



Fennimore  
Stitzer  
United  
Methodist  
Church

1450 Second Street  
Fennimore, WI 53809

**January 2021** Newsletter



## NEWSLETTER

*We need rain to grow ...*

Pastor Bud

I have always liked the rain. I like listening to it rain, I like thunderstorms, I like the smell after it rains. I have jumped in puddles after a rain (yes, even as an adult). I like watching a garden and crops grow. I like rain. We need rain to grow...

"The world was better without umbrellas. I don't know when or where it became a necessity for us to shield ourselves from the rain, to block downward movement. I hear dozens of mother and father figures reminding me that without my umbrella I could catch a cold. I know, I know. But the little boy in me still wants to run free and uncovered, with rain falling down onto my head and with water splashing up from the puddles that I absolutely must jump into.

Rain is different than ponds and rivers and oceans. Rain can fly. And we can too. We can fly. We can fly, but we cannot become the Rain. We can only become one drop sent from the Great Cloud above down to the earth to make things grow. To fill up ponds and rivers and oceans.

Direction is important. Wisdom knows that things must come down in order to bring things up. When they were little, my daughters would approach me with open arms and raised eyebrows silently communicating their desire to be lifted up. To do so, I had to bend down to pick them up. And when speaking with children, the best teachers know that they

must get on the children's level and kneel or sit on the floor with them. This occurs not only for practical purposes, allowing for better understanding with direct eye contact and a shorter distance for the sound of words to travel, but also for the powerful symbol communicated when one who is taller, stronger, and in authority gets down with those who are smaller, weaker, and under the authority. Coming down to the level of a child helps them grow up.

Rain knows this too. Crops cannot grow unless the water comes down to their level, even lower. The faithful farmer prays for rain during dry seasons, knowing that her sustenance and way of life depend upon Heaven opening the floodgates. God hears and sends a downward movement to replenish the land and bring growth. The rain comes down to the level of the crops and goes beneath it to enrich and refresh the land." (Charles Lattimore Howard, Pond River Ocean Rain/)

I think too many of us use our umbrellas too much. I think we shield ourselves from God because we think we got it ourselves, that we are in control and that we do not need God's help. However, without the Rain we cannot grow. We simply cannot! God wanted us to experience God's love, so God sent Jesus down so that we could learn about love and grow, and be refreshed, and our spirit replenished and to save us from ourselves. But then we put up our umbrellas to keep Jesus from entering. When we do that, we experience our own dry seasons. But then the Rain will come, and we will dance in the Rain.

"Dance, then, wherever you may be, I am the Lord of the Dance, said he, And I'll lead you all, wherever you may be, And I'll lead you all in the dance said he... I am the life That'll never, never die; I'll live in you, If you'll live in me..." (Lord of the Dance) It's time to put away the umbrellas and let the Rain come.

*God bless and God's got this!*

## *Where Your Heart Is*

Pastor Yang

My cousins and I were playing baseball outside when one of us accidentally hit the tennis ball (we played with a tennis ball since they are less destructive when they hit things) into the alley right behind the garage. As we waited for my cousin to retrieve the ball, we soon heard him shout ...

“Wow! I found \$50 bucks!”

It was soon decided that a couple of us would run over to the Hostess store just a couple blocks away and purchase as much candy as possible with the money and return to share it with everyone else. Even though the candy and treats tasted great, it was much later that half of us were sick to our stomachs with way too much sugar, while the other half wished we would have used the money on other kinds of foods instead.

Even though our immaturity led us to the wrong choice that day, the choice that my cousin and I made is not that much different from many of the choices we make today. Many of us work or earn wages and what we do with the money we earn is up to us. Unfortunately, we often decide to use our money on material things that might satisfy us for one second, but become worthless the next. That is that issue with purchasing material things – it may interest us for a little while but once we get bored of it or once it becomes broken, it's worth to us becomes nothing.

Rather than buy material things, maybe it's better to use our money so experiences instead. When I say “experiences” I mean something positive or something that can be helpful or fun to others. As we start to wonder what to do with our end of year or Christmas bonuses – why not create a memory instead of adding one thing to the other “stuff” you already have in your life. It may be hard to travel anywhere safely these days but maybe buying tools to fix something with your family

will be fun. One year, my Dad took apart our old dresser drawers and my parents and I cleaned and re-stained. That's an experience that I'll always treasure and remember.

It's been proven that people remember unique and fun experiences rather than the joy they received from material things such as clothes or jewelry. Are there times you have to spoil yourself – sure. I'm also a believer that true happiness can only be found with others, even if the only other person is God. These days many people are finding joy walking on trails or enjoying the beauty of nature at the many parks throughout the United States. Maybe that is something for you, especially if you like time by yourself or maybe do not always have a big group of people to enjoy yourself with.

In Matthew 6:21 it reads – “For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” May your treasure and heart be with God, family, friends, or your own health. Do not spend time on keeping with the Jones', but instead spend time keeping up with conversation and prayer. God bless!

*Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!*

**CHRISTIAN**  
E D U C A T I O N

Sunday School will be starting Sunday, January 10<sup>th</sup> and will remain virtual for the time being. If there are materials that will be needed for a certain week, those will be sent in the mail. If your child didn't sign up the First Semester and would like to be included in the Spring Semester, please contact Holly Straka at [hollymstraka@gmail.com](mailto:hollymstraka@gmail.com).

## UMW

Hello 2021! We hope you bring us back together soon!

The month of January is named after '**Janus**', **the Roman God of Gates and Doorways**. Janus is represented with two heads that are back to back, which signifies that he is looking backwards, as well as forward.

JANUARY 1, 2020 – we looked forward to a new year; setting goals, planning trips ... all to be halted by the COVID 19 Virus. Reflecting on the struggles we experienced individually and collectively, **does** serve a purpose.

It allows us to grieve, and acknowledge the suffering and loss we may have had. There is HOPE, there is LOVE and there is a LOT of GOOD in this world. Let us remember 2020 and take the strength we've gained, both individually and collectively, and make 2021 a great year!

Pain, struggle, suffering, crisis and trials do not have the last word. Christ does! Hope in Christ will NEVER disappoint.

**NEWS:** The UMW met on December 2, 2020 and wrapped up our year's meetings all in one. It was so nice seeing each other. We understand some chose not to attend, but hopefully we will see more join in as vaccinations increase and the year progresses. We enjoyed pizza and beverages before putting our cheer boxes together and delivering them. Some went out that evening and some the next day.

We look forward with hope that we can conduct meetings more normally this year. Our first one is set for March 24<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 PM. Stay tuned to future newsletters to see if we can make that happen.

## From the 1996 UMW Cookbook

Fresh Peach Pie – Bea Freymiller



1 – 9" Pastry  
Fresh Peaches  
1 C Heavy Cream  
1 C Sugar  
2 – 3 Tbls. Cornstarch  
1 tsp. Almond Extract (*optional*)

Line a pie pan with pastry  
Add a layer of fresh peaches, cut in half, with the cut side up.  
Mix together the cream, sugar and cornstarch and pour over peaches.  
Sprinkle with cinnamon.  
Bake at 350 degrees until peaches are tender and mixture has thickened.

*\*This is the easiest peach pie recipe I have ever come across, so simple that I actually called Bea's daughter and asked if it was complete!? It was! She attested that it is the most delicious pie and that the family always got their piece of pie first at picnics ... before it disappeared.*

*Bea raised her family on this pie and other good cooking (of course). What a blessing Bea is ... we will miss you!*

Below are links to the Wisconsin and National United Methodist Women's websites. Please explore and see what is being done!

<http://www.wisconsinumw.org/>

<https://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/>

### *Depot Exchange*

The Depot Exchange is still in need of volunteers! **However**, they are currently not allowing volunteer groups and are limiting the amount of volunteers per day. Please give them a call at (608) 822-4060 to schedule a time to volunteer! They would greatly appreciate it.

## Prayer for 2021

*(borrowed from Debbie McDaniel, Crosswalk)*

Dear God, Thank you that you make all things new. Thank you for all that you've allowed into our lives this past year, the good along with the hard things, which have reminded us how much we need you and rely on your presence filling us every single day.

We pray for your Spirit to lead us each step of this New Year. We ask that you will guide our decisions and turn our hearts to deeply desire you above all else. We ask that you will open doors needing to be opened and close the ones needing to be shut tight. We ask that you would help us release our grip on the things to which you've said "no," "not yet," or "wait." We ask for help to pursue you first, above every dream and desire you've put within our hearts.

We ask for your wisdom, for your strength and power to be constantly present within us. We pray you would make us strong and courageous for the road ahead. Give us ability beyond what we feel able, let your gifts flow freely through us, so that you would be honored by our lives, and others would be drawn to you. We pray that you'd keep us far from the snares and traps of temptations. That you would whisper in our ear when we need to run, and whisper in our heart when we need to stand our ground.

We pray for your protection over our families and friends. We ask for your hand to cover us and keep us distanced from the evil intent of the enemy; that you would be a barrier to surround us, that we'd be safe in your hands. We pray that you would give us discernment and insight beyond our years, to understand your will, hear your voice, and know your ways. We ask that you would keep our footsteps firm, on solid ground, helping us to be consistent and faithful. Give us supernatural endurance

to stay the course, not swerving to the right or to the left, or being too easily distracted by other things that would seek to call us away from a close walk with you.

Forgive us for the times we have worked so hard to be self-sufficient, forgetting our need for you, living independent of your spirit. Forgive us for letting fear and worry control our minds, and for allowing pride and selfishness wreak havoc over our lives. Forgive us for not following your ways and for living distant from your presence. We confess our need for you...fresh...new...again. We ask that you make all things new, in our hearts, in our minds, in our lives, for this coming year. We pray for your refreshing over us.

Keep your words of truth planted firm within us, help us to keep focused on what is pure and right, give us the power to be obedient to your word. And when the enemy reminds us where we have been, hissing his lies and attacks our way, we trust that your voice speaks louder and stronger, as you remind us we are safe with you and your purposes and plans will not fail. We ask that you will be our defense and rear guard, keeping our way clear, removing the obstacles, and covering the pitfalls. Lord, lead us on your level ground.

We ask that you would provide for our needs, we ask for your grace and favor. We pray for your blessings to cover us, we pray that you would help us to prosper and make every plan that you have birthed in our heart to succeed. We pray that others would take notice of your goodness and could not help but to say, "These are the ones that the Lord has blessed."

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Help us to be known as great givers, help us to be generous and kind, help us to look to the needs of others and not be consumed by only our own. May we be lovers of truth, may the fruits of your spirit be evident in our lives - your love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

Shine your light in us, through us, over us. May we make a difference in this world, for your glory and purposes. Set your way before us. May all your plans succeed. We may reflect your peace and hope to a world that so desperately needs your presence and healing. To you be glory and honor, in this New Year, and forever. In Jesus' name, Amen.

May you have a blessed and healthy 2021. Pastor Bud

### *Food Pantry Needs:*

Rice  
Canned Fruit  
Cereal  
Mixed Vegetables  
Pasta  
Mac and Cheese

### *Thank You!*

Fennimore UMW,  
Thank You so much for the Christmas gift!  
Everything was delicious as always and very much appreciated.

God Bless, Catrice Hunt