



THE MESSENGER

First Wausau United Methodist Church

Downtown Wausau Wisconsin

From the Pastor

By Pastor Rebecca Borke

Dear First Wausau Family of Faith,

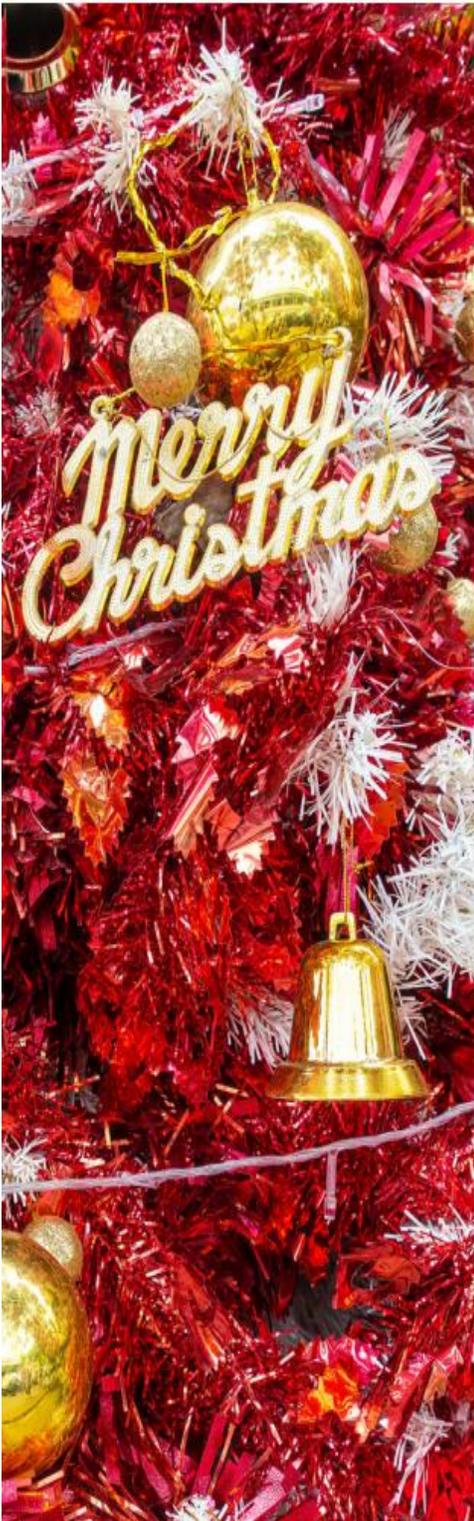
Happy New (Church) Year! Yes, the Church calendar starts anew at the beginning of Advent, this year on Sunday, November 30. Most of us don't think of our Advent Calendars as marking the first 24 days of a new year, but it might be interesting to start thinking with that perspective as we open the little doors each day to find thoughtful quotes or delicious treats.

There are growing options for Advent-themed merchandise. I received a fancy dark chocolate Advent calendar, and gave my daughter a calendar with two teabags each day, since she prefers that to chocolate. Some options focus more on the Twelve Days of Christmas, and I couldn't resist buying one with twelve different Wisconsin cheeses. However, those twelve days actually come after Christmas, not before like their Advent-themed counterparts. Starting on December 26, the Twelve Days of Christmas culminate on Epiphany (January 6), which celebrates when the Magi arrived to worship the newborn King. I wish our culture would spread the joy of Christmas all twelve days, rather than having one big day of gifting and feasting, frequently followed by a week of napping and cleaning.

Whether our little daily traditions and treats happen before and/or after Christmas Day, I hope they remind us to notice how God shows up in the small details of our lives. Maybe you will get an earlier appointment at the doctor because someone else cancelled, or you catch up with a friend over a call or a beverage. Those are examples of little gifts of God's grace. Advent and the 12 Days of Christmas are a perfect time to start the new Church Year with the practice of recognizing the daily ways God's grace opens doors with blessings. And just like our parents taught us to send a note of thanks to all who give us gifts, remember to pray, and live with thanksgiving to God.

Gloria in excelsis Deo,

Pastor Rebecca



December 2025 Stewardship Newsletter

Shining the Light of Christ Through Generosity

As Advent candles flicker to life, we're reminded that even the smallest light can push back the darkness. The weeks leading up to Christmas invite us to wait with hope, to prepare our hearts, and to remember that God's love comes to us not through power or wealth, but through the humble gift of Jesus.

This season can feel busy and heavy, with travel plans, shopping lists, and end-of-year pressures, but Advent calls us to pause and notice the light already breaking into our lives. It shines in a child's laughter, a shared meal, a simple act of kindness. It shines through generosity that makes someone else's day a little brighter.

As you light your candles and prepare your homes and hearts, may you be reminded that Christ still comes into our world - quietly, gently, persistently - with hope for all people. And as God's light takes root in us, we are called to reflect it outward, helping others see that the darkness does not win.

"The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it." - John 1:5

Wisconsin UMC

By Jason Mahnke

Director of Programming & Campaigns



Let Us Pray



- Robert Frame passed on 11-5-25
- Michael Sydow passed on 11-13-25

A grief counseling group is available for those in need of support during difficult times of grieving. Contact the church office or Julie Miehle to inquire.

Weekly grief meditations are available on our website.



Savvy Seniors will be meeting on **Monday, December 1st at 11:30am** at Patron Mexican Restaurant.

This is a social group open to singles & couples over 55. We would love to have you join us! Questions? Call Vicki 715-571-3009.

Prayer Shawl Ministry

Prayer shawls are available to the congregation both in the narthex and parlor of the church. Please avail yourselves of this ministry for comfort in cases of illness, grief, loss, or for celebrations such as: baptisms, confirmations, graduations, and marriage.

The group will meet for a holiday luncheon at the Filling Station on **Monday, December 15th at 11am.**

Wednesday Night Fellowship

Wednesday, December 17th

Christmas Dinner

6:00pm

(catered by Mint Café)

Meal will be provided by Mint Café, however we encourage you to bring and share a dessert.

Music Ministries

Chancel Choir

Wednesdays at 7:15pm

The Chancel Choir, led by Rob Perkins, will practice on Wednesdays at 7:15pm through December 10th in preparation for Lessons & Carols service. The dress rehearsal will take place Saturday, December 13th starting at 10am.

Jubilate Bell Choir

Wednesdays at 6:30pm

Jessica Wenzel leads our Jubilate Bell Choir practice on Wednesdays at 7:15pm through December 10th in preparation for Lessons & Carols service. The dress rehearsal will take place Saturday, December 13th starting at 10:30am.



Sunday, December 14th at 10:00am

Join us for our annual Festival of Lessons & Carols during our 10:00am worship time on December 14th. We will have musical pieces provided by our organist (Rob Perkins), Jubilate Bell Choir, Chancel Choir, Strings, and more.

The dress rehearsal will take place Saturday, December 13th from 9:00-12:00pm on the following schedule:

9:00-10:00am - Strings Only

10:00-10:30am - Choir & Instruments

10:30am - Choir & Handbells followed by Bells Only

A huge thank you to Rob Perkins and Jessica Wenzel for directing our Handbell and Chancel Choirs this year, and all those who helped with organizing music.

Discipleship Report

Merry Christmas, and a special thank-you to all who volunteer as Sunday School teachers, communion volunteers, and Bible study leaders.

On the first Sunday in December, we will have communion consecrated for those who wish to receive it in their homes. In accordance with our Safer Sanctuary policies, two non-related adults will bring communion to you in December. If you would like to receive communion at home due to an inability or difficulty in coming to church, please reach out to me or the church office and we will make arrangements.

There will be no adult or youth Sunday School on December 14th due to Lessons and Carols, and none on December 28th as we celebrate the New Year with a single 10 AM worship service.

We currently have up to 29 people attending Adult Bible Study on Wednesdays at 4:30 PM. We will meet the first two Wednesdays in December and will begin a new study in January. On January 7th, we will start with a presentation of Pastor Rebecca's trip to Greece and Italy. The following Wednesday, we will begin a study of the lectionary scriptures. Leadership for this study is being arranged. No books will need to be purchased, and a schedule of the required readings will be printed in the January newsletter.

- Julie Mieke

Scholarship Opportunity

Are you thinking of going back to school or just graduating and looking for scholarship funds? If you are part of the FUMC family you are eligible to apply for the Pivet Scholarship.

Applications open January 1, 2026 and are available at the church office. Deadline is March 1, 2026.

Charge Conference

Saturday, December 20th at 11:00am

Our Charge Conference will take place in the Chapel. Attendance of full church members is highly encouraged as voting will occur.



The church office will be closed:

- Dec. 24
- Dec. 25
- Dec. 31
- Jan. 1

Inquiries can still be made via email during this time.



First Wausau
United Methodist Church
**SUNDAY
COMMUNITY
DINNER**

- Dec. 7 - St. John Lutheran, Maine
- Dec. 14 - Latter Day Saints
- Dec. 21 - First English Lutheran
- Dec. 28 - Mt. Sinai

Mustard Seed Grant

In July, we were awarded another Mustard Seed Migration Grant of \$2,000 to continue our church's support of the refugees in the Wausau area.

The Mustard Seed Migration Grant program is designed to encourage United Methodist churches to engage in ministry to migrants in their midst.

In this application we asked for and were awarded funds to pay for five (5) green card applications at \$400 each. These fees ended up ranging from \$100-\$300 per person instead and a portion had to be paid by the families. This allowed us to spread the funds out to more individuals. In the end, we were able to help five (5) families with a total of 27 individuals with their green card application fees!

Important **The Messenger**

For our January Messenger, please submit any news or announcements to georgia@firstwausau.org by December 22nd.

December Mission

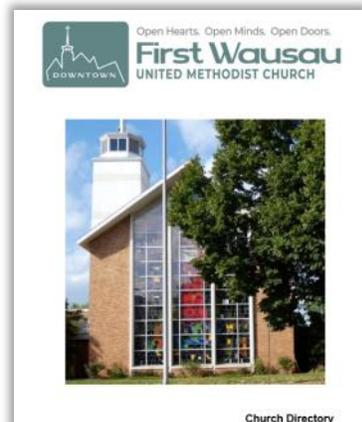
Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewa

This mission serves the residents of the reservation and deepens the relationship with the native community there. The donations will provide supplies for the early childhood programs and clothing for the children.

Throughout the month of December, donate loose change, put cash in the small brown envelopes, memo a check, or donate online under fund name: *Red Cliff*



- **AV/PowerPoint**—During Sanctuary services Visit the balcony on Sunday mornings for training
- **Ushers** - Specifically for 2nd and 5th Sundays, Contact the church office to help.
- **Nursery** — Per our policy, two adults or older youth need to be present to have the nursery open during the 10am service. We currently do not have but are seeking nursery volunteers. Contact Pastor Rebecca to help.
- **Coffee Hour**—Make a couple of pots of coffee (provided) and bring treats, including gluten-free options, to serve about 30-40 people. It is a great way to interact socially with your church family, meet new members, or celebrate birthdays and anniversaries. Signup in the Parlor.



The new church photo directories are now available.

You can pickup copies in the Narthex, Parlor, or church office.

Please do not remove copies provided in the pews.



United
Women
in Faith

At the November meeting, we reflected on the generations of women who came before as part of the World Thank Offering program. We made beaded keychains to remind us of the three facets of UWF—

- United
- Women
- Faith



ANNUAL COOKIE WALK

Following the Lessons & Carols Service on December 14th, take a stroll through Fellowship Hall and fill your own containers with your favorite cookies. Cookies are sold by the pound.

Monthly meetings are in the church parlor at 1:00 pm, unless otherwise noted.

- **Dec. 10** - Bring your memories of Advent and Christmas traditions to share.

WOMEN'S BOOK CLUB

Join us in the Parlor on **Thursday, December 4 at 4:00pm** to share with each other what books you have read recently and find a new one to dive into! Purchased books by our unit are available for check-out in the Parlor, or find the full list here: <https://uwfaithresources.org/prodDetail.cfm?productID=13204&catid=2175>



The Assembly, themed “Dream it! Believe it! Do it!” will take place in Indianapolis, Indiana, May 15-17, 2026. Registration for the event will open on Sept. 1, 2025. Visit <http://uwfaith.org/assembly>



The WMC Shelter is located in our church basement and have extended their stay here until March 31, 2026. Open seven days a week 6pm-8am, the shelter can house up to 60 people and a small meal is provided each evening. This shelter provides separation for women and men. For more info:

wmcshelter@wausauwi.gov
(715) 261-7824

[WMC Shelter Facebook Page](#)

End-of-Year Giving

Please submit all end of year giving to the church office by Sunday, December 28 to be included in this year's giving statements. 2026 pledge forms should be turned into the office ASAP for budgeting purposes.

To inquire about your giving, please contact our finance director, Georgia Reynolds. End of year giving statements will be mailed in January.

Online Giving

Online giving is available for regular offerings or other missions you wish to support. Account is not required.

[www.onrealm.org/
FirstUnitedMeth91919/give/now](http://www.onrealm.org/FirstUnitedMeth91919/give/now)



Connect Online!

Website:
firstwausau.org

Facebook:
facebook.com/WausauFUMC

YouTube:
youtube.com/@FirstWausauUMC

WiFi Network:
FUMC Guest
password: fumcpublic

Phone: 715.842.2201



Giving Trees



During the Advent Season, be sure to visit the giving trees in our Parlor. Each tree will be setup for gifts to be given to the Personal Needs Closet, Claire's Critter Closet, or New Beginnings for Refugees. You can take a card from the tree to fulfill a need request, or leave monetary donations on the tree. Please consider giving a little extra to one of these community missions. Thank you!

2025 Christmas Eve Services

4:00pm - Sanctuary (Choir)

8:00pm - Sanctuary (Strings)

**St. Paul's United Church
of Christ's Annual**

**Community
Christmas
Dinner**

December 25th
12pm - 2pm
St. Paul's UCC
426 Washington Street
Wausau, 54403

**Don't spend Christmas alone. Join Us for a
FREE Christmas Dinner with Your Community!**

Christmas Worship Times:
Dec. 24th: 6pm & 9pm

Dinner: Turkey, Ham, Sides, & Dessert / Cost: FREE
Please Use the Back Door (5th Street Entrance)

*Birthdays and anniversaries can
be found on calendar below.*

DECEMBER 2025



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	Joseph Schreiber (B) 11:30am Savvy Seniors (Patron Mexican Rest.)	6:00pm - Missions Team	4:30pm Bible Study 6:30pm Handbell Practice 7:15pm Choir Practice	8am AA 4pm UWF Book Club (Parlor) 7pm Scouts	Jan Clowes (B)	
Lynne Sydow (B) Besty Duginski (B) 8am Worship w/Communion (Chapel) 9am Sunday School/Adult Bible Study 10am Worship w/Communion (Sanctuary) 10:30am African Worship (Chapel) 11am Coffee Hour Potluck 4pm Community Meal	8	Yvonne Firary (B) Carrie Hockerman (B) 1-3pm PNC/CCC 5:30pm Trustees	1pm UWF Meeting 4:30pm Bible Study 6:30pm Handbell Practice 7:15pm Choir Practice	Arthur Chang (B) Cyrus Adams (B) 8am AA 7pm Scouts	Office Closed	9am-12pm Dress Rehearsal for Lessons & Carols
Sharon Gisselman (B) Stan Schacht (B) Lois Susor (B) NO 8AM SERVICE OR SUNDAY SCHOOL 10am Festival of Lessons & Carols 10:30am African Worship (Chapel) 11am UWF Cookie Walk (Parlor) 4pm Community Meal	15	Bob Bauer (B) 7pm Finance Committee	<u>WNE:</u> 6pm Christmas Dinner (Catered by Mint Café)	Dean Marquardt (B) 8am AA 7pm Scouts	Office Closed	11am - Charge Conference (Chapel)
8am Worship (Chapel) 9am Sunday School/Adult Bible Study 10am Worship (Sanctuary) 10:30am African Worship (Chapel) 11am Coffee Hour 4pm Community Meal	22	Ann Johnson (B) C. Merrill & MaDonna McMahan (A)	Office Closed	Office Closed	Office Closed	
Dennis Carey (B) John & Carole Macheck (A) NO 8AM SERVICE OR SUNDAY SCHOOL 10am Worship (Sanctuary) 10:30am African Worship (Chapel) 11am Coffee Hour 4pm Community Meal	29	30	Office Closed	Office Closed		
	Anita Gerber (B) Dick & Clare Ostwald (A)		New Years Eve Nancy Bogumill (B) Sara Koss (B)			

THE MESSENGER

First United Methodist Church of Wausau
903 Third Street
Wausau, WI 54403

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Our Mission:

Living as a community where God is forming deeply committed followers of Christ

Our Vision:

To be led by God to change lives and transform the world.

DECEMBER WORSHIP

Sunday Worship Times: 8:00AM Chapel | 10:00AM Sanctuary

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 7 HOLY COMMUNION

Signs and Stories

Psalm 72:1-8; Luke 1:5-24; Matthew 3:1-12

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 14

Festival of Lessons and Carols

(No 8am service or Sunday School)

Isaiah 11:1-9; Luke 1:26-38; Luke 2:8-20;

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 21

Signs and Faithfulness

Psalm 80:1-7; Isaiah 7:10-16; Matthew 1:18-25

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 24 CHRISTMAS EVE

Signs and Glory (4pm & 8pm Services)

Psalm 96; Isaiah 9:2-7; Luke 2:1-20

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 28

Signs and Power

(No 8am Service or Sunday School)

Psalm 148; Isaiah 63:7-9; Matthew 2:13-23

STAFF

Pastor

Rebecca Borke

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Director of Comm./Finance

Georgia Reynolds

georgia@firsttausau.org

Director of Discipleship

Julie Miede

julie@firsttausau.org

Building Engineer

Andy White

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