

WELCOME

CHRIST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH & WILDWOOD CHAPEL



Pastor Laverne Larson 608-606-4648

CUMC Worship Services

Sunday at 10:30am

300 N. Mill Street, Merrill WI

715-536-4676 merrillchristumc@frontier.com

Wildwood Worship Services

Sunday at 9:00am

W106 CTH C, Gleason, WI 54435



CUMC FINANCIAL NEWS FOR 2021

	<u>Current Month</u>
Income	\$8413.51
Month Expenses Paid	\$7295.99
Difference	\$ 1117.52

HOLY WEEK

MAUNDY THURSDAY will be very different as I focus on the Stations of the Cross. Stations will be set up outdoors for people to visit throughout the day. Even when we can't be inside the building, we can still remember what Jesus did for us and celebrate his love and sacrifice. I will share more during a 7pm online worship.



GOOD FRIDAY 7pm online, we will hold a Tenebrae service using light and dark, candles and music to remember Jesus' death.

EASTER 7am Sunrise service in the church parking lot where we will gather around a Resurrection tree to celebrate Christ's resurrection! (Be sure to be prepared for the weather.)



10:30am **We will resume in-person worship.** The service will focus on Living Crosses. Please observe health precautions such as social distancing and wearing masks.

CONNECTING WITH CHRIST UMC WORSHIP IS EASY & CONVENIENT

We will resume in-person worship beginning with the 10:30 am Easter service on April 4th. (masks and social distancing required)

DRIVE-IN worship will still be available at 10:30am in the parking lot. Tune your radio to FM 91.1

Watch on **FACEBOOK LIVE** at 10:30 AM at Merrill Christ United Methodist Church

Watch on **FACEBOOK** any time after 12 PM

Watch it from the **CHURCH'S WEBPAGE** at www.MERRILLCHRISTUMC.ORG

Receive the bulletin and sermon as an attachment via **EMAIL**

Receive the bulletin and sermon on paper via the **U.S. Postal Service** (upon request)
If you aren't receiving the bulletin and sermon and would like to, call Sandy in the church office at 715-536-4676.



April 2021

Good News Gazette

Wildwood Chapel News



Mission Work for March / April 2021

Spring is right around the corner and it's time to start gathering vegetable seeds for the Jackson Area Ministries. The Jackson Area Ministries is celebrating its 49th year of the garden ministry. Wildwood Chapel has contributed to this ministry every spring for many years and plans to do so again this year.

If you would like to help with seeds, they collect beans (pole and bush), beets, broccoli, cabbage, carrots, lettuce, cauliflower, corn, cucumbers, pumpkins, radishes, spinach, squash, turnips, watermelon--just about anything that is hardy for zone 6.

You can drop off the seeds in the tote located in the sanctuary of Wildwood Chapel. If you prefer to donate money to help them purchase seed potatoes or tomato plants, just mark "Seeds" on your check or envelope and give it to Sandy. **All donations must be turned in by Easter Sunday** in order to get them sent to Ohio in time for planting.



Thank you all for being a church in mission for those in need.



UMCOR Giving

In March we had a special collection for UMCOR Sunday (formerly One Great Hour of Sharing). Together, our small congregation collected \$125 for this very important mission. These funds, combined with all the funds given around the country and around the world, will help provide much needed assistance to areas devastated by natural or man-made disasters. Thank you for sharing your gifts.



HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

Rene' Daley
Harold Fox

04/02
04/05

NOTICE

Wildwood Chapel has resumed in-person worship. Worship services are at 9:00am on Sunday mornings. Please continue to take all necessary health precautions including social distancing. Hand sanitizer and disinfectant wipes are available as well.

If you are still not comfortable attending church in person and want to receive the worship material via U.S. mail or email, please contact Sandy at the church office so that she can put you on the distribution list.



2021 Missions

Jan/Feb	Blankets and Tools \$175
March	UMCOR Sunday \$125.00
March/April	Seeds / money for Jackson Area Ministry
May/June	Flood Buckets
July/August	TBD
Sept/Oct	TBD
Nov/Dec	TBD

Food Pantry Schedule

Jan/Feb	Antigo
Mar/Apr	Merrill
May/June	Antigo
July/Aug	Merrill
Sep/Oct	Antigo
Nov/Dec	Merrill



--Christ Church Birthdays--

Cindy Savone 04/09
 Mark Maurisak 04/14
 Jerry Weber 04/14
 Art Lersch 04/19



LouAnn DuPlayee 04/21
 Ellen Crapster-Pregont 04/28
 Cindy Swope 04/29

Michael Bergmann Update

Dear CUMC Family,

I know that some of you are aware of what's been going on with Michael, but I wanted to give a brief update. On Feb. 8, Michael suffered several seizures and a stroke (even though he is only 26 years old!) The blood clot that caused the stroke was brought on by complications from his Ulcerative Colitis which causes constant inflammation in the system. Throughout the next few weeks, Michael was in hospitals in Bozeman, MT (which is where he is currently living), Billings, MT, and finally Salt Lake City, UT. Len & I were able to see him once he was out of the ICU in Salt Lake City. Our lovely daughter-in-law Becca rarely left his side.

Things were quite serious for a while, however, they are now back home in Bozeman and life is slowly but surely getting back to normal. Function in his right leg has almost entirely returned and he is able to walk. His right arm and hand are very weak and he sees several therapists multiple times a week to regain motor control. It will likely take several more months to recover what he lost, but his doctors are optimistic that he will regain most, if not all, function on the right side. His speech and cognition were thankfully not significantly affected.

Thank you to everyone who has been keeping him in their prayers!

Amy Bergmann

MISSION NEWS

Chicks for Easter

In lieu of the Red Bucket, the CUMC Mission Committee collected money to purchase chicks through the Heifer International program. This program assists in poor countries to help families raise animals to support themselves and their communities. Funds were collected in February and March. A total of over \$300 was collected to purchase flocks of chicks for needy families to raise and use to support themselves. Thanks you to all who helped with this mission project. Your donations will help make a positive difference around the world.



INGATHERING 2021

Every year for Annual Conference, United Methodists have collected supplies to help people who have been through a disaster or are struggling with deep poverty. Our list for this year is shown below. Donations can be dropped off at the church and we will make sure they get to Annual Conference and the Midwest Distribution Center, who will then get them in the hands of hurting people. **All items must be at the church by June 13th.** THANK YOU for your support! You can also check out the Video at www.midwestmission.org.

Personal Dignity Kit

- 1 Bath Hand Towel - No kitchen towels
- 1 Bath Washcloth - No kitchen towels
- 1 Adult Toothbrush - No multipacks
- 1 Bar Soap – 3 - 4 oz.
- 1 Shampoo – 15 - 18 oz.
- 1 Deodorant – 2 - 3 oz. - stick, roll on, or pump
- \$2 for toothpaste and razor

Place items in a 1-gallon resealable plastic bag and deliver to church.

Homecare Kit

- 2 Liquid Household Cleaners 16 - 40 oz (no spray bottles)
- 2 Dish Soaps 16 - 34 oz
- 2 Liquid Laundry Detergents 32 - 64 oz
- 1 scrub brush with or without handle

Place items into a 5-gallon resealable bucket with a resealable cover and deliver to church.



For all the people who helped with Holy Week services, THANK YOU! Thank you too, to all the people who shared flowers to decorate our altar for Easter! It is always nice to have flowers, especially for days of celebration.



EASTER EGG HUNT!!!!

10:00 AM EASTER MORNING IN THE CHURCH PARKING LOT. DON'T FORGET YOUR BASKET!!

Easter Egg Hunt



UPDATE: Computer operator, Rianna Sukow, has had a change in her life and she will no longer be working IT on Sunday mornings. We are so glad Austin White will be able to take most Sundays.



Good news! Both Wildwood Chapel and Christ UMC are **open for in-person worship**. The building is not yet open for fellowship activities or singing, but we are one step closer than we were last month. We thank God for the decrease in COVID positive cases, and the increasing number of people who have been vaccinated.

What a blessing to finally be able to SEE one another again! We look forward to that time in which we will be able to fellowship with one another again!

READERS NEEDED

Volunteers are needed to assist with in-person worship. If you are interested in serving as a liturgist for any upcoming worship services, please sign up on the clipboard in the sanctuary or call the church office.

*****Christ UMC Small Group*****

The Christ UMC (formerly Wesley) Small Group continues to meet via Zoom on the first Monday of every month at 6:30 p.m. Anyone and everyone is welcome and encouraged to participate, so please join us. The group is having discussions about the vision and hopes for the future of Christ Church. Your input is very important. **Please plan to attend via Zoom on Monday, April 5 at 6:30pm.**

The meeting ID is **4301611974** and the password is **5YadZc**

If you do not have access to a computer but have questions or suggestions, please contact Debbie Tidwell or a member of the SPPRC. If you have questions about connecting online, contact the church office or Debbie! We look forward to seeing you!

Opening for Custodian:

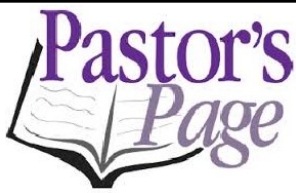
Custodian wanted for Christ United Methodist Church. Must be a self-starter, reliable, able to work without direct supervision. Must be able to accommodate routine weekly custodial tasks and periodic extensive cleaning. This position is anticipated to work 4 hours/week.



SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS

We will be continuing on-line Sunday School throughout the spring, so if you know of any children who would like to participate in a safe, online environment, please contact me! It has been an amazing experience connecting with the children during this difficult situation. What a blessing it has been to have the appropriate technology available to us, as we continue with our Sunday School Ministry!

God Bless!
Debbie



Christ is risen! He is risen indeed!

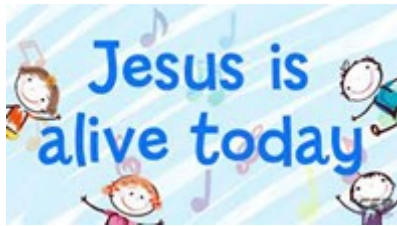
This ancient litany is the great news of Easter. Jesus, whose crucifixion was witnessed by hundreds, died and was buried on a Friday afternoon. On Sunday morning, three of his disciples found his grave empty. Moreover, many more saw Jesus alive, as he ate and drank with them. They saw the nail holes in his

hands and feet, and the spear wound in his side. They touched him and found Jesus was as real as they were. No one had ever heard of a resurrection before! How could this be? They concluded that Jesus must be the God he claimed to be for only God could not only raise other people from the dead, but now Jesus himself had come back from the dead!



This is the mystery and miracle of the Christian faith. We say it each time we celebrate Holy Communion: Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

Christians are a peculiar people because of this very belief. We believe God exists; God loves us; God died for us, to pay the penalty for our sins; and God is preparing a place for us to live in eternal holiness with him. For those of us who know this truth, there is great joy in celebrating Easter. I wish you all a joy-filled Easter!!!!



The best news is that Jesus not only came back from the dead, but he is with us NOW! Jesus Christ isn't some ancient God lost to the annals of history. He is still with us today. Jesus' gift of forgiveness still saves lives from guilt, depression and despair. Jesus' offer of salvation still gives hope to those unsure about death. This hope takes away the fear of death, and circumstances that threaten our lives. Jesus' gift of the Holy Spirit gives us access to truth and comfort, strength and peace, beyond what any philosophy can offer.

This is the Good News I have been privileged to preach for over 25 years. I preach it because I know it is true. I have met the risen Christ! He is ALIVE, NOW! And he LOVES YOU! And I want people to know the same joy, the same strength, the same hope, and the same peace, that I have received in my relationship with Jesus.

It doesn't matter whether I am a pastor or not, I still have the great privilege and joy of sharing this good news with people, and you do too! I hope you will do just that for many years into the future, for then our churches will always be filled with life.

Christ bless you with joy of Easter!

Pastor Laverne

FINANCIAL UPDATE by Pastor Laverne

At our Nov. 19, 2020 Charge Conference, Christ UMC members voted on a 2021 budget of \$96,190. This includes \$15,816 for Conference Apportionments, something we have been remiss in paying for the last few years because of declining offerings. Going to a half-time pastor was supposed to help the budget enough that our church could once again pay our fair share of Conference expenses. We did manage to send in \$2,000 on our \$15,816 debt, but we should be doing better than that.



Why is the pastor addressing this issue? While talking about our church's income and expenses may come across as a purely business matter, it is very much a spiritual issue. For one thing, Christians are challenged to follow the Biblical admonition to give to God first, a tithe of 10% (Genesis 14; Malachi 3). Tithing is an act of faith, first by obeying God's commandment to give; and secondly by trusting God to provide when you feel that your offering will leave you financially strapped. Secondly, the future of Christ UMC is at risk and members need to be aware of the situation.

Our congregation is not only facing a decline in money, but with 3 key leaders moving away, we are in need of more members to step up and take leadership positions in the church.

If you want to be part of the discussions regarding our church's future, join our Small Group meeting on Monday, April 5 at 6:30pm on Zoom. Meeting ID: 430 161 1974, passcode: 5YadZc.

Thank you for all you have done to serve and support Christ UMC in the past. I know you are all looking forward to renewed ministry after COVID. I hope you will step out in faith and renew your commitment to Christ and Christ UMC in making "disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." Jesus. (Matthew 28:19-20)



ANNOUNCEMENT

The United Methodist Church was in the news recently as our Council of Bishops announced that General Conference, originally scheduled for May 5 of 2020, postponed until Aug 29 of 2021, is postponed once again until Aug. 29, 2022, all because of COVID-19. The Bishops also called for a Special General Conference for May 8, 2021, to deal with some procedural matters, but they have since canceled this call because all the limitations to Conference discussions and voting still existed.

At the same time the Bishops made their statement, another announcement was made about the formation of a new Methodist denomination, the Global Methodist Church. To clear up one matter, the Global Methodist Church does not yet exist as a break-off branch of the United Methodist Church, it is only a proposed denomination.

The official announcement from the Transitional Leadership Council for the GMC says, “The new church will officially come into existence when a United Methodist General Conference adopts the implementing legislation for the Protocol for Reconciliation and Grace through Separation. Alternatively, if it becomes apparent that the leading bishops, centrists, and progressives who covenanted to support the Protocol no longer do so, then the council will consider bringing the new church into existence without delay. Local United Methodist churches, annual conferences, and central conferences will then be able to join the new denomination.

“The primary mission of the Global Methodist Church will be to make disciples of Jesus Christ who worship passionately, love extravagantly, and witness boldly,” said the Rev. Keith Boyette, who serves as chairman of the Transitional Leadership Council.

Last March, I explained this Protocol and how it was a mediated effort on the part of the Council of Bishops, and key leaders in the Progressive, Centrist and Traditional movements. It was hoped that the Protocol would be passed at General Conference last May and members of the UMC would be able to choose which branch they wanted to be part of and the tension in the UMC would dissipate.

As many of you know, there has been growing tension in the UMC in regard to divergent forms of theology. The seeds for these differences were present at the formation of the UMC back in 1968, and the differences have continued to grow stronger and deeper over the years causing a great deal of pain and suffering.

Not all United Methodists have been willing to wait for the passage of the Protocol. Some individuals have left to join other churches. Some UM congregations have negotiated to leave the UMC and have either joined another denomination or remained an independent denomination. Last winter, a new Methodist denomination was launched.

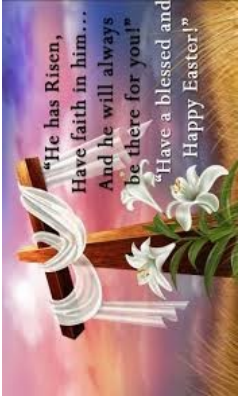
It was announced on Dec. 2, that a new Progressive Methodist denomination, the **Liberation Methodist Connexion, or LMX**, was formed. “The new church aims to center on the voices of people of color as well as queer and transgender individuals – those the LMX organizers sees marginalized in the United Methodist Church.” (UM News Dec. 2, 2020) To learn more about this group, go to their website, thelmx.org.

On Dec. 10, 2020, it was announced that another group of Progressive United Methodists chose not to break off from the denomination but formed a new group called **The Liberation Project**. “The Liberation Project creates space for United Methodist leaders to get together and do the work of justice-oriented, healing ministry, rather than talk to one another about how we probably should be doing it,” said the Rev. Jonah Overton, lead pastor of Zao MKE Church, a new United Methodist congregation in Milwaukee.

“Overton and other organizers make clear that the new Liberation Project is separate from the similarly named Liberation Methodist Connexion. The Connexion is starting a new denomination, while organizers of The Liberation Project are sticking with The United Methodist Church.” (UM News Dec. 10, 2020)

As you can see, the UMC continues to fray and splinter under COVID-19. Proposals are still coming forward for the General Conference to consider. Most are old proposals with new names like, “The Christmas Covenant,” which seeks to regionalize the United Methodist Church.

We won’t know what will happen until General Conference meets and the delegates make a decision. Please continue to pray for all the delegates as they wrestle with this most difficult decision.



~ APRIL 2021 ~



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
C = Christ Church W = Wildwood	Sunday Worship: W = 9:00am C = 10:30am			1 Maundy Thursday Stations of the Cross all day On-line worship 7pm	2 Office Closed Good Friday On-line worship 7pm	3
4 EASTER Sunrise service 7am 10:30am In-person worship begins Communion	5 CUMC Small Group meeting via zoom 6:30pm	6 Office Closed	7	8	9	10
11	12 SPPRC 4pm	13 Office Closed Trustee mtg 5:30pm Church Board 6:30pm	14	15	16	17
18	19	20 Office Closed	21	22	23	24
25	26	27 Office Closed	28	29	30	