



December 2024
the VINE

Dear Grand Avenue Church Family and Friends,

I hope everyone had a wonderful Thanksgiving. Now with Thanksgiving behind us, we are set to embark on the season of Advent. Advent begins four Sundays before Christmas and is intended to be a period of spiritual preparation leading up to Christmas Day. Today the Advent Season is more commonly referred to as the Christmas Season.

The Christmas Season is by far our most revered holiday of the year and it is impossible to escape the importance placed upon it in our country. The images of Christmas are everywhere. Our homes and streets are filled with colorful lights and Christmas decorations. Every store and business is promoting the season. There are numerous parades, events, and gatherings. We are constantly inundated with a steady stream of Christmas advertisements on our televisions and phones. No one can doubt that the days leading up to December 25th are dominated and focused on preparing for this celebration.

However, the Season that was originally instituted to provide a period of mindful spiritual reflection on the importance and significance of the birth and return of the Messiah has become increasingly centered on consumerism and not Christ. As I step back and analyze the modern Christmas/Advent Season, I am struck by how little focus is placed on Jesus. In fact, outside of our church communities and activities, there is virtually no mention of our Savior. How strange that a holiday that is so universally known and celebrated worldwide has almost no focus on the reason for its existence.

As we enter this Advent/Christmas Season let us reconnect with the reason for the season. Let our Lord's Word protect us from the bright, glittering lights of commercialism so that we won't be blinded to the true significance of Christmas and the need to pursue more meaningful preparation. Let us prayerfully center all of our preparations and celebrations on Jesus Christ and consciously seek to prepare our hearts to meet our Lord.

Isaiah 7:14, "Therefore the Lord Himself will give a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call His name Immanuel."

Galatians 4:4-5, "But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons."

John 1:14, "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen His glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth."

Your Brother in Christ,

Pastor Vince

CELEBRATE

December Birthdays

Lila Lentz	2	Mark Davis	21
Dan Benning	7	Michael Lueptow	21
Amelia Bastianello	9	Amanda Penkivech	21
Joyce Kirkendall	10	Ava Lentz	22
Henry Weltin	14	Mike Vernon	25
Emily Betker	16	Michael Lentz	26
Beth Davis	16	Barb Jones	27
Carol O'Mara	17		

December Anniversaries

Mark & Beth Breuer	16
Scott & Sue Penkivech	23
Gordon & Ardell Dionne	24
Dan & Lynn Benning	29
Mike & Geny Vernon	29

VOLUNTEERS

Thank you, Volunteers, for serving in our ministry!

<u>Date</u>	<u>Usher</u>	<u>Liturgist</u>	<u>Cupbearers</u>	<u>Coffee Host</u>	<u>AV</u>
12/1	Larry Maechtle	Nancy Haacke	Cathy/Rachel Guse	Cheryl Wozniak	Scott Penkivech
12/8	Larry Maechtle	Jan Young	n/a	Needed*	Scott Penkivech
12/15	Larry Maechtle	Cheryl Wozniak	n/a	Needed*	Scott Penkivech
12/22	Larry Maechtle	Ardelle Dionne	n/a	Mary Downing	Scott Penkivech
12/24	Larry Maechtle	Multiple	n/a	n/a	Scott Penkivech
12/29	Larry Maechtle	Mark Grams	n/a	Needed*	Scott Penkivech

*Please see sign-up sheet on the church bulletin board.

MUSIC MINISTRY



Hymn Suggestions for 2025



Do you have a favorite hymn you would like to hear during Sunday worship? If so, the music committee wants to hear about it and include in our services throughout the year. Simply fill out a "Favortie Hymns" form at the back of church and place in the box.

MISSIONS & OUTREACH



Non-Perishable Donation Needs

Pudding Snacks
Canned Fruit/Fruit Cups
Boxed Potatoes
Cranberry Sauce
Soup

Pasta
Cereal
Toilet Paper
Condensed milk
Canned yams



Gift A Child



Gift A Child is a program through The Food Pantry Inc. and provides Christmas gifts for children in Ozaukee County: something they want, something they need, something to wear, and something to read. A person may sponsor a child, a family, or a category. Gift A Child accepts monetary donations and donations of any new items.

In 2023, Gift A Child provided gifts for 168 children at the pantry. We were able to assist two Ozaukee County organizations, Advocates and Family Promise, with over 140 books, winter wear, and wrapping supplies for their Christmas programs.

Please contact Melissa, the Gift A Child coordinator, at (262) 235-0715 if you would like to make a donation or to sponsor a child.



Eliminating Hunger
...together

MISSIONS & OUTREACH, cont.



Meal Week Thank You

We served 11 adults and 8 children at the Family Promise Portlight Shelter during our meal week in November. **Thank you to Gwen and Ed Frier, Ann Schmidt, Sandy and Mark Grams with granddaughter Sydney, and Cheryl Wozniak for preparing and serving 3 of the meals.** Christ the King served the other 2 meals.

Shelter Donation

Thanks to the generous donations to the Family Promise Fund, we were able to deliver eight \$25 gas cards to the shelter in November to help guests with transportation costs.

Current Shelter Needs

Cold & Cough Medicine (Syrup, Drops, Pills, etc.)
Acetaminophen
Deodorant (Men & Women)
Bleach
Spray Bottles
Dryer Sheets
Pull Ups size T2
SOS Pads
Fabuloso Antibacterial Multi-Purpose Cleaner
Clorox Clean-Up
Facial Tissue
Shaving Cream (Men & Women)
Toilet Paper

[Portlight Shelter Amazon Wish List](#)

Giving Tree

Our Family Promise Giving Tree is up in the narthex. We are collecting read-a-loud picture books for the new Children's Library we recently set up at the shelter. Feel free to take a gift tag, purchase the book, and place the book and tag under the tree by December 15th.



Thank you for helping our neighbors in need!

MISSIONS & OUTREACH, cont.



We Need Your Help!

The Kids' Corner at the Portlight Shelter is complete with books and educational games and toys thanks to our grant from the Wisconsin United Methodist Foundation. Parents and staff report that the corner is getting lots of traction and the children are delighted with it. Now it's time to get the next phase of our Children's Library and Tutoring program rolling.



We currently have 8 children ages 2-14 in the shelter who would benefit from working with a caring adult. We have received requests that range from reading to or with children, arts and crafts, learning to cook, playing board games, help with homework, tutoring and more. We need your help to meet these needs! You can get involved in subjects and activities that you enjoy. It can be short term, just a few sessions, or something on-going. It's up to you.

You can sign up on the bulletin board at church or talk to Sandy or Cheryl to be added to our email group for information on our children and their interests. If there's a child with a need that captures your heart, we will get you connected and share the resources we have available to you. We are blessed to have the opportunity to serve these children and we hope you will join us.

FAITH GROUPS & ACTIVITIES



December Events

Sunday, December 8th from 6:30-8:00 pm - "Gift a Child" Christmas Shopping

We will be sponsoring 5 kids through the "Gift a Child" program with the Port Food Pantry. This program supports local families who may be struggling financially by helping to purchase Christmas gifts for their children. Join us as we go shopping to purchase these gifts for kids in need and help spread some Christmas cheer!



Sunday, December 15th from 6:30-8:00 pm - "Lighthouse Life" Night

Come join us for our last gathering in 2024 and enjoy a time of conversation, games, and some special Christmas fun!



Wishing you and your families a blessed and joy-filled Christmas as we celebrate the birth of our Savior!

See you in 2025!

- The Lighthouse Board



Lighthouse events are open to all students in grades 5-12 and, unless otherwise noted, take place at Lighthouse HQ (513 W. Grand Ave. in Port Washington).

Have questions about Lighthouse or want to get involved?

Contact Director Christin Flucke at 262-483-9582 or christin.flucke@lighthouseyouth.org

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Thank you to everyone that donated Silent Auction items to Lighthouse's Giving Tuesday Spaghetti Supper!

**FAITH GROUPS & ACTIVITIES, cont.**

*Giving Tuesday*  
**SPAGHETTI SUPPER**

**DECEMBER 3**  
5 pm to 7:30pm

at Parkside Community UCC  
166 W. Dekora St, Saukville



**HUGE SILENT AUCTION**

**MUSIC BY BELLA MUSIK**



**RAFFLE**  
2 CLUB LEVEL  
PACKER TICKETS

**DINE IN OR CARRY OUT**



**LIGHTHOUSE**  
YOUTH MINISTRY

**\$15**  
per person

**10 and**  
under free



## FAITH GROUPS & ACTIVITIES, cont.

### Coffee Hour Crew Gala

#### Sunday, December 15<sup>th</sup>, Memories Theater Christmas Lunch

For those of you already signed up for this outing, please be advised that Memories does not issue tickets. Just arrive on your own through their front door, advise them that you are with the Methodist group, and they will escort you directly to the correct table.

Lunch begins at 12:30 pm. The theater performance starts at 1:45 pm and concludes around 4 pm. Twenty-seven of us will be attending from Grand Ave. Church.

Sincere thanks to Bob and Jan Griesmeyer for allowing this wonderful event to happen free of charge to each of us. They extend thanks to the whole coffee hour crew for creating beautiful fellowship every Sunday morning.

Please advise Mary Downing if you need a ride to Memories from the church back parking lot. And if you signed up for this event earlier and now find a conflict with the date, please advise the church office immediately as there are a few people on a waiting list.

## CHURCH NEWS

### Weather Closings

With winter weather approaching, any church closings due to inclement weather will be posted on the following: FOX6 TV News Milwaukee, AM 920, Newstalk AM 1130 WISN, FM 95.7, FM 97.3, FM 100.7, and FM 106.1, [www.tmj4.com](http://www.tmj4.com), and our [Grand Avenue Church Facebook page](#).

### 2025 Liturgists Needed

We will be putting together our liturgist schedule for 2025 very soon. Volunteering as a liturgist connects our congregation and deepens our faith. Please let the office know if you are interested in being a liturgist in our worship services,

### Advent Worship Service at Christ the King

Christ the King and Living Hope Lutheran have invited GAUMC to their midweek Advent potluck and worship services:

- **December 11, at 5:30pm at Christ the King in Port Washington**, there will be a supper (potluck style with plenty of food for anyone who's available to come), then a worship service at 6:15.
- **December 18, at 5:30pm at Living Hope in Saukville**. Again, supper at 5:30 (menu will be pasta bake / lasagna) and worship at 6:15.

The services will use a musical setting called "Holden Evening Prayer" that's a favorite from previous years and Pastor Daniel Flucke will give a short message at each 30-45 minute service.





During this holiday season you can “purchase” love lights in memory or in honor of a loved one or someone who has inspired you in your life. The December 22<sup>nd</sup> and Christmas Eve bulletins will list for whom and from whom the love lights were given. Money received from love lights will go toward our conference mission apportionment.

We all have friends and relatives that have inspired us, so let’s have some fun remembering and honoring those dear to us in a meaningful and beautiful way during the holiday season with a Light of Love.

In honor of \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

and/or

In memory of \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Amount Enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_

Given by: \_\_\_\_\_

Please return this form with your cash or check payable to Grand Ave UMC by Sunday December 15<sup>th</sup>. You can place it in the offering box or mail it to the church office at 505 W. Grand Ave., Port Washington, WI 53074.





# United Methodist Corner

As we approach the Christmas season, I thought it might be helpful to look at John and Charles Wesley's view and understanding of Christmas. You might find it interesting that John never preached a Christmas sermon. He focused his writings and sermons on the grace and salvation that comes to us through the life, death, and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. John and Charles understanding of Christmas centered on the doctrine of the Incarnation and Jesus' teaching in John's Gospel that no one can enter of kingdom of heaven unless they have been born again or born from above.

Both the incarnation and second birth are cited in Charles Wesley's well-known Christmas carol, "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing." The doctrine of the incarnation is a central belief that God became human in the form of Jesus. In verse 2 we sing, "veiled in flesh the Godhead see; hail the incarnate Deity, pleased with us in flesh to dwell, Jesus our Emmanuel." The word Emmanuel, one of Jesus' names in Matthew means "God with us." God is fully with us in Jesus, saving us from our sins and placing us on path of his righteousness. The hope of Christmas is that we are not alone or deserted. God walks with us in Jesus.

In the third verse of Hark the Herald Angels Sing, we sing, "born to raise us from the earth, born to give us second birth". Being born anew in Christ is the work of the Holy Spirit in us. We cannot bring about this second birth any more than we were responsible for our births the first time. Some Christians would emphasize the need to be born again so that we be granted entry into heaven when we die. For Wesley, second birth was also about what the Spirit is beginning to do with us as we give our lives to Christ. The Spirit works to transform us into becoming more Christlike in our love and our discipleship. Christ said, "I have that you may have life (true life) and have it more abundantly (John 10:10).

One of the highlights for Wesley during the Christmas season is the Methodist Watchnight service that is usually held on December 31st. This Watchnight service emphasizes our commitment to renewing our covenant with Christ for the coming year. The service includes John's well-known Covenant Prayer which I will be examining in next month's column.

May you and your family experience the joy and deep meaning of this season.

In Christ's Love, Dave

# CALENDAR

## December Events

|                             |                                    |                   |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Worship Service             | Weekly Sunday at 10:00 am          | Sanctuary         |
| AA Meeting                  | Weekly Wednesday at 8:00 pm        | FAC               |
| Private Meeting             | Weekly Thursday at 5:30 pm         | FAC               |
| ADRC Meal Distribution      | Mon – Fri from 10:30 am – 12:30 pm | Kitchen           |
| Lighthouse Supper/Auction   | Tuesday, December 3, 5-8 pm        | Parkside Church   |
| Advent Study Group          | Friday, December 6, 11 am          | Fellowship Hall   |
| Advent Potluck & Worship    | Wednesday, December 11, 5:30 pm    | Christ the King   |
| Friendship Club             | Wednesday, December 11, 6:30 pm    | Fellowship Hall   |
| Advent Study Group          | Friday, December 13, 11 am         | Fellowship Hall   |
| Stockbox Distribution       | Tuesday, December 17 at 10:00 am   | FAC & Parking Lot |
| Advent Potluck & Worship    | Wednesday, December 18, 5:30 pm    | Living Hope       |
| Advent Study Group          | Friday, December 20, 11:00 am      | Fellowship Hall   |
| Newsletter Article Deadline | Friday, December 20                | Office            |
| Christmas Eve Service       | Tuesday, December 24, 7:00 pm      | Sanctuary         |
| Christmas Day               | Wednesday, December 25             | Office Closed     |

## GRAND AVENUE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

505 W Grand Ave Port Washington WI 53074 262-284-9478 [www.portumc.com](http://www.portumc.com)

|                           |                                                                 |                                                                    |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Pastor:                   | Vince Pepin                                                     | <a href="mailto:pastor@portumc.org">pastor@portumc.org</a>         |
| Pastoral Assistant:       | Dave Guse                                                       | <a href="mailto:senegaldave1@gmail.com">senegaldave1@gmail.com</a> |
| Administrative Assistant: | Stacy Peters                                                    | <a href="mailto:office@portumc.org">office@portumc.org</a>         |
| Lay Leader:               | Dan Benning                                                     | <a href="mailto:bennida01@att.net">bennida01@att.net</a>           |
| Council Chairperson:      | Mark Grams                                                      | <a href="mailto:mgrams@wi.rr.com">mgrams@wi.rr.com</a>             |
| SPRC Chairperson:         | Mary Kae Geittmann                                              | <a href="mailto:mkaeg214@gmail.com">mkaeg214@gmail.com</a>         |
| Bishop:                   | Dan Schwerin / District Superintendent: Rev. Dr. Ebenezer Insor |                                                                    |

Did you know you can help support our church through the fundraisers below?

- **Aluminum Can Collection** – Put your aluminum cans in the barrels at the back entrance into church and we'll recycle them for you.
- **Craft booth at Port's Artisan Market** – You can donate crafts, books, puzzles, or gently used quality items for us to sell at our church craft booth in downtown Port.
- **RaiseRight Scrip (Gift Card) Program** – You can order gift cards for businesses you already shop at and the church gets a donation. Forms are on the counter in the narthex or go to [www.raiseright.com](http://www.raiseright.com) and use our enrollment code of 45F776D958L66.



Open hearts. Open minds. Open doors.  
**The people of The United Methodist Church™**

# RaiseRight Scrip Fundraiser

*Each retailer makes a donation to the church for every gift card purchased.  
For a complete list of over 750 participating retailers, go to [www.raiseright.com](http://www.raiseright.com)*

Paper orders are due on the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of each month. Please remember to include your payment. Your gift cards will be ready for pick-up at church on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of the month. You can also order on-line at [www.raiseright.com](http://www.raiseright.com) using our church enrollment code of 45F776D958L66.

Questions? Contact Kay Hamann at 262-284-3168 or khamann530@yahoo.com

| RETAILER                    | QTY | TOTAL |
|-----------------------------|-----|-------|
| Amazon \$25                 |     |       |
| Amazon \$100                |     |       |
| Arby's \$10                 |     |       |
| AutoZone \$25               |     |       |
| Barnes & Noble \$10         |     |       |
| Barnes & Noble \$25         |     |       |
| Bath & Body Works \$10      |     |       |
| Bath & Body Works \$25      |     |       |
| Bed Bath & Beyond \$25      |     |       |
| BP \$50                     |     |       |
| BP \$100                    |     |       |
| Burger King \$10            |     |       |
| Cousins Subs \$10           |     |       |
| CVS Pharmacy \$25           |     |       |
| CVS Pharmacy \$100          |     |       |
| Dick's Sporting Goods \$25  |     |       |
| Dick's Sporting Goods \$100 |     |       |
| Exxon \$50                  |     |       |
| Fleet Farm \$25             |     |       |
| Fleet Farm \$100            |     |       |
| Home Depot \$25             |     |       |
| Home Depot \$100            |     |       |
| Jiffy Lube \$30             |     |       |
| Kohl's \$25                 |     |       |
| Kohl's \$100                |     |       |
| Kwik Trip \$25              |     |       |
| Kwik Trip \$50              |     |       |
| Kwik Trip \$100             |     |       |

| RETAILER                     | QTY | TOTAL |
|------------------------------|-----|-------|
| Meijer \$25                  |     |       |
| Meijer \$50                  |     |       |
| Meijer \$100                 |     |       |
| Mobil \$50                   |     |       |
| Noodles & Company \$10       |     |       |
| Panera Bread \$10            |     |       |
| Panera Bread \$25            |     |       |
| Papa Murphy's Pizza \$10     |     |       |
| Pick'n Save(WI) \$25         |     |       |
| Pick'n Save(WI) \$50         |     |       |
| Pick'n Save(WI) \$100        |     |       |
| Piggly Wiggly (WI, IL) \$25  |     |       |
| Piggly Wiggly (WI, IL) \$50  |     |       |
| Piggly Wiggly (WI, IL) \$100 |     |       |
| Qdoba Mexican Grill \$25     |     |       |
| Sendik's Food Market \$25    |     |       |
| Sendik's Food Market \$50    |     |       |
| Sendik's Food Market \$100   |     |       |
| Speedway \$25                |     |       |
| Speedway \$50                |     |       |
| Starbucks \$10               |     |       |
| Starbucks \$25               |     |       |
| Subway Restaurants \$10      |     |       |
| Target \$25                  |     |       |
| Target \$50                  |     |       |
| Walgreens \$25               |     |       |
| Walmart \$25                 |     |       |
| Walmart \$50                 |     |       |
| Walmart \$100                |     |       |

Total number of gift cards ordered: \_\_\_\_\_

Total amount due: \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*Make checks payable to  
Grand Ave Church*