



***Sun Prairie United Methodist Church  
Church Conference  
November 21, 2024  
6:30 pm***

***Our Vision:*** To be a welcoming home where we share God's love.

***Our Mission:*** To invite and welcome people to be committed and compassionate followers of Jesus Christ, through worship, spiritual growth, fellowship, and service to others.

Our welcome knows no boundaries.

The people of the Sun Prairie United Methodist Church open our doors and our hearts to all God's children. We celebrate the diversity of God's creation. We answer Jesus' call to 'love your neighbor' by embracing every person as a full participant in our church family, including people of all ages, nations, races, abilities, sexual orientations and gender identities.

**2024 Ministry Focus: BEYOND OUR DOORS**

**2025 Ministry Focus: LOVE REGARDLESS**

**CHURCH CONFERENCE**  
**SUN PRAIRIE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**  
**November 21, 2024 – 6:30 pm**  
**Rev. Cathy Christman, Presiding Elder**

Greeting and Welcome

Appointing of Recording Secretary (Chris Hale)

Opening Devotion & Prayer (Cathy Christman)

Mission of The United Methodist Church

*The mission of The United Methodist Church is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. Local churches and extension ministries of the Church provide the most significant arenas through which disciple-making occurs. (2016 BOD par. 120)*

Greetings from Bishop Dan Schwerin (Video)

Celebration of Ministry - Litany of Gratitude  
(Jenny Arneson & Gavin Denning)

Actions Requiring a Vote

Election of Lay Leadership for 2025	Jenny Arneson
Approval of 2025 Pastoral Compensation & Housing	Pat Flaherty
Approval of Lay Servants/Lay Speakers	
Care and Removal of Names	Jenny Arneson

Reports Not Requiring a Vote

Proposed 2025 Budget to be set by Leadership Board in Jan., 2025  
Staff and Ministry Reports are in the Booklet for Reading

Thank You to Staff

Benediction & Adjournment

## *2024 Litany of Gratitude*

Our Plan of Ministry for 2024 has had the focus of *Beyond Our Doors*.

**Blessed be the ties that bind.**

We welcomed Chris Hale as our new Administrative Assistant in the church office.

**All praise and thanks to God.**

Over \$17,000 was raised at our annual church Garage Sale, with proceeds going to support missions and ministries in our church, our community and the world.

**Jesu, Jesu, fill us with your love, show us how to serve the neighbors we have from you.**

We awarded 16 scholarships to our high school and college students this spring from our many different scholarship funds.

**Praise to the Lord, the Almighty.**

We shared in 6 baptisms this year.

**We give thanks with a grateful heart.**

We celebrated the lives of 14 saints of our church with funerals or memorial services.

**For all the Saints, who've shone God's love in how they live.**

Volunteers hid 10,000 Easter eggs filled with treats for children at our community egg hunt.

**There's a sweet, sweet spirit in this place.**

Our Reconciling Team participated in the Pride Fest in Sun Prairie by having a welcome and information table at the event.

**All praise and thanks to God.**

We supported 125 children and youth in our community at Christmas through the Spirit of Giving Tree.

**It is the cry of our heart to follow.**

We were blessed by another year of the Live Nativity with over 500 people driving around the church outdoors to enjoy scenes from the Christmas story.

**Come, ye thankful people, come.**

We continue to hold monthly food drives to collect items for the Sun Prairie Emergency Food Pantry and Northside Elementary School food pantry.

**Together we serve, united by love.**

We participate in the Sunshine Supper 4 times a year, each time providing over 400 meals to members of our Sun Prairie Community.

**Thank you, Lord.**

Throughout the year, we packed weekend food bags for families from Northside School and 300 lunches on Fridays during the summer for community kids.

**These are the ones we should serve; these are the ones we should love.**

We helped Stuff the Bus in our community with financial donations for backpacks and school supplies for children and youth.

**We give thanks with a grateful heart.**

We started making sleeping mats out of plastic grocery bags and working with Midwest Mission to send them to people in need.

**Together we serve, united by love.**

58 children and youth, mentors and adult helpers participated in our summer Vacation Bible School in August.

**May the love of God continue to give us hope and keep us strong.**

We welcomed 32 new members into our faith community this year, including 19 Confirmation students.

**Blessed be the ties that bind.**

Our church building is used for many community activities including quarterly Blood Drives and as a voting site.

**Great is thy faithfulness.**

We continue to offer and expand our online presence as a church and our livestream worship.

**The Lord has promised good to us.**

We offered several Kids' Night Out events for families in our church and community and served 43 kids in 2024.

**Here in this place new light is streaming.**

People decorated doors in the church and handed out candy at our Hall-O-Ween event for our community in October.

**Surely the presence of the Lord is in this place.**

We celebrated 11 years of being a Reconciling congregation that welcomes all people to our faith community.

**May the love of God continue to give us hope and keep us strong.**

We were faithful to paying our United Methodist Connectional giving in full and gave thousands of dollars to support UMCOR for hurricane relief and other disasters.

**What a privilege to carry everything to God in prayer.**

**As the Sun Prairie United Methodist Church, we continue live out our vision to be a welcoming home where we share God's love. We share God's expansive love with courage and gratitude. Thanks be to God! Amen.**

## 2025 LAY LEADERSHIP ROSTER

### LEADERSHIP BOARD

Chair: **Jack Malone**  
Secretary: Cheri Hiller

#### *Committee Chairpersons*

Finance/Stewardship: Sarah Bolen  
Trustees: Co-Chairs Mike Bandli, Janine Punzel  
SPRC: Pat Flaherty  
Outreach: Patricia Harrington  
Scholarship: Terry Twedell

#### *At Large Members*

Cheri Hiller (2027), Dee Heller (2027), Frank Flynn (2026),  
Marcia Flaherty (2026), Gavin Denning (Youth)

#### *Staff*

Lead Pastor: Jenny Arneson  
Pastor of Youth & Young Adults: Claire Douglass  
Director of Children's Ministries: Christy Tubbs  
Director of Caring Ministries: Brad Mather  
Director of Connecting Ministries: Deb Mulhern  
Director of Technology & Online Communications: Amanda Hinthorn  
Administrative Assistant: Chris Hale  
Financial Secretary: Sarah Bolen  
Treasurer: Lisa Wink

### VOTING LAY MEMBERS TO ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Marcia Flaherty, Linda Whitelock, Jack Malone

### FINANCE & STEWARDSHIP TEAM

Lead Pastor: Jenny Arneson  
Financial Secretary: Sarah Bolen  
Treasurer: Lisa Wink  
Check Signer: Erlene Delano

### STAFF PARISH RELATIONS COMMITTEE

(25) Donna Cole, Lori Candelmo, Mary Mitchell

(26) **Pat Flaherty**

Lead Pastor: Jenny Arneson  
Pastor of Youth & Young Adults: Claire Douglass  
Lay Member to Annual Conference: Connie Meyer

### TRUSTEES TEAM

Don Gilchrist, John Rublein, **Janine Punzel**, **Mike Bandli**, Tim Whitcher, Rick  
Mulhern, Corey Sanders, Stephanie Bass Faust, Mike Beck, Kathy Wessel  
Lead Pastor: Jenny Arneson  
Staff Liaison: Brad Mather

### **OUTREACH TEAM**

**Patricia Harrington**, Velma Hockenberry, Nancy Wilsmann, Lorie Candelmo, Pam Girard, Barb Utphall, Sherry Malone, Bonnie Kott, Jeanne Wellman, Linda Whitelock, Marcia Flaherty, Pat Harper, Bonnie Nissley  
Staff Liaison: Amanda Hinthorn

### **RECONCILING MINISTRIES TEAM**

Cassi Benedict, Brenda Carlson-Hahn, Marcia Flaherty, Connie Meyer, Lynn Smith, Heather Young, Donna Wilson  
Staff Liaison: Amanda Hinthorn  
Lead Pastor: Jenny Arneson

### **SAFE SANCTUARIES TEAM**

Dee Heller, Jodi Hauge, Beth Smeaton  
Lead Pastor: Jenny Arneson  
Pastor of Youth & Young Adults: Claire Douglass  
Director of Children's Ministries: Christy Tubbs  
Director of Technology & Online Communications: Amanda Hinthorn  
Background Checks: Lisa Wink

### **SCHOLARSHIP TEAM**

Cheri Hiller, Jan Thompson, **Terry Twedell**, Jim & Cathy Grenzow, Jennie Taylor  
Lead Pastor: Jenny Arneson  
Pastor of Youth & Young Adults: Claire Douglass  
Director of Connecting Ministries: Deb Mulhern

### **MENTAL HEALTH TEAM**

**Stephanie Bass Faust**, Beth Bandli, Debo Mofikoya, Geb Lefeber, Heather Young, Juanona Brewster

### **GREENSPACE TEAM**

**David Lyon**, Kathy Lyon, Jim Grenzow, Judy Krebs, Karen Bass, Gene Bass, Terry Twedell  
Lead Pastor: Jenny Arneson  
Director of Connecting Ministries: Deb Mulhern

### **YOUTH LEADERSHIP TEAM**

Geb Lefeber, Katie Rikli, Jake Clevestine, Hillary Lobenstein  
Pastor of Youth & Young Adults: Claire Douglass

### **CHILDREN'S LEADERSHIP TEAM**

Amanda Johnson, Samantha Sanders, Janelle Peterson, Lindsay Pothof, Jason Pothof, Sarah Prather  
Director of Children's Ministries: Christy Tubbs

## **RETIRED CLERGY**

### **UM Retired Clergy Relating to SPUMC:**

Rev. Roger Becker, Rev. Jane Daniels, Rev. Frank Gaylord, Rev. Brad Mather,  
Rev. Marjorie Rice Myers, Rev. Ross Oestreich, Rev. David Webster,  
Rev. Brenda Wingfield

### **Clergy Appointed Beyond the Local Church Relating to SPUMC:**

Rev. Kevin Rice Myers, Conference Secretary

### **Clergy from Other Denominations that Relate to SPUMC:**

Rev. John Leggett

## ***LEAD PASTOR'S REPORT***

Rev. Jenny Arneson

*“Trust in God with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding. Seek God’s will in all you do, and God will show you which path to take.” --Proverbs 3:5-6*

As of this Church Conference, I am serving in my 10<sup>th</sup> year as the Lead Pastor at the Sun Prairie United Methodist Church. It is a blessing and privilege to continue to serve alongside the people of SPUMC. The ministry we share is guided by the ministry of Jesus and is a witness to God’s love, grace and purpose in our lives.

I am thankful for the staff ministry we share and the dedication of our staff to the individual ministries to which they are called that serve our church and Beyond Our Doors. I feel blessed to walk this journey of faith together and to serve as your lead pastor.

When you read through our Litany of Gratitude that offers a snapshot of what we have done in ministry together in 2024, you will be inspired. The ways we continue to share of ourselves in relationship with God as the body of Christ in our community and the world is a blessing!

### ***Regular Lead Pastoral Responsibilities:***

- \*Weekly worship preparation and leadership, including preaching, and celebrating the Sacraments of Holy Communion and Baptism.
- \*Weekly Bible study and sermon preparation.
- \*Weekly worship preparation.
- \*Supervision of staff.
- \*Meeting with families and officiating at funerals and graveside services.
- \*Teaching Confirmation.
- \*Teach Advent and Lenten studies.
- \*Co-lead bi-monthly newcomer inquiry classes.
- \*Regular meetings of Leadership Board, Staff Parish Relations
- \*Weekly staff meetings and staff retreats.
- \*Provide the “Word of the Week” devotional each Monday and record for podcast.
- \*Provide a “Word from the Pastor” and other ministry information for our weekly Thursday congregational email of what is happening at SPUMC.
- \*Hospital calls in person and by phone and checking in with families as needed.
- \*Offer pastoral care, counseling, and referrals as needed.

### ***Community:***

- \*Serve as one of the volunteer Public Safety Chaplains for the Sun Prairie Police, Fire and EMS Departments.
- \*Participate in SPAM (Sun Prairie Area Ministry).
- \*Participate in Sunshine Supper as SPUMC takes its rotation. Meals continue in 2024 to be served as drive-thru meals, over 400 meals served each week.



***Conference, District & General Church:***

- \*Serve as chair of the Conference Personnel Committee.
- \*Serve as co-chair of the General & Jurisdictional Conference Delegation.
- \*Serve on the NCJ Committee on Episcopacy to appoint Bishops within the NCJ.
- \*Serve on the Wisconsin Committee on Episcopacy.
- \*Serve on the General Council of Finance & Administration (GCFA) Personnel Policy Committee for The United Methodist Church.

***Continuing Education:***

- \*School of Ministry, October 2-4, 2024 at Green Lake
- \*Assessing Your Church's Staffing Pattern Webinar, October 8, 2024
- \*On-going professional reading and study.

***Personal:***

\*I continue to be a primary caregiver for my mother, who lives in a senior living apartment in Sun Prairie.

***Personal Growth:***

- \*My spiritual and physical health and development is a priority in my life and ministry.
- \*Take daily time for devotional, spiritual and recreational reading and study.
- \*Regular time with family and friends for relaxation and renewal is a priority.

## PASTOR OF YOUTH & YOUNG ADULTS

Rev. Claire Douglass

I have enjoyed another year at Sun Prairie United Methodist Church serving at children, youth and young adults. I particularly appreciate SPUMC's understanding when I asked to step away from children's ministry to focus more on my family and my health.

It has been a great year for youth and young adult ministry at Sun Prairie United Methodist Church. I continue to be blessed with amazing adult volunteers who help to make youth ministries possible. Sunday night Youth Group, Sunday School and Club 3,4,5 all are doing well. We now regularly see grades 6 through 12 at our weekly programs.

Over the summer we enjoyed campfire games, traveled on a mission trip to Niagara Falls, New York, went on a retreat to Lake Lucerne Camp and spent a day at Mount Olympus Waterpark and Amusement Park in the Dells. We had 26 youth volunteer as VBS mentors this year.

We have seen youth step into leadership roles this year such as teaching Sunday School, leading VBS stations/groups and attending Annual Conference as a Youth Delegate. I am looking forward to seeing the ways in which our youth will continue to grow as leaders within our church.

Youth Ministry is looking forward to a renewed commitment to serve with several new service opportunities scheduled for this upcoming year. Returning opportunities such as shopping for Spirit of Giving gifts, preparing a meal for the Crossing Campus Ministry, handing out candy with Hall-O-Ween and hiding Eggs for our Community Egg Hunt will continue. As well as new opportunities such as our Fall and Spring Rent-a-Youth and shopping for the Northside Food Bags. We also have already started to plan and fundraise for our 2025 Mission Trip with Youthworks Missions next summer.

Two of our most popular young adult ministry programs continued this year. Last January, we gave 17 college students a small gift card to enjoy as they started their semester. This year SPUMC disbursed 16 scholarships to college students within our church community.

It has been a pleasure to spend time with the wonderful youth and young adults at Sun Prairie UMC and I cannot wait to see God continue to work through the young people of our church.

## DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES

Christy Tubbs

During my brief time as Director of Children's Ministry, I had the pleasure of creating vibrant and engaging experiences for the young hearts in our community. Park Pals was a cornerstone of our summer program, where we utilized events organized by the park district to blend faith and fun seamlessly. We participated in Community-Wide celebrations like Juneteenth and Pride Fest. Our season culminated in the hugely popular Taylor Swift Era's Tribute Concert, where kids sang and danced to their favorite hits. In the fall, we introduced our new name, Kid's JAM (Jesus & Me), and logo.

I reformatted our weekly newsletter to be more eye-catching and easily read. We hosted HALL-o-ween, an indoor trick-or-treating extravaganza that brought festive excitement to life. Our weekly Wednesday Children's Ministry sessions, Circuit, provided consistent spiritual growth and fellowship opportunities.

I also amended the Sunday School schedule to have all the classes kick off in musical worship together. Speaking of Sunday School, we have two youths teaching our 3rd-5th Grade class for the first time ever. Everyone is overjoyed with how well they are doing and how much the students enjoy class. So far, Kid's JAM has been a time filled with joy, learning, and lasting memories for the kids and their families.

## DIRECTOR OF CONNECTING MINISTRIES

Deb Mulhern

Connecting Ministries has had another busy year! We have over 150 – ushers, greeters, welcome center hosts and fellowship time hosts continue to try to make people feel welcome at SPUMC.

We have worked at making our Fellowship Time be a place where people can chat with old friends, make new friends and see a welcoming person giving them coffee, hot chocolate or tea and a donut. We have worked hard at getting enough fellowship time teams to only serve quarterly. People have enjoyed seeing our youth serving, having taken on some Sundays.

Last December we had our 4th Live Nativity. This is one of SPUMC's signature ministries, with many people coming from the community, as well as our church family to enjoy hot chocolate and listening to carolers, while driving around to see 6 different scenes from the Christmas story. We had 447 people and dogs drive through and 174 volunteer spots filled. Since this has become a rather large production, we have added many coordinator roles to help this all run smoothly.

This year we had a confirmation class again, with the plan being every other year now. This year we had a Confirmation Class of 19 students and 22 mentors and met on Wednesday evenings for dinner and class. We are blessed to have so many adults support our youth in this way and make a commitment to attending every Wednesday with them. We were able to raise money from our Sunrise Service offering to purchase food for the Patrick Marsh Food Pantry. We had a special collection on Confirmation Sunday to purchase fidgets and items for the Horizon Guidance Department in memory of our mentor, Ali Armstrong.

Our Greenspace Committee has made great strides in creating a "Memories Garden" to make the space between the church and the Wesley House a beautiful place to do ministry and have fellowship. We had a group of 11 of us working on this and hired a landscape architect to help us come up with a beautiful plan that we presented to the congregation on Fathers Day. We kicked off our fundraising efforts on Rally Day in September to offer the chance for people to purchase an engraved paver, bench or trees towards the garden. Avant Landscaping will plant some of the trees in November to start off the project.

We had another successful Rally Day with around 100 people and a "Fall Kickoff" theme. We were able to be outside and had lunch, did some mission projects, had a booth to help people learn about ways to get connected into the life of the church, games for both adults and kids and many children's activities, along with a Sunday School Open House.

All in all, it was a great year to support each other as we strive to help others and grow in our faith at SPUMC!

## DIRECTOR OF TECHNOLOGY & ONLINE COMMUNICATION

Amanda Hinthorn

I am now in my third year of serving in this role at Sun Prairie UMC. I am continued to be blessed by this church's support as we grow our technology and online ministries. We are a church that is both online and in person. People are connecting with us in so many different ways for worship and to grow their faith.

Here are some highlights from my ministry area in 2024:

1. We continue to have a large number of people worshipping with us online. We are seeing a slight increase of the number of worshippers who join us "live" at 8:30 am. We continue to see people joining us online as well outside of our normal worship time.
2. We continue to transform our flexible seating in the sanctuary and even tried tables and chairs during Lent.
3. We use multiple tools for communication across our website, emails, and social media to engage with our congregation.
4. We have completed some upgrade work to the "nuts and bolts" of our worship tech area in the back of our sanctuary.

In addition to overseeing tech and online ministries, I am in my third year serving as the staff liaison to our Reconciling Ministries Team here at church. This year Reconciling participated in the second Sun Prairie PRIDE fest. . We also continue to explore what it means to truly welcome and love all of God's people. This group has focused on social justice issues in 2024 including race, election support, moving beyond our doors through advocacy, and the changes around LGBTQ issues at our 2024 General Conference.

I also began working as the staff liaison to the Outreach Team this summer. I am so impressed by the many ways our church supports missions locally, nationally, and internationally. In 2025 I am hoping to learn more about all of the amazing work this team does.

Thank you to the Sun Prairie United Methodist Church for continuing to support me and all of these amazing ministries in the life of our church.

## **DIRECTOR OF CARING MINISTRIES**

Rev. Brad Mather

Here is a snapshot of the caring ministries that we offer at the Sun Prairie United Methodist Church.

### **Visitations**

An important part of my ministry is the opportunity and joy of visiting church family members who are typically in their aging years. In my visits it's my hope to bring them the love of God, along with the love of our church family.

### **Community Worship Services**

Currently, I provide monthly worship services at the Talamore and Hyland Park retirement communities. During our worship time, I offer prayer, scripture, a meditation, communion, along with hymn singing. Services are held on the second Thursday of each month. We worship at Talamore at 11:00 am and at Hyland Park at 1:00 pm.

### **Xtra Years of Zest**

XYZ is monthly gathering of seniors for a time of fellowship and dessert, followed by a program of some kind. Recent programs include a presentation from the Sun Prairie City Planner and a presentation from the Sun Prairie Historical Society. In addition to church family members, we often have a number of guests. We meet on the third Wednesday of each month, September – May. We begin at 1:00 with dessert and fellowship, followed by our program of the month.

### **Pastor Brad's Broadside**

One way that I've tried to keep our older members connected is through a newsletter that I periodically send out. I call it "Pastor Brad's Broadside" and it includes a short thought/essay from me, along with highlights of news happening around the church.

### **Meal Ministry**

There are times in life when meals at home become a temporary problem. Examples include when there has been a hospital stay or the arrival of a new baby or a death in a family. When a difficult situation arises, we are ready to help by providing gift cards or gift certificates to a local restaurant. A call to the church office by an individual, family member or a friend will get the ball rolling. The program is supported in part by generous gifts from our church family.