

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.

abumc.org*December 2022*



Worship Schedule for December

December 4th - 9:00 and 10:30
2nd Sunday in Advent – *Hope*
New Members Join,
Communion Sunday

December 11th - 9:00 and 10:30
3rd Sunday in Advent - *Love*
Service of Carols and Joy

December 18th - 9:00 and 10:30
4th Sunday in Advent - *Joy*

Saturday December 24th
Christmas Eve 5:30 & 8:00 p.m. Both services include Christmas carols and candlelight. The 5:30 Christmas Eve service will have elements for kids to enjoy. The 8:00 service will be traditional.

Sunday, Dec 25th - 10:00 a.m.
Come in your jammies if you'd like. We'll continue to tell the Christmas Story as we gather together.

Sunday, January 1st - 10:00 a.m.
Let's ring in the New Year together with a service of reflection on the past year and hope for the next.



Some Thoughts About Christmas and Bad Timing

by Pastor Cathy Weigand

When you read the Christmas story, you'll see many instances of bad timing.

*Bad timing for an unwed teenager to be pregnant.

*Bad timing for wise ones to stop and tell Herod, a power hungry ruler, where they were going and why.

*Bad timing for the census, where everyone had to travel back to their place of birth, it didn't matter if you were pregnant or sick, or in the midst of something important.

And yet, it's all of those instances of bad timing that lead us to the story that we know, love, and celebrate. We witness God's presence in the mess of it all.

We want to hear about Joseph struggling to know what to do. We feel anxious when the wise ones tell Herod where they believe they will find the Messiah. We want to be reminded of the image of Mary and Joseph uncomfortably traveling, and ending up in a stable.

It isn't a comfortable story and it isn't as pretty as we've made it over the years.

But isn't life like that.

Not comfortable.

Not convenient.

But... filled with God's love and God's light. Filled with help and hope where we might not expect to find them.

This season finds me in the midst of some really bad timing. Advent and Christmas are busy in the life of the church and in the lives of pastors.

This fall, Mike and I took a quick vacation to visit John at college, and kept driving to enjoy a little time at Lake Superior where we hiked a lot. One of the days, I stepped weirdly on uneven ground. It hurt, but it wasn't awful, and I didn't want to miss seeing or doing anything.

Two months later, my foot was worse, not better. Very long story short... now I'm in a boot awaiting surgery to help my foot heal how it was supposed to. The only surgical opening they had was Dec. 21.

Bad timing.

When I asked my surgeon about recovery and working on December 24 and 25, she advised strongly against it.

Super bad timing.

I'm working to write all of the worship services after the 21st in such a way that volunteers can do it, Pastor Mike can do it (wasn't he nice to offer?) and I can do it if it is possible.

Seriously bad timing.

Much like the bad timing in the story of Christmas, I know that this time continues to be filled with God's love and God's light, God's help and God's hope. God is always present, especially in the moments when we experience bad timing.

I ask for your prayers through this season. I'll also be praying for you. If you are going to be at worship on Christmas Eve or Day and are willing to read in worship, please let me know. We will pull together beautiful services with candle light and carols, and the story that we love to hear about the night God came into a world filled with bad timing... to show us the way.

God's Peace and Joy,
Pastor Cathy, pastor@abumc.org

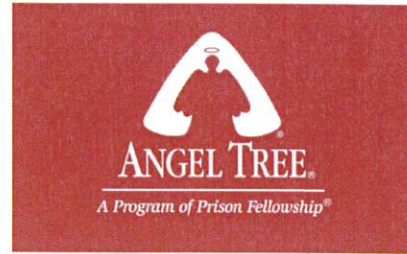
Don't Forget!

We are still collecting your empty toothpaste tubes, old toothbrushes, and empty dental floss containers in an effort to keep them out of the landfill. There is a receptacle outside the small set of doors next to the main church parking lot entrance.

TerraCycle is an organization that recycles items normally considered unrecyclable or difficult to recycle. Our oral care products program is sponsored by Colgate and there are many other brand or retailer sponsored recycling programs. Check out the TerraCycle [website](#) to find out about all the cool things they're doing.

Once we've accumulated more than 10 pounds of oral care waste, we'll ship it free of charge to TerraCycle. We receive points for every shipment which can be redeemed for a donation to a charity or nonprofit.

In addition to our oral care product program, we also are recycling packaging from Kroger (Pick 'n Save) brands through TerraCycle. This one has not quite taken off yet at ABUMC, so if you shop at Pick 'n Save, we hope you will take part! Plastic packaging from their Kroger, Private Selection, and Simple Truth brand items, such as coffee, nuts, chips, bacon, cookies, frozen vegetables and fruit, etc., can be recycled instead of being thrown away. There is a wicker bin on top of the shelf in the missions area in the hallway where these can be dropped off.



Angel Tree


There are many children in our community who will be spending Christmas without one of their parents this year because that parent is incarcerated. The child also would not be receiving a gift from that parent without the help of the Angel Tree organization and our giving hearts and generosity.

Each year, ABUMC receives the names, ages, and Christmas gift wishes of 50 area kids through Angel Tree, a program of Prison Fellowship. We can only imagine what our gifts mean to these kids. A reminder that gifts need to be returned by December 4th. **There are still SIX tags left.** Please contact Lisa-Marie if you would like to provide a gift for one of these children. The gifts will be delivered to the kids' homes the week before Christmas.

If you shop at Amazon, why not go through amazon smile? Amazon will donate 0.5% of your eligible purchases - at no cost to you. Go to smile.amazon.com and choose Algoma Boulevard United Methodist Church as your charity. It is an easy way to help the church financially.



You won't want to miss Saturday, December 10th



Annual Church Meeting

**Saturday, December 10th, 9:30 a.m.
in the Harmony Room.**

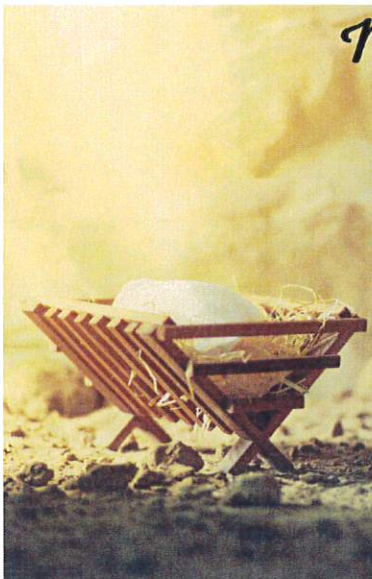
The meeting will be led by our new District Superintendent, Rev. Park Hunter.
All are encouraged to attend.
Everyone has a voice, church members have voice and vote.

**Algoma Boulevard United Methodist Church's
Annual Cookie Sale, Saturday, December 10th**

9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

\$10.00 per pound

**Sponsored by the United Women in Faith
to support local, state, and worldwide missions
that benefit women, children, and youths**



Nativity Open House

Bring a friend & enjoy our stunning collection of over 1,000 nativity sets from around the world, large & small, created from many different & interesting materials, while sipping some hot chocolate.

**Saturday, Dec. 10th
10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.**
Same day as the Cookie Walk!

Rising Sun Camp

Pay with cash at the store and save up those coins! During December, the coins that we collect during the offering will benefit Rising Sun Camp.

The Rising Sun Camp is a week-long adventure sponsored by the WI Conference of The United Methodist Church designed for students who have a parent who is incarcerated.

It is an opportunity for them to connect with other kids who are like them, and to receive support and encouragement, while giving their caregivers some time of respite. Campers work on team-building, conflict management, and trust-building as well as have the opportunity to experience all the fun things that camp has to offer - from campfires to canoeing, nature trails and games.

Feel free to give additional donations above and beyond your coins. You may give electronically, indicating the funds should go to Rising Sun Camp. You may place your donation in your offering envelope and note it in the Monthly Coin Mission space. Or you can have it delivered to the church office, noting Rising Sun Camp.



WINTER CAMP 2023 LAKE LUCERNE *SAVE THE DATE!*

Winter Camp 2023 will be held January 6-8, 2023, at Lake Lucerne Camp near Neshkoro, Wisconsin. Winter Camp is a time away to enjoy the outdoors, winter sports, relaxing by the fire and sharing with friends new and old. People stay in heated cabins with amenities provided and enjoy family-style meals together.

Register now for this event.

If you have any questions, contact Craig or Barb Blumer. Their contact information is available through the church office.

Thanks to everyone who donated and helped pack boxes for Operation Christmas Child. This year we filled 100 boxes, which means gifts for 100 children!



Tuesday Evening Advent Discussion Group

"An Introduction to Joy"

November 29th through December 20th
6:30 p.m. in Fireside Room
Led by retired pastor, Keith Wolf

We will view a 20-minute video, followed by discussion focusing on the topic of finding joy in the midst of our ordinary, messy and tumultuous everyday lives. I think the topic and small group discussions will be a great preparation for celebrating the true joy of Christ's birth.

No reading or preparation required. Just bring yourself. But please inform the church office if you plan to participate. Thank you.

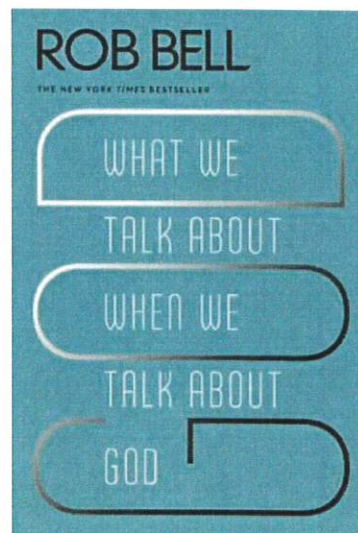


WHAT WE TALK ABOUT WHEN WE TALK ABOUT GOD

Book Discussion

Group Begins in January

Tuesdays at 6:30 p.m.
January 3 through February 14, 2023
Fireside Room
Led by retired pastor, Keith Wolf



How God is described today strikes many as mean, primitive, backward, illogical, tribal, and at odds with the frontiers of science. At the same time, many intuitively feel a sense of reverence and awe in the world. Can we find a new way to talk about God?

Pastor and New York Times best-selling author Rob Bell shows how traditional ideas have grown stale and dysfunctional and reveals a new path for how to return vitality and vibrancy to how we understand God. Bell reveals how we got stuck, why culture resists certain ways of talking about God, and how we can reconnect with the God who is with us, for us, and ahead of us, pulling us forward into a better future — and ready to help us live life to the fullest.

A Glimpse at our History

150th Anniversary of Algoma Boulevard
United Methodist Church
researched and written by Kate Yarbro

This excerpt comes from the introduction to the historical book Kate has been writing in celebration of our 150th Anniversary.

The history of the beginning of Algoma Boulevard United Methodist Church was penned in elaborate handwriting by an author who didn't sign his name.

That story is written in a very old book of church records kept in the safe in the church office. The early historian relates that, although there has been a church building at the corner of Algoma and New York in Oshkosh since 1872 it wasn't the impressive stone building you see when you drive down Algoma Boulevard.

So where did the idea of building the church come from? How did the Algoma Boulevard United Methodist Church become what it is today?

Those are the questions explored by this introduction to the history of the church. Who were the people who were the life of the church?

One question that the historian didn't answer is: Where and when did the members of the congregation meet before they gathered at the corner of Algoma and New York?

No one really knows where they got the idea to get together.

When those familiar with the history of the church are asked, "Where did we begin?" they might answer that it was in a schoolhouse on Punhoqua Street west of the Fox River in Oshkosh.

Although that schoolhouse played an important part, the truth is that this small congregation probably began quietly with people who neither recorded the date of their first meeting nor the names of the people who attended.

Several years before the small group of Methodists could be called a congregation, they most likely met in someone's home. It is possible they all lived in the village of Algoma west of the Fox River, on or near the street now called Oshkosh Avenue.

The nearest Methodist church in that corner of early Oshkosh was First Methodist Episcopal on the corner of Church Avenue and Division Street, a block off Main.

One reason to start the group that became Algoma Boulevard Methodist might have been that it was too far to walk nearly three miles to the "downtown church" and then back home. Even though it was not an unreasonable walking distance in those days, the walk could be especially unpleasant in Wisconsin's cold winter weather. It might be unpleasant enough to keep families at home with their young children. It was not too far for a horse and carriage, but if you didn't have a carriage, it was a long walk.

