

# 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

**October 28 - November 4, 2021**

## HAPPENING EVERY WEEK

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

[mcfarlanducc.org](https://mcfarlanducc.org)



**SUNDAY Morning, 10 am Zoom Worship**

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



**SUNDAY Morning, 12 noon 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, October 31st at  
10:00 a.m.***

***Sunday morning worship  
inside our church  
sanctuary***



***It's Halloween!! Feel free to wear your costume to church!!***

***See the information below regarding our COVID-19 precautions and how that will impact our indoor worship. Zoom will ALWAYS be an option as***

***well.***

***Again, apologies that the zoom church experience was not very good last week because of poor audio especially. Please try again this week--we've been working hard to make it significantly better. We are consulting with some AV professionals and will be keep doing our best to make zoom a pleasant and inspiring experience. Thanks for your patience as we figure out how to make this all work as well as possible into the future.***



**"Let There Be Light" Solar Energy Campaign Update:**

**We've Met Our Goal!!**

**How fantastic is this?!! Way to go everyone!**

We raised \$218.45 on Sunday, October 24th from our noisy offering, which brought the total raised as of 10/24 to \$16,193.55. That meant we only needed \$241.45 to reach our goal by 11/15.

Our treasurer Joan Jacobsen just informed us that we took in an additional \$400 in donations to the campaign this week, so we've met our campaign goal and then some!!

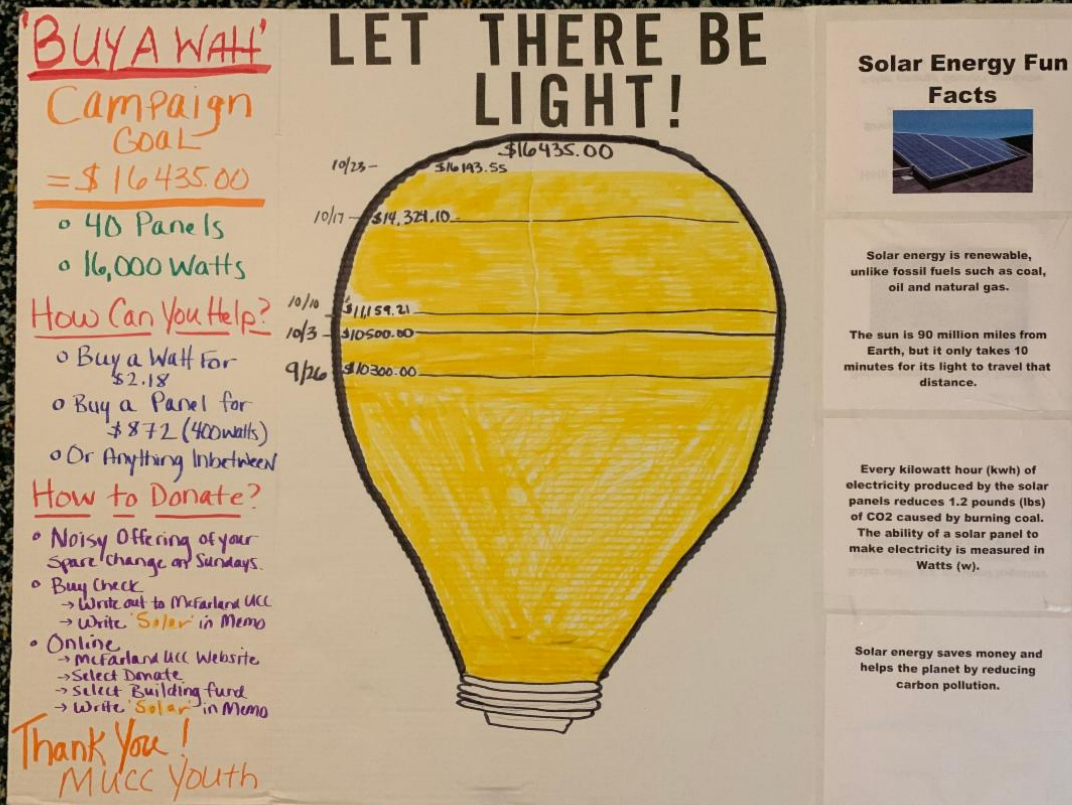
**BUT we'll still have one more "Noisy Offering" during church this coming Sunday, so BRING YOUR COINS if you have them!**

Instead of this offering being for our solar panels,



**we'll send this week's noisy offering total to UNICEF, which is something we've done annually at Halloween for a while.**

**Note:** the Lightbulb photo below was done before we realize we'd met our goal. Thanks so much to Heather Blackmore and Gwen and Claire for these weekly updates!



## **COVID-19 Precautions For Indoor Worship At McFarland UCC**

**Indoor Worship Begins Sunday, October 24<sup>th</sup>, 2021**

After a good deal of research and conversation, our congregation's Servant and Leadership Team (SaLT) has approved the following policy as we begin worshiping inside once again. We agreed to state our policy as simply as possible, to honor the science to the best of our ability, and to make all potential errors on the side of being "overly cautious" regarding the safety and wellbeing of all persons gathering, and

especially of those most vulnerable to the virus.

Please know that your suggestions and input are always welcome as we move forward, and that if you are not comfortable complying with the following procedures you can always join us for worship via zoom. We will gladly relax our policies over time if and when the science suggests it is wise to do so.

It will be wonderful to be in our beautiful church sanctuary once again, and thank you so much for honoring these precautions as we find our way back inside.

Pastor Bryan Sirchio and SaLT

**1. Vaccination Status:** We strongly encourage those who want to be inside the building for worship to be fully vaccinated. We are not going to ask people if they are vaccinated or not, but it is our preference that persons worshipping inside the building be vaccinated if possible.

**2. Masks are required:** We are asking everyone to make this easy by joyfully agreeing to come to indoor worship masked and not to ask for an exception. Regardless of our personal individual preferences and comfort level with wearing masks, we will require masks as an expression of loving concern for each other and especially for the children among us who are not yet able to be vaccinated.

**3. There will be no singing.** This is the one area where there is the greatest difference of opinion regarding how to best interpret the science at this point. We are going to start indoor worship with no singing at all and err on the side of caution. Once we feel the science is clear that singing is safe we will be eager to change this policy.

**4. Social distancing:** We will have ushers present to help you as you enter the sanctuary to find seats for yourself and those with you. We will provide sheets of colored paper to put on the chairs on both sides of a family or group. These chairs will remain empty. We have increased the distance between the rows of chairs. As we have during outdoor worship, we will not pass an offering plate or engage in liturgical moments that encourage touching other people. During times of announcements or prayer or other occasions for persons in the congregation to speak into a microphone, a wireless microphone will be brought to you by a designated individual who will hold the mic for you to speak into and thus avoid many different people touching and passing a microphone.

**5. Regarding Children:** We are well aware that children are not yet vaccinated and we want to do everything possible to keep them safe. For this reason we will not have children gather at the “kids table” as we have in the past and we suggest that children stay with their families. There will be paper and markers available for them to draw and color if they like. In accordance with our county guidelines we are asking that children over the



age of 2 wear masks.

**6. Post Worship Fellowship:** We will encourage people to leave the building immediately after worship and to visit outside if they would like to, but we will not linger after worship inside for fellowship.

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**Thursday, November 4th at 6:00 p.m. Monthly SaLT meeting** <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89964489555>

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## Upcoming Events



**Sunday, November 7th**  
**Both Younger Youth and**  
**Teen Youth Will meet!**

**Younger Youth Meeting**  
**3:30-4:30 p.m. (12 and**  
**under)** We'll meet outside and play

some games, hear a bible story, enjoy some snacks and maybe roast some marshmallows. **Pastor Bryan will be in touch with parents with more details, including some responses received this past week about timing preferences, etc. Thanks for those!**

**Teen Youth Meeting: 4:30-6:30 p.m.** Hopefully the youth from Lake Edge will join us again and we'll have a meeting similar to what we did last time--play some games, have some pizza, talk a bit. It's going to get dark early and be colder so we'll have a fire in the pit and be able to stay warm around it. More info to come but please save the date in any case!

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### **A Few Words From Pastor Bryan**

The photo you see here was taken today (10/29/21) at an Interfaith event sponsored by a



number of Madison area faith communities who are committed to justice for immigrants. Particularly, today's vigil was a call for a safe path to citizenship for the immigrants who are already here in the U.S. The event took

place at Orchard Ridge UCC in Madison.

We listened to some area clergy speak, and they all did a great job. But there was one young woman from Mexico who told the story of her father being arrested at their home here in Wisconsin and imprisoned when she was 16. The trauma she and her family experienced was horrific, violent, completely unnecessary, and all too common. Thankfully, her father was eventually released and has become a U.S. citizen. He is among the fortunate few.

As I listened today, I was reminded of one of the phrases from the Hebrew Scriptures that often haunts me. Proverbs 31:8-10 says,

*"Speak out on behalf of the voiceless, and for the rights of all who are vulnerable. Speak out in order to judge with righteousness and to defend the needy and the poor."*

I must say that I sometimes struggle a bit with the way that verse is worded, because I think that everyone has a voice. It's just that some are so hard to hear. As a Haitian proverb says, "No one listens to the cry of the poor, or the sound of a wooden bell."

Let's face it, it's so easy to not hear the voices of those most vulnerable among us. We all get wrapped up in our own lives and struggles. There's only so much we can take in. I'm certainly no different. It was a gift to me to be asked to participate in today's vigil, because the simple truth is that it's been a while since I've given much thought or energy to the whole issue of a clear and dignified path to citizenship for immigrants who are with us, but who have no legal status. I had forgotten just how vulnerable and invisible these "neighbors" of ours are.

Evidently just yesterday, in response to the constant efforts and calls for justice from immigrant justice groups throughout the country, President Biden announced that 100 billion dollars of the "Build Back Better" budget will go toward providing a road to citizenship for families like those I heard about today. It is way past time.. Let's just hope and pray that this winds up being more than an empty promise or some kind of political posturing. The "Dreamers" have been given empty promises for way too long.

I know that none of us can passionately embrace every issue of justice that confronts us. As you've heard me say more than once, our calling as individuals and as a congregation is to discern what little piece of God's dream for the world is ours to carry. I'm glad and grateful for our congregation's growing NION ministry, and for all those who are giving time and energy to the causes of immigration. Today, I was humbled by the magnitude of the suffering that families who live in hiding and fear must endure, and I was grateful for the relentless advocacy of some of the faith communities and organizations represented at the vigil. Their efforts are making a difference, and today's event rekindled my own awareness and commitment.

I was asked to sing a song to close the event today. I wrote a couple of verses to a well known folk song often sung in Central and South America, and then we sang the old Pete Seeger song, "We Shall Not Be Moved." Here are the verses I wrote for today;

*Some call me stranger, here in this strange land  
I've left behind me my home and kin  
Please hear my story, I share it with you  
We are one family, in the Holy One  
And when you see me, please look deeply  
Beyond my need now--see the gifts I bring  
We all need healing, right now I'm reeling  
But God's revealing what we all need*

*We all need welcome, we all need refuge  
And sanctuary when we're on the run  
We need safe places, when we're in danger  
We all need shelter from the desert sun  
So when you see me, please look deeply  
We're all connected in the Love Divine  
My situation, here in this nation  
Your liberation is bound with mine*



Let's continue to use our voices on behalf of those who are often so hard to hear.

With gratitude to and for you all,

Pastor Bryan

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