

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, 2022

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, 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, December
4th, 10:00 a.m.
Morning Worship
(in person and on
zoom as always)***

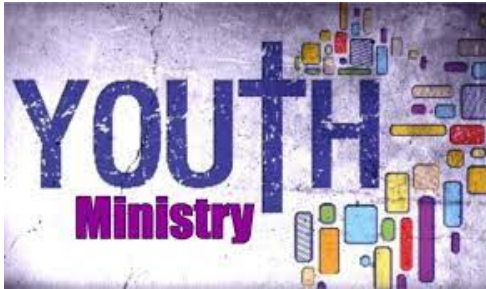
<https://zoom.us/j/97010988439>

Password: **bettogether**

2nd Advent Sunday Theme is Peace

Younger Youth Will Make Stained Glass Windows During Church Sunday Morning

Sheryl Rowe has materials to help the younger kids make stained glass windows (not using real glass!) during worship on Dec 4th. She's going to try to do this quietly at the children's table so kids can stay in worship. We'll see how it goes!! Once again, we're grateful to Sheryl for bringing this kind of creativity into worship with our children!



Sunday, December 4th,

5:30 - 7:30 pm

Teen Youth Group Meeting

This is our regular first Sunday of the month meeting for our youth 12 and older. Fun, discussion, pizza...what

more do you want! Bring your friends.

Tuesday, December 6, 6:00 p.m. Monthly SaLT meeting

in person at the church and on zoom. These church leadership team meetings are always open to anyone. If you would like to join us on zoom please use the Sunday morning worship zoom link and password.



Friday, December 9th, Younger Youth Meeting Before The Holiday Concert!

5:30 - 6:45 p.m.

Even though we've moved our Younger Youth meetings to the second Sunday of each month, we're going to **meet in December on Friday the 9th** to make it easy for families to join us for the special Ken Medema and Andra Moran concert that evening! We'll make Christmas tree ornaments and have pizza and a Bible Story as usual and then hopefully kids and families will stay for the concert. Bring friends!!!

Come and join us

Holiday Concert

Featuring



KEN MEDEMA

is known throughout the world for his amazing gifts as a pianist, vocalist and "spontaneous songwriter."



ANDRA MORAN

is a nationally known Christian singer and songwriter.

Friday, December 9th

7:00 pm

Free - All Ages Welcome

McFarland United Church of Christ
5710 Anthony St
McFarland, WI 53558



***Sunday, December 11,
Immediately After Worship***

***Decorate The Church For
Christmas!***

Worship on December 11th will already be special since Ken Medema will still be with us on Sunday morning. Then after church we'll enjoy Christmas cookies and finish trimming our church tree together. Plan to stay around a bit for this fun time of fellowship and joy!

Opportunities and Things Coming Up



Poinsettia Dedications 2022

Donate a poinsettia in honor or memory of someone important to you. We have purchased our poinsettias from the McFarland Lioness, so you'll also be supporting a great community organization!

We have 15 small plants (6 1/2" pots) with a suggested donation of \$14 and 5 large plants (8" pots) with a suggested donation of \$23. First come, first serve.

There are 2 payment options: 1. Pay online into the General Fund with a memo "Christmas Flowers" or 2. Pay by check - drop in the offering plate or send it to the church with a memo "Christmas flowers."

Plants will decorate the sanctuary for Advent and Christmas Eve. You may take them home after Christmas Eve worship. Any plants left after worship on January 8 will either be disposed of or brought to shut-ins (if they're in good condition).

[Click Here to go to SignUpGenius to reserve a poinsettia.](#)



FINANCIAL COMMITTEE NEWS

As we begin our financial planning for 2023 we are once again seeking financial pledges to help us have a sense of what degree of support we can count on in 2023.

An email was sent November 25 titled "A Letter From Our Church's Financial Committee" to everyone who receives the Pulse. This letter is now also on our website under the Donations tab.

[Click here to be taken to the Letter and Form.](#)

[Link to a fillable PDF of the 2023 Commitment Form.](#)

Please return Commitment Forms to the Financial Secretary via mail or email FinSec@mcfarlanducc.org by January 1, 2023. Thank you for your continued support!

Geoff Brink Joan Jacobsen Barb Janoski Carol Lemke
Farrel Smith Sue Haeffner



2023 Sunday Morning Ministries – Kitchen/Hospitality and Ushers

Here's your opportunity to get involved and support some of the activities for Sunday morning – helping in the kitchen or being an usher.

Kitchen/Hospitality Ministry Team

Team members are responsible for preparing beverages and snacks to be served prior to and after each worship service. This includes set up and clean up. The time commitment is from 9:15 am to about 11:45 am. The goal is to have a minimum of two individuals assigned each Sunday. Once a month on the first Sunday, in addition to the usual beverage duties, the Kitchen Team is responsible for setting up and serving cake for our monthly birthday celebration.

Ushers Ministry Team

The ministry of ushering is an important part of worship because it is one of the most visible ministries in the church. Ushers assist the congregation and pastor by greeting and welcoming all members and guests. They serve a role in ensuring the worship service runs smoothly and the sanctuary offers a place conducive for worship. Ushers also respond to requests and any special needs or accommodations of those in worship. Ushers serve from 9:30-11:15; preference is for 2 persons to greet and usher together. Signup sheets for 2023 are posted on the bulletin board near the front entrance and updated signup lists are now available in Sign Up Genius (under "Contact") on the church's website.

Link for Kitchen/Hospitality - For more information contact Joan Jacobsen (kitchen) at treasurer@mcfarlanducc.org

Link for Usher -For more information contact Becky Cohen (usher) at cohenrw@yahoo.com.



"The Giving Tree"

(giving Christmas gifts to area families through the McFarland Food Pantry)

As many of you know, McFarland UCC has participated in the Giving Tree, supporting the McFarland Food Pantry, for the past several years. I'm excited to share with you that we will be participating again this year! Below is a list of the items being requested (e.g., toys, clothes, gift cards).

- Angelos Gift Card
- Angelos Gift Card
- Kwik Trip Gift Card

If you are interested in participating, please contact me (608-212-1525 or asgerke@yahoo.com) to sign up for one or more of the items listed above.

We want to make things go smoothly for all involved. Please drop all items off at the McFarland Food Pantry, 5404 Anthony Street on one of the dates listed below.

- Saturday, December 3: 9am - 3pm
- Wednesday, December 7: 3:00pm - 5:00 pm

REMINDERS:

- Please let the Food Pantry know that you are from McFarland UCC when you drop your items off.
- If you need to make alternate arrangements, please get in touch with Kelly Maly directly (608-243-8234 or kelly@kellmaly.com).
- Please let me know when you drop off your items off at the McFarland Food Pantry, so I can ensure all gifts are accounted for.

Thank you for your continued interest in supporting the McFarland Food Pantry Giving Tree.

If you have any questions, please let me know (608-212-1525 or asgerke@yahoo.com).

Thanks!
Anne



An Invitation to Share Your Favorite Nativity Sets With Our Congregation...

Nativity sets are a wonderfully diverse, creative, and inspiring artform. If you have a nativity set that you would enjoy sharing with us church family we would love to see it! Our Worship & Arts Team is issuing this invitation to you all

to bring yours to church either for a Sunday or throughout the rest of the Advent and Christmas season. The team is not yet sure how they will be used. It all depends on how many we receive! It may be a table in the fellowship area or in the sanctuary somehow. Cindy Wendorf (cwendorf@aol.com) and Jean Duchrow (jeanduchrow56@gmail.com) will organize them once you bring them in. You can either bring them on Sunday morning to church or drop them off in our church office. Ginger is in the office Wednesdays and Thursdays from 9-1 p.m. Beyond that just email Ginger (office@mcfarlanducc.org) or pastor Bryan (pastorb@mcfarlanducc.org) to make an appointment to drop one off. Thanks!



Wednesday, December 21 6 - 7 pm Winter Soltice Fire Ceremony

As many of you know, throughout the past year we have been enjoying solstice and equinox fire ceremonies with our friend and Shamanic practitioner Jessica Riphenburg. Once again, we will celebrate the Winter Solstice together in this way. We will share prayers from the Christian tradition and the Shamanic fire ceremony ritual. Since it will be cold in all likelihood, we will limit the ceremony to one hour, and we will have a nice big fire to stand around together.

A Few Words From Pastor Bryan

Don't You Just Love Waiting?!



In addition to the four weekly themes of Advent that we celebrate each Sunday--Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love--the whole notion of waiting is also a traditional Advent theme.

I don't know many people who enjoy waiting. Do you?

I don't think the people of Israel were thrilled that they had to keep waiting and longing for the Messiah to come to them. So many of the Psalms start with the words, "How long God?" "How long must we wait God while things in this world seem to be falling apart and only getting worse?" That's a paraphrase but it's accurate.

Well here are 5 quick things that come to my mind as I think about Advent waiting, and if I had a week to preach about waiting in Advent, these are some themes I would work with.

First, Advent waiting isn't just a matter of "killing time." What a horrible little phrase when you think about it. Killing time. Advent waiting is about loving and appreciating and making the most of whatever time we have as long as we are in time. It's about preparation and groundwork and doing whatever we can as we also trust that God will ultimately bring about the life-giving changes for ourselves personally and for this world at large that we on our own can't or have not yet been able to make happen.

The second thing, which is related to the first, is about the quality of life we embrace as we wait. Recently I was watching some sporting event on ESPN, and there was an appeal program for the Jimmy Valvano Cancer Research fund. They showed a clip of a speech given by sportswriter Stuart Scott as he received an ESPY Award shortly before he passed away from cancer himself. Stuart said,

"When you die, that does not mean you lose to cancer. "You beat cancer by how you live, why you live, and the manner in which you live."

I've heard that statement of Stuart Scott's many times, and it always brings me to tears. And this year when I heard it I thought, "THAT's Advent waiting." He wasn't waiting to die, although by the time he gave this speech he knew his life in the body was rapidly coming to an end. But he was filling every moment of his life with dignity and courage and kindness to others. He was filling every precious moment with meaning and purpose

and love.

Third, when I think of Advent waiting I think of the kind of waiting that's hard simply because there's something that we KNOW is going to be so good that we're eager and longing for it out of joyful anticipation. Kind of like kids waiting for Christmas. Or adults eager to see someone they cherish and miss and long for. The point here is just that it's such a beautiful blessing to have something or someone you just "can't wait" to see because it's going to be *so good when you finally do*. And my point here is to remind ourselves that it's a blessing--and not one to take for granted--to be able to consciously wait for something fantastic that's on the way. Yeah, it's hard and frustration to have to wait. But such a gift to have something worth waiting for.

Fourth, Advent waiting is about accepting that there are things we simply can't make happen, but believing and trusting that God has something wildly good and beautiful for us when all is said and done--even when we have no clue about the how, where, or when. But it's a blessing to KOW that it's just a matter of when, not if. That means that even when the present reality feels completely empty or worse, we trust that life is ALWAYS heading somewhere beautiful because it's always heading toward the Love and Grace and Justice of God. If we truly believe that it changes everything.

Finally, "waiting" always reminds me of the advice of one of my most beloved mentors Gordon Cosby, which I've shared a few times with you. He said that there are 2 things we can all do that he guarantees will change our entire lives in a beautiful way. The first is to meditate twice a day for 20 minutes each. The second is to show up 5 minutes early for every appointment or event we have scheduled and wait calmly for whoever it is we're meeting to show up, or for whatever is supposed to happen to begin. But in that 5 minutes of waiting, be open to God doing something unexpected. As Gordon always said after issuing those two challenges--"I can't think of one person who has accepted this challenge and done these things consistently, but I promise you, it will change your life if you do!" And by the way, I haven't taken him up on it consistently yet either. I guess I'm "waiting" for the grace to be given to do that. Maybe try to do it just for a week? Anyone want to join me?

Well that's enough about waiting for now.

Hope to see you this 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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