

THE PORTLIGHT

A newsletter for members and friends of Portland Avenue United Methodist Church

A Covenant Prayer in the Wesleyan Tradition (Contemporary Version)

I am no longer my own, but yours.
Put me to what you will, place me with whom you will.
Put me to doing, put me to suffering.
Let me be put to work for you or set aside for you,
Praised for you or criticized for you.
Let me be full, let me be empty.
Let me have all things, let me have nothing.
I freely and fully surrender all things
to your glory and service.
And now, O wonderful and holy God,
Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer,
you are mine, and I am yours.
So be it.
And the covenant which I have made on earth,
Let it also be made in heaven. Amen.

June 2021

Our Mission

*"To grow followers of
Jesus who change the
world."*

Our Vision

*"To be a safe harbor
along life's journey."*

The  **PORT**
A safe harbor along life's journey.

Pastor's Message *Rev. Carol Zaagsma*

Perhaps not surprisingly, outdoors seems like the place to be this time of year! As pandemic-related restrictions ease, more and more people are comfortable getting together outdoors for some social activities.

Let me share a couple opportunities that might be of interest in the coming weeks:

Softball - For the first time in recent memory, The PORT is fielding a softball team in a co-ed recreational church league. Blake Mahre is our coach. Come out on Friday nights to cheer on the team between now and the end of our season on July 16.

Games start at 6:15 pm and are played at Mendakota Park (2050 Mendakota Dr, Mendota Heights, MN 55120). There are only two active ballfields there, so look for us with our light blue team T-shirts. There are benches and a small set of bleachers to sit on.

Bloomington Medalist Concert Band - For the last several summers, many of you have enjoyed an evening out at a local park to hear a free concert by the band I play in. We're reconvening this summer and have the following concerts on the schedule:

- Tues, June 22 @ 7 pm - Como Park Pavilion
- Mon, June 28 @ 7:30 pm - Lake Harriet
- Wed, June 30 @ 7 pm - Centennial Lakes
- Sat, July 3 @ 8 pm - Summer Fete Bloomington
- Tues, July 13 @ 7 pm - Normandale Lake
- Thurs, July 22 @ 7 pm - Roseville Central Park
- Wed, July 28 @ 7 pm - Town Green, Maple Grove

However you enjoy these summer evenings, remember to say a prayer of thanks when you're out there enjoying God's creation.

Pastor Carol



MN Annual Conference Session

Minnesota Annual Conference is scheduled to convene June 22-24. Annual Conference is a time when clergy and laity from every local United Methodist Church in MN gathers to make state-wide decisions, worship together, and learn together.

Much of the conference will be live-streamed at <https://www.facebook.com/MinnesotaUMC/>. You do not need a Facebook account to watch, so please tune in as you'd like.

COVID-19 Congregational Update

Much has happened regarding pandemic news in a relatively short time over the last few weeks, some of which is outlined in Bishop Bard's letter enclosed as an insert in this newsletter.

Your Church Council leaders are working together to determine how these changes relate to our ministries. In the meantime, a number of you took the recent poll to indicate your interest in attending outdoor worship 1-2 times this summer. Thank you for sharing your thoughts!

The Church Council is in the process of finalizing our

plans related to worship during the summer and into the fall, so please stay tuned for announcements as those decisions are made. Until then, worship continues online each week, while all protocols related to the pandemic remain at this time, including the requirement to wear masks inside the building, and to stay home if you are feeling ill.

News regarding our plan for the coming months will be shared by email (and mailed to those without email), shared in online worship, and on our website at www.paumc.org, so please stay tuned and watch for more information later this month.

Youth Group News

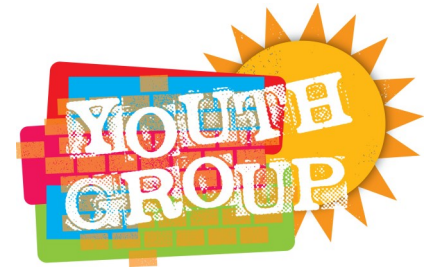
Youth Group meetings are taking a break for the summer, but we're getting ready for Ultimate Challenge Summer Camp from July 18-24 (grades 7-11)!

Here's what the camping website says about this camp:

Are you ready to take your faith to the next level? This fun-filled, high-energy camp is for teens hungry to grow closer to God. Campers will play meaningful games, enjoy tons of lakeside activities, build lasting friendships, and learn to walk with God in new and life-changing ways. Learn more at <http://ultimatechallengecamp.com>.

Cost is \$475 and scholarships for \$200 are available by contacting Pastor Carol. Visit here to begin the registration process: <https://www.campminnesota.org/campsessions>.

~Blake & Pastor Carol



Holiday Bazaar

Join Our Holiday Bazaar Crafters Tuesday Nights

Evening crafters began their workshops in May, but newcomers are always welcome. With the success of last year's online Bazaar we know that no matter what the situation is this year we will be able to hold the event again for the 47th year. It will be held on November 12 and 13, so now is the time to get to work!!

The Tuesday evening workshop group meets at 6:30 pm in the Wesley Room. All you need is a mask and a will to help create some fun and festive items for our customers! We will distance as we work. We were easily able to do it last year.

Our evening group usually consists of 6 or 7 ladies, but we would love to have more join us - or even some men! We wrap things up at about 8:15 pm, so we are ready to leave by 8:30 pm.

We are a pretty easy-going bunch, so if you would like to come a few times, great! If you decide you want to come more often, even better! No special skills are needed – we provide on-site training. But seriously, we have fun and would love to have you join us!

If you have any questions you can contact Lynn Livingston at 952-797-2645. Happy crafting!

~Lynn Livingston



Mission Outreach

June Mission Outreach Project - “Tornado Kits”

During June, The PORT will help Midwest Mission by collecting items to create “tornado kits.” Midwest Mission works with the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR), and distributes supplies in response to many types of disasters, including tornado destruction. Their mission statement is, “Bringing the hearts and hands of God's people together to transform resources into humanitarian relief.”

Here are the items needed for one tornado kit:

- 2 pairs of work gloves
- 24 1-gallon resealable bags
- 2 permanent markers
- 1 roll of duct tape—prefer colored
- 2 dust masks—non surgical
- 24 trash bags—heavy duty—33 to 45 gallon
- 24 clear/white trash bags—20 to 33 gallon

Since this project requires very specific items to create each tornado kit, you may wish to contribute financially, with your contributions being used to buy the items in bulk at a savings. Mail your checks marked “tornado kits” to 8000 Portland Ave S, Bloomington MN 55420 or give securely online at paumc.org/giving.

For those who prefer to donate any of the physical items listed above, we will have a drive through drop-off at church on Tuesday June 29, 6:00-7:00 pm.

These items will be sent to Midwest Mission to help tornado survivors here in the midwest. Thank you in advance for supporting this important project.



Your Cornerstone Donations Delivered

During the month of April we received donations of liquid hand soap, socks, underwear, deodorant, body wash, body lotion, gift cards, and cash donations. The cash donations were used to purchase gift cards from Target.

Your generous cash and gift card donations allowed us to give Cornerstone \$620 in gift cards. What a tremendous help this was for them! They are still not doing ‘dine in’ meals, but when they resume those we will want to get on the schedule to serve a meal.

~Linda Schesso, Mission Outreach Chair



“Do all the good you can,
By all the means you can,
In all the ways you can,
In all the places you can,
At all the times you can,
To all the people you can,
As long as ever you can.”

(attributed to John Wesley)

Walker Methodist Health Center Auxiliary Update

In this year of Challenge, I share with pride, how the Walker MHC Auxiliary Volunteer Board has worked to follow their Mission Statement: “to aid in serving the physical, social, emotional, and spiritual needs of the Walker Methodist Health Center Residents.”

Although volunteers have not been allowed in the Health Center until recently, the Auxiliary has kept in touch with residents and staff throughout the year by sending cards and notes and writing articles for the Health Center newsletter.

The Auxiliary donated all of the candy from the Gift Shop to Walker MHC to use as treats, prizes for games, or however they felt would be beneficial. Both staff and residents were happy to receive the candy.

The Auxiliary expressed their gratitude for the exceptional work of staff workers on the “frontlines” with donations to the “Well Wishes” website. In May, a \$2000 donation from the Auxiliary to the Walker Foundation helped support “May Free Meals Fund,” providing free meals to all staff members during their shift and food to bring home to their families. In June, the Auxiliary purchased two registrations to support the Virtual “Stride for Seniors” Annual Foundation fundraiser.

As we neared holiday shopping, the annual Craft/Vendor fundraiser became virtual. The sale had limited success, but as the Auxiliary Board said, it was “worth a try.” Monies raised went to the “Bus Fund” to maintain operation of the Walker MHC bus. Spirits of the Health Center’s hard-working, dedicated staff were lifted with a holiday pizza party (including fresh baked chocolate chip cookies) funded by the Auxiliary.

To help relieve the isolation residents have been experiencing in 2020 and as we continue to live with Covid guidelines in 2021, the Auxiliary purchased a virtual reality entertainment program, “MyndVR.” Residents wear goggles, select from a variety of travel, art, or nature themed programs, then sit back and enjoy their “escape” into this virtual time away.

The Board has met virtually since June 2020 to continue the Auxiliary’s support of the Health Center and to fulfill our Mission Statement. In that time the Auxiliary has been aware of the loss of a major service to residents, staff, and guests....the Gift Shop.

The Auxiliary is extremely excited to begin preparation for reopening the Gift Shop, one of the highlights of the Health Center. We are even adding a delivery service for residents who prefer to stay in their rooms. There is quite a lot of work to be done, including replacing all of that candy that we donated! Our tentative reopening date is June 1.

Donna White, Director of Therapeutic Recreation Services, works closely with the Auxiliary Board and other volunteers to keep us informed of services, activities, and opportunities for participation in the lives of residents. The good news is that volunteers are being gradually welcomed back into the Health Center.

~Sue Wells, Walker MHC Auxiliary Board Secretary

Walker Methodist Health Center Gift Shop



Congregational Care

We celebrate YOU during JUNE



If you have a birthday during the month of June but your name isn't on our list, PLEASE LET US KNOW, so we can update our records for next year.

- 02 - Mark Wicks
- 03 - Dianne Madsen
- Julie Rasmussen
- 06 - Clint Andrus
- 07 - Paul Swenson

- 08 - Peggy Erstad
- Guy Moore
- 09 - Joshua Rice
- 16 - Blake Mahre
- 18 - Bryan Darnell

- 19 - Harvey Erstad
- 21 - Alina Schroeder
- 24 - Ann Benson
- 29 - Heather Anderson

From the Mailbox

A Goodbye and a New Beginning

For the last 20 years I have felt like I had found a home at PAUMC. The people have been family. I have loved the music and fellowship.

As I get older, I want to move out of my house on my own terms. I will be in a condo 1.5 blocks away from my son and family and 2 miles from my daughter. I see that they need my help now.

My children have been a great help to me as I move, and I know I will have to rely on them more in the future. So, with reluctance, I say goodbye to my friends, family, and the house where I have lived for 47 years. I look forward to my new life in Appleton, WI, which begins June 16.

~Carol Emdy

Address Updates

Traci & Bryan Darnell
(eliminated landline telephone)

Carol Emdy (effective June 16, 2021)
2231 E Sienna Way
Appleton, WI 54913



An Invitation to Friends

The Rasmussen family is happy to share some wonderful news. Jakob Rasmussen is graduating this month from Lakeville North High School, Class of 2021.

Friends from The PORT are invited to join the Rasmussen family in a celebration at Jakob's home at 19774 Itasca Lane, Lakeville, MN 55044 on Sunday, June 13 from 12:00-3:00 pm.





Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 6:30pm Bazaar Wkshp	2	3	4	5
6 10:00am Online Worship/ Communion	7	8 6:30pm Bazaar Wkshp	9	10	11	12
13 10:00am Online Worship 11:15am Congregational Care Videoconference	14	15 Newsletter Deadline	16	17	18	19
20 FATHER'S DAY 10:00am Online Worship	21	22 6:30pm Bazaar Wkshp	23	24 6:30pm Caregivers Support Group	25	26
27 10:00am Online Worship	28	29 6:30pm Bazaar Wkshp 7:00pm Midwest Mission Tornado Kits Drop-off	30	7:00pm Church Council	<p>TUNE IN FOR SUNDAY WORSHIP ONLINE @ 10:00 AM:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://www.youtube.com/c/PortlandAvenueUnitedMethodistChurch • https://www.facebook.com/PortlandAvenueUMC/ 	

Portland Avenue United Methodist Church
8000 Portland Ave S, Bloomington, MN 55420



GIVE+
Electronic Giving Options



ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

DATED MATERIAL
PLEASE EXPEDITE

Join us for online worship on Sundays at 10:00 am
~~Sunday School (9:00 am) and Coffee Fellowship (9:30 am)~~ suspended until further notice

Staff

Rev. Carol Zaagsma (Pastor) carol.zaagsma@paumc.org (cell phone for emergencies 651-329-7878)
Kathryn Quam (Administrative Assistant) paumc@paumc.org
Blake Mahre (Youth Group Intern)
Peggy Larson (Music Director) peggylarson@comcast.net
Dale Miller (Accompanist) miller.daler@gmail.com
Judy Richardson-Mahre (SonRise Singers Director) jembrm@charter.net
Mary Nelson (Handbells Director) nelsonc2m@aol.com
Paul Herrmann (Custodian) 612-916-3376

Church Office E-mail: PAUMC@paumc.org PAUMC Website: www.paumc.org
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/PortlandAvenueUMC/>
YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/c/PortlandAvenueUnitedMethodistChurch>

Minnesota Annual Conference COVID-19 Update



Minnesota Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church

Editor's Note: The following pastoral letter was released by Bishop David Bard, interim bishop of the Minnesota Annual Conference, on May 25, 2021.

Dear friends in Christ in the United Methodist Churches of Minnesota,

Greetings to you in the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the peace and power of the Holy Spirit.

Today, we turn the dial on our [Phased Re-Gathering Plan](#) to blue. I celebrate that we have arrived at an important turning point in our fight against COVID-19 here in the United States. With increasing numbers of persons receiving vaccinations and with the cooperation of so many to maintain mitigation measures while vaccines were being administered, case rates are declining, as are hospitalizations and deaths. Therefore, Gov. Walz has removed all capacity and social distance requirements, as well as the indoor mask mandate.

This is good news, and news we must hold with the reality that this is a global pandemic and other parts of the world have not yet reached such a turning point. We need to remember that “this virus loves nothing more than to find a large group of unvaccinated, unmasked human beings among whom it can dance and hop from person to person and go wild” (Dr. Nancy Kass). Most recently, we’ve witnessed the devastation wrought by the coronavirus in India.

As I have maintained throughout this pandemic, as followers of Jesus we should act in ways that promote public health, foster the common good, and care for the well-being of others. We do this in the name and

Spirit of Jesus, this Jesus who told us to love our neighbor as we love ourselves (Mark 12:31) and invited us to care for the least of these (Matthew 25:45). I want to again thank you for all that you have done these past months to promote public health, foster the common good and care for the well-being of others while staying in ministry for Jesus. What might this ask of us now?

If you have not yet been vaccinated, get vaccinated. The guidance to engage with others without masks is only for those who have been fully vaccinated. Encourage others to get vaccinated. Help others find vaccinations and locate transportation to receive them.

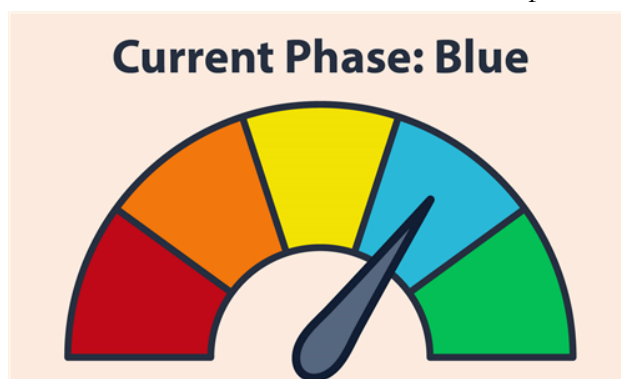
Compose well-considered plans for how you will gather and keep such plans thoughtful and flexible. How and when you gather should continue to be based on solid local community health information. What is the test positivity rate? Ideally, we want to achieve a positivity rate below 5 percent. What is the case rate in your area?

A case rate of over 25 new daily cases per 100,000 people is considered the highest risk level. What is the vaccination rate in your area and how widely have the vaccines been made available?

As I write this, [about 64 percent of Minnesotans are fully vaccinated](#). That means 36 percent are not, and vaccines have only recently been made available for those 12 to 15 years of age. Vaccines for children under 12 are not yet available. You will want to consider who is likely to gather at your church when you think about when and how to gather.

As you make your plans for gathering, consider how you will invite persons to continue to use mitigation measures like mask wearing, hand washing, and social distancing. Dispensing with masks for outdoor gatherings seems prudent given the medical evidence, though unvaccinated people mitigate their risk by continuing to wear a face covering even outdoors. Increased use of outdoor space for gathering makes good sense when the weather permits.

When gathering indoors, you may want to consider continuing with an indoor mask requirement, depending



on the vaccination rate for your congregation and community. Unvaccinated people should continue wearing masks indoors. As a gesture of hospitality, having masks available for people at your church is a sign of caring. Singing with masks is safer than singing without them. As vaccination rates increase and vaccines are available to more and more people, some mitigation measures can be relaxed. Even as masks become more optional, remember always to treat those who choose to mask with kindness. You do not know their medical situation or their life experience. Someone wearing a mask does you no harm, and may be protecting you from getting sick.

If you are still wondering what may be most helpful at this particular time, a number of public health experts and other denominational leaders are encouraging consideration of “the 2/3 rule.” The 2/3 rule says that public gatherings are safest with they meet two of three criteria: masked, distanced, and outdoors. Again, as vaccination rates increase, this rule can be relaxed, but it is not a bad starting point at this time.

One other thing we have learned throughout this time is the vital importance of hand washing and sanitizing. Our facilities should have soap available in restrooms and hand sanitizer widely available throughout. Clean hands stop the spread of viruses. So, too, does staying home when you are sick.

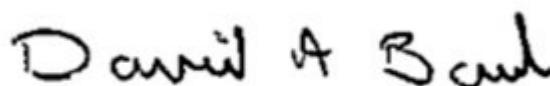
Even as plans are made to gather again, be gracious in offering options for those who continue to choose to connect with your faith community virtually. Just because you’ve opened again for in-person worship does not mean everyone will deem it safe to return, particularly those with younger children. Don’t forget that you may also have connected with new persons online who want this to remain their primary connection to your church. We should not think about returning to something that once was, but rather take what we have learned and build something new—something that combines the best of in-person and virtual connections. We need to become both/and churches.

Even as we plan for an emerging reality that is freer of the threat of the coronavirus, we need to remember that while we are turning a corner now, there may yet be setbacks. As long as this virus finds human hosts throughout the world, it has the opportunity to change, and new variants against which our current vaccinations may be less effective could arise. Another reason

to get vaccinated. Continue to pay attention to public health news and guidance.

Finally, let me again encourage deep patience among us. As your church leaders make plans and decisions, know they are doing their best to further the ministry of the church while caring for others in love. Your viewpoint may not always win the day, and when it doesn’t, please be gracious. Wouldn’t it be awful to arrive at the other side of this pandemic, when we can again open our buildings freely and fully with less concern for the coronavirus, only to find that the church community to which we wanted to return and into which we wanted to welcome others has been significantly diminished because of conflict over decisions made, decisions only intended to reflect love and care?

I remain grateful for the thoughtful and careful ways you have made decisions about ministry during this pandemic. I appreciate your ongoing desire to act in the interest of public health, the common good, and the well-being of others, all in the spirit of Jesus. As ever, I am deeply grateful for your creativity, your persistence, your courage, and your patience as we have navigated such uncharted waters. Thank you and thanks be to God, who, in Jesus Christ, has been our companion along the way.



Bishop David A. Bard
Interim Bishop, Minnesota Annual Conference