



January 2025
the VINE

Dear Grand Avenue Church Family and Friends,

Happy New Year and welcome to 2025. We find ourselves saying the same thing each year: “Wow I can’t believe it’s 19__ or 20__.” I found myself saying the same thing as I began to write this letter. However, as I contemplated this common repetitive thought it occurred to me that the year doesn’t matter. What matters is the continued process of life. The “wow” isn’t because the number of the year keeps getting bigger, it is really the “wow” of all the things that have happened in our lives in the past year. In fact, this time of year prompts us to look not only at the past year but at the course of our lives up to this point. It is from this mindful perspective we not only evaluate the past but also look to what the future may hold with the dawning of yet another year. This paradoxical precipice can be a powerful tool to enable us to seek a new course for our lives. This is precisely why at this point each year so many people pledge to make changes to certain aspects of their lives. These resolutions can take many forms, but share the common goal of seeking to improve their life. This time also provides us a great opportunity to do the same thing with our faith.

As we begin a New Year we can look back at how God has been with us, loving and sustaining us, through the many tosses and turns of this life. This provides us with a renewed sense of comfort and is a great means of strengthening our confidence in the truth that God loves us and walks with us. It is also an excellent opportunity to examine our path of discipleship and resolve to strengthen it in the coming year. While there is no doubt there are many New Year resolutions that can be beneficial, none could provide a greater benefit for us than strengthening our relationship with God.

Romans 12:1-2, “I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, on the basis of God’s mercy, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your reasonable act of worship. Do not be conformed to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of the mind, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect.”

Mark 12:28-31, “Which commandment is the first of all?” Jesus answered, “The first is, ‘Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one; you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ The second is this, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.”

Happy New Year,

Pastor Vince

CELEBRATE

Happy Birthday

Larry Maechtle	1	Charles Kirkendall	23
Tori Meins	3	Ann Schmidt	23
Cathy Guse	12	Rick De Yarman	25
Lin Lohr	13	Rama Bharadwaj	27
Axton Meins	16	Victoria Berger	30
Larry Caro	19	Gregg Lentz	30

VOLUNTEERS

Thank you, Volunteers, for serving in our ministry!

Date	Usher	Liturgist	Cupbearer	Coffee Host	AV
1/5	Larry Maechtle	Mary Downing	<i>Needed*</i>	<i>Needed*</i>	Scott Penkivech
1/12	Larry Maechtle	Marc Eernisse	n/a	<i>Needed*</i>	Scott Penkivech
1/19	Larry Maechtle	Rama Bharadwaj	n/a	<i>Needed*</i>	Scott Penkivech
1/26	Larry Maechtle	Jan Young	n/a	Cathy, Dave, & Barb	Scott Penkivech

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

CHRISTMAS JOY

Awesome Women Christmas Dinner



Thank you to all the women of the church that could attend this year's Awesome Women Christmas Dinner at Plier's Full Circle Restaurant. It was a delightful evening with entertainment from the Port Washington High School choir, Limited Edition.

CHRISTMAS JOY, cont.

Memories Theater

A huge thank you to the Griesmeyers for the gift of lunch and the wonderful Winter Wonderettes Musical at Memories that was enjoyed by all attending.



(Photo credit:
Gwen Freier)

MISSIONS & OUTREACH

Suicide Awareness and Prevention

Grand Avenue will be hosting three monthly presentations on suicide awareness and prevention this spring beginning on Thursday, April 10th. The May and June presentations are tentatively scheduled on the second Thursday of the month (May 8th and June 12th). More details about the series content will be provided in the February newsletter. Check out the following link: [Suicide Prevention - National Institute of Mental Health \(NIMH\)](https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/suicide-prevention/index.shtml) which lists some warning signs that someone is thinking about suicide. If these warning signs apply to you or someone you know, you are strongly encouraged to get help as soon as possible. You can call or text the Suicide and Crisis Life **988** or you can chat at 988lifeline.org.

MISSIONS & OUTREACH, cont.



Non-Perishable Donation Needs

Cake Mix
Frosting
Birthday Candles
Canned Veggies
Canned Soup

Cream of Soups
Canned Chicken
Cereal
Shampoo/Conditioner
Canned fruit



Current Shelter Needs

Bleach
Clorox Clean-Up
Deodorant (Men & Women)
Toilet Paper
Facial Tissue
10–12-inch Non-Stick Frying Pan
Shaving Cream (Men & Women)
Q-Tips
Washcloths
Plastic Dish Sets (See Amazon list)
[Portlight Shelter Amazon Wish List](#)

FAITH GROUPS & ACTIVITIES

Sister Circle - Thursday, January 16th, 7:00 pm
Christ the King, 420 W Whitefish Rd, Port Washington

We will be starting a new book in January, "Becoming Women of the Word" by Sarah Christmyer. Please read chapters 1, 2, & 3 for the January meeting. An updated reading schedule will be available at the January meeting.

We will no longer be reading /discussing the book, "Not Counting Women and Children, Neglected Stories from the Bible" by Megan McKenna.. Please contact Mary at 414-828-4675 or mariwags@gmail.com with any questions.

FAITH GROUPS & ACTIVITIES, cont.



January Events



January 5th from 7:00-8:00 pm – Lighthouse Life Night

Celebrate the start of 2025 and ease back into your routines following Christmas break with a casual time to hang out, play games, and catch up with your friends from Lighthouse. Plus, those present will get to help plan the calendar events for the rest of the school year!

January 12th from 1:00-5:00 pm - Skiing/Tubing at Sunburst

Come enjoy an afternoon of winter fun with friends as we hit the slopes together! We will meet at Lighthouse (513 W. Grand Ave. in Port) and carpool to Sunburst in Kewaskum. Students can choose between snow tubing, skiing, or snowboarding and Lighthouse will cover the rental/lift costs. Please come dressed for the weather and bring along some money for snacks if you would like.



Students must pre-register for this event by January 2nd so talk to Christin if you want to come!

January 19th from 6:00-8:00 pm – Movie Night

Cold winter nights are the perfect time to grab a friend and enjoy an old-fashioned movie night together. Pizza, popcorn, and other movie favorites will be provided, and comfy PJs are highly encouraged as well.

Note: those present will vote on the movie selection.



Lighthouse events are open to all students in grades 5-12

Have questions about Lighthouse or want to get involved?

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

Help the Lighthouse Youth spread some birthday joy to those in our community!



Lighthouse will once again be collecting items such as cake mix, frosting, candles, etc. to assemble "birthday kits" to donate to our local food pantries. These kits will help ensure that pantry guests can enjoy a birthday celebration on their special day. **Be on the lookout for the birthday cake collection poster at each church with more details about what items are needed.** Please place all donations in the marked container at church by Friday, January 31st.

LOVE LIGHTS 2024

We give thanks for all the gifts of life and love, and praise God for the people who have so richly blessed our lives by offering this gift of Love Lights.

In memory of my son Skip Holle.

In memory of my son Michael Holle.

From Barbara Jones

In honor of our children Tab, Robyn, and Marty. Grandchildren Sarah & Dave, Brittany, Nick, and Brandon. Great-grandchildren Aiden, Jordy, and Ivy.

In memory of our parents, Frances and Chuck Price, Gertrude and Dick Freeland. Brothers Ken Price and Phil Freeland. Sister-in-laws Shelly and Karol Freeland. Brother-in-law Bob Jahnke. Neice Kim Freeland. Sarah's Mom Donna. Great nephew Tyler Jahnke.

From Netta and Jake Freeland

In loving memory of Wayne Frank From Barbara Spencer and Family, Sean and Family, and Stefan and Family.

From All who love you!

In honor of my daughter Chris Craig, son Todd Craig, grandson Jake Craig, and granddaughter-in-law Jessie.

In memory of my sister Jean Tippery.

From Pat Craig

In honor of my daughter, Joanne; Pastor Vince and family; Dave and Cathy Guse; our organist, Mason Thill.

In memory of my husband Paul, sisters Arline Wisse and Laverne Joosse; Nick Pepin, Sue Killey, Marilyn Nelson, Merton Lueptow, Barb Aagerup, and Muriel Ford.

From Edna Koskamp

In honor of my husband Bob Graff and our children Amanda, Will, Jason, Cody, and Nick.

From Jill Eernisse

In memory of my mom and my brother.

From Lin Lohr

In honor of my cherished Downing/Chao Family, given by Mother and Grandmother Mary.

In memory of victims of war, suicide, and other tragedies too numerous to mention.

From Mary Downing

In memory of my husband Phillip Bruno, son Peter Geittmann, and grandson Mathias Geittmann; all missed and forever in my heart.

From Mary Kae Geittmann

In honor of our children and grandchildren, Mark & Tina & Michael, Randy & Anna, Sarah, Jaryd, Karl, Emily, and Steve, Hope, & Scooter, and great granddaughter Anya.

In memory of our parents Ed & Lydia Freier, Adolph & Charlotte Thein, sister Jackie, brothers Whitie & Jerry Thein, and very good friend Georgine Molitor.

From Ed & Gwen Freier

In honor of Jon Meins for bringing the eggs.

In memory of my parents, sister-in-law Wendy, Aunt Caroline, Sue Killey, Merton Lueptow, Marilyn Nelson, Barb Aagerup, Floyd Swanke, and Patricia Draeger.

From Larry Maechtle

In honor of my kids Kevin, Curt, Jeff & Jamie, my grandkids Allison, Alyssa, Jordyn, Logan, Alec, Hunter, Cody, Dakota, and Leeland.

In memory of my Mom and Dad, Ben & grace, brothers Dan & Jim, nephews Brandon, Mike, and my sweet niece Carrie Sue.

From Cathy Smith

In honor of George & Clara Miller and William & Emma Martin, Fred & Johanna Wilke and family, and Carl & Louisa Setzer and family.

In memory of William & Dorothy Martin family, Trixie Martin, Benji Martin, Scooter Martin, and Wamdoodles Martin.

From Our Lord and Savior

God bless my family at UMC. Love, Jay Martin

In honor of family and friends who have supported me during this difficult time of loss.

In loving memory of Merton Lueptow, the love of my life.

From Margaret Lueptow

In memory of Sue Killey.

From Jeff Killey

In honor of Rama Bharadwaj.

From Anonymous

In honor of our dear family and special friends.

From Grace and Marc Eernisse

In memory of David Olson.

From The Olson family

In honor of Douglas, Patty, and Tyler Schmidt.

In memory of Edwin & Josephine Gantner and David & Sadie Schmidt.

From Ed & Joanne Schmidt

In memory of Jim & Ron Swirth (Jackie's brothers).

From Jim and Jackie Sorenson

In honor of Mom, Pastor Vince and Sherri Pepin and family, Dave and Cathy Guse and family, organist Mason Thill, and church secretary Stacy Peters.

In memory of Dad, Aunt Laverne Joosse, Sue Killey, Merton Lueptow, Marilyn Nelson, Barb Aagerup, and Lili Bieber.

From Joanne Koskamp

In honor of my caring family and my dining partner Sue Merrill.

In memory of the love of my life, Bob.

From Kay Hamann

In honor of my friend G.E. who makes the best bacon-wrapped water chestnuts ever!

From Anonymous

In honor of our grandkids Sarah, Emily & Alexis Werth, and Kyle Kroening. Our kids Daniel, Glen & Vera Kroening, and Carolyn & Steve Werth.

In memory of Sue Killey and Lil Bieber.

From Ardelle & Gordon Dionne

In honor of my sons Dennis and Peter.

In memory of my parents, Wilfred and Alma Maechtle, and my husband Denny.

From Sue Merrill

In honor of our children & grandchildren – Melissa, Aaron, Sydney, Taylor, and Skylar White, Matthew Grams, and our father Ed Grams.

In memory of our brothers Gary & Brad Grams, Guy Tebbit, our friends, Marris Garcia Keller and Sarah Stitt Collins, our parents, Mary & Walt Tebbit, and Delores Grams.

From Mark and Sandy Grams

In memory of our parents, Calvin and Muriel Ford; sister, Teri Gosewehr; aunt, Marilyn Davis; uncle, Jeff Trende; and cousin, Niki Seabright. Blessed to have had you in our lives and now watching over us.

From Debra, Lori, Patti, and Stacy

In honor of my husband, Scott, and daughters, McKenna, Madison, and Mallory, my sisters Debra, Lori, and Patti, and all extended family! Forever grateful and blessed.

From Stacy Zwicker

In honor of my special husband, Al Haacke, who would have celebrated our 58th anniversary on Christmas Eve..

In memory of Mathias Geittmann and Nicholas Pepin, peace and healing to their families..

From Nancy Haacke

THANK YOU NOTES



Thank you for all your support of The Food Pantry in 2024. Our client list continues to grow, and because of you, we can continue to serve those in need!
- The Port Food Pantry



Thank you to everyone that donated books to our Giving Tree for the new Children's Library at the Family Promise Portlight Shelter. Thanks to the generosity of our congregation, we have 38 more books for the library!



THANK YOU NOTES, cont.

Thank you to all who participated in our Christmas Eve service. The readings and music selections made it a wonderful service! A special thank you to Mason Thill for not only all the regular music, but also for accompanying all the singers, AND for the great organ and piano duet with Marc Eernisse before and after the service. We also can't forget to thank Baby Nicholas for his part in the Advent Candle lighting!



Thank you to Erika Davis for making the lovely balloon Christ candle for us. What a fun addition to our narthex this year.

CHURCH NEWS

A year in review:

As I sit at my desk, looking out the window, watching the snow come down to create what I hope will be that memorable Christmas card scene for our holiday this year, I am drawn back to what the Advent season is all about. It is the celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ over 2000 years ago.

I am blessed daily by my GAUMC family and the impact each of you has on me, my community, and my world. Let me restate that: on us, our community, and our world. A lot has happened at GAUMC in 2024. There have been many blessings and a few opportunities.

Blessings:

- Pastor Vince was officially appointed to Grand Avenue UMC on July 1.
- We have completed the parking lot refurbishment project and paid off all expenses. We still have \$2950 to seed future parking lot maintenance projects.
- A new tenant family moved into the parsonage.
- Enhancing our music program with a new accompanist and choir.
- We have paid our UMC connectional apportionments in full again.
- Installation of two (2) AED devices and training on the usage of AED devices.
- Five (5) year anniversary of our partnership in the Lighthouse Ecumenical Youth Ministry program.
- Development of the Library and Mentoring Program at the Family Promise shelter, including gaining multiple grants from the Wisconsin UMC Foundation.
- Another successful flower sale fundraiser.
- New faces attending our programs and activities. Our ministries have touched every one of them and us.
- Establishing an endowment fund of \$58,900.
- Dave Guse was added as the pastoral assistant.
- We had many opportunities to grow spiritually through learning from the teachings of the Bible.

Opportunities:

- A water leak in the boiler system caused a \$300 water utility bill instead of a \$100 regular bill. Repairs cost us around \$900. All are welcome to make a small "water leak" special offering to help us offset this unexpected cost.
- The passing of some of our long-term members has been sad and difficult, even though we know they are now at peace with our Lord. Their strong faith brought energy into our congregation that we all dearly miss. Please continue to invite friends, neighbors, and others to join us for worship so that we can continue to grow our community.
- Our 2025 liability and property insurance premiums increased by 65%. To reduce the rate increase, the Wisconsin conference is moving to a new insurance provider. Please pray that our conference can move to a new insurer soon and that they can provide reasonable rates so that churches across our nation do not need to sacrifice God's work to cover these costs.

I hope you enjoyed the Advent season and took time to worship the birth of Jesus. We look forward to 2025 and many opportunities to live out our mission statement: *By the grace of God, we seek to love God and to serve humanity as Christ did.*

With love and faith, Dan Benning



United Methodist Corner

A prayer that deeply informed John Wesley's theology and preaching has become known as the **Covenant Prayer**. Wesley had adapted the prayer below from his parents (Samuel and Suzanna) Puritan tradition.

"I am no longer my own, but thine.
Put me to what thou wilt, rank me with whom thou wilt.
Put me to doing, put me to suffering.
Let me be employed by thee or laid aside for thee,
exalted for thee or brought low for thee.
Let me be full, let me be empty.
Let me have all things, let me have nothing.

**I freely and heartily yield all things
to thy pleasure and disposal.**

And now, O glorious and blessed God,
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
thou art mine, and I am thine. So be it.
And the covenant which I have made on earth,
let it be ratified in heaven. Amen."

Wesley expected Methodists to pray this prayer at the beginning of each new year as a way of remembering and renewing their baptismal covenant. Wesley did not want Methodists to become complacent in their faith by thinking that since Christ has saved them, that they need not worry about how they were to live their lives. He was concerned about Methodists backsliding, which he defined as those who received Christ's salvation, but have now fallen into habitual sin. Wesley would point out that indeed Christ has died for us, but Jesus also said that anyone who seeks to follow him must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow him. Our egos and the temptations around us can easily lead us from God's path, the path that leads to life.

For me, the key part of the Covenant Prayer are the words, "**I freely and heartily yield all things to thy pleasure and disposal.**" We are to continually seek to do God's will and purpose. I admit that discerning God's will under some circumstances may be difficult. But Biblical writers like Micah give us a vision of what God seeks for us. Micah wrote, "What does the Lord require of you but to "do justice, love kindness and walk humbly with your God. (Micah 6:8). We may not have a perfect vision of God's will, but we know that when we seek to love God (with the help of the Spirit) with all our heart, soul, mind and strength and love our neighbors as ourselves, we are on the right track

May you have a healthy and spiritually renewing New Year! --Dave

CALENDAR

January 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
New Year's Day	Wednesday, January 1	Office Closed
Administrative Council	Thursday, January 9 at 7 pm	Zoom
Trustees Meeting	Sunday, January 12 at 11 am	FAC
Worship Team Meeting	Sunday, January 12 at 11 am	Fellowship Hall
Port Washington Woman's Club	Monday, January 13 at 11 am	Fellowship Hall
Lifeline Health Screening	Tuesday, January 14, 8 am – 4 pm	Fellowship Hall
Social Principles	Tuesday, January 14, 1 pm	Gathering Area
Friendship Club	Wednesday, January 15, 6:30 pm	Fellowship Hall
Dan Benning Reserved	Saturday, January 18	Fellowship Hall
Stockbox Distribution	Tuesday, January 21 at 10:00 am	FAC & Parking Lot
Newsletter Articles Due	Friday, January 24	Office
Mark Grams Reserved	Wednesday, January 29, 6-9 pm	Fellowship Hall

GRAND AVENUE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

505 W Grand Ave Port Washington WI 53074 262-284-9478 www.portumc.com

Pastor:	Vince Pepin	pastor@portumc.org
Pastoral Assistant:	Dave Guse	senegaldave1@gmail.com
Administrative Assistant:	Stacy Peters	office@portumc.org
Lay Leader:	Dan Benning	bennida01@att.net
Admin Council Chair:	Mark Grams	mgrams@wi.rr.com
SPRC Chair:	TBD	
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 and use our enrollment code of 45F776D958L66.



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

Orders are due in the church office on the 1st Sunday of each month. Please remember to include your payment. You can also order on-line at www.raiseright.com Your order of gift cards will be ready for pick-up at church on the 2nd Sunday of the month.

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

*Each retailer makes a donation to the church for every gift card purchased.
For a complete list of over 700 participating retailers, go to www.raiseright.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*