

United Messenger



January 2026

Ponderings from the Pastor's Pen

It is snowing this afternoon as I write this message to you—big, wet, fluffy flakes floating down and sticking to every branch of the massive maple tree out my window. Somehow, the wintry scene outside seems like a fitting metaphor for this week in between Christmas Day and New Year's Day—a week of floating and freefall as the world is made new. We've already leapt from—and left behind—the frenzy that culminated in Christmas Day and we haven't yet landed in the fervent resolutions or the fresh new reality of the coming year. For this brief window of time we simply float. Whatever holiday tasks may have been on our to-do list in the past few weeks, they are either done now or simply aren't going to happen in this season after all. There is no more striving. No more hustle. For these few brief moments we can simply settle into the stillness.

Just a couple days before Christmas, I was in a video conference with a group of ecumenical colleagues when a Lutheran bishop asked us what were most looking forward to that week. Several of us shared specific traditions in our churches like worshiping by candlelight on Christmas Eve but most admitted that the day *after* Christmas is what we most look forward to—when the tree is still trimmed and the lights are still twinkling but the main tasks and activities are all behind us. I, too, enjoy the solitude and peace that comes *after* Christmas. Today's snowfall simply deepens that sense of stillness and peace as the whole world around us grows quiet under this fresh new blanket of snow.

By the time you read this message, the snow will

likely be done falling but I hope you can still find a few moments of stillness and peace just the same. May you be filled with the goodness of God as you face the year ahead with determination. May your faith be made new just as our landscape has been made new in the bright, sparkling snow.

I look forward to seeing you soon as we worship and serve together in 2026!

In God's love,
Pastor Wendy



*He will cover you with
His feathers
and under His wings
you will find refuge.*

Psalm 91:4

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Circuit Meeting to Be Held on January 25

All members and friends of the United Methodist churches in Menomonie and surrounding areas (Elmwood, Rock Elm, Knapp, Tainter, Colfax, Wheeler, Boyceville, Prairie Farm, Downing, Glenwood City, Elk Mound, and Iron Creek) are cordially invited to our next circuit mission day on Sunday, January 25 from 1-3 pm at Menomonie UMC! Rev. Jean Waldron, a newly retired United Methodist pastor, will be with us to share stories and photos from her recent mission trips to India over the past few years. We'll even have some Chicken Tikka Masala (a delicious but spicy Indian dish) available for you to try if you'd like, along with some other snacks and refreshments.

Additionally, all churches will bring the sleeping mats they completed in last summer's mat weaving challenge and we'll take a group photo with our completed mats to celebrate our successful effort before the finished mats are sent in the next shipment to the Midwest Mission Distribution Center. Please join us for a fun afternoon of learning, cultural experience, and celebration with our fellow United Methodist friends!

Financial Footnotes

"Out with the old and in with the new" is how the old saying goes but I am not quite ready to live by that motto. There are things I had hoped to accomplish in 2025 but never quite got to it. So now I look forward to 2026 and the new opportunities that might present themselves. As we wrap up the church books for another year we have so much to be thankful for. The gifts that you shared with the Menomonie United Methodist Church were so appreciated. We were able to pay our share of the apportionments totaling \$44544. All your gifts that were designated for Advance Specials were sent off to various missions and organizations. Native American Sunday, Peace with Justice Sunday and World Communion Sunday received \$550.00. Rooted and Rising (UM Children's Service), International Disaster Relief-Gaza, Ludhiana Christian Medical College and Hospital, McCurdy Ministries Community Center, Heifer Project International, Migration and Refugees and missionary Nkemba Ndjungu received funds totaling \$8450. Closer to home Grace Bridge Korean UMC, Stepping Stones, Jonah and AbleLight received \$9000. Now as we turn our eyes to 2026 I am excited to see the direction our church goes in the new year. Stay tuned! Please do not hesitate to give a shout out if you have any questions or concerns.

Lynn Klatt
finance@menomonieumc.org

January 2026 Stewardship Newsletter

More Than a Resolution: Practicing Faithful Stewardship for the Long Haul

Every January, many of us start the year with good intentions. We resolve to spend less, save more, pay down debt, or finally feel less anxious about money. Some of those resolutions stick for a while. Many don't. And it's not because we lack discipline or desire.

The truth is that healthy financial stewardship is rarely achieved through willpower alone. Getting out of debt, learning to save, practicing contentment, growing in generosity, and cultivating gratitude are not quick fixes. They are habits – formed slowly, intentionally, and often imperfectly over time. Like prayer, worship, and service, faithful stewardship is a spiritual practice that shapes us as disciples.

Scripture reminds us that transformation is ongoing work. Paul writes, "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds" (Romans 12:2). That kind of renewal does not happen because the calendar flips from December to January. It happens when we acknowledge that our relationship with money, possessions, and generosity is deeply spiritual – and that God's work in us unfolds over a lifetime. For some, this might mean seeking help to escape cycles of debt. For others, it may mean learning to live with enough, resisting the pressure to accumulate more. For still others, it might be discovering the joy of generosity - not just financial giving, but generosity of time, skills, hospitality, and compassion.

As individuals and as churches, the invitation at the start of a new year is not simply to make resolutions, but to recommit ourselves to practices that help us grow in trust, gratitude, and faithfulness. Stewardship is not about perfection. It's about progress – taken one faithful step at a time.



January

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1 Happy New Year!	2 Sarah Z. 9:30-11 at church	3 GriefShare 1-3 pm Fireside
4 Blood Pressure Checks	5 Monday Meal 5-6 pm	6	7 Youth Group & Confirmation 6:30-8	8	9 Sarah Z. 9:30-11 at church	10 GriefShare 1-3 pm Fireside
11 Messy Church 10:30-Noon	12 Monday Meal 5-6 pm Mom's Group 6-7 pm	13	14 Foot & Nail Clinic 9-3 pm Youth Group 6:30-8	15 It Takes a Village 6:30-7:30 Prayer Shawl 4-6 pm	16 Sarah Z. 9:30-11 at church	17 GriefShare 1-3 pm Fireside
18 Potluck 10 am	19 Monday Meal 5-6 pm	20	21 Youth Group 6:30-8	22	23 Cupcakes & Cards with Sarah Z. 9:30-11	24 GriefShare 1-3 pm Fireside
25	26 Monday Meal 5-6 pm	27 Grief Group 6-7:30	28 Youth serving Wed. Table	29	30 Sarah Z. 9:30-11 at church	31 GriefShare 1-3 pm Fireside

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ALB Potluck Brunch

3rd Sunday of the Month
starting January 18, 2026
10:00 am

Brought by whoever can!
All are welcome!
For information contact
Janet Manette at 715-505-6748
or jmanette@htomaol.com



2703 Bongey Dr.,
Menomonie, WI
715-235-0654



Free Blood Pressure Screening

First Sunday
of the month after
Worship Service

SAVE THE DATE



American Red Cross

Together, we can save a life

Blood Drive

Monday, February 23

12:00-6:00 pm

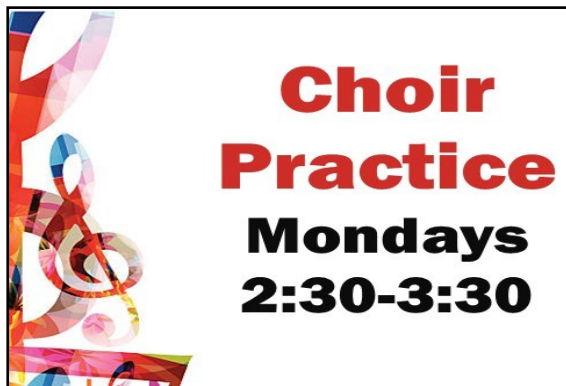
Menomonie United Methodist Church

2703 Bongey Drive

To donate go to redcrossblood.org,
enter 54751 or call 1-800-733-2767

Rapid Pass is available.

Many time slots available!



Cards & Cupcakes

Friday, January 23

9:30-11:30

Craft 5 fabulous cards:

A Valentine trio card kit

and 2 bonus cards.

All material supplied.

Cost: \$6.00 • 6 spots available

Reserve one of the six available spots.

Contact Sarah Zarbock
at zarbocks@gmail.com or 715-308-1698

Join us in the fun!



2703 Bongey Dr.,
Menomonie, WI
715-235-0654

*Joy to the world,
the Lord has come!*

As 2025 comes to a close, what are your prayers and hopes for 2026?

Prayer, a spiritual discipline, has been around for centuries. It is one of the earliest forms of anxiety reduction.

Here are some ways you can use prayer in your life.

Praise & Thanks: Thank God for the day, God's love, and blessings.

Guidance: Ask God for wisdom, discernment, and direction of decisions.

Protection: Pray for safety and goodness, not evil to abound.

Provision: Ask for daily needs to be met.

Relationships: Pray for your family, friends, and love for community and world.

Spiritual Growth: Ask for strength, grace, and to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

There are many other ways to pray, along with just being in silence.

May your 2026 be filled with many times of prayer, along blessings and joy!

Happy New Year,
Sarah Zarbock Parish Nurse

*1st Thessalonians says rejoice always,
Pray constantly, give thanks in all circumstances;
for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.*

Wanted Choir Director

GENERAL DESCRIPTION: The choir shall be a blend of traditional and contemporary music. The Choir Director is responsible for coordinating the music program for the Chancel choir. The Choir Director is supervised by the Pastor who reports to the Staff-Parish representatives on the Accountable Leadership Board. The Choir Director works with the Pastor in planning music for worship services. The selected candidate must pass a confidential background check. The Menomonie UMC is a relaxed and welcoming community with three gifted pianists and a dedicated, experienced choir. We have vibrant faith formation programs for preschoolers through adults, including opportunities for intergenerational ministry.

DUTIES:

- Must have good musical skills, knowledge of different styles of singing and be able to work with a variety of voices.
- Selecting appropriate music for the choir to perform, considering the abilities of the choir members and the occasion
- Leads weekly choir rehearsals (September through May), helping members improve their vocal technique and musical skills
- Directs the Chancel Choir for Sunday (September thru May) one to two Sundays per month, and other services, as requested
- Plans and directs one Cantata each year if possible (Christmas and/or Easter)
- Conducts the choir during performances to guide tempo, dynamics, and overall interpretation of the music
- Order music and other materials, keeping within the budget assigned
- Maintenance of the musical library (filing)
- Assists in preparing the music ministry budget when requested.
- Communicating effectively with choir members, accompanists, Pastor and other relevant parties
- Ensuring the choir adheres to any relevant rules or codes of conduct
- Collaborating with other musical directors or musicians for special performances and Summer Services when available
- Communicate with the Administrative Assistant on music to be used before the bulletin is printed.
- Notifies choir members and the Pastor two weeks in advance for any planned absences.
- Communicates with the custodian on music schedule and needs for practice and services.
- Ensures the building is secured after rehearsals.

SALARY AND BENEFITS:

Salary: \$3150 to be reviewed and set annually on a calendar year basis. (Anticipated hours: approximately

190/year, or 4-5 hours per week, September through May).

Social Security: As per FICA regulations.

Mileage reimbursement at the IRS standard business mileage rate

TERMINATION: Termination of services by the Coordinator or church shall require 30 days notice.



Foot & Nail Clinic

Toenail trimming and thinning (if needed), callous care.
Provided by RN, Foot Care Specialist
Jacki Bruchert

2nd Wednesday of the month
January 14
(no meeting in December)
9:00 am-3:00 pm
\$40 for 45 min. appt.
\$50 for 60 min. (if needed)
Please contact Jackie 2 days before to schedule appointment call or text
715-529-5637

Everyone Welcome!

Grief Share

"A Journey from Mourning to Joy"
Time to process your grief
in a group with faith setting.

Saturdays,
January 3 thru March 28
1:00-3:00 pm • Fireside Room

Freewill donation.
Please register through the Grief Share website at
griefshare.org by January 2, 2026
or contact Sarah Zarbock
at 715-308-1698 or zarbocks@gmail.com

Open to Everyone



Sarah Zarbock,
our Parish Nurse
to be in office most
Fridays from
9:30 -11:30 am
In the conference room

Feel free to
stop by to
meet or visit
with any
health or
faith
concerns



United Messenger

January 2026

Pastor: Wendy Slaback
Phone: 715-235-0654
Email: pastor@menomonieumc.org
www.menomonieumc.org



Office Hours

Monday, Wednesday and Thursday 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM

Service Schedule

9:00 a.m. Sunday Worship Service followed by a fellowship hour

10:30 a.m. Sunday Study



January
HELLO

2703 Bongey Drive
Menomonie, WI 54751
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
Menomonie