

THE PULSE

MCFARLAND UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

a church with heart - weekly newsletter

"I will put my teaching in their minds and write it on their hearts..!"
Jeremiah 31:33

December 2 - December 9, 2021

HAPPENING EVERY WEEK

You can find brief descriptions of these weekly programs on our website:

mcfarlanducc.org



SUNDAY Morning, 10 am Zoom Worship

<https://zoom.us/j/97010988439> Password: **bettogether**



SUNDAY Morning, 12 noon Zoom Bible Study

<https://zoom.us/j/262314649>



MONDAY - FRIDAY, 8 am Morning Devotion

<https://zoom.us/j/94276813637>



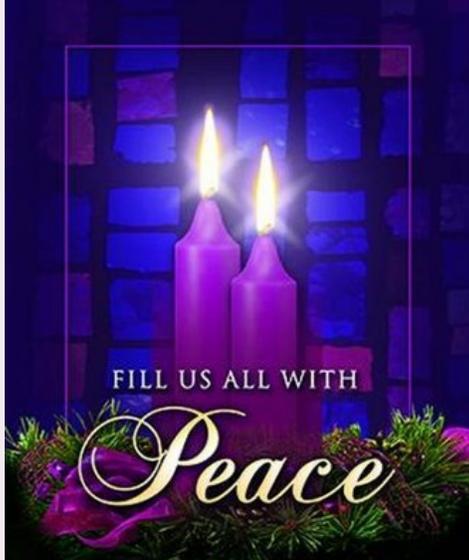
WEDNESDAY Eve., 6:30 pm Midweek Inhale Spiritual Practices

<https://zoom.us/j/123020606>

Happening This Week

*Sunday Morning Worship
December 5th 10:00 a.m. in
person and on zoom.*

Advent, December Birthdays, and

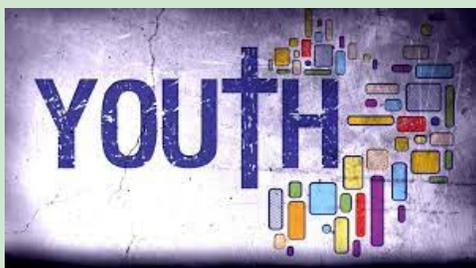


Communion!

We'll continue our spiritual preparation for Christmas with the lighting of our first two Advent candles--the candle of Hope, and the candle of Peace.

No Changes In COVID Precautions This Month: SaLT (Servant and Leadership Team) met this past week and decided that in light of the uptick in COVID cases in our area and the new Omicron variant, we will not make any changes in our COVID precautions and requirements. Our policy is clearly stated on our website, and ***here is a link to that page if you would like to read them again.***

Sadly this means that unless something changes dramatically, **we will not be singing in the sanctuary during the holiday season, and masks will continue to be required for in person worship.** Thanks to all of you for complying with these policies so cheerfully.



Sunday, December 5th, 4:30--6:00 p.m.

Teen Youth Group Meeting with Lake Edge UCC at our church!

Teenagers I trust you all know about this gathering. We'll play some games, have some meaningful conversation, and eat pizza! There's no Packers game this weekend! Hope to see you. Bring friends! (masks required of course).

Tuesday, December 7th, Green Team Meeting 6:30 p.m.
All are welcome so please attend even if you haven't yet been involved with the Green Team.

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86377661794?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86377661794?pwd=UFk4VUlsNnUwWHooNXJHeVloQzBQZz09)
pwd=UFk4VUlsNnUwWHooNXJHeVloQzBQZz09



So great to have our younger kids in church this past Friday night!

Our Younger Youth had a blast together at our first Friday Night Monthly Gathering on December 3rd.

We had 14 kids and at least 6 others would have been there if they'd not had scheduling conflicts. We'll be meeting the second Friday of each month from now on for games, Bible Stories, crafts, and a simple dinner. Thanks so much to Melissa Pfohl for leading us with the crafts! Spread the word and let's have another great turn out at our January gathering on Friday, Jan. 14th from 5:30 to 6:45 p.m.



Will You Help With Communion Preparation the First Sunday of Each Month?

Now that we're worshiping in our building once again we need a team of 6 persons to make a commitment to coming to church at 9:15 the first Sunday of the month and helping to get the bread and juice ready. This is a great way for some of you newer members to get involved in some of the "work" of our church. It's fun, easy, and a great way to get to know each other better.

Here's a link you can use to sign up for this service. We're asking for a team to make a commitment to do this the first Sunday of the month beginning in January, 2022 and ending in May, 2022. Thanks in advance!!

We Also Need Ushers For Christmas Eve Service at 6 p.m. on December 24th!

The "signup genius" page has been updated to include Christmas Eve and

Sunday morning worship through the end of January, 2022. We have several unfilled slots so please sign up to serve our congregation in this way. Thanks so much and [*here's the link to the signup genius page.*](#)

Upcoming Events



Share Your Christmas Season Music and Art For Worship Again This Year!

(That's Geoff Brink's "Boundary Waters Moon photo that was a part of last year's worship)

Last year since we were completely on zoom a number of you shared music and readings on video and we used these for our Christmas pageant and Christmas Eve and New Year's weekend services. That was fun and a number of you asked if we could do that again since there's a good chance we may not be able to sing or have wind and brass instruments in the sanctuary because of COVID. So please feel encouraged to create video recordings or take still photos once again of your artwork and send them to me (Pastor Bryan). I'll do my best to figure out how to use them in worship and let you know when your art will be featured. If you need help recording something please let me know and I'll do my best to help you out with that.



The Solar Panels were installed!

Way to go and thanks to everyone who helped make this happen. Such a visible sign of our commitment to honoring the earth!



A Few Words From Pastor Bryan

I'm going to share a simple reading from an anonymous source that a friend of mine posted on Facebook recently. I shared this reading with our morning devotion group

Friday morning, and it's been sticking with me ever since. I'm glad this week's Advent theme is Peace. This simple reading helps us lean in that direction in its own quiet way.

Sometimes I just want it all to stop. Talk of covid, protests, looting, brutality, climate change, another mass shooting, malignant narcissists running the country, selfishness and greed and dishonesty running just about everything-- the list goes on. I lose my way. Become convinced that this "new normal" is real life, and that there is very little reason to be hopeful.

But, then I meet an 87 year old who talks of living through Polio, diphtheria, Vietnam protests and countless personal losses, and yet is still enchanted with life. He seemed surprised when I said that 2020 and 2021 must be especially challenging for him. "No," he said slowly looking me straight in the eyes. "I learned a long time ago to not see the world through the printed headlines, or so-called news that is sold to us as a marketable product. That is not the lens through which I see the world. Instead, I see the world through the people that surround me, and are close to me. I see the world with the realization that we can and often do love big. Therefore, I just choose to write my own headlines. "Husband loves wife today." "Family drops everything to come to Grandma's bedside." He patted my hand. "Old man makes new friend."

This simple reading reminded me that one of the greatest freedoms you and I have is the capacity to determine what our own "headlines" are. I don't think the solution is not being informed or involved regarding the pain and brokenness of the world. God calls us to get involved and to use our gifts in response to the suffering and needs of others. But we can regulate how much "bad news" we consume, what we say "yes" and "no" to and why, and we can turn off or mute devices when the tone is toxic and out of balance and simply not worth "taking in."

I'm grateful that we all have the freedom to do our best to keep "first things first," and to decide what we're going to regard as most important. One of

the reasons I think a regular practice of some kind of prayer and meditation is so important is that this is the single most effective way I know of to "turn off the noise" and become centered on what truly matters-again and again.

What I love about this reading is that it's a gentle reminder to embrace the fact that being a loving parent, or a loyal friend, or a supportive partner, or simply smiling at someone who is lonely and afraid could well be the most important and sacred thing any of us do in a given day. Or in our lives for that matter.

Breaking News: *Person stops everything for a moment, says thanks to God, and feels grateful for the gift of a life filled with so much goodness and love.*

Hope to see you Sunday,

Pastor Bryan

608-838-9322
5710 Anthony St.
McFarland WI 53558
mcfarlanducc.org

Pastor Bryan Sirchio
pastorb@mcfarlanducc.org
608-577-8716

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