



Pastor's Corner



When one of our sons was still little, my family and I used to tease him and call him "Curious George." The boy was very curious for everything. Few years later, I, too, became "Curious George." I was curious to know more about "Black Friday." That was a

very interesting Friday night in my life. The night was so dark and cold but many people parked their cars and camped for hours in the freezing weather as they waited the exact time to start the shopping which was set by 10:00PM. Having spent a few years in Wisconsin by then, I still had to face the fact that I could not stand the cold outside. But I was also determined to know what was going on in the store, acquaint myself with the procedure of shopping on Black Friday. I decided to get into the store where it was a bit warmer and started moving around and asking questions. There I joined other shoppers. There was a great excitement everywhere. The Christmas atmosphere was already in the air. As I wandered in the store, I discovered that there were many reasonably priced items. Unfortunately, my budget was limited so I could not afford to purchase them. This is what we refer to in my country as "*kudisha meso*," an expression that means "*to satisfy the eyes, but not the heart*." My eyes were satisfied because I saw, but my heart hurt because I did not get what I saw.

When the store opened it was in a very short period before many items were gone but I was able to pick up my only one item: GPS to facilitate my travelling. Now, time to join the lines for payment. In front of me there was a woman who seemed to be an experienced shopper. In such a fast pace, where there was a lot of pushing to get what you wanted; she managed to pick up many items. Sadly enough, she did not have enough credit on her card to buy all the items she had collected. Many items were finally left at the cashier and she only managed a few. What a headache!

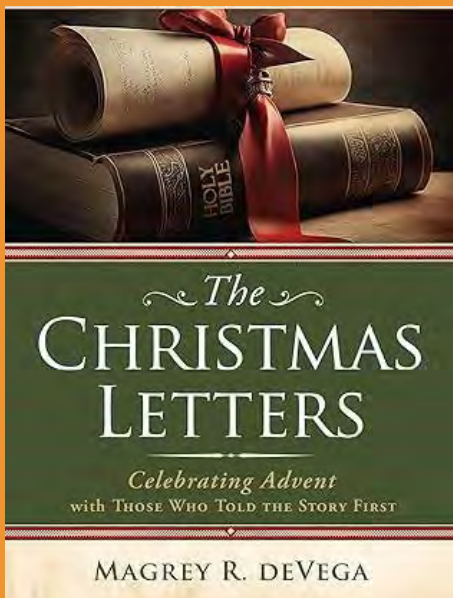
As Christmas approaches, this is the moment that people in a consumer world experience all kinds of headaches. Some people remain broke and in debt as they seek to accumulate more things some of which will never even be used. Other people remain exhausted and stressed because of all the activities and preparations associated with the Christmas season. As we begin this Advent, which is a journey leading us to Christmas, this is a moment we are invited to stop and reflect on the reason for this season. Do we see Christ in Christmas or become guilt in our greed and busy-ness? Remember, Jesus is the reason for Christmas. And if Jesus is the reason for Christmas, "What would be a perfect way to celebrate Him in the consumer world?" We need to be cautious, least, we lose the meaning of Christmas.

Christmas is all about God coming to us to be One of us. As a result, we know He understands well what we all go through, both the good and the bad, all the disappointments as well as the blessings of our varied and fragile lives. This time of year, we rightfully sing carols and songs of joy but we also take great consolation in knowing our God is close, understanding and caring fully about all the things we have to go through. Christmas is all about God fulfilling His promise to reestablish the broken relationship between us and the Divine, God became flesh and dwelt among us: Emmanuel. This is a story about how much God loves us, and wants to affirm His relationship with us. It is a story of hope being realized. Christmas is all about God coming into a broken world to make it straight. Christmas is about God coming into a divided world to unify it. Christmas is about God coming into a hurting world to bring hope. Christmas is also about God coming into this world to elevate and give a new status to those who have been looked down. This God comes into the person of Jesus Christ. During this season, I want to invite everyone to look at Jesus, because Jesus is all what we need in today's world. I also invite to focus on Jesus and His purpose for coming to us: He is coming to save you.

In His Service,
Pastor Kyabuntu

Four Weeks Bible Study

Are you so busy in life that you cannot attend the Bible study even though you want to? If “yes,” ask yourself this one question: “Where is my priority in life?” During this Advent season, we are offering a short Bible Study Class titled “The Christmas Letters.” You may or may not know the story of your birth. If you do, there is something special about hearing your origin story again and remembering how it all began for you. That is why we observe Advent: to celebrate how it all began for us. In this book, we are invited to hear about the miracle of Christ’s birth from those who first told the story. The letters in the New Testament, known as the Epistles, contain the first attempts by the church to understand and celebrate the mystery of the Incarnation. They point us to the origins of what we believe about Jesus, fully human and fully divine. By spending time with these holy, ancient words this Advent, we will come to know the meaning of Christ’s coming like never before. If you are interested in joining this class or have any question, please contact Mike Blodgett or Pastor Kyabuntu. Looking forward to seeing you in this class.



Christmas Eve Service December 24, 7:00 p.m.

*For unto us a Child is born.
Unto us a Son is given.*

*Merry Christmas
from your church family at
Community United Methodist Church.*



Special Christmas Offering

We will be sending a special Christmas Offering envelope by the second Sunday of Advent so that they can be returned during this Advent season. This special Christmas offering will be placed in our general fund to meet the many regular needs of our congregations where we have remained behind. This will help us to finish the year strong and positive financially. Thank you for your willingness to participate in this last effort in our financial campaign for the year 2025.



Christmas Giving Opportunities

I am sure that most of you are already aware of the various opportunities that we have to help make this Christmas season special for those who are less fortunate than we are. So this is primarily a reminder for you.

Hats, Mittens and Scarves - This is to benefit our friends at Rooted and Rising as well as Northcott Neighborhood House. We are collecting handmade or store-bought hats, mittens and scarves for children and adults. Donations should be brought to church by Sunday, December 7, so we can deliver them to the two organizations that following week.

Gift Cards - These gift cards should be purchased from either Target or Wal-Mart, and suggested denominations are \$10 - \$20. We will evenly divide the donated cards and give them to the staff of Northcott and Rooted and Rising so they can purchase gifts for the people that are supported by these great United Methodist organizations. As with the Hats, Mittens and Scarves, please bring your card donations to church no later than Sunday, December 7. There is a donation box in the office into which the cards can be deposited.

Lasata Christmas Gift Program - We are once again collecting gifts for the residents of Lasata, many of whom are former members or congregants of CUMC. There is a sign-up list on the Welcome Center counter in the church lobby. Please sign up for one or more of these residents, and bring your unwrapped gifts to

church by Sunday, December 7. Gifts should be tagged with the line number (which will identify the recipient), gender, and what the gift is.

Interfaith Caregivers "Gifts for the Heart" - This is a new addition to our holiday giving opportunities this year, and while not normally one of CUMC's normal offerings, Interfaith is an Ozaukee County program that we support financially. This year, they would like to be able to provide each of their clients with a \$10 gift card from Piggly Wiggly, Meijer, Pick 'n Save, Walgreens, Walmart, or Sendik's. These cards should be mailed directly to Interfaith Caregivers of Ozaukee County, 2360 Dakota Drive, Grafton, WI 53024.

The above list is a lot to ask for, and of course no one should feel obligated to support all of these. But if you are able, your donations will put a smile on the faces of those who we will never know - but who God knows. As always, thank you for your generosity and compassion.

Craig Pierce and the Outreach Committee



Happy Birthday to You!

December 1 Emil Assmann

December 2 Robin Carpenter

December 18 Barbara Ridgely

December 20 Karen Eggert
Joseph Grams

December 23 Kim Polan

December 26 Darrell Olson
Ellen Holyoke

December 30 Val Olson

Appreciation from Pastor Kyabuntu



As the year 2025 comes to an end, I want you to know how grateful I am for your presence, prayers, witness, support, and encouragement. Because of your graciousness and generosity, CUMC is able to continue sharing God's love in our community and with all people who enter its doors each week. Thank you so much.

And for all those who serve in one way or another, I want to convey my special appreciation to you in particular for all your prayers, time, and efforts you put together to grow our church. Many times, it can be easy for all what you do to go unnoticed. Yet, your services are what make the church to function up to this point. Thank you and may God richly bless you.

Women of Faith

On Monday, December 8, Women of Faith will gather for a festive and fun Christmas Luncheon at the Flipside Cafe and Grill, 2074 Washington St., Grafton 53024, where back room seating has been reserved for 11:30 a.m., and food will be ordered from the menu. Please bring a wrapped "white elephant" gift for a gift exchange. The usual "4th Monday coffee fellowship" will be skipped during the busy week leading up to Christmas.

2026: Peaceful Living, Chapters 6 and 7, will be the topic for discussion in the CUMC library on Monday, January 12, at 1:15 p.m., and "4th Monday coffee fellowship" for all interested women of the church and friends will resume on January 26 at Big Apple Bagels, located on Wisconsin Ave., Grafton, between Culver's and Pick 'n' Save. Women of Faith welcomes new members anytime. Please contact Barbara Anne Ridgely about ordering a book or if you have any questions.



**Thank you, Maggie,
for sharing your amazing
talent with us!**



Finance/ Stewardship Update

On behalf of the entire Finance/Stewardship Committee, we extend our sincere gratitude for your time, effort, and monetary contributions this year. Your support is invaluable to us.

We acknowledge the congregants who have returned their pledge commitment form for 2026. If you have not yet returned your card, please mail it to the church, or email it to the treasurer at treasurer@cedarburgcumc.org, or place it in the offering at church. Even if you are unable to pledge at this time, kindly return the card indicating this, as it assists us in planning for the church's budget.

Our committee will follow up with those who have not responded.

An update to our financial position for General Budget 2025:

As a result of your generous giving, building rental use, investment income, and prudent expense management, we are projecting to be very close to budget or even exceed it. We are fortunate to be in this position.

As we face new challenges for 2026, we express our deepest gratitude for any and all donations received this year and next year. Attached is the 2026 General Budget approved at our Charge Conference in November. Questions can be directed to our Finance/Stewardship Committee. Thank you again.

Finance/Stewardship Committee

COMMUNITY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH Budget 2026

	<u>Budget 2026</u>
Revenue	
Building Use of facilities	8,000.00
Fundraisers	12,000.00
Holiday Offerings	10,000.00
Investment Income	19,000.00
Loose Offering	2,000.00
Miscellaneous Revenue	500.00
Revenue	
Revenue-General Budget	212,008.00
Unpledged Revenue	8,000.00
Total Revenue	220,008.00
Special Giving Revenue	20,000.00
Total Revenue	291,508.00
Gross Profit	291,508.00
Expenditures	
Administration	7,500.00
Christian Outreach-Mission	8,000.00
Church Outreach (Evangelism)	1,500.00
Conference	
Annual Conference Expenses	1,000.00
Conference Apportionment	37,128.00
Total Conference	38,128.00
Copyright Licenses	950.00
Credit Card Fees	100.00
Education	
Education-Children	4,600.00
Youth Ministries	1,000.00
Total Education	5,600.00
Facilities	
Maintenance & Repairs	17,000.00
Parsonage Utilities	10,000.00
Utilities & Insurance	25,000.00
Total Facilities	52,000.00
Fellowship & Welcoming	800.00
Finance/Stewardship	400.00
Landscaping	1,000.00
Music	200.00
Staff Relations	
C.P.P.	1,854.00
Pastor Business Expense	300.00
Pastor Continuing Education	1,000.00
Pastor Medical Insurance	25,032.00
Pastor Pension Plan - CRSP	10,144.00
Pastor Travel Expense	2,000.00
Payroll Expenses	123,500.00
Staff Education	200.00
Workman's Comp Ins	1,100.00
Total Staff Relations	165,130.00
Technology	9,000.00
Worship	1,200.00
Total Expenditures	291,508.00
Net Operating Revenue	-
Net Revenue	-





Pumpkin Spice French Toast Casserole

This Pumpkin Spice French Toast Casserole is the perfect fall breakfast or brunch dish. It combines the comforting flavors of traditional French toast with the warm, aromatic spices of pumpkin pie. <https://betterhomebase.com/pumpkin-spice-french-toast-casserole>

Ingredients

1 loaf about 1 pound of day-old bread, cut into 1-inch cubes

(French bread or challah work great!)

6 large eggs

2 cups whole milk or 1 cup milk and 1 cup heavy cream for extra richness

1 cup pumpkin puree not pumpkin pie filling

½ cup brown sugar

¼ cup granulated sugar

2 teaspoons vanilla extract

2 tablespoons pumpkin pie spice

¼ teaspoon salt

Optional add-ins: 1/2 cup chopped pecans or walnuts 1/4 cup dried cranberries

For the topping:

¼ cup all-purpose flour

¼ cup brown sugar

1 teaspoon pumpkin pie spice

¼ cup cold butter cubed

Instructions

Grease your 9×13 inch baking dish with butter or cooking spray.

Spread the cubed bread evenly in the prepared baking dish.

In a large bowl, whisk together eggs, milk, pumpkin puree, sugars, vanilla extract, pumpkin pie spice, and salt until smooth.

Pour this pumpkin custard mixture over the bread cubes, making sure all pieces are evenly coated. Gently press down on the bread to help it absorb the custard.

Cover the dish with plastic wrap and refrigerate for at least 3 hours or overnight. This allows the bread to soak up all that pumpkin-y goodness!

When you're ready to bake, preheat your oven to 350°F (175°C).

In a small bowl, mix flour, brown sugar, and pumpkin pie spice for the topping. Cut in the cold butter using a pastry cutter or fork until the mixture resembles coarse crumbs.

Sprinkle the topping evenly over the casserole.

Bake for 45-55 minutes, or until the top is golden brown and the center is set.

Let it cool for 10-15 minutes before serving. This will allow the casserole to set and make it easier to slice.

Tater Tot Casserole



<https://www.messforless.net/tater-tot-casserole/>

This overnight Tater Tot Casserole simple to make. Prepare it the night before and just pop it in the oven in the morning. Delicious, warm and CHEESY!

Prep Time
25minutes mins

Cook Time
40minutes mins

Total Time
1hour hr 5minutes mins

Servings
8 pieces

Ingredients

6 eggs
20 oz sausage links use two 10 oz packages
1 cup milk
16 oz Tater tots
2 ½ cups shredded cheese we used a cheddar and jack mix
½ teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon pepper

Instructions

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
Grease a 9 x 13 casserole dish.

Brown sausage according to package directions and cut into bit sized pieces. Spread cooked and

cut sausage onto greased casserole dish.

In a large bowl, beat together milk, eggs, salt and pepper.

Cover the sausage in the casserole dish with the egg mixture.

Cover with one cup of cheese.

If you will be serving this the next morning, cover and refrigerate at this point.

In the morning:

Spread 16 oz of tater tots on top of the cheese.

Add the remainder of the cheese on top.
Bake for 40 minutes at 350 degrees.

Notes

Mix cheddar and jack cheese for a rich, cheesy flavor.

Don't bother thawing the tater tots first. Just spread them evenly over the cheese layer.

Throw in some veggies like onions or mushrooms to bulk up the casserole and boost the flavor.

On November 16, Patrick and Maggie Schiel made an Egg Bake and a Pumpkin French Toast Bake for Coffee Fellowship. They had many members asking for recipes. We have included them here for all to enjoy.

Wander and Whisk Fundraiser



This successful fundraiser was started in 2024 and the Fundraising Committee has decided to continue it for 2025.

For those of you unfamiliar with this event, this is a cookie walk and craft sale that is open to our community. Another way to draw potential interest for an individual seeking a new church home.

As the old saying goes, many hand make light work. This event takes lots of hands so you can volunteer in various ways. Bakers – get out your fancy Christmas cookie recipes and prepare to bake. Crafters – design and make your special crafted items to sell. Those of you who do not bake or craft, assistance is still needed. You can put up posters in locations you shop or work

to advertise. On Friday, December 12, 9:00-12:00 you can assist in set up and accepting donated items, and on the day of the sale, Saturday, December 13, 10:00-1:00, you can help with greeting and assisting guests, weighing cookie purchases, and other helpful ways. There will be sign-up sheets circulated soon so prepare to add your name to the volunteer lists.

If you would like to know more about this fundraising opportunity, you can contact either Linda Dillman or Pat Lietzke.

CUMC Fundraising Committee



**Wander
& Whisk**
A Sweet Treat Stroll

“The Night Everything Changed”

A Children and Student Ministries Christmas Service

On Sunday, December 21, our children and students will lead us in a joyful and heartfelt retelling of the greatest story ever told, the birth of Jesus, in a special presentation titled “The Night Everything Changed.” This is a Sunday you won’t want to miss!

Through Scripture, storytelling, and creativity, our young people will guide us back to that miraculous night in Bethlehem when heaven met earth. But this service is meaningful not only because of the story, it’s meaningful because they are the ones telling it.

There is something powerful about hearing the gospel through the voices of the next generation. When kids and teens proclaim the birth of Jesus, we see faith taking root. We witness the story becoming their story. Their joy, simplicity, and sincerity remind us of what Jesus himself taught, that the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Their retelling invites us to listen with childlike wonder, softening our hearts to the beauty of the Incarnation in a way that adults alone cannot always accomplish.

This year’s presentation, “The Night Everything Changed,” invites us to imagine what it was like for Mary and Joseph, for shepherds startled by angels, and for a world quietly awaiting its Savior. Through their eyes, the miracle feels fresh again. Their voices remind us that the good news is for all generations and that God is still at work shaping young hearts to share His light.

This service is also a celebration of the commitment, creativity, humor, and enthusiasm of our kids and students. Their willingness to step forward in worship strengthens the whole church, reminding us that the body of Christ is vibrant, growing, and filled with future leaders God is already forming.

We encourage you to invite your family, neighbors, and friends. Whether they’re longtime believers or visiting for the first time, this will be a warm and welcoming moment to experience Christmas through the voices of those who often see God’s wonder most clearly.

Join us on **December 21** as we celebrate the night that changed everything and the Savior who continues to change lives today.

Come ready to smile, to worship, and to rejoice in the gift of Jesus – and in the young disciples who help us see Him anew.

Stevie Stibor
Director of Children and Youth Ministries



2025 Tax Deduction

To receive credit on your 2025 tax return, all gifts must be received in the church office by December 28, 2025 which is the last Sunday of the year 2025. If you have year-end gifts that you were or are planning to make to our general fund, please have them to the church by

that date. Any contributions received after this date will be part of your 2026 gifts. Thank you for supporting CUMC through your prayers, gifts, presence, and service this year. May God bless you.

Through Their Eyes – What Christmas Means to Kids and Teens

Christmas has a way of capturing the imagination of every generation, but there is something especially meaningful about seeing this sacred season through the eyes of our kids and teens. Their wonder, sincerity, and openness offer us a fresh lens through which to experience the miracle of Christ's birth.

For children, Christmas feels like a season bursting with joy – twinkling lights, familiar carols, and the excitement of giving and receiving. Yet even beneath all the fun and festivity, kids often understand something profound: Christmas is about **Jesus**. To them, the manger isn't just part of a story; it's the beginning of God's greatest gift. Many children talk about how they feel closer to God at Christmas – how the nativity scene, services celebrating advent, or singing "Silent Night" help them understand that Jesus came because God loves them.

Teens, meanwhile, often wrestle with bigger questions, purpose, identity, belonging. Christmas speaks deeply into those longings. For many of them, the birth of Jesus represents hope in a world that often feels overwhelming. They see in the story of Bethlehem a God who draws near, who chooses humility, who understands struggle, and who offers peace when life feels chaotic. As they grow in their faith, teens begin to recognize Christmas not just as a tradition but as the moment God's plan unfolded in a way that changed history and continues to change us.

What stands out for both age groups is the celebration of Jesus' birth. Children marvel at the angels filling the sky with songs of glory; teens reflect on the courage of Mary, the faithfulness of Joseph, and the stunning reality that the Savior entered the world in complete humility. Together, they remind us that Christmas isn't merely about sentiment, it's about incarnation. It's about the moment when God stepped into human history, choosing vulnerability so that we could know His love up close.

Kids and teens notice the joy of Christmas, but they also grasp the significance. They

understand that we celebrate because Jesus' birth brought light into darkness. They understand that Christmas is the beginning of the story of salvation. They understand that the baby in the manger is the same Christ who calls us to follow Him today.

In many ways, their perspective pulls us back to the heart of Christmas. They celebrate simply and honestly – because the Savior has come. They remind us that Christmas is not just a memory but an ongoing invitation: to rejoice, to worship, to welcome Jesus into every part of our lives.

So, as we journey through this season, may we take time to notice how the young people in our church are experiencing Christmas. Listen to their questions. Hear their excitement. See their faith. In their uncomplicated joy and genuine wonder, God often speaks to us again.

This Christmas, let us join our children and teens in celebrating the miracle of Christ's birth – the night when hope arrived, when light broke through, and when love Himself came near.

Jesus is born. And because of that, everything has changed.

Stevie Stibor
Director of Children and Youth Ministries





Twander & Whisk

A Sweet Treat Stroll

**Saturday
December 13
10 AM - 1 PM**

Capture the Christmas season with delectable cookies, candies & treats, when Community United Methodist Church holds a **Cookie Walk & Holiday Craft Fair**. The funds raised will go to faith supported programs. For more information visit our website - cedarburgcumc.org.



Cedarburg
Community
United Methodist Church

W68N563 Evergreen Blvd, Cedarburg, WI



Cedarburg **Community** United Methodist Church

W68N563 Evergreen Blvd.
Cedarburg, WI 53012
cedarburgcumc.org 262-377-3832

Monthly Newsletter of Community United Methodist Church

Please worship with us on Sunday mornings, either in-person
or online at cedarburgcumc.org | 10:00 a.m.

Memorial Day Through Labor Day - Sunday School for all ages at 9:00 a.m.

Pastor | Pastor Banze Kyabuntu | PastorKyabuntu@CedarburgCUMC.org

Church Office | 262 • 377 • 3832 |

Hours | Monday - Thursday from 9:00 a.m. to Noon.
W68N563 Evergreen Blvd., Cedarburg, WI 53012

www.CedarburgCUMC.org

"We are a Safe Sanctuary Congregation"