

September  
2024

# The Current



Monthly News from Port Edwards United Methodist Church

## Our New District Superintendent

### The Rev. Park Hunter



The 2024 Annual Conference of Wisconsin approved the consolidation to 4 districts from 5. The district in which Port Edwards used to reside, the North Central District, was absorbed into its two surrounding districts: the North West and North East districts. Port Edwards now resides at the further corner of the North East District. There are no longer physical district offices, as all district work is done through a central office in Sun Prairie by two administrative assistants.

District superintendents serve in their capacity up to 6 years or up to 8 years at the discretion of the bishop. District superintendents are *not* consecrated or ordained to their position. They are elders (pastors) who *temporarily* serve in this supervisory role for the district.

After this period, they return to the local church or become hired conference staff. All the district superintendents together form the bishop's "cabinet" who assist the bishop in the annual appointment process of all conference clergy.

**The Rev. Park Hunter** is our new district superintendent (D.S.). D.S. Park grew up on a farm in Indiana and worked in technology and journalism before accepting a mid-life call into ministry. He has pastored in Wisconsin since 2010. He was serving at Onalaska UMC when he was appointed as D.S. in 2022 by Bishop Hee Soo Jung. He brings experience as a business owner and has provided clergy service in 3 states. He has strong gifts as a clergy mentor, a deep commitment to interfaith work and to the conference. He is also a Reconciling United Methodist.

His hobbies include antique cars, model trains, reading, camping, and games. Visiting and encouraging congregations and pastors are D.S. Park's favorite parts of the job! He often takes photos or videos during his travels and shares the exciting things he sees on the district Facebook page. He lives in De Pere with his wife, Rev. Anna-Lisa Hunter, who leads Suamico UMC.

It takes almost 3 years for D.S. Park to make the Sunday rounds and worship with each congregation. If we have a special event coming up and would like D.S. Park to attend, we must try scheduling it at least 2-3 months ahead. He will be leading our Church/Charge Conference in December in person and will be attending a worship service in the spring.





## **PACKER TICKETS AVAILABLE THROUGH DISTRICT OFFICE**

**FUN FACT:** Packers quarterback Bart Starr was a faithful United Methodist and lay leader at Green Bay: First UMC!

Thanks to “Saint Bart,” the North East District is “endowed” with 4 season tickets to Packers home games, which are available for purchase by the clergy and laity of the NE district!

Preseason games are \$78 per seat, and regular season games are \$155 each. Seats are numbers 15-18 in section 110, row 50 with a great view of the field. Tickets are available first-come first-serve by emailing [nedpt@wisconsinumc.org](mailto:nedpt@wisconsinumc.org).

District administrators, Heidi Careaga and Kristy Yang, work out of the district office in Sun Prairie and can help you with most questions.

### **Address:**

District Office Center  
750 Windsor Street, Ste. 304  
Sun Prairie, WI 53590  
Monday through Friday 8:00 – 4:30

If you have a question or suggestion for D.S. Park, you can contact him directly (608-478-4631) cell/text or [phunter@wisconsinumc.org](mailto:phunter@wisconsinumc.org).

Use this link (for electronic copies of this newsletter) to find the district calendar: [Calendar - Wisconsin Conference of the UMC \(wisconsinumc.org\)](http://www.wisconsinumc.org)  
Follow district news and events on FB: [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/NEDistrictoftheWisconsinUMC) or search on FB for “NE District of the Wisconsin UMC” and don’t forget to LIKE the page!



### **Pictured:**

(left) D.S. Hunter Park with his wife, The Rev. Anna-Lisa Hunter.  
(center) Hunter with his son, Erick, and a car so “antique” it is “Outtatime!”  
(Right) The Rev. Anna-Lisa with their daughter, Anna, during one of their regular trips to England. The Parks like to host their own John Wesley pilgrimages to our “merry ol’ mother land.”



# LABOR DAY SERVICE

**SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 1<sup>ST</sup> - 10:00 AM**

Edwards-Alexander Memorial Park Lions Shelter House (210 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, Port Edwards)  
Three congregations: PEUMC, Nekoosa UCC, Rapids Congregational Church (UCC)

Potluck provided by all three churches.

Rapids Congregational Church is \*hosting, Rev. Wanda Veldman is preaching.

\*organizing the service; will go to Rapids in case of bad weather.

## **FIRST WEDNESDAY**



**Hymn-sing service on the first Wednesday of each month.**

**Wednesday, September 4<sup>th</sup> – 6:00 – 7:00 PM** (NOTE TIME CHANGE!)

**Fellowship Hall.**

**We sing through lots of hymns—learn a few new ones, sing lots of favorite classics!**

**The message is in the lyrics! (Not livestreamed.)**

## Sunday School

**After a discussion of modern family trends and a plan to relate differently to our young families, both current and future ones, we will not be hosting Sunday School on a regular basis.**

## KICK-OFF SUNDAY

**Sunday, September 8<sup>th</sup> – 10:00 AM**

- Back in the sanctuary!
- Congregational Photo!
- Journey Through the Bible, Year 3 Begins – *Year of Luke.*
- Cookout after the service.



# CONGREGATIONAL PHOTO – SEPT. 8<sup>TH</sup>!

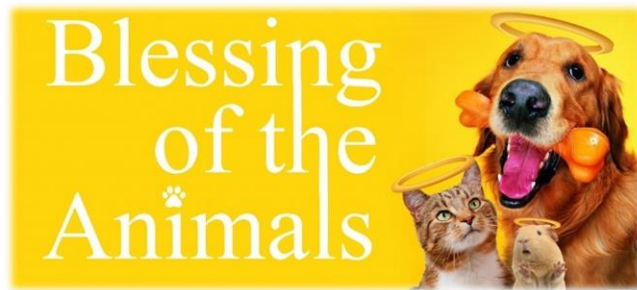
## **SERVICE AT NEKOOSA U.C.C.**

N.U.C.C. is hosting us on Sunday, September 22<sup>nd</sup> while Pastor Caleb is out of country. Please note that their service is from **9:30-10:30A.**

Breanna Illéné will be preaching, she is a United Methodist pastor (ordained with Pastor Doug in 2020)

and is the director of justice for the Wisconsin Council of Churches.





## Port Edwards 4<sup>th</sup> Annual



Monday, September 9<sup>th</sup> - 6:00-6:15p

Ripple Creek Dog Park

Any and all pets are welcome!

(large, nervous, or aggressive animals should be caged or leashed)

*Certificates of blessings issued - memorial ribbons for lost pets*

## Our Congregation to Host an Appreciation Dinner for *El Café* Employees.

From the mind of Lindsey Hintz, our Witness Team is planning an appreciation dinner for the workers of Port Edwards' *El Café* on **Monday, September 23<sup>rd</sup> from 5-6 PM** in our Fellowship Hall.

"We want to say thank you to all the ways the café has given back to the community," Lindsey said. "Fidel is always looking for ways he can partner with community organizations; he is really invested in Port Edwards."



It will be potluck style, so we will need our usual cooks and chefs to help us with this gesture of gratitude! We will be providing for around 12 people max. This is for all the employees (waitstaff and cooks + Fidel, the owner) and their families. Invitations have been sent out mid-August for this event. The dinner will be "sprinkled" with other signs of appreciation, yet to be planned.

**What a great opportunity to provide a meal to those who have provided us with many great dishes and a gathering place for the community!**

*\*\*This may become a new form of outreach to our community:*

*pick a constituency in our community (fire department, police department, village staff & workers, veterans, teachers, etc.) on an annual basis and provide a dinner for them that says "thank you for all you do!"*



# Getting to Know Your Pastor

When space allows, we'd like to include in our monthly newsletter some fun, interesting, or otherwise, pointless facts about Pastor Caleb.

*Photo: Pastors Doug and Caleb at the headwaters of the Wisconsin River.*

**What is your favorite fast-food place?** Panda Express.

**What is your favorite book of the Bible and why?**

Letter from James. Because it emphasizes faith in action.

("faith without works is dead.")

The First Letter of John. Because its central theme is love in action.

("God IS love.")

**Who were your favorite teachers?**

Dr. Mark Fowler (church leadership professor at Garrett-Evangelical Theological seminary in Evanston, IL; he retired as pastor from Madison First UMC and he officiated at our wedding last October).

Mrs. Ballard, my first-grade teacher.

Mrs. Diane Liddle, my sixth-grade English teacher.

**What is your favorite Football Team?**

The Chica . . . um, I mean . . . the Green Bay Packers, of course!

**What was your favorite childhood TV show?**

The Power Rangers. Anything on the Cartoon Network or Nickelodeon Channel.

**What is your favorite soup?**

Classic vegetable soup and chunky tomato soup. But above all, Hot-and-Sour soup.

**Who baptized you and when was it?**

Pastor Bob Killion. It was Mother's Day: Sunday, May 14<sup>th</sup>, 1989.

I was just over a month old. I was baptized in the family baptismal gown, sown by my mom's mom which had won several awards as local & state fairs.

**What is one interesting fact about yourself?**

In its 160-year history, I was the first person to be given their degree (by mail) from Garrett-ETS in the fall. Previously, they only approved degrees in the spring. This is because I finished my program with one last summer class, and the board of trustees were getting tired of me. (*The feeling was mutual!*)

## TO THE HIGHLANDS!

Doug and I will be off to Scotland from September 11<sup>th</sup> through September 22<sup>nd</sup> for our honeymoon.

We will be enjoying places like Edinburgh and Glasgow, and taking a loop around the country, visiting castles and ruins, lochs and moors, visiting islands like the Orkneys and

Hebrides. It will be a time for me to get in touch with my own Gaelic ancestry.

*Pictured: the MacGregor Clan tartan and crest.*



Pastor Wanda Veldman from Nekoosa U.C.C. will be on call for pastoral emergencies:

Cell: 715-213-7447

# Where are the Churches in Our District?

**Circuit** | **Church** | **Pastor (new app't / in process / circuit leader)**

NE01	Crandon: St Luke	Debra Spira
NE01	Goodman: Union Protestant	Debra Spira
NE01	Niagara: Riverside	Debra Spira
NE01	Minocqua: Church of the Pines	Mark Gilbert
NE01	Rhineland: First	Mark Klaisner
NE01	Tomahawk	Lisa Weaver
NE01	Spirit	Lisa Weaver
NE02	Mosinee	Eunhye Grace Cho
NE02	Rothschild: Revelation	Txawjhw "Hu" Yang
NE02	Wausau: First	Rebecca Borke
NE02	Wausau: Wesley	Tim Gurlea
NE02	Rib Falls	Tim Gurlea
NE03	Antigo	Deb Pimm
NE03	Mattoon	Deb Pimm
NE03	Merrill: Christ	Mike Zahn
NE03	Wildwood	Mike Zahn
NE04	Marshfield: Wesley	Doug Clement
NE04	Port Edwards	Caleb McGregor
NE04	Stevens Point: St. Paul's	Tim O'Brien
NE04	Wisconsin Rapids	Kyochul Shin
NE05	Berlin	Sang Yeoul You
NE05	Neshkoro: Zion	Sang Yeoul You
NE05	Green Lake: Federated	Karen Gyax-Rodriguez
NE05	Plainfield	to be supplied
NE05	Almond	to be supplied
NE05	South Burr Oak	to be supplied
NE05	Wautoma: Grace	Stephanie Taylor
NE06	Brillion: Faith	Wesley Jacob
NE06	Kiel: Bethel (w/ Peace U.C.C.)	Wendy Witt
NE06	Manitowoc: Lakeshore	Cherie Forret
NE06	Mishicot: Zion	Lynn Tricker
NE07	Algoma	Jane Sommers
NE07	West Kewaunee	Jane Sommers
NE07	Egg Harbor: Calvary	to be supplied
NE07	Gibraltar: Zion	to be supplied
NE07	Sturgeon Bay	David Leistra
NE07	Jacksonport	David Leistra
NE08	Green Bay: Bethany	Robb McClintock / Ellen Williams
NE08	De Pere: New Hope	Robb McClintock (interim thru 6/30)
NE08	Green Bay: First	Steve Polster (interim thru 1/12)
NE08	Green Bay: Peace	Laura Riemer
NE08	Denmark: Zion	Laura Riemer

NE08	Green Bay: St Paul's	Jerome Sahabandu
NE08	Green Bay: Vida Nueva	Ricardo Torres-Barajas
NE08	Oneida	Elizabeth Jacob
NE08	Suamico	Anna-Lisa Hunter
NE09	Bonduel: Zion	Jeremiah Cottrell-Duebner
NE09	Gillett: Tabor	Jeremiah Cottrell-Duebner
NE09	Marinette: First	Nathan Reed
NE09	Peshtigo	Nathan Reed
NE09	Harmony	Nathan Reed
NE09	Oconto	Shadrach Muhima
NE09	Oconto Falls	Shadrach Muhima
NE09	Shawano: The Church on the Hill	Daniel Dukkun Kim
NE09	Red River: Salem	Daniel Dukkun Kim
NE09	Suring	Dominic Petit
NE09	Hickory	Dominic Petit
NE10	Clintonville	Diana Ziegler
NE10	Manawa	Leo Cadavos Jr.
NE10	Iola	Leo Cadavos Jr.
NE10	New London	Debi VanDenBoom
NE10	Seymour: New Life	Gail Ray
NE10	Waupaca: First	Hyunwoong Hwang
NE10	Parfreyville	Hyunwoong Hwang
NE10	Crystal Lake	Hyunwoong Hwang
NE10	Wild Rose	Kari Riley
NE10	Amherst	Kari Riley
NE10	Buena Vista	Kari Riley
NE11	Appleton: Emmanuel	Ben Morris
NE11	Appleton: St James	Ben Morris
NE11	Appleton: First	Markus Wegenast / Tim Navis
NE11	Appleton: Zion	Hee-Kwon Jung
NE11	Center: Emmanuel	Hee-Kwon Jung
NE11	Kaukauna: Peace Family	Paul Nulton (interim thru 8/30)
NE11	Neenah: First	Rebecca Henry
NE12	Oshkosh: Algoma BLVD.	Ellen Rasmussen
NE12	Oshkosh: First	Emmanuel Bang-Asan
NE12	Oshkosh: Wesley	Chuck Emery
NE13	Batavia: Zion	Tshishnen Mpoyo
NE13	Greenbush: New Hope	Emily Gilbertson
NE13	Plymouth Area Regional Ministry	Emily Gilbertson
NE13	Sheboygan: Cristo en tu Ayuda	temporarily dormant
NE13	Sheboygan Falls: Faith	Marcos Tamega Jr.
NE13	Sheboygan: Wesley	Marcos Tamega Jr.
NE13	Sheboygan: St Luke	Ruth Hallstead

# DONATE TODAY TO OUR "LOBBY CARPET" FUNDRAISER!

**"Remove your sandals, for the lobby you are standing in is holy (and soft)." -PEUMC 4:13-14**



Each square will \$16.

Project quote is \$6,027.00 (Freedom Carpet)

That's 375 squares!

So far, at the time of this printing, we have raised \$1,738.00 or 28.8%

That is 108 squares funded!

Go to [peumc.org/donate](http://peumc.org/donate) OR use this QR Code:



We will be picking up a special offering for this on the last Sunday of each month until we have reached our goal!

## WALK OFF DEBT SCHOOL MEALS

SEPT. 7 8am



HELP US, HELP OTHERS



WALK STARTS & ENDS AT FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH  
311 2ND ST. S WIS. RAPIDS

BENEFITS SOUTH WOOD COUNTY SCHOOL MEAL PROGRAMS.

SPONSORED BY G.R.A.C.E  
CASH & CHECKS ARE ACCEPTED.  
PLEASE MAKE CHECKS OUT TO PORT EDWARD UMC

**The Greater Rapids Area Churches for Ecumenism (G.R.A.C.E.) is sponsoring a walk-a-thon event to help raise funds for school meal debt. We are now dividing all funds between Nekoosa & Rapids school districts.**

*Why school meal debt?* Yes, some people qualify for the gov't free lunch program but do not file for it. There is still a lot of stigmas around free lunch programs and parents/students are often embarrassed to fill out the forms. Additionally, many older students are tasked with filling out the form themselves but without knowledge of their family's annual income they don't know how to fill out the form. Any senior with outstanding meal debt cannot graduate in good standing. We want to help them start the next chapter in their lives on the right foot and free from embarrassing debt.

*Checks are made out to PORT EDWARDS UMC, because Pastor Caleb is the treasurer; until G.R.A.C.E. is registered as a non-profit, all funds will be funneled through the church.*

## Trustees Projects

- Fix front lawn damaged by elevator equipment. Ben Martinson of the Village Public Works crew has graciously offered to fix the sidewalk himself.
- The foyer floor will be replaced with carpet squares. Price of each square will be \$16.

## Our Prioritized Church Goals

#1: Provide learning opportunities for the community.

#2: Provide a compensated children/youth/family coordinator.

## September Household Prayers

Next month the congregation is asked  
to pray for the following families  
(randomly chosen on 8/23):

- Mark L.
- Rachel & Chuck L. household
- Leona S.
- Judy & Larry M. household
- John & Diane S. household



### Meetings in September

**U.W.I.F.** – Wednesday, September 4<sup>th</sup> – 12:15p – bring a health snack; Margaret Getzin, guest speaker

**Nurture Team** – Tuesday, September 10<sup>th</sup> – 10:00a

**Circle of Friends** – Wednesday, September 11<sup>th</sup> – 1:00p

**Staff-Parish Relations** – Wednesday, September 25<sup>th</sup> – 10:00a

## A TRIVIA NIGHT THANK YOU!

I would like to thank the following people for helping out at the Community Benefit Trivia Night that PEUMC hosted on August 20<sup>th</sup>: **Midge H., Tiara G., and Kathy McG.** for bringing baked goods to be sold. For **John & Diane Sw. and Joy R.** for setting up the tables, helping serve the food, and boxing up the leftovers. For **Kathy McG.** for cashiering at the door. For **Amy**, the resource director of The Family Center, for coming and giving us an update about their ministry in the Rapids area. According to Amy, previous presidential administration(s) drained the federal funding for domestic violence organizations. The Family Center received their “fair portion” of what the current government had left, but at a loss of about \$250,000.

At the time of this printing, we do not know the exact amount that The Family Center will receive from our benefit night. Some monies are still coming in and we have yet to receive the bill for the food. We expect around \$350.00.



# September-October Mission Projects

## Part One: Collect \$\$\$ for



**New Beginnings for Refugees** is a non-profit organization based out of the First United Methodist Church of Wausau, WI. It is the official local organization that partners with the government to provide resources for refugees and asylum seekers in Wausau. The **Wisconsin's Refugee Resettlement Program** is a federally funded program that helps individuals and families admitted into the U.S. as refugees to become self-sufficient after their arrival. But this program only provides help for the first 90 days. For long-term stability and help, the WI RRP relies on local non-profits like **NEW BEGINNINGS** to provide local support. **NEW BEGINNINGS** helps to furnish apartments, provide English (ESL) classes, transportation needs, and guidance with legal papers.

Through the present, they have furnished around 100 apartments and have 40-50 refugees enrolled in their English classes with 20 volunteer teachers. The program receives around 12 families a year. Many of these families come here with only the clothes on their backs. This program helps them get settled in conditions right for starting a new life. **NEW BEGINNINGS** is not federally or state-funded, but they do rely on donations and grant monies. Right now, as they are between dedicated grant-writer, they have suffered from a lack of funds. The two largest populations of asylum-seekers coming to Wausau are Afghanistan and Congolese.

**NEW BEGINNINGS** also accept all things household items, hygiene items, and furniture. They have a large warehouse to collect these large items.

## Part Two:

### Write 100 Cards to the Never Forgotten Honor Flight (Wausau)



Write general letters to the veterans going on the Never Forgotten Honor Flight out of Wausau.

**DEADLINE: Veteran's Day 2024.**

**GOAL: 100 letters**

INFO.: As part of the event, veterans who go on the honor flight are presented with letters on their return flight in an old fashioned "military mail call." Most of these letters are from friends and loved ones. NFHF always accepts general letters to supplement each veteran's packet so that each receives a generous amount.

# An Example Card for the Honor Flight

Below are some examples of what to write in a letter or card for the NEVER FORGOTTEN HONOR FLIGHT.

This is a compilation of multiple examples found online:

Dear American Hero / Dear United States Veteran / etc.:

Thank you for the example you have set for us all. Thank you for your sacrifices and your service. Thank you for serving our country and being willing to put yourself in danger for the sake of others. You have done so much for us. I am proud of you for serving the U.S.A. It must have been really difficult to leave behind your family to protect a nation of families. If no one had served, our lives would have been very different. Thank you for bravely doing what you were called to do so we can safely do what we're free to do. You deserve so much more than honor; you deserve love and hope. Please know that you are appreciated and recognized as someone who helped protect our freedom. You have given our country your life, time, energy, and love. You are such an honorable person and 'thank you' just doesn't seem enough to say I appreciate what you have done. You are in my heart, and even though I do not know your name or face, I will pray for you as you go on your honor flight. I wish for you comfort, happiness, contentment, and many moments filled with joy. My Dad was in World War II and thinks about those times often. I hope the life ahead of you is full of happiness and blessings. God bless you!

-Signed: A Thankful U.S. Citizen / A Grateful American / [Your Name] / etc.

The example above is not meant to compromise your own words from your heart. Consider sharing about someone in your own family who served.

## DO's and DON'Ts

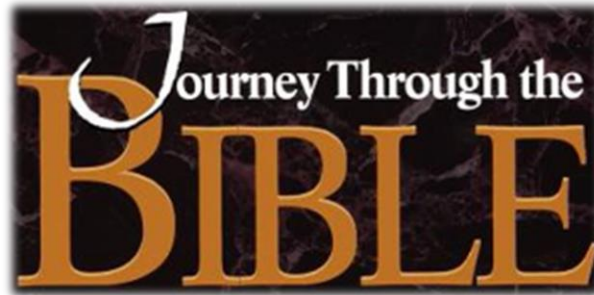
- Do **not** use dates, since NFHF won't know when they will be given out.
- You *may* share your name and address, *if you want*; no last names for minors.
- Do **not** seal your envelopes
- You may write "letters" or "cards." Include an envelope, but leave it unmarked.
- If you are creating duplicates of the same letter/card, please bind them together; this helps NFHF sort through the cards and keep the same veteran from getting the same card twice.
- Deposit your letters/cards in the designated place in the church lobby; PEUMC will make sure they get delivered around Veteran's Day. You do **not** need to mail them yourselves.

# Worship Servants (so far) for September

Communion: JUDY Candles: Sue	Greeter(s)	Usher	Liturgist	Pew Ambassador	Musician
SEPTEMBER 1 <sup>ST</sup>	-----IN THE PARK-----				
SEPTEMBER 8 <sup>TH</sup>	Sharon S.	Skip M.			
SEPTEMBER 15 <sup>TH</sup>	Sharon S.				
SEPTEMBER 22 <sup>ND</sup>	-----AT NEKOOSA U.C.C.-----				
SEPTEMBER 29 <sup>TH</sup>					

## Sundays in September

Septemb. 1 <sup>st</sup>	Labor Day in the Park <i>(Alexander-Edwards Park – Port)</i>	Bring food for potluck + lawn chair	Pentecost.15 (Communion Sunday)
Septemb. 8 <sup>th</sup>	"Cain & Abel"	<b>JOURNEY THROUGH THE BIBLE</b>  YEAR 3	Genesis 4
Septem. 15 <sup>th</sup>	"Near Sacrifice of Isaac"		Genesis 22
Septem. 22 <sup>nd</sup>	SERVICE AT NEKOOSA U.C.C.		SERVICE AT 9:30a
Septem. 29 <sup>th</sup>	"Promises of Passover"		Exodus 12 & 13



Join us for the 3<sup>rd</sup> time in our 40-week journey through the Bible!

Dates

Stories

Location

September 8 <sup>th</sup> thru October 6 <sup>th</sup>	First Age of Humanity Abraham's Gnarled Family Tree	OLD TESTAMENT: Genesis 4 / 22 / 45 Exodus 12 & 13 / 32
October 13 <sup>th</sup> thru October 27 <sup>th</sup>	God's People Ask for a King to Rule them All	1 Samuel 7 & 8 1 Kings 1 / 5 & 8
November 3 <sup>rd</sup> & 10 <sup>th</sup>	Fictional Biblical Stories: Jonah & Job	Book of Jonah Book of Job
November 17 <sup>th</sup> thru December 15 <sup>th</sup>	The Age of Prophets	Isaiah 6 / Jeremiah 36 & 31 Daniel 6 / Joel 2 / Isaiah 61
December 15 <sup>th</sup> thru June 8 <sup>th</sup>	"Second" Age of Humanity Begins	NEW TESTAMENT: Gospel of Luke



# P.E.U.M.C. TO WALK IN PORT EDWARDS HOMECOMING PARADE

We have purchased 400 orange beaded necklaces to give away during the 2024 Port Edwards Homecoming Parade.

We will need two people to hold the banner and several to hand out the necklaces.

DATE: Thursday, October 3<sup>rd</sup> – 6:00 PM. The route is about 1 mile.



## FREE HOMECOMING OUTDOOR MOVIE NIGHT

Saturday, October 5<sup>th</sup> – 6:30 – 8:12p

After a successful showing *Encanto* last year, we are happy to hosting another outdoor movie night on the BIG SCREEN in our church parking lot on homecoming weekend.

This year: LEO!

Leo is 2023 animated musical comedy film starting Adam Sandler as the title character. The story tells the story of a 74-year-old tuatara (lizard) longing for the wild and worried about dying. He is taken home by different students per the assignment of a strict substitute teacher, but gets caught up in the troubles of each student and offers life advice to each of them. Rated PG.



## Find Us On Instagram



Port Edwards United Methodist Church  
Instagram

INSTAGRAM is owned by Facebook (now Meta Platforms), and both media platforms are very similar. However, INSTAGRAM excels at photos and videos with inspirational captions.

INSTAGRAM will help us reach a different social media audience, but it is also our chance & challenge to take more photos of the life of our congregation. Whether you are on Facebook or Instagram, you can upload your own photos or videos pertaining to the church and tag us in it! Search for our name in the search bar in INSTAGRAM!



Wisconsin Rapids Family Center, Inc.  
Yesterday at 10:00 AM · 🌐

Thank you to [Port Edwards United Methodist Church](#) for organizing a dinner and trivia event for Wisconsin Rapids Family Center last night. We appreciate your support!



# G.R.A.C.E.



## The Greater Rapids Area Churches for Ecumenism

Thursday August 8, 2024 @ 9:00a @ *From the Ground Up* Coffee Shop

Attending: Revs. Caleb McGregor (treasurer), Michelle Nickodemus (secretary), Beth Rohn-Habegger (president), Kate West, Joyce Heintz. Absent: Margot Peterson (vice president)

1. Opening Prayer – Caleb McGregor
2. **Walk-Off Debt Fundraiser** Planning Update – for **all** Rapids area school's student food debt
  - a. Saturday September 7<sup>th</sup> @ 8:00a
  - b. Start/end at First Congregational U.C.C. in W.R.
    - i. Approx. 1.5-mile route, with stops for prayer along the way
  - c. Ask each walker to get donations/sponsors (vs. entry fee)
    - i. Sponsor forms available
3. Ecumenical Community Worship Services
  - a. **Thanksgiving Worship**– Sunday November 24<sup>th</sup> @ 6:00p @ First Congregational UCC
    - i. Preaching = Caleb McGregor
  - b. **Blue Christmas** – Thursday December 19<sup>th</sup>
    - i. Saint John the Evangelist Episcopal Church (W.R.) to host – around 12/21/24
    - ii. Preaching = Kate West
  - c. **Ecumenical Sunday** – pulpit exchange – Sunday, January 19<sup>th</sup>, 2025.
    - i. At least Beth and Caleb will be exchanging pulpits this Sunday.
4. G.R.A.C.E. Meetings:
  - a. **Lunch and Learn** – 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday of the month in September, January, April, June, have a lunchtime discussion with an organization leader in the community.
    - i. September—The family Center (Tricia) at W.R. Moravian Church
5. **Lenten Round Robin Events** (for our churches):
  - a. Lunchtime: 12:15-12:45p – suggested location: community theater at Centralia Center
    - i. Bring lunch / find a place that will provide lunch / hosting church provides lunch
    - ii. Keep the same location every week and rotate leader/speakers
6. Financial Report (Caleb)
  - a. \$351.00 from Thanksgiving 2023 - less expense for parade banner.
    - i. Each member congregation encouraged to do a special offering to support G.R.A.C.E.
      1. Who are the member congregations? Don't yet have a full defined list...
        - a. Port Edwards U.M.C.
        - b. First Congregational U.C.C.
        - c. Grace Lutheran
        - d. Woodlands Lutheran (Rome)
        - e. W.R. Moravian
      2. Annual membership letter
        - a. w/ suggested donation?
        - b. w/ request for a donation of some amount within the year
        - c. include a brief budget description
7. **Community Prayer Vigils** – be ready to respond to any urgent community/national/world events
  - i. have supply of candles w/ plastic cup holders
  - b. **Pre-Election Day Prayer Service** - Monday November 4<sup>th</sup>
    1. outside at a park (Veteran's Memorial Park in downtown Rapids)
    2. 12:15p and 5:00p
  - c. Be prepared to hold an "emergency" prayer vigil after elections, in case there is violence
  - d. Possibly around inauguration day in January.
8. Next meeting date, time and location: September 5<sup>th</sup> – Moravian Church – Lunch and Learn
9. Adjourn

# ARTICLES ABOUT SUNDAY SCHOOL IN THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY

## “Parents, Stop Sunday Schooling Your Kids out of Church,” by Rev. Dr. Jason A. Carter, Dec. 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2021.

During the last 40 years, the Western Church has experimented with the way it passed along its Christian faith by using age-specific programs. Unfortunately, one of the unintended consequences of this increasingly ubiquitous model of the church in North America is that many young people are losing – and have lost forever – any meaningful touch points with the rest of the congregation. Tim Wright argues that by segregating our kids out of worship, *we never fully assimilated them into the life of the congregation*: “They had no touch points. They had no experience. They had no connection with the main worship service – its liturgy, its music, its space, its environment, and its adults. It was a foreign place to them.” Over the last 40 years, children and students have enjoyed tailor-made programs suited to engage them, persuade them, and woo (and wow) them to become Christians. **Yet we didn’t raise them, teach them, show them, or disciple them to become Church Christians.** Perhaps that reason, in part, is why so few of the next generation attend church today; **they’ve graduated out of the church we gave them.** As Tim Wright expresses it, “We’ve essentially ‘Sunday-Schooled’ them out of church – because we never assimilated them into church. We never ‘church-broke’ them.”

### Four Guiding Thoughts for Parents:

- (1) **Language of Worship.** If the worship service is a foreign language to our kids by the time they turn 12 (let alone, 18), kids are more likely never to come back to participate meaningfully in a congregation if their discipleship is forever and only “age-appropriate.”
- (2) **Discipleship Tethered to Congregational Life.** In trying to raise disciples of Christ, we must remember that disciples untethered to congregational life is an oxymoron both *scripturally* and *historically*. In fact, I’d argue that any Christian who is growing in their love of Jesus will also be growing in their love for the Body of Christ, of whom Christ is the Head.
- (3) **The Real Problem.** The main problem why children or teens fight their parents about church is not the church, nor the preaching, nor the style of music, nor the architecture. Nor is it helpful for the parent to shift the blame onto the institutional church (i.e. “*the church doesn’t meet our children or teenagers where they are*”). The real problem is a combination of:
  - (a) *Many children/teenagers are not mature enough to recognize what they really need spiritually. In this sense, they are like all of us. We need adults, and others who are further along in their faith journey, to guide us.*
  - (b) *Parenting often capitulates to the desire and whims of our children;*
  - (c) *Adults can effectively communicate through their actions that church is marginal to life, a “thing we do” after football or soccer, band, or scouts. Everything else is more important for your life – than you attending both the worship service with your family and receiving age-appropriate teaching Sunday school on a Sunday morning. Ultimately, the things of the soul are not that important, after all.*
- (4) **Disciplined Faithfulness Reaps Great Rewards.** If a child is brought up attending church services, as a parent, you’d have frequent touch-points to talk about faith in the home. They could see, and taste, Holy Communion, see, and feel, Holy Baptism; the welcoming of new and different members; the laying on of hands and prayer; words of inclusivity and love; faith lessons in sermon and song. They would be praying for the sick and comforting families experiencing loss. Their ears would tingle at the exciting news about the spread of the Gospel. Slowly, they would (even without a “classroom setting”) absorb the theological and spiritual vocabulary of the church. All of this helps the parent talk about faith in the home. “Congregational memories” are imprinted on the soul of your child. Our congregational muscles are the strongest muscles in our body for establishing and anchoring our life of discipleship. (Source: [revdrjasoncarter.com](http://revdrjasoncarter.com) / Tim Wright, “Sunday Schooling our Kids out of Church.”)

## “Every Parent Is a Sunday School Teacher Now,” by Rev. Andy Huetten.

We canceled Sunday School for this fall semester, and – truth be told – I’m kind of excited about it. The reason I’m optimistic about cancelling Sunday School this fall is because now our ministry philosophy will be put to the test. We rarely encourage at-home discipleship because we had plenty of at-church programming filling our calendars. Add to the mix the typical 21<sup>st</sup> century family schedule and many parents consider it a win if they can just get their family into the church building. To put it mildly, many Christian parents are not actively discipling (not “disciplining”) their children. They’re leaving that to the church to do. Cancelling the children’s ministry programs put the onus of responsibility back where it should have been all along: *on the parents*. It is the parents’ task, not primarily the church’s, to disciple children. We try to encourage all families with children living at home to try to do family devotions 5x in one week. In place of Sunday School, we are equipping our families with resources to help parents sit around the kitchen table and lead their children in Bible reading, prayer, and singing. It is time for Christian parents to come good on those vows once affirmed in their babies’ baptisms – to ‘discipline and instruct’ our children in the ways of the LORD. Parents don’t need an elaborate plan of catechesis, just an intentional rhythm of family devotion. (Source: [matthiasmedia.com](http://matthiasmedia.com))

## **“Parents Are the Primary Disciple-Makers Of Their Children,” by Anna Meade Harris, October 6, 2022**

According to Scripture, God intends for parents to be the primary disciple-makers of their children. After twenty-five years of searching the Scripture for what it says about being a mom, I still have not found a step-by-step set of instructions to producing the “results” I want for my family. But here’s what I have found: a Savior who draws me into a relationship with Himself. He disciples me through our relationship, and that, in turn, is how I will lead my children to know Him. Deuteronomy 6:4-9 provides a solid foundation for parents hoping to lead their children to love Jesus. But rather than a series of rules, these verses describe a lifestyle rich with loving relationship: **“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. . . . You shall teach them diligently to your children and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.”**

The most organic way that children learn about God’s love for us in Jesus Christ is through the rhythms of ordinary life, which includes, but is not limited to, devotional times set aside. Beyond even Sunday School teachers and pastors, **you are the first and most effective spiritual influence in your child’s life.** Parents exert far and away the greatest influence on their children’s religious outcomes . . . In almost every case, no other institution or program comes close to shaping our youth religiously as their parents do – not congregations, youth groups, faith-based schools, mission trips, community service, summer camps, Sunday School, youth ministers, or anything else. Those influences can *reinforce* the influence of parents, but none can substitute for it, or surpass or override it. This is because only the parent can demonstrate spirituality and religiosity *in ordinary life*, not just on holy days and weekends, but *throughout the week and years.* **Don’t let this frighten you; God will equip you for the work. Parents, do not outsource your child’s spiritual formation.** You don’t have all the answers – you don’t, you won’t, and you shouldn’t, anyway. Admitting you have questions and yet still believe will be a powerful witness to the dubious child. Talk about Jesus while driving, washing dishes, walking the dog, when the record card comes home, when the first breakup occurs, or when your child strikes out in their game. Hands-on discipleship opportunities are everywhere in your walking-around daily life. You are the first and most important, but by no means, the only person who plays a role in the spiritual formation of your child. The church is there to help, even if it no longer looks like Sunday School. (Source: rootedministry.com)

**A WORD FROM PASTOR CALEB:** The point of these articles (of which there are *hundreds* more like these online) are to help express the reality we, like the vast majority of churches of every denomination around the U.S., are experiencing today: that Sunday School and child-based programming is next-to-impossible to accomplish, especially using our older model of “come-to-us.” There is hope, though, to help connect and re-connect young families to a congregation, but it isn’t through traditional programming and classes. *Why?* It’s because these things just add busyness to our overly-busy schedules already. Instead, discipleship today looks like helping parents out with their burdens – providing childcare occasionally, so that parents can have time away OR doing small groups over a meal, doing things in member’s homes or in public spaces; providing hands-on experiences and outreach projects for our families. The discussion at our latest Ministry Team meeting about no longer providing Sunday School emphasized this important point: It’s not because we’ve failed or are now “too small” (almost 85% of churches today can no longer sustain even a single Sunday school class), so this isn’t about what we’ve (at PEUMC) did wrong. It’s just a far-reaching culture shift. So, we are moving forward into the fall without attempting to provide Sunday School (a.k.a., “children’s church”) because we believe there are better ways to minister to our young people than to take them out of the worship service for lessons and crafts. You see, we mustn’t frame this as a sad commentary for our small numbers and lack of volunteers – instead, it’s a challenge for us to do ministry with young people that provides more integrity and opportunity for faith-formation. We plan to start equipping our young families with at-home resources to do exactly what the above articles are describing. I hope you understand. And I want to thank all the former Sunday School teachers of our church. They certainly did their best and excelled at it! But . . . the results are now in – and the fact is, Sunday School (“teaching morality and Bible stories in a classroom setting”) is a ministry that is not longer sustainable, practical, or helpful to the needs of young families today. For us at PEUMC, we believe that **“the family that worships together, stays together.”**

## **THANK YOU, VOLUNTEERS, FOR HELPING OUR NEIGHBORS IN AUGUST!**

### **Home Delivered Meals Drivers**

Skip & Ellen M.  
Pat & Kathy McG.  
Becky T. / Leo & Sue T.

### **FOCUS Food Pantry Helpers**

Julie B. / Renee M.  
Lori H. / Pastor Caleb  
Candy P.-T. / Becky T.

Every four weeks, PEUMC volunteers deliver a hot and nutritious noon meal to homes of Wisconsin Rapids area residents who are unable to prepare their own meals.

Your efforts to help put food on the table for our neighbors is so appreciated! Anyone interested in helping with these programs may contact Becky Taylor (715-887-2163) for more information. **THANK YOU!**

# SEPTEMBER

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<b>Service 10:00 AM</b> <i>(Communion)</i> <b>SERVICE IN THE PARK</b> w/ <b>NUCC &amp; WR Congr.</b> <b>10:00 AM</b> Edwards-Alex. Park in Port. Bring something for potluck <b>Anniversary</b> <b>Bob &amp; Julie B. (45<sup>th</sup>)</b>	<b>Office Closed</b> 	Sharing Memories Group – El Café-10:30A	Birthday Mandy My.  UWIF 12:15P <i>(bring healthy snack)</i>  First Wednesday Service 6:00-7:00p Fellowship Hall	Birthday Diane Sw.  Birthdays Gabrielle Ma. (14) John Sw. Pastor's day off   Eagles – 7:15p	Birthday Gabriel Hi. (11)  G.R.A.C.E. Walk of Debt Event (First Congregational Church) – 8:00a	
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
<b>Service 10:00 AM</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kick-Off Sunday!</li> <li>• Congregational Photo!</li> <li>• Cookout After Church!</li> <li>• Journey Thru Bible:                              Genesis 4 (Cain &amp; Abel)</li> </ul>	Blessing of the Animals Port Dog Park 6:00-6:15P	Nurture Team 10:00A	Circle of Friends 1:00P		Birthday Mary He. Ken Pe.	
Pastor on honeymoon - Scotland						
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
<b>Service 10:00 AM</b> Journey Thru Bible: Gen. 22 (Sacrifice of Isaac) <b>3<sup>rd</sup> Sun. Refreshments</b>   COLTS – Noon			Birthday Matt Bo.			
Pastor on honeymoon - Scotland						
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
<b>Service 9:30 AM</b> <b>Worship held at</b> <b>Nekoosa U.C.C.</b> (church by the bridge) Birthday Crystal Sa.   Titans – Noon Pastor in Scotland	Peter Kurth's Honor Flight (8-9P – Mosinee airport)  El Café Appreciation Dinner 5-6p (hosted @ PEUMC)	Anniversary Mike & Lori Hi. (41 <sup>st</sup> )	Birthday Damon Kl.  S-PRC - 10A		Birthday Anna Hi.  Pastor's day off	Birthday Don Ha.
29	30	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Service 10:00 AM</b> Journey Thru Bible: Exodus 12 & 13 (Passover)   VIKINGS – Noon	Birthday Bob Be.	(First Tuesday Service 6:00-7:00p Fellowship Hall)		<b>HOMECOMING WEEKEND AT PORT</b>		SHOWING OF "LEO" AT THE CHURCH 6:30 – 8:12P (102 MIN.)
				P.E.U.M.C. TO PARTICIPATE IN HOMECOMING PARADE 6:00P		

## Church Office Hours:

Connie: Monday through Friday : 8:00a – noon

Pastor: Monday through Thursday : 9:00a – 1:00p