



THE MESSENGER

First Wausau United Methodist Church
Downtown Wausau Wisconsin



From the Pastor

By Pastor Rebecca Borke

In honor of St. Patrick this month, here is a wee bit of Celtic Christian tradition. There is a special kind of Irish prayer called a Loric, which is based on the Latin word for armor. These prayers of protection are attributed to Saint Patrick (ca. 377). They can still empower our faith more than sixteen centuries later. As we journey through the wilderness and often feel weak during this season of Lent, I invite you to pray for spiritual strength as you arise each day.

I arise today through God's strength to pilot me; God's might to uphold me, God's wisdom to guide me, God's eye to look before me, God's ear to hear me, God's word to speak for me, God's hand to guard me, God's way to lie before me, God's shield to protect me, God's hosts to save me, From snares of the devil, From temptations of vices, From everyone who desires me ill, Afar and anear, Alone or in a multitude.

I arise today through the strength of heaven; Light of the sun, Splendor of fire, Speed of lightning, Swiftmess of the wind, Depth of the sea, Stability of the earth, Firmness of the rock.

Christ with me, Christ before me, Christ behind me, Christ in me, Christ beneath me, Christ above me, Christ on my right, Christ on my left, Christ when I lie down, Christ when I sit down, Christ in the heart of everyone who thinks of me, Christ in the mouth of everyone who speaks of me, Christ in the eye that sees me, Christ in the ear that hears me.

I arise today through a mighty strength, The invocation of the Trinity, through a belief in the Threeness, Through confession of the Oneness of the Creator of creation.

In the name and strength of Christ, we pray. Amen.

Pastor Rebecca Borke

March 2026 Stewardship Newsletter

Grace That Keeps Moving

There's a difference between grace that stops with us and grace that keeps moving.

Grace, at its core, is a gift we didn't earn and can't repay. God offers love, forgiveness, mercy, and belonging not because we've checked the right boxes, but because that's who God is. And while receiving grace can be life-changing, one of the most faithful responses to grace is letting it flow through us to someone else.

The 2000 movie Pay It Forward explores this idea through a simple, hopeful premise. A middle-school student is given an assignment to come up with an idea that could change the world. His solution is disarmingly small: instead of paying someone back for a kindness, you "pay it forward" by doing something generous for three other people; something they couldn't easily do for themselves. Those people then do the same for others, creating a ripple effect of generosity and compassion.

The film isn't naïve about the difficulty of living this way. Not everyone responds. Some people stop the chain. Others are changed deeply. But the idea at the heart of the story rings true: grace grows when it's shared.

That's how God's grace often works in the real world. We receive forgiveness and choose to forgive someone else. We experience generosity and become more generous. We are shown patience and learn to extend patience to others. Grace doesn't lose power when it's shared - it multiplies.

Stewardship, at its best, is not about extracting resources or enforcing obligations. It's about helping people recognize the grace they've already received - and inviting them to pass it along. When generosity is rooted in gratitude and grace, it stops being a burden and becomes a joy.

Let Us Pray



- Ken Thario passed 2-6-26
- Darlene Kell passed 2-8-26

A grief counseling group is available for those in need of support during difficult times of grieving. Contact the church office or Julie Miehe to inquire. Weekly grief meditations are available on our website.



Savvy Seniors will be meeting on **Monday, March 2nd at 11:30am** at Pizza Ranch. 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. The next meeting is **Tuesday, March 24th at 10:00am** in the church parlor.



Have you been growing in your faith at First Wausau? If our congregation is starting to feel like your spiritual home, we invite you to explore how United Methodism works and why we

might be a good fit for your journey of faith. Please contact Pastor Rebecca if you are interested in learning more, and she will coordinate schedules for a 3-session class to deepen your connection and help you understand what it means to be a member.



The WMC Shelter has extended their stay with us until the end of April. 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 call (715) 261-7824 .

Chancel Choir Discipleship Report

Wednesdays at 7:15pm

The Chancel Choir, led by Rob Perkins, practices on Wednesdays at 7:15pm in preparation for Sunday worship. New members are always welcome!

Wednesday Night Fellowship

March 18th, 2026

Schedule:

5:00pm - Bible Study

6:00pm - Dinner

6:30pm - Handbell Practice

7:15pm - Choir Practice

If you are looking for a night out involving good food, great conversation, and a casual time to connect with people in our church, then please consider joining us on the 3rd Wednesday of most months, at 6:00 pm. The March meal will be a ham dinner catered by the Mint Café.

Time to Celebrate with the Reynolds Family!

Our church's Finance/Communications Director, Georgia, and her husband, Dennis, will welcome a little boy into their family soon, and our church family is ready to celebrate his arrival with them. An all-church baby shower will be held on **Sunday, March 22**, in Fellowship Hall, following the 10am church service. SPRC (Staff Parish Relations) will be hosting this event, and everyone is invited to attend.

Because of the timing, we hope you will join in and make this event an all-church brunch potluck as well. A sign-up sheet for the food is located on the coffee hour table in the parlor. Even if you would rather not bring a dish to share, please plan on attending to help Georgia and Dennis celebrate the upcoming birth.

Group gifts are being purchased if you would like to be part of them, or you may choose to share something with this family on your own. If you want to be part of the group gifts, please let Bonnie Goertz know by March 5.

I want to share a couple of things that are happening in our adult Bible study and Adult Sunday School classes. On Sundays, the group has been beginning by lighting a candle and lifting specific personal and community prayers to begin their study of the daily devotions for the week from "Steadfast 365 Days of Devotion". People are finding this particularly powerful and meaningful. The Wednesday evening class started a new Lenten study by Adam Hamilton on February 25th. The class meets at 5PM in the BK Smith room. This is a short six-week study described as follows: "Despite the Crucifixion's central place in Christian faith, the New Testament offers few clear answers about how Jesus' death saves---or why, exactly, he had to die. The New Testament writers use a host of metaphors—ransom, sacrifice, reconciliation, victory—but never explain exactly how it works or why it had to happen this way. What if that's because we've been asking the wrong question? What if the cross isn't a transaction to be explained, but a living Word from God meant to transform who we are and how we live? Adam Hamilton encourages us to ask what Jesus' death means. The breadth or meaning will astonish you, and more importantly, deepen your faith." Please join our group on Wednesday evenings to discuss the book, listen to the video and ask questions. If Wednesday evening keeps you from joining in this study, I am willing to consider another time to offer it to others. I think it is well worth the effort.

- Julie Mieke Director of Discipleship

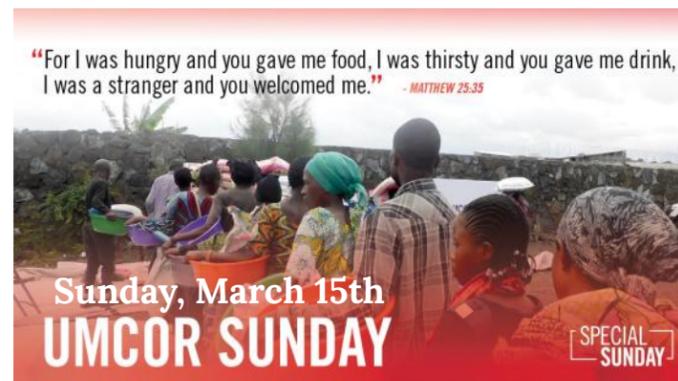
Beware of "Wolves" in Church Texts & Emails!

If you receive a text or email that looks like it is coming from the Pastor or church staff asking for gift cards, bitcoin, a copy of the directory, or a reply to discuss a "discreet request", **please do not reply!** These are scams using the name of clergy to prey on kind and generous people. With AI, they are even stealing voices and making phone calls that sound like people you know and trust. If it seems suspicious, trust your discernment, report it as a scam to your email or phone provider, and block the email or number.

March Mission



UMCOR is a humanitarian organization that assists the most vulnerable people affected by crisis or chronic need without regard to their race, religion or status. UMCOR's work is carried out by providing relief and assistance in response to natural and human-made disasters. Donate loose change or cash in the small brown envelopes in the pews, memo your check, or give online (*fund: UMCOR*).



BISHOP'S CONVOCATION OF LAITY 2026
MARCH 7TH, 2026
Portage UMC

Save the date for the 2026 Bishop's Convocation of Laity! This year's gathering will be held on Saturday, March 7, 2026, from 9:00am to 2:00pm at Portage UMC. A watch party will also be held at our church in the BK Smith Room. A light lunch will be provided and communion will be given by Pastor Rebecca at the conclusion of the day.



Please submit any news or announcements for the April messenger to georgia@firstwausau.org by March 24th.



United Women in Faith

Our February UWFaith program explored how maps have been used, especially in Black history, as tools for justice, connection, and reimagining community rather than division. We then applied this idea locally by mapping our own city, identifying lines of difference and discussing how we can intentionally cross them to better live out our faith in action.

The group continues providing protein items for Open Door on Wednesday mornings. Items can be dropped off in the labeled boxes in the kitchen to be delivered each week.



Upcoming Events:

- **Mar. 11, 1:00pm** - Monthly Meeting, Parlor
- **Apr. 11, 9am-12pm**—Social Action Day Zoom Event
Watch party available in BK Smith Room
- **May 2**—NE Dist. Annual Retreat (New London UMC)

WOMEN'S BOOK CLUB

Join us in the Parlor on **Thursday, March 26 at 4:00pm** for our discussion of the 1st half of *Seventy Times Seven* by Alex Mar from the Social Action category. If you'd like to be a part of the book club, you can pickup a copy of the book from Georgia or Julie at the church office.



For more info visit: <https://uwfaith.org/dayofgiving/>



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

March Host Groups:

- Mar. 1 - Baumann Family
- Mar. 8 - Latter Day Saints
- Mar. 15 - St. Andrew Lutheran
- Mar. 22 - First Hmong Missionary Alliance Church
- Mar. 29 - First Wausau

2026 Open Dates:

May 24th, July 5th & November 22

If you are interested in hosting one of these dates, contact the church office.

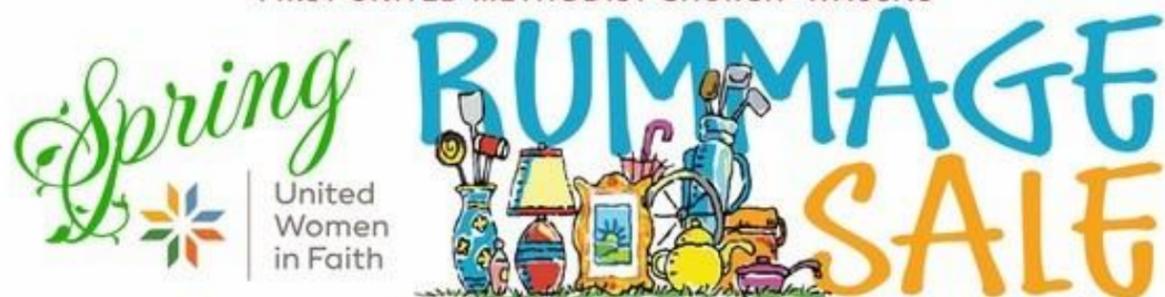
Church Office Move



The church offices have been officially relocated to the old PNC/CCC rooms by the BK Smith Room. The Trustees graciously installed new carpet and had the walls painted to prepare for this.

This new office location will allow our staff to better accommodate visitors and members as they enter through our main parking lot door. It also has freed up prime first floor space in our efforts to fill the church with tenants to help the church financially as we try to maintain our large building. If you know of any non-profits or other businesses that would align with our vision who are looking for rental space, please contact our building manager, Lana Mohs. We want to thank all the volunteers who helped with getting the new offices ready and moving the offices. Please bear with us as we finish up last minute items to complete the move.

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH-WAUSAU



Proceeds Will Benefit:
United Women in Faith
Mission Projects

Where:

903 Third Street
Wausau, WI

In Fellowship Hall inside the church
Use the north door from the parking lot on
Fulton St. to enter the church building.

When:

Thursday, April 9, 2026
9:00 am - 4:00 pm

Friday, April 10, 2026
9:00 am - 1:00 pm

What will you find at the sale?

Holiday Decorations Toys Home Decor
Jewelry Kitchen Items Books
And More!!!

Questions?

Sara Koss 715-297-4890
slgkoss@aol.com

Bonnie Goertz 715-716-0051
bgoertz@charter.net

Anyone is welcome to contribute items to the sale up to that week. It is a great opportunity to clean out closets / basements / attics and rid yourselves of holiday and household items you no longer need or use, and help out some very worthy mission causes.



Sunday, March 29

8am & 10am—Palm Sunday Worship

Thursday, April 2

7pm—Holy Thursday Service, Chapel

Friday, April 3

7pm—Good Friday Worship

We will be joined by Wesley UMC

Sunday, April 5

8am & 10am—Easter Sunday Worship

CAN COLLECTION



RAD donated a total of \$2,974 worth of animal food to Claire's Critter Closet in 2025. Please help us in our continued mutual support by bringing in your empty aluminum cans. Drop them in the Can Collection Bin located in the church kitchen or drop off bags of cans during church office hours. These funds not only help our own animal assistance program but others including Patriot K9s of WI, Fetch, Foster, Rescue, Neighbors' Place, etc.

Connect Online!

Website:
firstausau.org

Facebook:
facebook.com/WausauFUMC

YouTube:
youtube.com/@FirstWausauUMC

WiFi Network:
FUMC Guest
password: fumcpublic



LAY SERVANT MINISTRY TRAINING

March 14 & 28—First Wausau

Have you heard about Lay Servant Ministry (LSM)?

This is a United Methodist program that provides training to help laity deepen their faith and equip them to be more effective in leading, caring for others, and communicating. Each class requires a minimum of ten (10) hours of instruction and consists of laity from different churches across the region. Both the content and the connections are meaningful as faith and friendships grow. It all begins with the Basic class, and then advanced (specialty) classes can be taken.

We are excited to offer three LSM classes in Wausau on March 14 & 28, 8:30 am-4:00 pm at our church. Julie Mieke will teach the Basic class, Pastor Mike Zahn will teach the Polity class, and Pastors Rebecca Borke & Tim Gurlea will lead the Heritage class. A light lunch will be provided for everyone. The classes are free, except for the cost of a small book for each course that should be read in advance. Attendance is required on both days.

Please register at this link. You should sign up to take the Basic class unless you have already taken it.

<https://www.wisconsinumc.org/lsm-training>

Contact Pastor Rebecca if you have any questions.

Online Giving

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

www.onrealm.org/
FirstUnitedMeth 91919/give/nov



Birthdays and anniversaries can be found on calendar below.

MARCH 2026



Day	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 Pivot Scholarship Applications Due Bruce Chopp (B) Mary Fischer (B) 8am Worship w/Communion (Chapel) 9am Sunday School/Adult Bible Study 10am Worship w/Communion (Sanctuary) 11am Coffee Hour 11:15am Confirmation Class 4pm Community Meal Daylight Savings Time Starts	2 John Macheck (B) 11:30am Savvy Seniors, Pizza Ranch	3 Wendi Adams (B) 6:00pm - Missions Team	4 Lisa Fons (B) 5:00pm Lenton Bible Study (BK Smith Room) 6:30pm Handbell Practice 7:15pm Choir Practice	5 8am AA 7pm Scouts	6 Office Closed	7 9am-2pm Bishop's Convocation of Laity 2026 (Portage UMC) - Watch Party available in BK Smith Room
	8 Judy Hoover (B) 8am Worship (Chapel) 9am Sunday School/Adult Bible Study 10am Worship (Sanctuary) 11am Coffee Hour 11:15am Confirmation Class 4pm Community Meal	9 Margaret Anderson (B) Oliver Hornby (B) 1-3pm PNC/CCC 5:30pm Trustees	10 Margaret Anderson (B) Oliver Hornby (B) 1-3pm PNC/CCC 5:30pm Trustees	11 Mlenga M'Munga (B) 1pm UWF Meeting 5:00pm Lenton Bible Study (BK Smith Room) 6:30pm Handbell Practice 7:15pm Choir Practice	12 Office Closed	13 Office Closed	14 Kris Rybarczyk (B) Youn Woo Seo (B) 8:30am-3:30pm Lay Servant Ministry Training (First Wausau)
	15 UMCOR Sunday Rob Perkins (B) 8am Worship (Chapel) 9am Sunday School/Adult Bible Study 10am Worship (Sanctuary) 11am Coffee Hour 4pm Community Meal	16 10am Prayer Team (Parlor)	17 Karli Johnson (B) 7pm Finance Committee	18 London Larson (B) Dan Marzu (B) WNF: 5:00pm Lenton Bible Study 6:00pm Dinner 6:30pm Handbell Practice 7:15pm Choir Practice	19 8am AA 7pm Scouts	20 Office Closed Ann Chopp (B) Lewis Sakharuk (B)	21 Dan Maguire (B)
	22 8am Worship (Chapel) 9am Sunday School/Adult Bible Study 10am Worship (Sanctuary) 11am Reynolds Baby Shower/Brunch 11:15am Confirmation Class 4pm Community Meal	23 Grace Mfaume (B) Tom & Nancy Bogumill (A) 7pm Ministries Council	24 Maggie Schoenfeld (B) 10am Prayer Shawl Group (Parlor) 6pm SPRC	25 5:00pm Lenton Bible Study (BK Smith Room) 6:30pm Handbell Practice 7:15pm Choir Practice	26 Bonnie Goertz (B) 8am AA 4pm UWF Book Club (Parlor) 7pm Scouts	27 Office Closed Tim Harvey (B) Mauwa Misuu (B)	28 Sue Serrurier (B) 8:30am-3:30pm Lay Servant Ministry Training (First Wausau) 9-11am PNC/CCC
	29 Palm Sunday Jen Marzu (B) 8am Worship (Chapel) 9am Sunday School/Adult Bible Study 10am Worship (Sanctuary) 11am Coffee Hour 11:15am Confirmation Class 4pm Community Meal	30 Morgan Borchardt (B)	31 Barb Dinsmore (B) Suzanne Gebhardt (B)				

THE MESSENGER

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

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTSED

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.

MARCH WORSHIP

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

SUNDAY, MARCH 1 HOLY COMMUNION

Guided by the Promise

Psalm 121; Romans 4:1-5, 13-17; Genesis 12:1-4

SUNDAY, MARCH 8

Companion of the Journey

Psalm 95; Romans 5:1-11; Exodus 17:1-7

SUNDAY, MARCH 15 UMCOR SUNDAY

Journeying in Grace

Psalm 23; Ephesians 5:8-14; 1 Samuel 16:1-13

SUNDAY, MARCH 22

Redemption Road

Psalm 130; Romans 8:6-11; Ezekiel 37:1-14

SUNDAY, MARCH 29

PALM SUNDAY

Marching Orders

Psalm 118:25-29; Matthew 21:1-17

STAFF

Pastor	Rebecca Borke	rebecca@firstwausau.org
Director of Comm./Finance	Georgia Reynolds	georgia@firstwausau.org
Director of Discipleship	Julie Mieke	julie@firstwausau.org
Building Engineer	Andy White	

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Office Hours: 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. Monday-Thursday
(715) 842-2201

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