



THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

July 2017

Serving since 1859!

Wisconsin Rapids, WI

Just Joshin'

I've used this newsletter article over the last two months to help inform you and to help you think about the society we live in today as it relates to church attendance. The issue of people not attending church isn't simply a Christian versus non-Christian debate anymore as those who consider themselves Christians are attending less frequently. We also took a brief look at some ways to address this issue and how to relate/connect with these people.

This month, I want to keep this article much shorter (the last 2 months have been very long, I know), but hopefully as helpful with some more information about our culture today. Again, we're going over this because if we don't know what we're facing then we won't know how to address it. We need new wineskins for the new wine as Jesus taught.

Here are some trademarks of the "churchless" or "nones" crowd in our culture today (stats and figures come from Barna Group research as well as Pastor Carey Nieuwhof):

- Two decades ago, only 1 in 8 people had never been to church in America, and that's since doubled to 1 in every 4. We now have a large percentage of people who have no muscle memory of regularly going to church or being part of a Christian community.

- About half of Millennials are considered to be post-Christian, which means one isn't defined by a measurable orientation around the Christian faith. These first two points tell us that many people we might connect with have no idea what goes on inside a church and what church is about. This

means we can't assume that they know what they're doing when they come or that they're ready and willing to serve right away. Our focus at Wisconsin Rapids UMC is to help folks come to know God's LOVE, GROW in our love of and faith in God, and then GO show the love of God to others. For some, this means that they'll have to grow in their faith a bit before they're willing to serve. Everybody will be different.

- Even if this is the case, most young adults are still interested in spiritual things and are looking for answers to life questions; they're just not looking for the formulaic answers that too many Christians have been trained to give. These answers can seem too rehearsed and too "be like everybody else" which scares some away. There's a call for a genuineness and a realness that lets new Christians know that this faith is relevant in their lives.

- When there's no recognizable contrast between the church and the world, Millennials ask what you're calling people into other than a more committed relationship with Jesus? If the people of a church community don't seem any different than anybody else, why join up? Does the challenge from Scripture ring true for those people that make up Wisconsin Rapids UMC — they will know you are Christians by your love for one another?

- We must focus as much (if not more) on sending people out as we do bringing people in. People must be equipped to integrate their faith with everyday life and not just for the times when they're "helping out the church."

- The people that currently make up the local church must keep active in cultivating their own souls. Jesus asks us, what profit is it if a person gains the whole world but loses his soul? Let's not

lose track of the fact that our faith development and growth as a disciple of Jesus is a never ending journey. If we can't get excited about what God is doing in our lives, why would anybody want to join us?

What do you think Wisconsin Rapids UMC needs to change to be ready to better connect with the world around us? What has to change within the people that make up this church? What might have to change with some of the programs or structures at Wisconsin Rapids UMC to better reach out and serve our community?

God's Blessings,

Pastor Josh

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL
Kids Join Us at First English Lutheran
Church 440 Garfield Street Wisconsin
Rapids along with United Methodist Church
of Port Edwards for:



BarnyardRoundup:
Jesus Gathers Us Together

Songs, Skits, Crafts and Games
July 16th - 20th
Sack Suppers at 4:45 pm
VBS at 5:30 pm - 8:15 pm
All Are Welcome!
Bring a Friend!

UW Extension Wood County Master Gardeners
18th Annual Garden Walk
Saturday, July 8th, 2017
9:30 am until 3:30 pm (Rain or Shine)

Tickets are \$10.00

For additional information contact:
UW Extension at 715-421-8440



My first memory of the Wisconsin Rapids UMC was when Katie and I were trying to figure out where the front entrance might be. Later we learned that what we thought was a service entrance was the front entrance.

Another of my not-so-favorite comments about the front entrance came from a man who does business with the Lutheran Church across the street. He made the comment that he didn't realize the building was still in use. This comment stemmed from simply observing our front drive and front entrance.

As I was writing this note, a service man arrived trying to figure out which entrance to come in. Unfortunately, this happens too often. When people (funeral planning visits, mostly) come to meet with me, finding the front entrance has been confusing.

It's time for a new front entrance. A space where people will know this is the front. A space where people will feel comfortable entering. A space where people won't look at it and think this is an abandoned building. Also, we need a front entrance where people can easily get in and out of and not have to worry about tripping over the broken concrete.

We've had 9 people step forward to generously donate the monies needed for a new front entrance. Many may have already noticed the new fence around the electric junction box. The rest of the front entrance will be scheduled to be redone sometime mid-July to mid-August.

The second part of this project is something that had been discussed before I arrived, and that is the front drive. The trustees will be discussing bids and designs for the front drive. They will report to the congregation what they have decided when plans are finalized.

By completing both the front entrance and the front drive, we hope to present an attractive and welcoming space for those stopping by the church. We hope to have a space where folks can enter the building safely (no cracks, rough ground to traverse), where there can be a couple handicap spots close to the office door, and where there can be extra parking for midweek events.

To jumpstart this project, we've been given an anonymous matching gift of up to \$10,000. Every dollar we contribute up to \$10,000 will be matched by this generous gift. Leading up to the Trustees decision, would you prayerfully consider giving to this project that will help Wisconsin Rapids UMC update its front drive in order to be more welcoming and helpful to our guests and members?

Blessings,

Pastor Josh

United Methodist Women



The calendar has caught up to the weather – welcome to Summer! We began the UMW summer with a great picnic at Julie and Mike Dresen's house. Thank you again for hosting a great party! A big thank you to Barb and Fred Kronenberg for the entertainment as well as the interesting discussion on violin making. Again, we never know all the talents of our friends. Next year I think everyone should bring their recipes for their dishes – those that weren't able to attend missed out on some very good food!

A reminder to those in the reading program – your sheet with the books read has to be in by the end of July. For those that aren't in the reading program, please feel free to check out the books in our library, the public library or borrow from our members and enjoy the good reading there is to have. A good summer memory is sitting in the summer breeze under a tree reading – kick back and enjoy!

You still have until the end of June to sign up for the 4-day Mission U and the 1 day drive in Mission U. Please consider attending one of them. The dates again are July 24-27 for the 4-day and then a one day overview is July 28th. The registration sheet will be on the bulletin board by the lounge.

On Tuesday, July 25th our church will be host for the evening program. Please feel free to come and enjoy the evening's program.

A gentle reminder, please send in your annual pledge. You can do it in installments which is always an easier option and allows you to give when your budget allows. Just remember how change adds up for the noisy coin collection!

Looking forward, our next meeting is on September 10, 2017 at 10:30 am, our guest will be from the United Way agency. Please plan on attending.

Please join in the activities - you will enjoy great fellowship!

Blessings,
Cindy



Stuff the School Bus will be asking local businesses and individuals to collect/donate school supplies from July 10 – August 3, 2017. School supplies must be dropped off at the Stuff the School Bus drive on August 3rd during Lunch by the River at Veteran's Memorial Park (11:30am – 1:00pm); or in the case of rain, at Witter Field.

Stuff the School Bus is a community collaborative effort to collect and distribute school supplies to students in need. All families who are in financial need are eligible. For more information, please contact United Way's 2-1-1.

Every year, the Stuff the School Bus/Stuff the Desk Committee asks the community to stuff a school bus with donations of school supplies. The event is held during Lunch by the River. Later, the donated school supplies are distributed to local students in need during the Stuff the Desk event. All families who are in financial need are eligible.



Bethesda Thrift Shop:

In July we will have yellow-tagged clothing & shoe sales and various other sales on items that we have an abundance. We thank you all for your continued support and ask that you invite others to shop at Bethesda. The store will be closed July 4.



Mission Needs



Noisy Collection

Sunday, July 9, 2017
for Jennifer and Paul Webster
at Mujila Falls Agriculture
Centre



SWEPS Essential Pantry Sunday July 16, 2017

SAVE THE DATE

On Thursday, July 13 Paul Webster will visit us. His program will feature his missionary work in Zambia, Africa at the Mujila Falls Agriculture Center. This mission is one that truly demonstrates the idea of "give a man a fish and he will eat for a day, but show a man how to fish and he will eat for life." Paul Webster is originally from Wisconsin and shared his mission work with us before. I promise you a good lunch and an uplifting program. Please RSVP to Jean Michaels or the church office by July 6. Also, I will appreciate assistance with the lunch. Please talk to or call Jean Michaels (715-423-5528). **THANK YOU!**



MEN'S GROUP



Meet
for
Breakfast

All men are
invited July 5,
2017 at 8:00 am

**HAPPY
BIRTHDAY**

July

2-Marcia Wright
2-Trevor Sloat
4-Hi Young Hong
5-Don Whitley
5-Bill Spaulding
5-Wendy Boettcher
7-Libby Correll
8-Aida Harper
9-Mackenzie Schulz
9-Kaden Hicks
15-Stephanie Fletcher
17-Mike Dresen
19-Valerie Nordin
21-Cathy McNett
23-Brian Michaels
25-Jeff Anhalt
26-Cody Russell
27-Jean Michaels
28-Barb Moon
29-Jennifer Bartram

*Happy
Anniversary*

9-Vic and Barb Moon
9-Narman and Auril Harding
10-Scott and Judy Skinner
16-Keith and Janet Hansen
23-Garold and Evelyn Lampman
28-Steven and Susan Andrews
30-Brad and Stacey Russell

If we have omitted your birthday or anniversary or have it listed on the wrong date, please let us know so we can make the necessary corrections to our records.

Prayer Calendar July

- 1—Ethel Hetzel
- 2—Hi Young & Im Hong
- 3—Delores Hudak
- 4—Kevin, Tami, Riley & Owen Huiras
- 5—Bob, Pam & Danielle Ironside
- 6—Hubert & Betty Johnson
- 7—Bill & Mandy Jungwirth
- 8—Helen Jungwirth
- 9—Shirley Klapperich
- 10—Fred & Barb Kronenberg
- 11—Darwin Lamb
- 12—Garold & Evelyn Lampman
- 13—Stanley & Myrna Langowski
- 14—Eloise Larsen
- 15—Bob & Carol Liska
- 16—Chris Maguire
- 17—Carole Manz
- 18—Christopher Marshaus
- 19—Bob & Wanda McIlvain
- 20—Cathy McNett
- 21—Jack & Carol Metzger
- 22—Brian Michaels
- 23—Jean Michaels
- 24—Daniel Michalak
- 25—Vic & Barb Moon
- 26—George Neumann
- 27—Marty & Terry Nolet
- 28—Nathalie Noonan
- 29—Valerie Nordin
- 30—Ashley, Kolt, Walker & Easton O'Keefe
- 31—Nancy Olson

Have a prayer request? Call the prayer chain:

Daytime: (9:00 a.m. — 6:00 p.m.)

Lynn Swanson — **715-423-4407**

Evenings: (6:00 p.m. — 9:00 p.m.)

Kathy Duerkop — **715-421-3396**



For encouragement,
call the prayer phone:
715-423-1323

Prayer Coordinator

Our scripture for today is: *Jeremiah 17:7*
*Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord,
whose confidence is in him.*

Is your confidence in the Lord? Do you trust him? There are times when I ask myself these questions. What does it mean to trust in and have confidence in our Lord? I believe it means giving all our fears and troubles to him. But do I? Do we? I am good at giving them to him, but even better at taking them back and worrying. That is where trust comes in. We must remember that God waits to carry all that we fear and all that troubles us. And remember, he will carry us, too, if necessary. These words bring to my mind the picture of Jesus' footprints in the sand. He is always there to carry us. He does love us more than we can ever imagine.

Life is full of challenges and things we fear but as I have said above, God is with us every minute of every day. I want to be blessed by God. I want to trust and have confidence in God. So today I am challenging myself and you to let God be God and carry our troubles for us. If you find yourself worrying, stop and give your fears back to God. Then stop and remember the joys in your life and thank God for them. Do not let your fears take over, concentrate on your blessings with thanks in your heart. God loves you and cares for you.

Let us pray: Lord God, we know you are with us each day. Bless us as we trust in you and surrender all our fears to you. We love you, Lord. In Jesus Name, Amen



July 4

OFFICE CLOSED

July 5

8:00 am - Men's Breakfast
9:00 am - CLF Bible Study
10:30 am - Disciplines

July 10

5:00 pm - Trustees

July 11

10:00 am - Bible Study
6:00 pm - Bible Study

July 12

10:30 am - Disciplines

July 13

12:00 pm - Paul Webster lunch and program

July 17

6:00 pm - Finance
6:30 pm - Council

July 18

10:00 am - Bible Study
3:00 pm to 4:15 pm - UW Extension
6:00 pm - Bible Study

July 19

9:00 am - CLF Bible Study
10:30 am - Disciplines

July 25

10:00 am - Bible Study
6:00 pm - Bible Study
6:00 pm to 7:00 pm UMW Mission U

June 26

10:30 am - Disciplines
10:00 am to 5:00 pm - Mobile Food Pantry



**August
Newsletter**
**Articles are due in the
church office Monday
July 17, 2017**

Church Office Hours

The church office is open Monday through
Thursday from 8:00 a.m. — 12:00 p.m.
and closed on Fridays.

Pastor Joshua's Office Hours

Monday through Thursday
8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

E-mail Addresses

Church Office: umc@wctc.net
Pastor Joshua: Joshua.pegam3@gmail.com

Church Office Phone

715-423-8860

Pastor Joshua's Phone No.

Cell: 920-896-3976

Sunday Services

9:00 a.m. — UMC Worship Service
10:00 a.m. — Coffee Fellowship

The Neighborhood Table

The last two Tuesdays of the month: 4:30 p.m.
Every Thursday: 4:30 p.m.

Narcotics Anonymous

Meets each day of the week as follows:
Monday 11:30 a.m.
Tuesday 7:00 p.m.
Wednesday 7:00 p.m.
Thursday 7:00 p.m.

Nar-Anon

Every Thursday: 6:30 p.m.

Wisdom Seekers

Every Thursday: 9:30 a.m.

Gamblers Anonymous

Every Thursday: 7:00 p.m.

• **Honor the gift of freedom** — “For freedom Christ has set us free ... do not submit again to a yoke of slavery” (Galatians 5:1, ESV). We strive as citizens to preserve and live out our national freedom. Likewise, as citizens of God's kingdom we live gladly in the freedom of salvation and share that gift with others.