6-7PM IN THE NARTHEX
OCCASIONAL FIELD TRIPS TO STONE CREEK

PARENTING TOGETHER IS A CASUAL CHANCE TO CONNECT WITH OTHER PARENTS FROM OUR FAITH COMMUNITY ON A WEEKLY BASIS. STOP BY TO CHAT, SHARE WHAT'S ON YOUR MIND, OR SIMPLY ENJOY SOME COMPANY. COME AS YOU ARE!



**The Stories
of Women in
the Bible**

**Wednesdays
6-7pm
Wesley Room
led by
Rev. Mel Vance**

A PLACE TO GROW, A PLACE TO BELONG

FAMILY MINISTRIES

At UMCWFB, Family Ministries helps children and youth build friendships, explore faith, and discover that their gifts matter.

On a Wednesday evening, families sit down to dinner together before children head to choir and youth gather to talk about their week. On Sunday, children learn Bible stories, teenagers explore big questions, and people of different generations share in the life of the church.

These moments are at the heart of Family Ministries at the United Methodist Church of Whitefish Bay. Through classes, meals, music, service, and time spent together, children and youth come to know: I am loved by God. I belong to this community. My gifts matter.

Director of Family Ministries Kristal Melbye and Children's Ministry Leader Kirsten Uphaus help create those connections. Together, they make room for children, youth, and families to get to know one another, grow in faith, and put that faith into action.

Their work is shaped by their own experiences as parents. Kristal and her husband have four children, Kate, Anna, Luke, and Ally, whose ages now span high school and college. She has watched them move through many stages of growing up, each with its own questions, friendships, and changing needs.

Kirsten and her family have three children, Hugo, Vera, and Mavis, all still in elementary school. She knows the pace of life for families with young children: busy school weeks, activities, and the value of finding a place where everyone feels comfortable walking through the door.

Between them, Kristal and Kirsten understand both the joy of watching children grow and the effort it takes to make space for connection amid full schedules. They want church to be a place families look forward to coming. Children should find friends here. Parents should find community. And young people should have adults who listen to their questions and keep showing up for them.





Faith grows through relationships

Children begin to feel at home when leaders greet them by name, remember what matters to them, and invite them to participate. As those relationships grow, children can see that they have a place and a role in their church.

On Sundays, KICKstart (Kids in Christ's Kingdom) offers Sunday School for children in K4 through sixth grade during the 10:30 a.m. service. Older children also take part in Milestones, exploring Communion, the Bible, and serving as acolytes. The congregation celebrates these steps in their faith journeys.

Youth in seventh through twelfth grade gather for Pancakes and Connection, followed by Sunday School and Confirmation. Beginning in seventh grade, Confirmation invites students to explore Christian and United Methodist beliefs, learn about other faith traditions, and consider what they believe and why. Worship, outings, service, and conversations with mentors make room for honest questions.

Wednesday's Faith, Food and Friendship gathering gives families a chance to reconnect over dinner. Afterward, children join KICKstart and choir, while youth gather for praise team and youth group. Together, they talk about faith, life at school and home, and ways to serve others.





Youth serve in the nursery and KICKstart and work with community partners including St. Ben's Community Meal and MacCanon Brown Homeless Sanctuary. Alongside adult volunteers, they meet neighbors, build relationships, and discover how their gifts can make a difference.

In summer, KICKstart continues on Sundays, and Camp Lucerne offers children in third grade and up time for faith, friendship, and the outdoors. Older youth can help lead younger campers. High school and college students can also join Appalachia Service Project, working alongside adults to make homes warmer, safer, and drier.

There is a place to begin at every age, whether through a Sunday class, Wednesday dinner, choir, Confirmation, camp, or service. Adults can be part of the story, too, by teaching, mentoring, volunteering, praying, or giving.

Together, these connections help children and youth grow in faith and know that this is their church, too.

To learn more, volunteer, or support Family Ministries, contact Kristal Melbye or Kirsten Uphaus.





Light The Way

A New Name and a New Chapter for Our Childcare Center

On Sunday, September 13, our congregation dedicated our newly renovated childcare center and celebrated its new name: Light the Way Christian Childcare Center. It was a meaningful moment to pray for the children, families, and staff who will fill these rooms in the years ahead.

The name Light the Way reflects our hope for every child in our care. We want children to feel safe and loved as they learn, make friends, and grow. Rooted in our Christian faith, we are called to be the light of the world, and we hope to help light the way for each child and family who comes through our doors.

This new name also marks a fresh chapter for the program. Alongside the renovation, we have been working to strengthen staff training, clarify expectations, and build a nurturing culture centered on the children in our care. We are excited for families to experience both the new space and the care happening within it.

A heartfelt thank you to Tom Van Cleave for his seemingly endless work on the renovation and to Kari Nau and Christy Wimmer for all they have done to lead the childcare program through this transition. Renovating a space while continuing to care for children takes tremendous coordination, flexibility, and patience. We are grateful for the care each of them has brought to this work.

Thank you, too, to our congregation for your patience through the disruption of construction and the many changes along the way. Your support has helped make this new beginning possible.

Our opening dedication was a chance to celebrate what has been accomplished and to ask God's blessing on what comes next. We look forward to welcoming children and families into Light the Way Christian Childcare Center and continuing this ministry together.





UMCWFB Missions Team



Thank you to everyone who continues to support our mission partners. Twenty-five volunteers took part in a food sort for Hunger Task Force, and the congregation contributed \$800 for food pantries.

We also collected school supplies for our tutoring program at Marvin Pratt School.

At the Fall Welcome Picnic, a food drive filled a car with donations for the pantry at Voces de la Frontera. Additional gifts and the Pastor's Emergency Fund provided \$6,000 to support the pantry and help families with legal expenses.

Seven volunteers joined Habitat for Humanity on September 26 to assemble wall panels for a four-bedroom Interfaith house. We hope to return soon to help turn those walls into a home. The Missions Team thanks you for your generosity and support.



Fall Welcome Picnic



We had a wonderful and joyous time at our annual Fall Welcome Picnic! Delicious food was prepared by Chef Gretchen Kniffin and served by a crew of faithful volunteers. Joyful music was provided by the Praise Team. Guests enjoyed socializing, playing games and exploring the newly renovated spaces in "Light the Way" Christian Childcare Center, (formerly, Carpenter's Shop Day Care).

Special thank you goes to Tom and Beth Groble, Jeff and Terry McClellan and Tom Van Cleave for all the help with volunteer recruitment, set-up and clean-up, as well as Mary Mueller for managing our compost program to reduce our environmental impact.





United Women in Faith Gathering For Fun And Fellowship



Members of United Methodist Women (UWF) and guests gathered to enjoy a wonderful salad buffet and kick off the 2026-2027 program year. Information tables told the story behind UWF “Circles” or small groups, and representatives from each group spoke during the luncheon’s program. Circles bring those with a special interest together for fun, fellowship and to support mission. For example, Claudia Circle provided the salads for the luncheon and the quilts decorating Fellowship Hall, and some of those quilts will be donated to special causes. A busy fall lies ahead, for UWF, with the Holiday Fair on Nov. 14 and the Christmas Luncheon set for Dec. 8. Want to know more? Contact UWF president Jodi Houge at jhouge60@gmail.com



Hannah Circle members and friends gathered in the church kitchen Sept. 24 to craft jams and jellies for the Nov. 14 Holiday Fair.

Linda Groose, Nancy Batchelder and Jen Mitchell ladled Pepper Jelly into jars. Other tasty treats included Bourbon Peach Jam, Bumbleberry Jam, Blueberry Lime Jam and Raspberry Wine Jelly.

Faith, Food, & Friendship

Our weekly Wednesday Night program is off to a strong start with more than 80 people attending the first week. Our new chef, Luke Norris, is making delicious dinners week after week. Pastor Claudia offered a one-night class celebrating the life, faith, and music of Dolly Parton. Children and Youth participate in three different levels of choir, Youth Group, and KICKStart (faith-focused games and activities for kids). Our adult faith classes beginning on Sept. 23rd are Stories of Women in the Bible led by Rev. Mel Vance and “Journey Towards Freedom” discussion based on the book, ‘Steps’ by John Ortberg led by Pastor Gary Holmes. These classes will run through October. Thank you so much to all of our volunteers who set-up, serve, clean-up and lead programming to make Wednesday nights such a wonderful experience for people in our faith community.



UMCWFB Foundation

Supporting the life and ministry of our church since 1982—often quietly and behind the scenes.

Through generous gifts, bequests, memorials, and long-term investment growth, the Foundation has become an important part of our church's financial resources.

The Foundation is not intended to replace giving to the church's annual budget, capital campaigns, or special needs in our community. Those remain our primary sources of support for ongoing ministry. Instead, the Foundation provides additional resources to help launch new ministries, encourage personal and spiritual growth, and invest in our building and equipment.

So, what exactly is the Foundation, how does it work, and what does it support? Here are answers to some common questions.

What is the UMCWFB Foundation?

The UMCWFB Foundation receives bequests, memorial gifts, and other contributions and invests those funds for the long-term benefit of our church and its ministries.

Foundation assets are invested through the Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation Common Fund, which combines investments from many Conference churches. The Common Fund is professionally managed by Baird and invested in a diversified portfolio of stocks and bonds that reflects United Methodist values.

Who manages the Foundation Legacy Fund?

The Foundation is overseen by the seven-member Foundation and Memorials Committee (FMC). The senior pastor serves as an additional non-voting member, and one member of the committee also serves on the Servant Leadership Board.

The committee meets quarterly to review the financial health of the Legacy Fund, consider grant requests, and oversee Foundation policies and investments.

The current committee chair is Craig Walker, and Dan Linsley serves as treasurer.

Is the Legacy Fund one large pool of money?

No. The Legacy Fund includes a general unrestricted fund as well as five funds designated for particular areas of ministry:

- Building
- Youth
- Hospitality
- Music
- Missions

With the exception of the Building Fund, these designated funds began with bequests in which donors specified how their gifts were to be used. Those donor intentions continue to guide how the funds are distributed.

Is the Legacy Fund an endowment?

In a broad sense, yes, although the term endowment can mean different things depending on how a fund is structured and how its resources may be used.

During the Foundation's early years, grants were generally limited to interest and dividend income, allowing the principal to grow over time. More recently, Foundation policy has allowed a percentage of the total fund value to be distributed each year while maintaining a focus on long-term sustainability.

What changed recently?

The Foundation policy was updated in 2025 to allow the Legacy Fund to have a greater impact on the life and ministry of UMCWFB. The changes also strengthened coordination between the Foundation and Memorials Committee and the senior pastor and church leadership, helping ensure that Foundation resources support the church's broader goals and vision.

The types of projects supported have not changed substantially. The Foundation continues to invest in ministries, personal and spiritual growth, outreach, and church facilities. What changed was primarily the amount available for grants.

Today, the Legacy Fund has a value of more than \$2 million. The Foundation and Memorials Committee takes seriously its responsibility to preserve these resources for future generations, but the fund was also created to be used.

The people whose generosity built the Foundation did not simply envision a large investment account. They envisioned a vibrant faith community. Using these resources thoughtfully to help people Connect, Grow, and Serve is one way we can continue fulfilling that vision.

What has the Foundation funded recently?

Through the years, the largest dollar value of funding went to building projects, and the last two years have been no different. The Foundation recently committed \$162,000 to overhaul the air conditioning on the ground floor, a significant amount to be sure, but the relaunch of Carpenter's Shop as Light the Way Christian Childcare fulfills a need for quality childcare in our community and is a significant part of our commitment to children and families. Other grants supported Camp Lucerne, youth scholarships, outreach activities, and startup of the new Blessings from Above ministry.



I want to help ensure a strong future for our church. What can I do?

Including the UMCWFB Foundation in your estate plans is one way to extend your commitment to the church and help future generations benefit from the ministries and community that are important to you. You can also make a gift to the Foundation during your lifetime.

If there is a particular ministry or area of church life you would like your gift to support, a member of the Foundation and Memorials Committee or the senior pastor would be happy to talk with you about the possibilities.

North Shore School for Seniors

Second Term begins in October



We are underway! North Shore School for Seniors' first term got off to a great start in September. Registration is ongoing and first-term classes continue to launch through October 8. The second term begins on October 20 and continues through November 10.

While some classes continue from first term, new courses during second term range from "History of Christian Thought," "Blind Obedience to Authority," Quest for Water Rights," "Legends of the Wild West," "Political Implications of the U.S. Census," "Searching for Life in the Universe," "The Beatles at Shea Stadium," "The Horn – History and Music" and "Into the Wilds of Mongolia." Crafting lovers will enjoy "Korean Paper Art – Making Holiday Gifts."

Email questions to nssbxt@gmail.com or phone (414) 292-0960.

(Returning your phone message will be congregation member and NSSS volunteer Nancy Lizdas.)



Full class information and registration is available at nss4s.org.

Class catalogs are also available for pick-up at church.

All are welcome – there is no age requirement!

NSSS is an adult interfaith outreach program of UMCWFB.

OCTOBER BIRTHDAY WISHES

1st - J. D. Davis, Alexis Halliburton

2nd - Jack Boehm

3rd - Sandy Hansen, Meg Lybeck-Smoak

4th - Bennett Feix

5th - Tom Groose, Emily Henley

6th - Mary Paull, Heather Kotecki

7th - Lynette Janssen, Barbara Margenau,
Tabetha Steege

8th - Dylan Rice

9th - Kate Veierstahler

12th - Kyle Trimble, Chris Felix

13th - Dick Marx

14th - Laurie Jeffery

16th - Melanie Berg, Lennox Mabry

17th - Ruby Elizer

18th - Laurie Douglass, Kelley Daugherty, Carleen Sook

19th - Elliot Hatch, Niesa Walker

20th - Michael Rupp, Ruth Alt, Sam Zhang

21st - Kathleen Smith, Jason Janczak

24th - Suzie Webster

25th - Scott Chiappetta

26th - Bob Batchelder

27th - Jodi Lambert-Belke

28th - Jamison Gaffney

29th - Leona Jordan, Jen Boehm, Sarah Milia

30th - Charles Ward

31st - Dennis Funk



UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
of Whitefish Bay

*Becoming a Beloved Community by
Connecting, Growing, and Serving*

WWW.UMCWFB.ORG