



THE MESSENGER

First Wausau United Methodist Church
Downtown Wausau Wisconsin



From the Pastor

By Pastor Rebecca Borke

Happy Resurrection season!

I celebrate the spring days of increasing sunshine and warmth. The snow and ice will soon melt into rivers and lakes, and the now-barren trees will leaf into a canopy of shade, songbirds, and silly squirrels. Bulbs and seeds will soon bear beautiful flowers and fruitful plants in a few short months. Most of what looked dead for the past five months was thankfully only dormant.

The three days from Christ's crucifixion on Friday to his resurrection on Easter morning must have felt like an even longer and colder winter. The disciples and curious crowds were buried under a blanket of despair and dashed hopes. The cold-hearted religious and military leaders were gloating, yet still guarding Jesus' borrowed tomb. Then some women braved the dark before dawn and went to face death to honor the One they loved and grieved with all their heart, soul, and strength.

On the chilly winter night of February 9, 1709, when John and Charles Wesley were 5 and 1 years old, their home burned down. Their father, Samuel, was an unpopular Anglican priest in Epworth, England, and it is believed their home was set on fire by disgruntled church members. Young John was miraculously saved from death as he jumped out of a second-story window into the arms of a kindly neighbor, just before the roof collapsed.

John, his parents, seven siblings, and a few servants weren't the only ones saved from the fire. A Bible and a poem his father wrote were salvaged from the rubble. It ends with the stanza,

*"But soon he'll break death's envious chain and in full glory shine.
O Lamb of God, was ever pain, was ever love like thine?"*

Christ has rescued all of us from eternal death. Because of God's sacrificial love for us, we can have hope and new life. As it seems like the world is burning around us, may we leap into a new season of loving God and neighbor with grace and hope. May God's resurrection power be revealed now and always in our lives, our church, and our world.

Gratefully,
Pastor Rebecca

April 2026 Stewardship Newsletter Starting with What We Have

In a Lenten devotional I read recently, Rev. Lizzie McManus-Dail reflected on the story of Jesus feeding the five thousand. When the disciples saw the crowd gathering, they immediately began doing the math. There were simply too many people and far too little food.

Their focus was on the problem.

But Jesus started somewhere else.

Instead of beginning with what was missing, Jesus began with what was already present: five loaves and two fish. What seemed impossibly small to the disciples became the starting point for a miracle in the hands of God.

Churches can fall into the same pattern of thinking. We sometimes begin by naming everything we lack – too few volunteers, tight budgets, or not enough people in worship. Scarcity can shape the way we see our future.

But the Gospel story reminds us that God does not begin with scarcity. God begins with what we have.

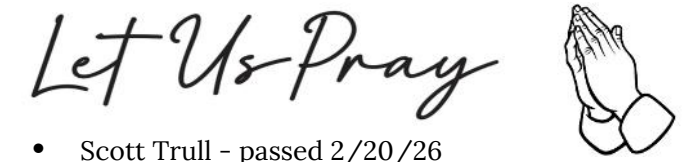
I once heard a pastor describe stewardship this way: imagine placing everything your church has on a table – your people, your ministries, your building, your finances, your passion for serving others. It might not look like much compared to the needs of the world.

But that is exactly how the miracle of the loaves and fishes began.

The miracle did not start with abundance. It started with a small offering placed into Jesus' hands.

And that is often where God's work begins today as well.

This reflection was inspired by a devotional by Rev. Lizzie McManus-Dail in the Sanctified Art Lenten devotional *The Good News Is... Together, the Impossible Is Possible.*



- Scott Trull - passed 2/20/26
- Joyce Mortt (Jen J.'s Mother) - passed 3/19

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



Savvy Seniors

Savvy Seniors will be meeting on **Monday, April 6 at 11:30am** at El Mezcal. 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, and loss, or for celebrations such as: baptisms, confirmations, graduations, and marriage.

The next meeting is **Tuesday, April 28 at 10:00am** in the church parlor.

Chancel Choir

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!

Jubilate Bell Choir

Wednesdays at 6:30pm

Jessica Wenzel leads our Jubilate Bell Choir practice on Wednesdays at 6:30pm in preparation for musical worship on May 3.



Holy Thursday, April 2

7:00pm—Service for All the Senses, Parlor

Good Friday, April 3

7:00pm - Sanctuary

We will be joined by Wesley UMC

Easter Sunday, April 5

8:00am & 10:00am

NOTE FROM TRUSTEES

I want to share some updates of recent repairs and upgrades happening around the church. Many volunteers, vendors and our amazing staff have been working hard to move the offices of Georgia, Julie, and Pastor Rebecca. Now located at the main entrance to the Church across from the BK Smith room, we're almost done. New carpet and paint make the new offices a warm and inviting place. New VOiP phones (voice over internet phones) will be installed in each office as well as a new phone in our kitchen. We will soon be working on installing window A/Cs in each office.

During December a section of the protective glass of our stained glass in our beautiful Sanctuary was shattered as well as a small hole in the stained glass itself. The protective glass panel has been replaced. We are currently working with a stained glass restoration company to repair the small hole.

This work would not be possible without the generous giving of the Congregation of First Wausau. Your gifts make it possible for the Trustees to maintain our Church building and facilities. Our current funds are getting low with all that is happening to keep our Church a safe and welcoming place. Please prayerfully consider an offering to allow us to continue the work of the Trustees.

Have any questions about all that the Trustees are up to? Feel free to contact me. I would love to discuss what's going on.

With gratitude,

Dave Green - Chair of the Trustees
(804) 512-6509 | dgreenz428i@gmail.com

Message From the Finance/Communications Director

Dennis and I would like to sincerely thank everyone for the kindness and generosity shown as we prepare to welcome our first baby. The baby shower was such a thoughtful blessing, and we truly appreciate the gifts, prayers, and encouragement.

I will be on maternity leave beginning around April 13. During my leave, I will not be available or responding to messages so that I can fully focus on recovery and caring for our new baby.

For any questions or needs during that time, please contact:

- Julie Mieke** – For finance related inquiries
- Julie Mieke or Pastor Rebecca** – For all other inquiries
- Jen J. or Missions Team** – For Community Meals

-Georgia Reynolds

Discipleship Report

We currently have Sunday School for youth from 6-12th grade, and adults. Both groups meet on Sunday mornings at 9AM. There will be no Sunday School on Easter. Our adult Bible study meets on Wednesday evenings at 5PM in the BK Smith Room. We are finishing a study by Adam Hamilton called, "Why did Jesus Have to Die? The Meaning of the Crucifixion." We will be returning to our study of the Disciplines on April 8th. There are currently three confirmands who are preparing to become members of the church this spring. In May we will also be celebrating graduation and those who have been awarded a Pivet Scholarship. Peter Johnson graduated early this semester, and the following will be graduating this spring/summer: Dante Rue, Gideon Adams, Michael Marzu and Oliver Horby.

As a member of the District United Women in Faith, I would like to invite you (anyone) to a watch party in the BK Smith Room on April 11th from 9am to noon. Light Breakfast will be provided.

The theme is "IMMIGRATION IN WISCONSIN -- STANDING UP FOR DUE PROCESS"

Our local unit is willing to cover the cost of registration for the first 10 who register.

REGISTER ONLINE at: <https://wisconsin-reg.brapp.com/UWInfaithsocialactionday2026>

April Mission Refugee Support

Our congregation supports refugees in their effort to establish a new life in our community. Earlier this year we were able to purchase 2 washers and 3 dryers for 3 different refugee families who were in need of their own laundry appliances. To help, donate loose change or cash in the small brown envelopes in the pews, memo your check, or give online (*fund name: refugee support*).



April Host Groups:

- Apr. 5 - Mount Sinai
- Apr. 12 - First Presbyterian
- Apr. 19 - First English Lutheran
- Apr. 26 - St. Stephens Lutheran

2026 Open Dates:

May 24th, July 5th & November 22

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

Wednesday Night Fellowship

April 15th, 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 April meal will be Build Your Own Sub.



United Women in Faith

For our March Program, we reflected on the image of a meandering river to explore how UW Faith has grown, adapted, and continued its mission through the years. Through a collaborative "Meander Map" activity, we identified past impacts, current strengths, and future opportunities of our unit to ensure our mission continues flowing strong for generations to come.

The group continues providing protein breakfast items for Open Door on Wednesday mornings. If you would like to contribute, items can be dropped off in the labeled boxes in the kitchen to be delivered each week.

Upcoming Events:

- **Apr. 8, 1:00pm** - Monthly Meeting, Parlor
- **Apr. 9 & 10**—Spring Rummage Sale, Fellowship Hall
- **Apr. 11, 9am-12pm**—Social Action Day Zoom Event "Responding to Love" - Focus on Immigration Issues *Watch party available in BK Smith Room (free of charge for first 10 attendees)* Register online at: <https://wisconsin-reg.brapp.com/UWInfaithsocialactionday2026>
- **May 2**—NE Dist. Annual Retreat (New London UMC)



The Assembly, themed "Dream it! Believe it! Do it!" will take place in Indianapolis, Indiana, May 15-17, 2026. Registration for the event is open. Visit <http://uwfaith.org/assembly> for more information or to register.

WOMEN'S BOOK CLUB

Join us in the Parlor on **Thursday, April 23 at 4:00pm** for our discussion of the remainder 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 Julie at the church office.

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH-WAUSAU

Spring **RUMMAGE SALE**
United Women in Faith

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
sigkoss@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. Please put those donated items on the stage in the Fellowship Hall during office hours.

Volunteers are always needed earlier that week for setup, during the event to assist shoppers and provide security, and with cleanup/packing after close on Friday, April 10th.

Connect Online!

Website:
firstwausau.org

Facebook:
facebook.com/WausauFUMC

YouTube:
youtube.com@FirstWausauUMC

WiFi Network:
FUMC Guest
password: fumcpublic



The WMC Shelter is open at our location until April 19th. 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 .

Online Giving

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

www.onrealm.org/FirstUnitedMeth91919/give/now



APRIL 25 11AM WAUSAU

THE 2026 **EARTH DAY CELEBRATION**

Sponsored by Citizens' Climate Lobby NAOMI

Our Missions Team is excited to invite anyone interested to join a community Earth Day celebration on Saturday, April 25 at 11:00 a.m. at Schofield Park (606 E. Randolph St.)

This annual event, organized by Citizens' Climate Lobby in partnership with NAOMI, celebrates care for God's creation and the diversity of our community. Each year volunteers gather to plant a small orchard of fruit trees in a local county park. Participants work in teams, and our church will have a team representing First Wausau.

The Parks Department will guide the planting process. Please bring gloves and a shovel if you have them. The event will conclude with a Talking Circle for reflection and community connection.

There is no cost to participate, though donations are welcome to help fund next year's trees. If you're able, consider joining us and bringing family or friends. The more helping hands the better! If you are unable to attend, donations are also welcome to help towards next year's event.

ROADSIDE CLEANUP VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

We are looking for volunteers to help with our annual roadside cleanup on **May 3rd** for our church's designated highway section at the intersection of W/WW north of Wausau, past Brokaw Corners. The group will meet in the church parking lot at 11:30am to carpool. Allow up to two hours to complete.

Bags, vests, gloves, and bottled water will be supplied. Please wear long sleeve shirts, pants, caps, and sunscreen. Call Maggie S. (715) 842-9809 if planning to attend.



CAN COLLECTION

Please help us 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 RAD assist Claire's Critter Closet but others including Patriot K9s of WI, Fetch, Foster, Rescue, Neighbors' Place, etc.



The Messenger

Please submit any news or announcements for the May messenger to jongoertzdesign@gmail.com by Thursday, April 23.

APRIL 2026

Birthdays and anniversaries can be found on calendar below.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Easter Sunday Jane Dovenbarger (B) 8am Worship w/ Communion (Chapel) 10am Worship w/ Communion (Sanctuary) 11am Coffee Hour 4pm Community Meal	Diane Vernon (B) Russell Bennett (B) 11:30am Savvy Seniors, (El Mezcal)	6pm Missions Team (BK Smith Room)	5:00pm Lenten Bible Study (BK Smith Room) 6:30pm Handbell Practice 7:15pm Choir Practice	8am AA 7pm Holy Thurs. Service for All the Senses (Parlor)	7pm Good Friday Service (Sanctuary)	Barb Ritchie (B) Cathrine Harmon (B) Robert & Suzanne Gebhardt (A)
Dottie Nietert (B) 8am Worship (Chapel) 9am Sunday School/Adult Bible Study 10am Worship (Sanctuary) 11am Coffee Hour 4pm Community Meal	Diane Vernon (B) Russell Bennett (B) 11:30am Savvy Seniors, (El Mezcal)	6pm Missions Team (BK Smith Room)	Jordan Fons (B) 1pm UWF Meeting 5:00pm Bible Study (BK Smith Room) 6:30pm Handbell Practice 7:15pm Choir Practice	Karen Petersen (B) 8am AA 9am-4pm UWFaith Rummage Sale 7pm Scouts	Office Closed	Dane Larson (B) Tom Kufahl (B) 9am-12pm UWFaith Social Action Day (watch party available in BK Smith Room)
Native American Ministries Day Barb Maquire (B) Aleksey Sakharuk (B) Arthur & Jacqueline Chang (A) 8am Worship (Chapel) 9am Sunday School/Adult Bible Study 10am Worship (Sanctuary) 11am Coffee Hour 12-4pm Greater Northern Chorale Concert (Sanctuary) 4pm Community Meal	Faiuma Abwe (B) 10am Prayer Team (Julie's Office)	Morgan Rohland (B) 1-3pm PNC/CCC 5:30pm Trustees	WNF: 5:00pm Bible Study 6:00pm Dinner 6:30pm Handbell Practice 7:15pm Choir Practice	Marc & Sheila Carlson (A) 8am AA 7pm Scouts	Office Closed	Jon Goertz (B)
Lin Strong (B) Ray & Vicki Nowaczyk (A) 8am Worship (Chapel) 9am Sunday School/Adult Bible Study 10am Worship (Sanctuary) 11am Coffee Hour 4pm Community Meal	Mary Brown (B) 10am Prayer Shawl Group (Parlor)	7pm Finance Committee	Ken Attoe (B) 5:00pm Bible Study (BK Smith Room) 6:30pm Handbell Practice 7:15pm Choir Practice	Lily Atonio (B) 8am AA 4pm UWF Book Club (Parlor) 7pm Scouts	Office Closed	Nancy Turner (B) 9-11am PNC/CCC 11am Citizen's Climate Lobby Tree Planting (Schofield Park)
	Mark & Janelle Milne (A) 5:00pm Bible Study (BK Smith Room) 6:30pm Handbell Practice 7:15pm Choir Practice			Kieran Grogan (B) Sharon Rayborn (B) 8am AA 7pm Scouts		

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.

APRIL WORSHIP

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

HOLY THURSDAY, APRIL 2

A SERVICE FOR ALL THE SENSES - 7:00 PM
Ps 116:12-19; John 13:3-17; Matthew 21:18-27, 26:20-30, 36-46

GOOD FRIDAY, APRIL 3

Reaching Destination - 7:00 PM
Ps. 31:9-14; Matthew 14:55-59, 15:1-5, 26:14-25, 27:27-44; Mk 14:32-41; Isaiah 53:1-5; Luke 23:44-46

EASTER SUNDAY, APRIL 5

HOLY COMMUNION

A New Start
Psalm 118:14-24; Acts 10:34-42; John 20:1-18

SUNDAY, APRIL 12

Unless I See
Psalm 16:5-11; 1 Peter 1:3-9; John 20:19-31

SUNDAY, APRIL 19

Astounded Us
Psalm 34:1-8; 1 Peter 1:17-23; Luke 24:13-35
(First Nations Versions)

SUNDAY, APRIL 26

Knowing the Voice
Psalm 23; 1 Peter 2:19-25; John 10:1-10

STAFF

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

903 N. Third Street, Wausau, WI 54403
Office Hours: 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. Monday-Thursday
(715) 842-2201
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