

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*

November 18 - November 25, 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 *NO Bible Study Nov. 20th!!*
<https://zoom.us/j/262314649>



MONDAY - FRIDAY, 8 am Morning Devotion *YES We will have morning devotion on Thanksgiving and this Friday*
<https://zoom.us/j/94276813637>



WEDNESDAY Eve., 6:30 pm Midweek Inhale Spiritual Practices
<https://zoom.us/j/123020606>

Happening This Week



***Sunday, November 20th,
Sunday Morning Worship 10
a.m in-person and on Zoom.***

Our own Martha Olsen will be leading worship this coming Sunday while Pastor Bryan is with the Confirmation Youth for a retreat at Daycholah Center in Green Lake, WI. Martha will share a beautiful meditation she wrote

weaving together various hymn and song lyrics. She shared this meditation with our Morning Devotion group and it was wonderful. We'll sing more hymns than usual, including some favorites requested by members of our congregation.

(Masks are optional)

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

Password: **bettogether**



*Sunday Evening,
November 20th, 5-7 p.m.*

*Service Opportunity to Help
Little John's of Verona get their
Thanksgiving meals prepared!*

McFarland UCC member Becky Boggs works at Little Johns and has put out a call for helpers the evening of Sunday, November 20th from 5-7 p.m. A number of you have already signed up to help out, and Becky says they can use as much help as possible. Please be in touch directly with Becky if you have any questions about this. Her email and phone are: beckyjboggs@gmail.com and 262-374-0921.



Welcome Ginger Hummer!!

Ginger is our new Church Office Administrator and we are absolutely thrilled to have her working with us! Those of us who have gotten to know Ginger agree unanimously that she is a total Godsend and that Geoff Brink, Tom Ludwig, and Heather Blackmore (our Personnel Committee) hit the jackpot when they found her! Ginger's

warm personality and exceptional administrative skills are already making a difference and we are thrilled to have her in our midst and on our staff. Ginger will be in the office Wednesdays and Thursdays from 9 a.m. -- 1 p.m., and will be working remotely and by appointment beyond that. She can be reached at office@mcfarlanducc.org.



Advent begins November 27th!

First Theme is Hope!

Wow... It is hard to believe that the first Sunday of Advent is Sunday, November 27th! Advent is the 4 week season in the church calendar year during which we prepare ourselves spiritually to celebrate Christmas with as much depth and meaning as possible.



Sheryl Rowe, a long-time member of our congregation, is going to be helping out with our younger youth activities.

Thanks so much for sharing your time and experience with us Sheryl!

Sheryl was especially active working with younger kids back when Jack Hicks was pastor of our congregation. She is fantastic with the "littles" and I (Pastor Bryan) look forward to working with her and other parents who are helping out as they are able. Special thanks to Erin Gelhausen and Hillary Cheever for their help with crafts!!

Advent Wreaths For Kids November 27th!

Sheryl will help kids who attend church Sunday morning, November 27th, to make Advent wreaths that they can take home after church. We'll talk about the meaning of Advent a bit during worship as we begin this season together.

Recycle Plastic for A Kids' Craft

Sheryl Rowe needs plastic like this (baked goods and certain produce often come in these) for a craft idea with the younger kids. Please either bring it to



church or arrange with Sheryl directly to get it to her (sherrowe@aol.com).



Youth Art Contest for Climate Hope Cards!!!

I (Pastor Bryan) know some of the teens and younger kids in our congregation are great artists! **Here's a chance to enter a nation-wide contest that our denomination, the United Church of Christ, is holding.** If you are 18 or younger, you are invited to draw, paint, or color your feelings about climate hope, environmental justice, or protecting the Earth. Winners will be announced during an online award ceremony on Saturday, January 7th, 2023. **The winners of the Art Contest will have their art printed on thousands of Climate Hope Cards to be collected by UCC members around the country and ultimately delivered en masse to the White House!**

The contest runs until November 29th. ***Here's a link to more about how to submit your art.*** If you need help please ask Pastor Bryan! It would be awesome to have a bunch of youth from our congregation enter this contest. Who knows, your art might get all the way to the White House! Even if you don't win the context, we'll love seeing your art in our own church.

Ken Medema & Andra Moran In Concert!

Friday, December 9th, at 7:00 p.m.!

All Ages Welcome!

Spread the Word!! Invite Your Friends!!



Ken Medema is known throughout the world for his amazing gifts as a pianist, vocalist, and "spontaneous songwriter." Ken was with us in April, 2019, and is delighted to return for a concert on Friday, Dec. 9th and to be with us for Sunday morning worship on December 11th. Ken's incredible gift for listening to a story and then immediately composing a song that "sings the story" back is beyond description. Don't miss this opportunity to be blessed by Ken and his gifts.



Andra Moran is a nationally known Christian singer/songwriter and dear friend of both Pastor Bryan and Ken Medema. Andra will be with us for the Friday night concert on December 9th to share some music and perform with Ken as well. Andra and her daughter Calla often join our morning zoom devotion group and have been with us in worship often via zoom. Andra has been so generous sharing her musical gifts with us. Don't miss this chance to meet and hear her in person!



A Few Words From Pastor Bryan

Grandson Jack is coming into his own!

Jack is my daughter Emma's youngest of 4 boys. He's 4 years old and attends a Catholic pre-school. They have been talking about Christmas recently, and when Jack got out of school and into the car earlier today he

said to Emma,

"Mom, Jesus thinks Christmas is his birthday but it's actually everybody's birthday because everyone gets presents."

At first Emma was thinking that perhaps he was having a deep theological insight and making a connection between Christmas and God wanting us to all love each other, but then Jack made it quite clear where he was coming from. After a brief reflective pause, he continued,

"Jesus is always telling us how he died for us. I'm sick of that."

Perhaps there's something wrong with his minister grandfather getting such a kick out of these irreverent quips from my grandsons, but this one just cracked me up and delighted me to no end.

It delighted me that he knows it's okay to say what he really thinks about Jesus to his mom, knowing full well that his mom actually thinks Jesus is quite wonderful. And it delighted me that they are talking about Jesus at all!

And it delighted me because it's just so..."Jack." I love seeing this kid's personality coming out in full form these days. He's a lot like his brother Bryan (hmmm... Bryan has my name and Jack was born on my birthday)--a little tough guy who isn't going to "give it up" easily for anyone, including Jesus. Emma's got her hands full with this little dude. The first day of preschool she had to bring him home early because he yelled at the teacher and called her "A big dumb!" Emma was mortified. Of course he was corrected and disciplined, but it still made me laugh. This kid is consistent. Whether it's a teacher or Jesus, Jack's going to let you know what he thinks.

Isn't it amazing how so much of who we are is just "in there" from the start? And God, like a loving mom or dad, is just crazy about all of us, no matter who we are, or what we're working with in terms of our basic dispositions or "hard wiring." When we begin worship each week with the words, "Whoever you are, wherever you are on life's journey..." you are welcome and loved... (that's the gist of it)--well that's been true from the beginning, even when we were too young to pretend we like Jesus any more than we actually do.

As for Emma, well, she and her husband are going to have quite a wild ride parenting those 4 very different boys. God will give them whatever they need to keep raising those little guys to know they are unconditionally adored, no matter what twists and turns their lives take.

As I thought about Jack and his blossoming personality, I couldn't help but think about Emma when she was that age. Just this morning Emma's mom (Ann is her name) posted something on Facebook that Emma wrote when she was about 7. Emma used to write little signs or messages and then get up early and place them on the refrigerator door for the rest of the family to wake up to. Ann evidently kept a picture of one of them and posted it this morning. I wasn't quite sure whether to laugh or cry when I saw it and remembered it from all those years ago, so I did a bit of both. That daughter of mine has been nothing but grace and sweetness to me her entire life. You can read the message below...

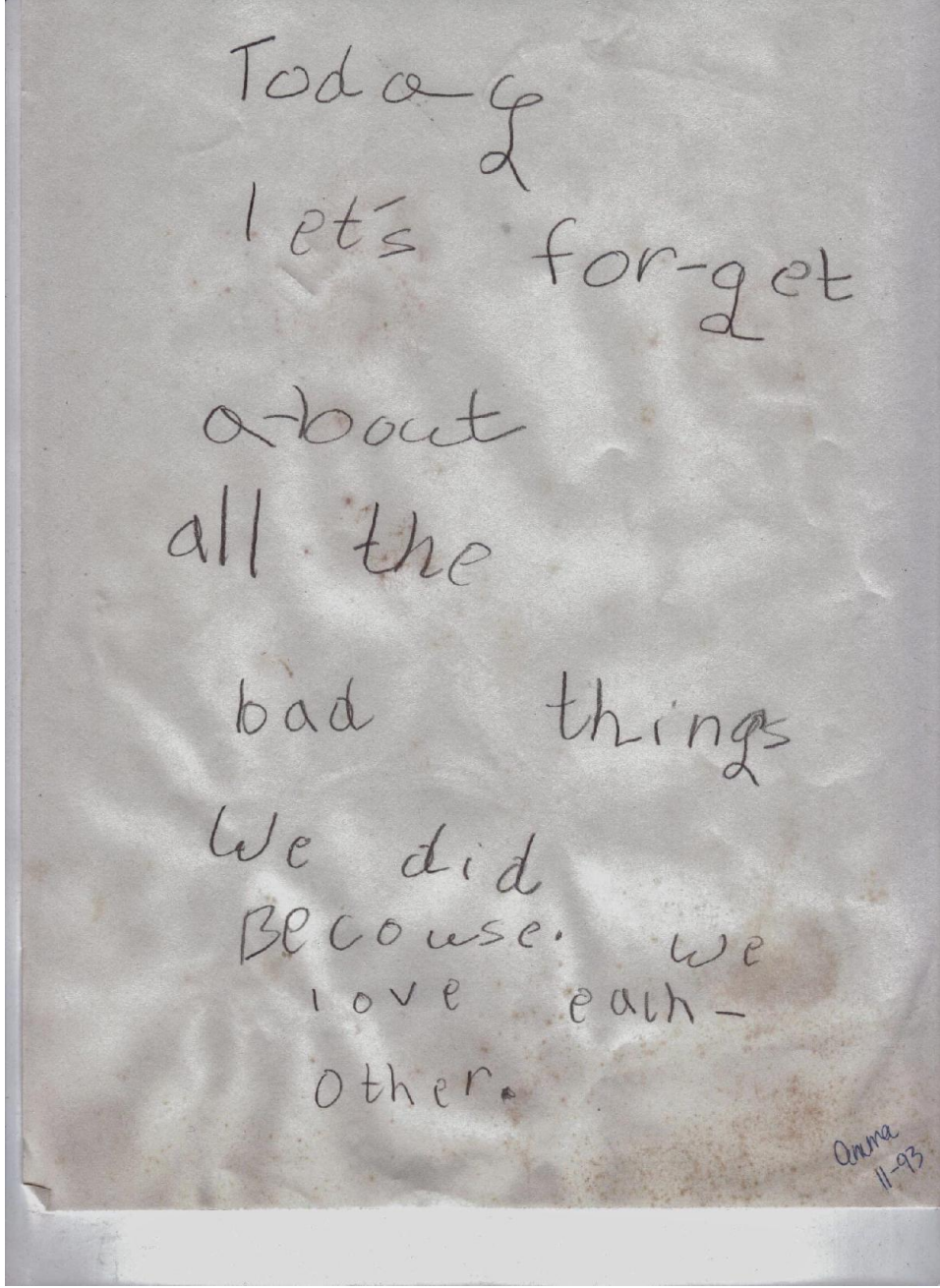
What journeys we all have with kids--our own and others. I know some of those journeys go to incredibly tender places of disappointment, grief, anxiety, and loss, as well as to places of unspeakable joy and gratitude. It's almost too much to hold, and we all have times when we're not sure whether to laugh or cry, or both.

Just imagine how God must feel when She/He/They (pronouns...) looks upon all of us kids with so much love it makes God's heart ache.

Just imagine... And remember you've been loved every step of the way, even when you've been tired of hearing about Jesus, and even when you've thought God was a Big Dumb.

See you soon one way or another I hope,

Pastor Bryan



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