



**ABUMC.ORG**

**AUGUST 2025**



***MISSION STATEMENT:***

*As the Algoma Boulevard United Methodist Church family of faith, we will help people experience God through... transformational worship, lifelong learning, inspiring music, life-changing service, and passionate witness.*

Justice is the way of Jesus and the call of God. Micah reminds us what the Lord requires of us: to act justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with God.

And what does the Lord  
require of you?  
To act justly and  
to love mercy  
and to walk humbly  
with your God.



## FROM THE HEART OF PASTOR ELLEN

**August 2025**

*The heavens declare the glory of God;  
the skies proclaim the work of God's hands.*

*~ Psalm 19.1 NIV adapted*

Dear Beloved,

I'm fresh off my first EAA public show on the flightline, and I am so grateful to have had such an amazing and mesmerizing experience. I'm told that my mouth was open in awe much of the evening—completely captivated by the sights and sounds above.

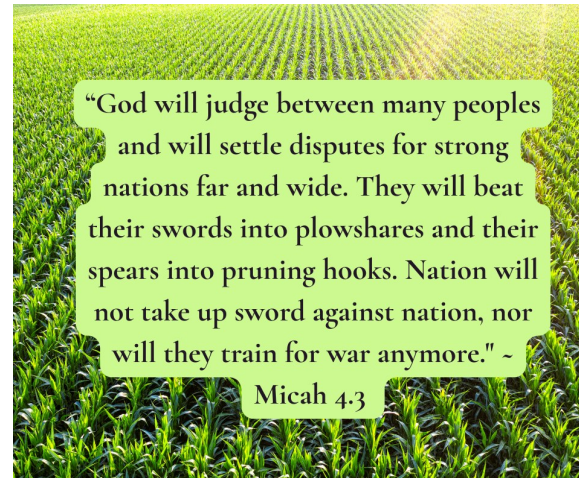


*"Endless Possibilities"—EAA 2025 brought more than aircraft and adrenaline. It stirred deep reflection and prayer.*

As I watched the fighter jets and aerial acrobatics, my gaze stayed fixed on the sky—but so did my prayers. While I was awed by the beauty and power of flight, my heart turned toward our siblings living in war-torn regions. I became acutely aware of the privilege we hold: when planes and drones fly overhead, we do not flinch or run. We do not hide. We do not fear the sky.

What a contrast. For some, these machines inspire wonder. For others, they bring fear and heartbreak. How do we reconcile that weapons of war are also tools of entertainment?

Scripture speaks into this tension. Both Isaiah 2:4 and Micah 4:3 envision a world where swords are beaten into plowshares,



*The prophet Micah offers a holy vision: tools of war transformed into tools of peace and nourishment.*

where nations no longer learn war. These prophets call us to transform the tools of violence into instruments of peace and provision.

And so, in the midst of the lights and the roaring engines, I found myself praying—especially for our neighbors in Palestine. My friends are heavy on my heart.

Being a disciple of Jesus Christ isn't always easy. It means living with paradox. It means holding both joy and sorrow, privilege and responsibility, awe and lament. We walk the messy middle road, trying to do the best we can. But we are never without direction: justice is the way of Jesus and the call of God.

Through it all, I am grateful. God's love and grace meet us on this journey. And through that love, we are empowered to bring hope and healing to the world.

Love & Peace,  
Pastor Ellen



**From Bishop Daniel W. Schwerin, July 18, 2025**

Grace and peace to you in the hope that is ours in Christ.

When the kids were little, we liked to walk in county or state parks. It was not uncommon for Rachel to see a toad or frog and pick it up. You know the inevitable question: ‘Dad, can we keep her?’

I would explain. ‘Rachel, that little frog has a mom, maybe a dad or grandpa or little brother, and soon they will start missing her. She will want to go home to her table for supper, and you can imagine how sad it would be for them if their little girl did not come home. She will miss them. They will miss her. Let’s let her go so she can hop home.’

I don’t know if that was a gold standard answer, but both kids learned empathy. They are kind to animals. They live out Christian love even if they do not set worship attendance records. Rachel is a social worker who manages others and engages the most challenged of those who live in Milwaukee without housing. Once, someone who was distressed asked the police to call her by name. Andrew loves to serve. Siblings in Christ, we belong to each other. Archbishop Tutu of South Africa has described life as ‘a bundle of belonging.’

In her book, *Who Do We Choose to Be?* Margaret Wheatley says a decent human being must be willing to serve an inhumane and indecent time. More than being decent, what might a Christian be willing to do in an inhumane, indecent time?

Despite the fact that the federal government has built a concentration camp in Florida and has resorted to burning food aid rather than feed hungry children, I am still answering angry letters from the [Council of Bishops’ epiphany letter](#), read in our churches, that sought dignity for immigrants.

I feel as if I am crouching down in my gentle fatherly voice and saying, ‘the 34 people per cage have a mother, a sister, or a child. They are exposed to the elements and live in their own stench. Most are guilty of no crime. For the first offense, being in the US illegally is a misdemeanor, and when did misdemeanor crimes warrant incarceration in a concentration camp away from family and legal recourse? Their children are traumatized from missing their fathers. Let them go. Let them go back to their dinner tables.’

Bishop Tom Berlin, our bishop assigned to the Florida conference, has raised his opposition to a concentration camp built in Florida that costs \$450 million per year to operate. Inmates are given food infested with maggots. Mosquitoes, some carrying disease, are everywhere. The lights are left on so inmates cannot sleep. Of course, immigration reform is needed. Of course, persons who have committed serious crimes must be addressed. How do you defend a concentration camp with your Christian faith? Might the FEMA money used to maintain this be better spent in Texas or on a natural disaster?

Siblings in Christ, we have been divided by powerful, moneyed voices. Many hearts have been turned to revile immigrants by allowing ourselves to fear them in the most criminal terms. Consider how many United Methodists approve of this example of structural and systemic racism. Who would want to join that church?

Contact your representative and your senator. Join in prayer and protest. Feed those widowed because their husband has been swept up in a needless raid. Contribute to the [Texas flood relief](#) through UMCOR or a short-term mission trip. Love your neighbor. The neighbor, says Luke 10:37, is the one who showed mercy.

Know that your witness to Jesus and your service of the reign of God is critically important. Thank you for your witness and faithfulness. It is good to be in ministry with you.

Peace, Daniel W. Schwerin, Bishop



## WHAT'S UP IN WORSHIP—AUGUST 2025

### Pentecost People: Embodying the Love of God

We continue our worship series, Pentecost People, as we explore what it means to Embody the Love of God in our lives and in the world.

Dr. Cornel West reminds us,

**"Never forget that justice is what love looks like in public."**

He also offers a powerful challenge:

"The country is in deep trouble. We've forgotten that a rich life consists fundamentally of serving others, trying to leave the world a little better than you found it. We need the courage to question the powers that be, the courage to be impatient with evil and patient with people, the courage to fight for social justice. In many instances we will be stepping out on nothing, and just hoping to land on something. But that's the struggle. To live is to wrestle with despair, yet never allow despair to have the last word."

Let's carry these words with us as we journey through August.

Each week, we'll continue to be guided by the voices of United Methodist Bishops from around the world. In *Monday Musings*, you'll hear from:

Bishop Delores J. Williamston (Louisiana Annual Conference)

Bishop Israel Maestrado Pinit (Davao Episcopal Area, Philippines)

Bishop Dottie Escobedo-Frank (Los Angeles Episcopal Area)

Bishop Connie Mitchell Shelton (Raleigh Episcopal Area)

In the words of our resource materials:

"The 2020 (2024) General Conference marked a new beginning for The UMC. As we live into this new church, we long for the spiritual renewal of the church. We desire to rediscover what it means to be Pentecost People—people healed and transformed by the presence of the Holy Spirit, sharing in the death and resurrection of Christ, living in dynamic, welcoming communities, empowered to bear witness in example, deeds, and word to God's reign of love in the world."

Thank you for taking this journey of transformation and hope. God is creating a new thing. I'm so grateful we get to be part of it—together.

Love & Peace, Pastor Ellen



### Labor Day Weekend Worship

Sunday, August 31 • 10:00 a.m.

Did you know that *The United Methodist Social Creed* is meant to be regularly emphasized in every congregation—and even included frequently in Sunday worship? It's true! This powerful statement of faith and action reminds us of our shared commitment to justice, dignity, and the common good.

As we gather for worship on Labor Day Weekend, we'll engage the Social Creed and its *Companion Litany* while exploring a powerful story from the book of Jeremiah and hear from our youth and their mission trip!



## WORSHIP AUGUST 2025



**August 3, 2025, 10 am**  
**Potluck Perspectives**  
**Acts 2.41-47**

*Embodying the  
Love of God -  
A Table Open to All*

What does *radical hospitality* look like? Feel like? Bear witness to?

We proclaim that all are welcome at Christ's table—and we mean it. But are we extending the same welcome at our potluck tables? Do our shared meals reflect the same wide grace as communion?

Come explore what it means to truly open our tables, hearts, and lives to one another.

When the Holy Spirit moved at Pentecost, it drew people together across differences and distances. That same Spirit still calls us into community today. In worship, in small groups, around the table—we experience grace through connection.

Join us as we explore how fellowship is more than friendship; it's a means of grace that strengthens, heals, and empowers us to live as one body.



**August 10, 2025, 10 am**  
**Means of Grace**  
**Acts 2.5-12, 17-18**

*Embodying the  
Love of God -  
Fellowship & Connection*



**August 17, 2025, 10 am**  
**What Does Justice  
Look Like?**  
**Isaiah 42.1-9**  
**Micah 6.6-8**

*Embodying the  
Love of God -  
Compassion & Justice*

What does justice look like in everyday life? In the prophet's vision, justice is gentle, persistent, and rooted in compassion. It lifts the bruised and protects the vulnerable.

Come explore how God's love calls us to do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly—together.

Psalms 23 has comforted generations in times of grief and uncertainty. It speaks of a God who restores, leads, and walks with us—even through the valley.

Come hear a story of memory, healing, and wholeness—and how God's love unites us across generations.



**August 24, 2025, 10 am**  
**Grandma's Cross Stitch**  
**Psalms 23**

*Embodying the  
Love of God -  
Healing: Brokenness &  
Wholeness*



## OUR WORSHIP EXPERIENCES

### SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS!

#### **Celebrating Summer & Looking Toward Fall**

It has been a great joy to celebrate **ONE SERVICE SUNDAYS** with you this summer! Gathering together at 10:00 a.m. has gifted us with more time to be in community and opportunities to share a wider variety of music and worship experiences.

As we look to the fall, it's time to discern what our Sunday mornings might look like moving forward.

A mailing will be coming your way soon inviting your feedback. Over the past several months, your church leaders—especially through Ad Council—have been exploring important questions and possible options. Now we want to hear from you.

We've asked:

- ⇒ How would we describe our worship services to someone new?
- ⇒ Are we meeting the needs of all generations, including our children?
- ⇒ Are we offering discipleship opportunities for everyone?
- ⇒ Does our current Sunday schedule help us live out our mission to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world?

⇒ Are we using our time, space, and staff resources in the most faithful and effective ways?

So many good questions! And we are discerning together.

#### **New Descriptors for Worship at ABUMC**

**Every Day Sacred Worship** (Formerly known as the Informal Service)  
You are invited to worship—online or in person—as we celebrate God's love, grace, and the sacredness of everyday life.

Come as you are—wear what feels comfortable for sitting and standing in public spaces. We celebrate the sacred worth of all people and are proud members of the Reconciling Ministries Network.

Our worship includes:

- ⇒ A wide range of music led by Travis Worth and our praise band—blending genres and bridging street and sanctuary
- ⇒ Community prayer and a mission spotlight
- ⇒ A message most likely from Pastor Ellen grounded in hope and transformation

## OUR WORSHIP EXPERIENCES

- ⇒ Children celebrated as part of the whole worshipping community
- ⇒ Monthly communion with grape juice and gluten-free bread
- ⇒ Mission giving through offerings — cash, checks, QR code, and online options.

### New Traditional Worship

This worship experience reflects the beauty and rhythm of our historic faith practices.

You'll find:

- ⇒ A familiar liturgical order with responsive readings and prayer
- ⇒ Music offered by Travis Worth on the pipe organ or piano, and the ABUMC choir (September–May) under Todd Kaphaem's direction
- ⇒ Children welcomed in worship with activity bags available
- ⇒ Monthly communion open to all, with grape juice and gluten-free bread
- ⇒ A consistent spirit of hospitality and welcome—ALL are truly welcome here
- ⇒ Messages typically shared by Rev. Ellen Rasmussen, an ordained elder in The United Methodist Church.

### Reimagining Christian Education

We recognize that changes in staffing—including the retirement of Don Nelson—

mean our Christian education opportunities will look different moving forward. This is a moment for imagination and renewal.

What if...

- ⇒ We offered a shared discipleship hour between worship services?
- ⇒ Children and adults could learn and grow together—without being pulled from worship?
- ⇒ We included time for shared fellowship or a simple breakfast?

Let's dream together.

Your voice matters. Your input will help shape what Sunday mornings look like at ABUMC this fall.

**Look for your letter soon!**

**And yes, we will still have special music offerings, hand bells when they are available and more!**



# Resources for Growing Disciples

## Amplify Media ~

A **FREE to user** online digital library for individuals, small groups, and families!

### Explore Amplify Media

#### *A free resource for your faith journey!*

Amplify Media is a dynamic online platform from the United Methodist Publishing House that offers high-quality, searchable video content for individual, family, or group discipleship—anytime, on any device. It's designed with Wesleyan values in mind and perfect for use at ABUMC.

Here's the best part: We pay a small monthly fee as a church so you can access it for free! Whether you're looking for Bible studies, children's content, devotionals, or inspiration from trusted leaders—you'll find something just right for your spiritual journey.

#### Getting started is easy as 1-2-3:

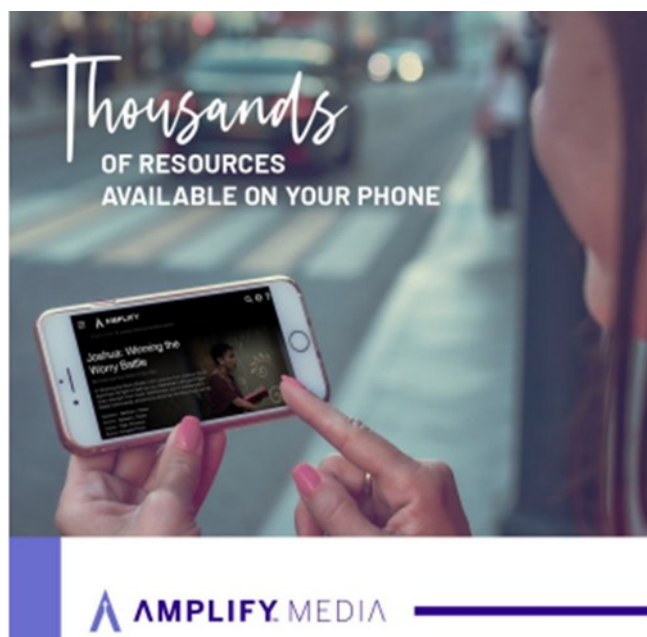
1. Visit [my.amplifymedia.com](http://my.amplifymedia.com)
2. Click the person icon  
(upper right corner)  
and enter our Access Code:  
**VLMNWI**
3. Create your free account and start exploring!

#### What you'll find:

- Browse by topic, speaker, or author
- Discover what's new: Recently Added, Most Watched, and Featured Studies
- Explore Channels like Amplify Media, Cokesbury Kids, Fresh Expressions, and Everyday Faith

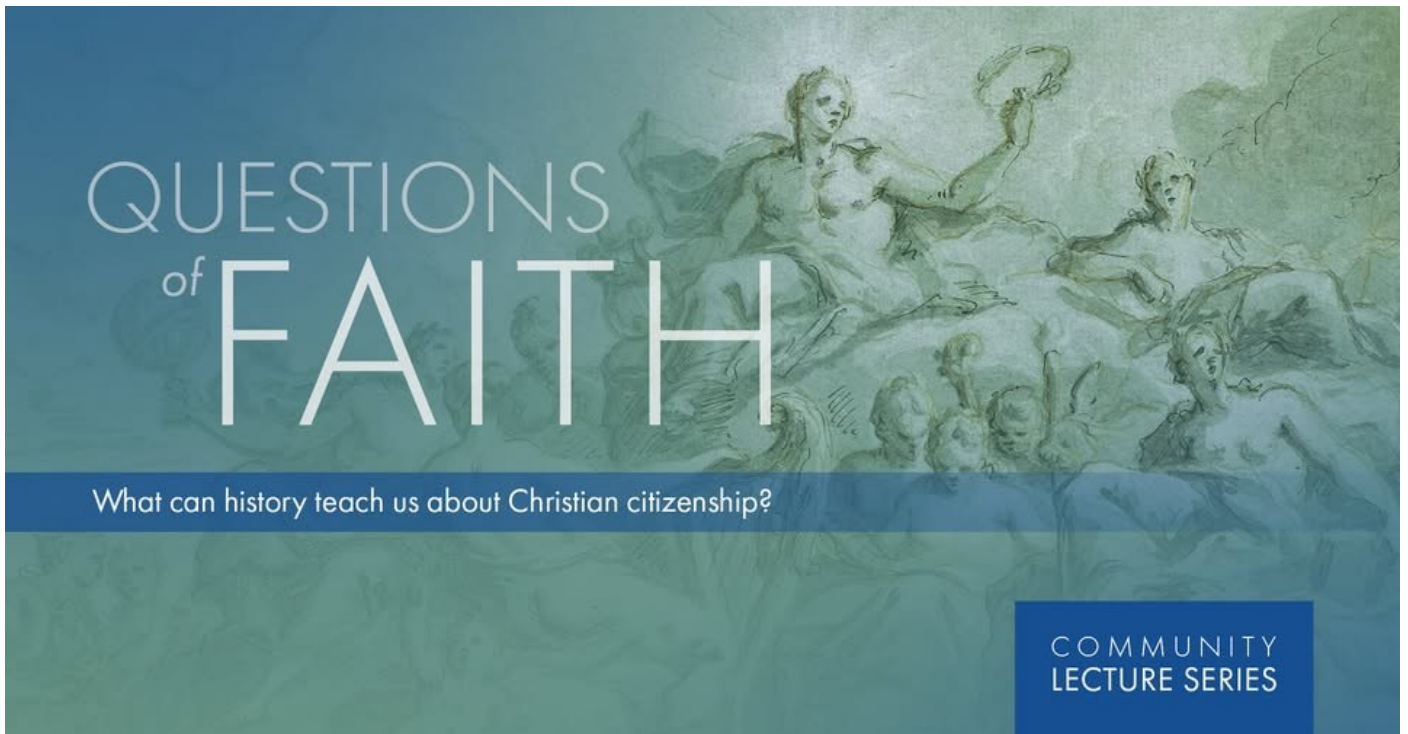


Scan the QR code with you phone.





## COMMUNITY EVENTS



### **FOX VALLEY RESIDENTS: A new lecture series is coming your way!**

Join Professors Michael Rutz and Garwood Anderson at UW-Oshkosh on Wednesday, August 13 for a FREE conversation on what we can learn from Christians' historic responses to political and cultural challenges. This will be the first in a series of lectures that will bring together scholars and community members to explore vital questions at the intersection of faith and public life. Mark your calendar for 8/13 at the Culver Family Welcome Center (625 Pearl Avenue) - enjoy a reception at 6:30, with a lecture to follow at 7 p.m.



### **Cherith International Benefit Concert**

**"A Touch From Jesus"**

**Friday, August 15, 2025**

**Doors open at 6:30 pm**

**Concert at 7:00 pm**

**Calvary SonRise**

**222 Church Avenue, Oshkosh**

[A night of talented local singers and soloists coming together to raise funds to, and help, immigrants, refugees, and homeless.](#)



# United Women in Faith

**We believe  
love in action  
can change the world.**

United Women in Faith would like to thank everyone who participated in the summer fun luncheon on Tuesday, July 8, 2025. We had a wonderful gathering with a delicious collection of food. It is always such a joy to welcome new friends and share an amazing time learning new things about each other.

Kathy Propp was asked to tell us about her community involvement and how and why she decided to become active. Thank you for agreeing to share a part of your story with us. We really enjoyed your story and message. We appreciate you for your continuing service to Oshkosh.

Kathy is featured in the book “Women of Oshkosh” that is available in the Open Door Library if you’d like to check out more about Kathy!



Coming up in September, **United Women in Faith Sunday will be held September 14.** We are pleased to welcome back Rev. Dr. Heather Brewer from Ripon UMC.

Also in September, Barbara Diener Blumer will lead a World Thank Offering program during the **unit meeting on Wednesday, September 17, at 1 p.m.** Everyone is welcome to participate through the loose coin offering during the month of September. Look for special boxes towards the end of August/early September for the World Thank Offering Collection.

[Rev. Dr. Heather Brewer](#)

The North East District is holding the Annual Day of Celebration on Saturday, September 20, at Berlin UMC. “Understanding Cultures” is the theme. Our featured speakers are: the Rev. Jay Cottrell-Duebner speaking on “Echoes of Heritage & Today” and Jeanie Reimer speaking on “Hope Center, Sharing God’s Love.” An offering will be taken for supplies for the Berlin Food Pantry.

— Sandy Butcher



# FUN, FELLOWSHIP, AND CAUSES

## THE UNITED WOMEN OF FAITH



TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE ORGANIZATION,  
VISIT: [HTTPS://UWFAITH.ORG/](https://uwfaith.org/)



## CONNECTIONS MINISTRY



Once again, ABUMC is a sponsor of the Pedal Out Hunger event which benefits the Salvation Army of Oshkosh's pantry and cafeteria. And we will have a team participating in the 10-mile ride.

The Salvation Army food pantry serves Oshkosh and the surrounding areas, providing 4,302 households with healthy food. The Meals program served 34,909 hot lunches to those most vulnerable in our community last year.

All proceeds from Pedal Out Hunger will go to these programs.

Please join us on Saturday, Aug. 16, at 9 a.m. for a fun bike ride that benefits our neighbors in need. Reach out to Lisa-Marie and let her know if you're interested in riding with us. Because ABUMC is a sponsor, the registration fee is waived for our team members, but individuals do need to register.

## Back-to-School Party

We're throwing a little party for our friends at Read Elementary School and we would love a little help. The front yard of the church will be the site of our back-to-school party, Thursday, Sept. 4, complete with a bounce house, yard games, crafts, and popcorn. So, we need several folks to help with the activities, serve popcorn, and clean-up. The party runs from 2:45-4 p.m. Reach out to Lisa-Marie and let her know you are ON BOARD!

## Spread the Love



Don't you just **love** making someone's day? Well, we've got an easy way for you to do just that for a UW-Oshkosh student on move-in day. Donate a **small, easy to grow**, potted houseplant! What a great way to say, "Welcome to our community! We hope you have a wonderful school year!"

Please bring your potted plant to church **by Aug. 24**. It's helpful if you include a little note with care instructions. We will deliver them to UW-Oshkosh to be distributed during move-in weekend.



# MISSION TRIP FOLLOW-UP

Our youth mission trip team spent a week in Colorado Springs in July. Come and listen and show your support as they share a bit about their experience during **worship on August 31 at 10 am.**

It's Labor Day Weekend and the last of the 10 am blended services.



**10 am worship**

**11:30 potluck**

**12:34 concert**

**Sunday, August 17**

**12:34 Concert & Potluck**



**Violet Wilder**



## WAYS OF GIVING

### AUGUST COIN MISSION



World Central  
Kitchen

**470,000 PEOPLE IN  
GAZA ARE FACING  
CATASTROPHIC  
HUNGER**

*Forty years ago, the world's conscience was shocked into action by images of emaciated children and starving babies dying in their mothers' arms. There was a surge in international aid, airdrops of food and activism from the world's most popular artists. Thanks to the news media and events such as Live Aid, we could not look away from the hungry in Ethiopia.*

*A generation later, people of good conscience must now stop the starvation in Gaza. There is no excuse for the world to stand by and watch two million human beings suffer on the brink of full-blown famine. ([NY Times article](#))*

Founded in 2010 by Chef José Andrés, World Central Kitchen (WCK) is a nonprofit organization that is first to the frontlines providing fresh meals in response to crises. Applying their model of quick action, leveraging local resources, and adapting in real time, WCK has served more than 500 million nourishing meals around the world.

When disaster strikes, WCK's Relief Team mobilizes with the urgency of now to start cooking and serving meals to people in need. By partnering with organizations on the ground and activating a network of local restaurants, food trucks, and emergency kitchens, WCK serves comforting meals to survivors of disasters quickly and effectively. To support regional economies, WCK prioritizes purchasing local ingredients to cook with or distribute directly to families in need.

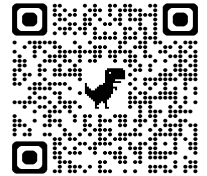
We know that good food provides not only nourishment, but also comfort and hope, especially in times of crisis. Learn more at [wck.org](https://wck.org).



## **How To Give At ABUMC**

We honor our baptismal and membership vows to God by our prayers, presence, gifts, service, and witness. As contributors to a connectional system, our gifts have a global impact. Thank you for your generous support of the ministries at work in and through the people of ABUMC.

**To Give In-Person:** Envelopes are available at each worship experience, and you can designate how you would like your gift distributed. Cash and checks payable to ABUMC are accepted.



### **To Give Electronically:**

**Online at:** <https://www.abumc.org/giving> —Select “How to Give” and follow the online giving link.

**Through your bank:** Work with your online banking system to set up recurring or one-time payments through options like ZELLE or electronic funds transfer.

### **To Mail Gifts:**

Please make your check payable to ABUMC and send your gift to  
ABUMC, 1174 Algoma Boulevard, Oshkosh, WI 54901

*For assistance with any of these options, please contact our staff at  
920.231.2800.*

***Thank you for your gifts.***



**A Gift For You from Pastor Ellen: Nablus Olive Oil Soap from [Palestine](#)**

**Pick one up today.** Use it as intended or as a reminder to pray for the people of Palestine. Feel free to get more than one. This is the soap that she uses and it's her small way of economic support for her friends there.

Donations for [Wi'am Conflict Resolution Center](#) in Bethlehem are greatly appreciated.

