



PATHWAYS

Emmanuel Community United Methodist Church



DECEMBER 2024

Emmanuel Community United Methodist Church Monthly Newsletter

N84 W16707 Menomonee Avenue, Menomonee Falls, WI 53051 ✧ 262-251-3830 ✧ www.ec-umc.com

OUR DECEMBER CALENDAR

Advent Sundays: 12/1, 12/8, 12/15, 12/22

The Advent Conspiracy worship series

Soup, Stories, and Songs

Wednesdays, 12/4, 12/11, 12/18

6:30-7:30 PM (CH) A light meal is served.

Advent Study: *An Unlikely Advent* by R. Billings

Thursdays, 12/5, 12/12, 12/19 (CL)

9:30-10:30 AM and 5-6 PM

Women's Contemplative Service:

Friday, 12/6 at 6:30 PM

Children's Christmas Program: Sunday, 12/15

The Christmas Program will be integrated into the 8:30 and 10 AM worship services in Celebration Hall.

All-Choir Sunday: Sunday, 12/22

Enjoy a musical worship experience at 8:30 and 10 AM, both in the Sanctuary.

Christmas Caroling: Sunday, 12/15, 1:00 - 3:30 PM

Christmas Eve: Tuesday, 12/24

2 PM Christmas Eve with Communion (S)

4 PM Family Christmas Eve (CH)

8 PM Traditional Christmas Eve (S)

All services include special music and a message from Pastor Matt.

Sunday, 12/29: 9 AM worship (S)

No Sunday School, but there will be a Children's Time during the services and special activity bags will be available.

SEW & SEWS GIFTS

December is National "Buy Some Fabric Art from your Local Sews & Sews" Month!

Maybe we just made that up, but, seriously, please help support our missions by purchasing unique sewn or quilted gifts for someone you love this Christmas. The Sew & Sews will be putting up a display in Fellowship Hall after Thanksgiving.



CHRISTMAS GIVING THE MISSION WAY

This Christmas season, the Missions Team is offering three ways you can give to others:

1. Provide a jacket or coat (or contribute toward one) to a child or teen through Rooted & Rising. See details on page 5.
2. Bring mittens, hats, gloves, to adorn our Mitten & Hat tree in Fellowship Hall. These will be distributed after Christmas to R&R- Washington Park and Northcott Neighborhood House.
3. At Northcott, wrap presents that will be given to children who may not get any on Christmas Day and given out at Northcott's annual Holiday event. We will carpool on the following dates, leaving church at 11:30 AM and returning around 3:30 PM: Tuesday, 12/3; Wednesday, 12/4; Thursday, 12/12. Contact Mary Klein, Bob Weiland, or Bonny Walters for more information.



WOMEN'S CONTEMPLATIVE CHRISTMAS

Join us on Friday, 12/6 for refreshments in Fellowship Hall at 6:30 PM and a quiet service in the Sanctuary at 7 PM.

No RSVP needed. Invite a friend who might appreciate a moment to breathe during this busy season.



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A WORD FROM PASTOR MATT

Pastor Matt Hadley; MattH@ec-umc.com

This Advent, Let's Conspire Together

Dear Church Family,

As we enter the Advent season, it's easy to get swept up in the hustle and bustle—shopping lists, parties, and endless to-do lists. But what if we took a step back this year? What if we reimagined Advent as a season of intentional worship, simple living, and heartfelt giving?



This December, we'll journey together through a powerful worship and sermon series called "Advent Conspiracy." It's an invitation to reclaim the true meaning of Christmas. Advent is the season where we intentionally prepare our hearts and anticipate the celebration of Christ's birth – the moment that changed everything. Advent Conspiracy is counter-cultural movement that helps us reorient our hearts back to Christ. It's about letting go of traditions that actually take our focus away from God during Christmas and embracing the wondrous moment when Jesus entered our world to make things right.

To help guide us through this process, there are four tenets, or principles we follow: Worship Fully, Spend Less, Give More, Love All. Instead of getting lost in consumerism, we'll explore how to:

Worship Fully because Christmas is about Jesus. If we forget this foundational truth, everything else falls apart. May our actions and our words come from a place of true worship. (12/1)

Spend Less because we know mindless consumption is not the way to celebrate our Savior. By spending a little less on ourselves during Christmas we are able to more joyfully give to others in need. (12/8)

Give More of ourselves because this is the way of Jesus. God gave us his Son and now it is our turn to reflect that same selflessness to the world. We share our time, talents, and presence with the people we love. (12/15, Children's Program)

Love All because we have been loved first. We believe that the poor and hurting of our world can be reached by God through the way we choose to celebrate Christmas. (12/22, All Choir Sunday)

Each Sunday, we'll unpack one of these themes, grounding ourselves in Scripture and practical ways to live them out. Together, we can experience a Christmas that changes not only our hearts but the world around us.

Mark your calendars and invite a friend—this series is for anyone longing for a more meaningful Advent. Let's conspire together to make this season not about "more stuff" but about more Jesus.

Grace and Peace,
Pastor Matt

ANNUAL CHURCH CONFERENCE, WEDNESDAY, 12/11 AT 6:30 PM

Reverend John Sumwalt will be facilitating our Church Conference this year. It is scheduled for Wednesday, 12/11 at 6:30 PM, in conjunction with our Advent "Soup, Stories, and Songs" gatherings. Rev. Sumwalt will be our storyteller for the evening.

The Church Conference is a brief meeting held yearly to approve the Pastor's compensation and elect a slate of officers for the Administrative Committees of our church (Trustees, Staff-Parish, Finance, Nominations) and select chairpersons. All are welcome to participate in the discussions, but only full members may vote.

CHURCH OFFICE

262-251-3830 Church@ec-umc.com

Hours: Monday–Thursday, 9 AM–1 PM

Christmas closure: Tuesday-Friday, 12/24-12/27



YOUTH MINISTRIES

Contact: Bill Follmann; BillF@ec-umc.com, 414-881-3023

Saturday 12/14, 5-7 PM Come bake and decorate cookies! These treats will be served at the Children's Christmas program the next morning. Although some cookies may not make it to the tray?!



Sunday, 12/15, 1-3:30 PM A church-wide caroling event will start at church and car-pool to the different care facilities in the Falls. This is a great mission event which brings Christmas joy to the elderly.

Friday, 1/10 - Sunday, 1/12 The much-anticipated Wisconsin conference winter youth retreat at camp Lake Lucerne has been a favorite activity for the youth as they have a chance to grow closer to God. There's fun interaction with other youth as well as the great winter activities available like sledding, winter hikes, and broomball plus large indoor group games, singing, and camp-style worship.

Please register online and let Bill know if you are going to attend this event!! Do not pay anything online! Sign up quickly as there is a limit of 65 students for this event!!! When the total hits 65, that will be the cut-off for the whole state!

How much?? Youth Ministries will cover \$90 of the \$140 registration fee,



so your cost is only \$50 per student.

Who: All students (6th-12th grades) will need to register online in addition to getting your information to Bill. **DO NOT PAY ONLINE!** Since the church covers part of the cost, you will write a check to the church for your student's part (\$50pp) and the church will send a check to pay for everyone.

NOTE: This is a 10-point event for Confirmands. Here is the link for online registration:

<https://wiumcamps.campbrainregistration.com/>

Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns.

These events were suggested by the Youth Council.

ADULT DISCIPLESHIP

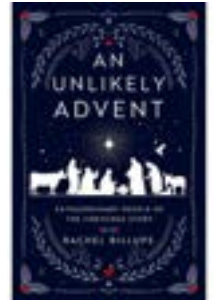
Contact: Janet Ray; JanetR@ec-umc.com

Advent Study: *An Unlikely Advent*

Mary, Joseph, the baby – and maybe a sheep or donkey – those are the “standard” elements of most Nativity scenes. But there are others who aren't always (or ever!) included in the creche who still have an important role in helping bring the reality of God-with-us to life. Maybe this Advent is the time we overcome our negative narrative, extend our circle, and allow the trajectory of our lives to be interrupted.

For three Thursdays in December, through video, examination of the Bible, and shared experiences, we'll consider the “villainous,” the “strange,” and the “worthless” participants of the nativity story. We'll meet in Chapel Lounge on Thursdays (12/5, 12/12, 12/19) during the day from 9:30 – 10:30 AM or in the evening from 5 – 6 PM.*

Rachel Billups' *An Unlikely Advent* is available in the church office at the discounted price of \$5. Rev. Billups is lead pastor at New Albany United Methodist Church in Ohio.



*Choir members are welcome to bring a bagged dinner so they don't go to rehearsal hungry!

WE GIVE THANKS!

We are grateful for all the gifts of time, talent and treasure made by this congregation in 2024.



Look for your 2024 annual statement of giving by 1/11/25.

Thanksgiving is already behind us, and we are headed into Advent. This is the time of the year when we wrap up pledges for the upcoming year. We are slightly behind last year's total pledges from 128, so if you have not yet made a pledge please do so. 2025 pledge forms are available from the office.

2025 Giving Envelopes

Individual pledge envelopes for 2025 will be available for pick-up outside the church office by 12/15. If you give by VANCO (QR code) or EFT, (electronic funds transfer), you will not receive envelopes. If you are joining the Emmanuel Community UMC community and need envelopes please email Anna Thompson, Financial Secretary at Annabhthomp@gmail.com or call 320-309-2003.

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY NEWS

Contact: Liz Cannon; LizC@ec-umc.com/262-370-7512

Please welcome our new Nursery Attendant!

The Children's Ministry is pleased to inform you that we have hired Doricela (Dori) Herrera-Sanchez as our new Nursery Attendant.

Dori will work with our Nursery Coordinator, Renee Rusch, providing love and care to infants and toddlers while their parents attend church or other special events at Emmanuel Community UMC. Dori is friendly and outgoing, so be sure to say hi and introduce yourself to her. She is a great addition to our staff!



Children's Sunday School

Your savior is born today in David's city.

He is Christ the Lord. (Luke 2:11)

The elementary school aged children had a lengthy study of Moses this Fall, learning to trust and believe that God's love is always with us.

This month we begin our Celebrate Wonder Winter Curriculum with a focus on Advent.



Advent is the time when we wait and prepare for the birth of Jesus. There is a focus on waiting for all of us this month.

Our spiritual practice for the next few Sundays will be on exploring Advent through presence. Thanks to the Women's Ministry, we have Advent calendars to mark off the days. We have Christmas programs and decorating to help us be present with God as we wait.

Thank you to Angie Schneider, Bonny Walters, and Nate Schlotthauer for teaching the middle school aged group last month. Jean Reif continues to work with the middle school youth this December.

Spice Rack is the name of the curriculum for the season. By using



scripture from Matthew, Luke and John, students will see how the Christmas story unfolds as they move through the Advent season. This four-week study is perfect for Advent and Christmas.

Club 4/5 and Acolyte Training

Club 4/5 had its first get together last month! The

Powers Family hosted a "Tailgate Party" and the service project for the future Youth Group members was to bring food to fill Bill's truck. The event was well attended, and a movie outing is being planned! Check out the bulletin board outside of Fellowship Hall for more information. Sign up to join in the fun and fellowship!



*The remaining planned Acolyte training dates and times are below. We meet in the Narthex.
Lesson 2: Monday, December 2, at 6 PM
Lesson 3: Monday, December 9, at 6 PM
Each lesson is 30-40 minutes. Parents are welcome.

Christmas Pageant & Children's Choir

This year's Christmas program "Santa Tells the Story of Jesus" will be presented at both services on Sunday, December 15. We are excited to present this play and share the joy that children bring to this season of hope, love, and peace.



Until 12/15, Sunday School starts at 8:30 AM, with program/music rehearsal 9:15 to 10 AM.

Our Dress Rehearsal will be on Saturday, 12/14, at 9:00 AM.

Program participants - please arrive at 8 AM on 12/15! Moms and dads - consider helping out! The Children's Choir sings at both services on Sunday, 12/22. Children should be in their robes ready to warm up by 8:15 AM. Please stay for Sunday School and holiday fun and games until the second service at 10:00 AM - the children sing very early in the order of worship.

Teachers, teachers, where are you?

Would you like to start the New Year out right? Resolve to teach!

There are lots of opportunities to volunteer and share your talents to Children's Ministry! As of the writing of this article, there is only one volunteer signed up for one Sunday in January of 2025.

Emmanuel United Methodist Church needs you! Ms. Liz needs you! Most importantly the children need you! Please sign up to serve our youngest disciples.

Ready to volunteer? Please contact Liz Cannon at lizc@ec-umc.com or 262-370-7512.

Check out *ENews*, *Community News*, and the *Pathways for updates*.

MISSIONS

Contact: Mary Klein; MaryKlein1@gmail.com

Kids Winter Jackets Needed!

'Tis the season of falling temperatures and the need for warm winter jackets. The kids served by Rooted & Rising Washington Park could use our help in getting winter jackets and snow pants for the approaching winter season.

You can help! Here's a list of what's needed:

New & gently used winter jackets

Sizes: infant thru 18 months

2T thru 6T

Youth 6 thru 16

New & gently used snow pants

Sizes: 18 months

2T thru 6T

Youth 6 thru 10



Please drop off any donations in Fellowship Hall. Use the bin labeled "Kids Winter Jackets."

Cash or checks can be dropped off at the displays outside the Sanctuary and Celebration Hall any Sunday through December 15.

Cash and checks can also be left in the church office Mondays-Thursdays until 12/15.

A PRIVATE SPOT FOR WOMEN

We've created a private corner in the anteroom of the Women's Restrooms near the office for nursing moms or anyone who needs a little privacy.

There's a chair that rocks, a screen to block the view from the entrance, and a box of tissues nearby.

Thank you to the Trustees for this newly renovated, bright space!

Thank you, Jim Mergerner, for restoring a broken screen to usefulness again!



*a private spot
for nursing moms or anyone
who needs some time alone*



STAYING HEALTHY

Now that cold/flu/COVID season is back, please wear a face mask if that increases your comfort at church. Stay well, everyone!

CHRISTMAS POINSETTIA ORDER

Order poinsettias for use in our worship spaces at Christmastime. Orders are due on 12/9.

Choose your 6 1/2" pot of Red, White or Jingle Bell flowers for \$12 each. There will be order forms in the bulletin. Flowers may be purchased in Honor or Memory of someone, which can be indicated on the order form.

Make all checks out to ECUMC and indicate Poinsettia in the memo line.

Flowers can be picked up after the 8 PM Christmas Eve service or during the following week.



DECEMBER WORSHIP

Sunday, 12/1 —8:30 AM (S) and 10 AM (CH)

Advent Conspiracy: Worship Fully

Friday, 12/6 Women's Service—6:30 PM (FH/S)

Sunday, 12/8 —8:30 AM (S) and 9:45 AM (CH)

Advent Conspiracy: Spend Less

Sunday, 12/15—8:30 AM (CH) and 9:45 AM (CH)

Children's Program

Advent Conspiracy: Give More

Sunday, 12/22 —8:30 AM (S) and 10 AM (S)

All-Choir Sunday

Advent Conspiracy: Love All

Tuesday, 12/24—Christmas Eve

2 PM and 8 PM - Sanctuary

4 PM - Celebration Hall

Sunday, 12/29 —9:00 AM (S)

Christmas Leftovers

There will be Children and Youth Sunday School except for 12/29.

Adult classes meet on 12/1, 12/8, and 12/15 only.



MUSIC MINISTRIES

Contact: Bill Follmann; BillF@ec-umc.com

We have great musical opportunities this December!

First - Please plan to attend the **Children's Christmas program** as part of the worship experience on Sunday, December 15. The children have been working hard on this year's presentation and I am sure you will not want to miss it. Both the 8:30 and the 10:00 AM services will feature the program. Both services will be in Celebration Hall.

Second - We are going **Christmas caroling** on Sunday, December 15, from 1 to 3:30 PM! This is a great time to get out into the community and raise our voices as we sing well-known Christmas carols with those who struggle to get out at this time of the year. We will meet in the church parking lot at 1 PM and carpool to local care facilities. Dress in your festive clothes (nothing that plays a tune, please) for a fun afternoon.

Third - Our annual **All-Choir Sunday** is December 22 at 8:30 and 10:00 AM. Both services will be held in the Sanctuary and we will fill the room with joyous melodies and the songs and carols of Christmas. Finally - **Christmas Eve** will have three services.

This first is at **2 PM in the Sanctuary** with Holy Communion. Our Youth Singers will sing at this service along with other special music.

The next service is at **4 PM in Celebration Hall** where the service will be geared toward our younger attendees and families. Special music will be provided for this service.

Our final service will be at **8 PM in the Sanctuary**.

The Chancel Choir is scheduled to provide music at that service.

The many wonderful musical opportunities this Christmas season make it a great time to invite a friend, neighbor or relative to join you in worship.

Please let Bill know if you have any questions or concerns. BillF@ec-umc.com or Bill's cell 414-881-3023.



BOOKS BETWEEN BITES

Contact: Mary Jo Karnath; AKarnath@wi.rr.com

Books Between Bites will meet in on December 13 (the 2nd Friday of the month). The day group will meet at Ally's 1:00 PM. The evening group will not meet in December.

YAHAS MEET 12/17

We will meet on Tuesday, 12/17 at 11 AM. Jan and Amy have planned some games to play and we'll sing carols, too! Please bring a "White Elephant" (something you already have but no longer want valued under \$3) wrapped in newspaper - these will be our prizes! Lunch will include your donated vegetable, salad, or dessert plus ham and scalloped potatoes. Dues are \$2.



DECEMBER TIPS TO CARE FOR CREATION

Change the usual pre-Christmas conversation of "What do you *want* for Christmas?" to a focus on "What do you *need*?"

Choose a gift that is zero-waste, such as a shampoo bar, preserves from local farmers, some bamboo toilet paper, a bracelet made of plastic recovered from an ocean, a packet of seeds for wildflowers. If you don't wish to receive presents, invite gift givers to **shower you with their presence** instead. What can you do together to create memories?

Buying clothes for Christmas gifts? **Read the labels**. Choose items made of natural fibers (organic cotton, linen, wool, silk, hemp, bamboo) or recycled fibers. Fossil-fuel-based polyester, nylon, acrylic, spandex, lycra release microplastics into water when washed, harming sea creatures and ultimately humans.

Stay in touch with friends and family with an email or digital card. It's cheaper and more earth-friendly than a card/letter and postage stamp.

Focus on "enough" with holiday foods. Food waste that ends up in landfills becomes methane, which exacerbates climate change. Feast with gratitude and joy—and with the goal of little to no waste.

When disposing of a live Christmas tree, **give your tree to the Earth**. Some communities grind them into wood chips for paths or mulch. Or cut up your tree and bury the pieces; the decaying tree to add nutrients to the soil. Burning it sends harmful carbon dioxide into the atmosphere.

December 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 8:30am - Sanctuary Worship 8:30am - Sunday School (V) 10am - Celebration Worship 11am - Confirmation Class 1pm - Hmong Alliance (CH)	2 9:30am - Sew and Sews (112) 10am - Staff Meeting (FH) 6pm - Acolyte Training (N) 6:30pm - Green Team (CL) 6:30pm - Mission Team (FH)	3 6pm - Children's Ministry	4 10am - Bible Study (FH) 5:30pm - Youth Singers (YR) 6:30pm - Soup & Story (CH) 6:30pm - Trustees (CL)	5 9:30am - Advent Study (CL) 10:30am - Spiritual Guidance 5pm - Advent Study (CL) 6pm - Women's Choir (MR) 6:30pm - Men's Choir (MR) 7pm - Chancel Choir (MR)	6 Office Closed 10am - Bible Study (Z) 5pm - Advent (S/CH) 6:30pm - Women's Service	7
8 8:30am - Sanctuary Worship 8:30am - Sunday School (V) 10am - Celebration Worship 11am - Confirmation Class 1pm - Hmong Alliance (CH)	9 10am - Staff Meeting (FH) 5:30pm - Stewardship (CL) 6pm - Acolyte Training (N)	10	11 5:30pm - Youth Singers (YR) 6:30pm - Church Meeting 6:30pm - Soup & Story (CH)	12 St. James - Meal (Clean-up) 9:30am - Advent Study (CL) 5pm - Advent Study (CL) 6pm - Men's Choir (MR) 6:30pm - Women's Choir 7pm - Chancel Choir (MR)	13 Office Closed 1pm - Books B/T Bites - Ally's	14 9am - Dress Rehearsal 5pm - Youth Cookie Bake
15 Children Christmas Program Pathways Deadline by Noon 8:30am - Worship (CH) 8:30am - Adult Sunday 10am - Worship (CH) 1pm - Christmas Caroling 1pm - Hmong Alliance (CH)	16 10am - Staff Meeting (FH) 7pm - Church Council (CL)	17 9:30am - Community Care 11:30am - YAHAS (CH) 7:30pm - SPRC (CL)	18 10am - Bible Study (FH) 5:30pm - Youth Singers (YR) 6:30pm - Soup & Story (CH)	19 9:30am - Advent Study (CL) 5pm - Advent Study (CL) 6pm - Women's Choir (MR) 6:30pm - Men's Choir (MR) 7pm - Chancel Choir (MR)	20 Office Closed 10am - Bible Study (Z) 1pm - Books Between Bites 7pm - Game Night (FH)	21 9am - Craft Morning (FH)
22 8:30am - Worship (S) 8:30am - Sunday School (V) 9am - All choir Rehearsal 10am - Worship (S) 1pm - Hmong Alliance (CH)	23 10am - Staff Meeting (FH)	24 CHRISTMAS EVE Office Closed 2pm - Worship (S) 4pm - Worship (CH) 8pm - Worship (S)	25 CHRISTMAS DAY Office Closed	26 Office Closed	27 Office Closed	28 8am - Community Breakfast
29 9am - Sanctuary Worship (S) 1pm - Hmong Alliance (CH)	30 10am - Staff Meeting (FH)	31 NEW YEAR'S EVE Office Closed	1 NEW YEAR'S DAY Office Closed	2 6pm - Women's Choir (MR) 6:30pm - Men's Choir (MR) 7pm - Chancel Choir (MR)	3 Office Closed 10am - Bible Study (Z)	4