





# Cedarburg **Community** United Methodist Church

W68N563 Evergreen Blvd.

Cedarburg, WI 53012

[cedarburgcumc.org](http://cedarburgcumc.org) 262-377-3832

## Monthly Newsletter of Community United Methodist Church

Please worship with us on Sunday mornings, either in-person  
or online at [cedarburgcumc.org](http://cedarburgcumc.org) | 10:00 a.m.

Memorial Day Through Labor Day - Sunday School for all ages at 9:00 a.m.

**Pastor** | Pastor Banze Kyabuntu | [PastorKyabuntu@CedarburgCUMC.org](mailto:PastorKyabuntu@CedarburgCUMC.org)

**Church Office** | 262 • 377 • 3832 |

Hours | Monday - Thursday from 9:00 a.m. to Noon.

W68N563 Evergreen Blvd., Cedarburg, WI 53012

[www.CedarburgCUMC.org](http://www.CedarburgCUMC.org)

*"We are a Safe Sanctuary Congregation"*



Cedarburg  
**Community**  
United Methodist Church

## Pastor's Corner



**B**eginning February 18th, we begin our journey in Lent. Lent is not a season we are called to feel heavy or distant; but rather, an invitation from our Lord Jesus Christ to slow down, reflect, and return to God again. Lent is a time of reflection, repentance, and renewal. It serves as a profound reminder

to awaken from our slumber, to shake off the lethargy that may have settled in our hearts and minds, and to embrace the transformative power of compassion and service. At Cedarburg Community United Methodist Church, we do not walk this season alone. We walk it together with God and with one another. We also gather around God's Word and anchor in the promises God has kept for us in Jesus. Lent begins with honesty and hope. On Ash Wednesday, we are reminded that we are dust, and that sin touches every part of our lives. Yet even in that reminder, God speaks a word of grace, hope and comfort. He calls us to return to Him and promises that He comes to meet us with mercy.

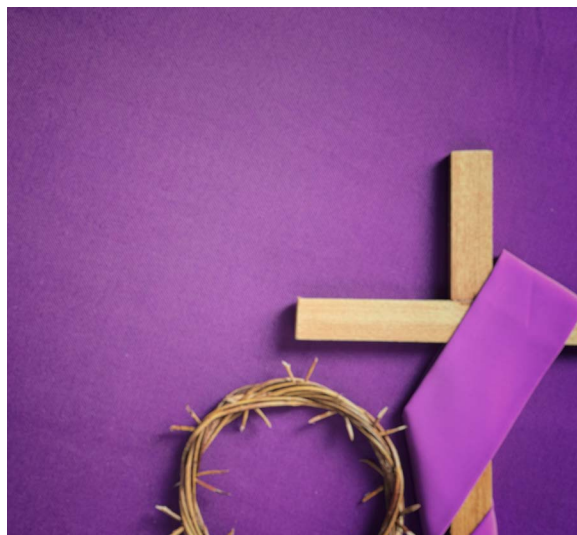
Throughout these 40 days of Lent, our worship will continually point us to Jesus, who willingly went to the cross and finished the work of our salvation for us. One way we will journey together this Lent is through our spiritual disciplines such as meditation, prayer, devotion... Through these spiritual disciplines, we can be reminded that faith is not just about having good intentions but about keeping our eyes fixed on Jesus Christ. Because God has been so gracious to us, we are drawn to follow Jesus more closely. As we hear His words together, we will be encouraged to live lives marked by grace, compassion, and love for others. But we will also be inspired to be God's agents of justice in the world filled with injustice.

During Lent, we will explore a thought-provoking theme titled, "They Tried to Kill Him." Before even Calvary, Jesus was always being sought everywhere as they wanted to kill Him. There are many incidences in the Bible where they attempted to murder Jesus, but He escaped. The

question we need to ask ourselves is that if Jesus was just a nobody from Nazareth, why were there so many attempts on His life? Why could they not leave Him alone? In this series, we will discover not only the question "why?" but also reveal certain circumstances leading to His execution. Of course, theologically, everyone knows Jesus died for our sins, but this series will shed some light that He was killed for something else. His death may have been spiritual, but His execution was political.

We invite you to be a part of this worship series. Our hope and prayer is that this Lenten season will be a time of profound renewed worship, fellowship, and spiritual growth for all of us. Come and be a part of it. Gather with God's people. Invite a friend or neighbor to join you. The Lord is at work among us, strengthening our faith and drawing us closer together. As we return to the Lord this Lent, may we trust His promise that He always returns to us with grace, forgiveness, and life in Jesus. As He draws us back to Himself, may He also use us to live out our calling as a congregation, "Connecting People to Christ." Through our worship, our words, and our care for one another, may this season be a time when we are strengthened in faith and sent out in love, so that others may come to know the Savior.

In His Service,  
*Pastor Kyabuntu*





## Find Your Place: Discover How You Can Get Involved

**H**ave you ever wondered where you fit in at our church? Whether you're brand new, have been attending for years, or are simply looking for a fresh way to connect, we invite you to join us for our **"Find Your Place" Workshop on Wednesday, February 11 at 6:00 p.m.**

This engaging workshop is designed to help you explore the many ways our church lives out its mission through service, leadership, and community. You'll have the opportunity to

learn more about our various committees and ministries, hear what they do, and discover how your interests, gifts, and passions can make a meaningful difference.

Most importantly, this workshop is a chance to meet people, ask questions, and take a next step; no pressure, no long-term commitment required. Just come as you are, listen, and see what might spark your interest.

We truly believe that when each person finds their place, our whole church grows stronger. We hope you'll join us on **Wednesday, February 11 at 6:00 p.m.** and take this exciting step in discovering how you can be part of what God is doing in and through our church. A light dinner will be provided.

**H**elen M. Peace passed away on Friday, January 9, 2026. She was 89 years old. Please send cards and memorial donations to her son David.

David Peace  
6214 Pleasant Hill Drive  
West Bend, WI 53095

## Happy Birthday to You!

February 1     Joan Neuswanger  
                     Randy Pierce  
                     Gerald Wilda

February 2     Papa Annor  
                     Kevin Westphal

February 6     Sue Van Dyk

February 8     Jane West

February 9     Lorraine Hanson

February 11    Susan Harrington  
                     Shirl Campbell

February 13    Cassandra Janssen  
                     Elana Olson

February 16    Sandy Olson

February 19    Carl Hader  
                     Stevie Stibor

February 20    Tom Manz

February 22    Debbie Blodgett  
                     Chuck Rabas

February 25    Terumi Schaefer  
                     Ohemaa Annor

February 27    Ellen Adgate

February 28    Michael Schiel

Not on the Birthday List? Please contact the CUMC office.

# Ash Wednesday: Beginning the Journey Together

**A**sh Wednesday marks the beginning of the season of Lent, a sacred time in the life of the church when we slow down, take an honest look at our lives, and turn our hearts back toward God. It is a day that invites reflection, humility, and hope. With simple ashes placed on our foreheads in the shape of a cross, we remember both who we are and whose we are.

The words spoken on Ash Wednesday are ancient and profound: *"Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return,"* or *"Repent and believe the gospel."* These words are not meant to shame or discourage us. Instead, they ground us in truth. They remind us of our human frailty and our deep need for God's grace. At the same time, they point us toward the mercy and love of a God who meets us exactly where we are and invites us into new life.

Ash Wednesday is not about perfection. It's about presence. It's about showing up with honest hearts, our regrets and hopes, our doubts and faith, our weariness and longing, and letting God begin a new work in us. It is a quiet, powerful moment to pause in the middle of busy lives and remember what truly matters.

As we begin this Lenten journey, we invite you to join us for our **Ash Wednesday service on Wednesday, February 18th at 7:00 p.m.** This will be a meaningful, reflective time of worship, prayer,

Scripture, and the imposition of ashes. Whether you've attended Ash Wednesday services for years or have never experienced one before, you are welcome here.

This service is for anyone who longs for a fresh start, a deeper connection with God, or simply a moment of peace and perspective. It is for those who are carrying heavy burdens and for those who are filled with gratitude. It is for those who feel close to God and for those who feel far away. God's invitation is open to all.

Lent is not a race to Easter; it is a journey of transformation. And every journey has a beginning. Ash Wednesday is our first step together.

We hope you'll join us on February 18th at 7:00 p.m. as we mark the cross on our foreheads, open our hearts to God's grace, and begin this sacred season side by side. Come as you are. There is room for you.

*Stevie Stibor*  
*Director of Children and Youth Ministries*

## Men's Study Group

**H**ey guys; come and join us as we read and discuss the letters of James and Peter. In February we will begin reading and discussing William Barclay's book on the Letters of James and Peter from his Daily Study Series. Barclay, a renowned Presbyterian theologian, author, and minister, is well known for his in-depth texts of all the books of the bible. His intent on writing the series was not academic but to enable readers to "to know Jesus Christ more clearly, to love him more dearly, and follow him more nearly."

Which of the four James mentioned in the New Testament really wrote this letter? Was it Jesus' brother who was also the leader of the new church in Jerusalem? Why did Péter, who Jesus loved most

and named him the Rock on which the Christian church would be built, write only two letters? To whom were these letters addressed? We hope to learn answers to these questions and others and also the words of James and Peter.

Men! Please do join us at PJ Piper's Pancake House Thursday mornings at 7:00 a.m. We'll analyze Barclay's thinking and share some comradery.

# Like and Subscribe: Share the Love of Jesus

**W**hat's the first thing you want to do when you discover a hilarious video, an amazing song, or a powerful podcast? You share it! You hit "like," send the link to a friend, or tell everyone, "You have to check this out!" We naturally want to pass along the things that make us laugh, inspire us, or help us see the world in a new way.

That's why our theme this month is "Like and Subscribe: Share the Love of Jesus." We want our kids to understand that there's nothing more awesome they can share than the love, hope, and adventure that come from knowing Jesus.

In a world where kids are constantly sharing clips, memes, and messages, we're helping them see that faith is meant to be shared too. Jesus didn't keep his love a secret, he welcomed people, healed them, forgave them, and invited them into a new way of living. Then he told his followers to go and tell others about him. Sharing Jesus doesn't have to be complicated or awkward. It can be as simple as being kind to someone who feels left out, praying for a friend who's having a hard day, inviting someone to church, or telling a friend why Jesus matters to them.

Throughout the month, kids will explore stories from the Bible that show how God's love spreads from person to person. They'll learn that when we "like and subscribe" to Jesus – when we choose to follow him every day – it naturally overflows into the way we treat others. God uses ordinary people, even kids, to do extraordinary things when they share his love.

We'll also talk about what it looks like to live out our faith online and offline. In a digital world, words matter. Kind comments, encouraging messages, and thoughtful choices reflect God's love just as much as our actions in person. Kids will be challenged to think about how their words, attitudes, and choices can point others to Jesus.

As parents and caregivers, you play a huge role in helping this message stick. Here are a few simple ways to reinforce the theme at home:

- **Talk about sharing.** Ask your child what they like to share with friends and why. Then talk about what it means to share Jesus in everyday life.
- **Model it.** Let your kids see you praying for others, showing kindness, and talking about your faith naturally.
- **Encourage courage.** Celebrate small steps your child takes to be kind, invite a friend to church, or stand up for someone who needs help.

My prayer is that every child will discover that following Jesus is the greatest adventure of all, and that sharing his love is one of the best ways to make a difference in the world.

So, this month, let's all "like and subscribe" to what God is doing in our lives and pass it on. Because the love of Jesus is too good not to share!

*Stevie Stibor*  
Director of Children and Youth Ministries

## Special Easter Offering Envelopes

**T**he Easter offering envelope will be sent in the mail during Lent. At this Easter season we are called to give generously to God out of thankfulness for the new life available to us through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

May God bless you richly in your giving.

## Member Request



**S**haron Parker has a wooden ramp that she needs to dispose of. If anyone is interested in the ramp, please contact the office and let us know. Thank you!



## You Belong Here

**M**iddle school and high school can be amazing... and really hard. It's a season full of big questions: *Who am I? Do I matter? Where do I fit in?* There's pressure to look a certain way, act a certain way, post the right things, get good grades, make the team, have the right friends, and somehow hold it all together. It can feel like everyone else has it all figured out while you're still trying to find your place.

Here's something I want every student to know, you are not alone, and you don't have to pretend here.

Our student ministry exists to be a place of acceptance, belonging, and hope – a place where you can show up exactly as you are. You don't have to have all the answers. You don't have to be perfect. You don't have to believe all the right things yet. You are welcome, valued, and wanted just as you are.

Each of you matter deeply to God. You are not an accident. You are not invisible. You are not "too much" or "not enough." You were created on purpose, with purpose, and your life has meaning, even on the days it doesn't feel like it.

This is a place where you can ask honest questions without being judged, build real friendships that go deeper than likes and streaks, laugh, have fun, and make memories, talk about the stuff that actually matters in your life, and discover who God is and what that means for you.

I know life isn't always easy. Some of you are carrying stress, anxiety, grief, family struggles, or loneliness. Some of you feel overlooked, misunderstood, or exhausted from trying to keep up. Some of you feel like you don't quite fit anywhere. This is a space where you don't have to carry all of that by yourself.

You don't have to clean yourself up before you come. You don't have to be a "church kid." You don't have to be outgoing or confident or spiritual. You just have to be you.

My hope is that you find more than just a program here; you find a community that sees you, listens to you, and walks with you. A place where you can grow, not just into a better student or athlete, but into the person God created you to be. A place where you can learn that your life matters and your story matters.

If you've ever felt like you don't belong anywhere...

If you've ever wished someone really understood you...

If you've ever wondered if God cares about your life...

This is your invitation.

Come check it out. Come meet people who will care about you. Come experience a place where you can breathe, belong, and become who you're meant to be.

You don't have to do life alone.

You don't have to have it all figured out.

You don't have to be perfect.

**You belong here.**

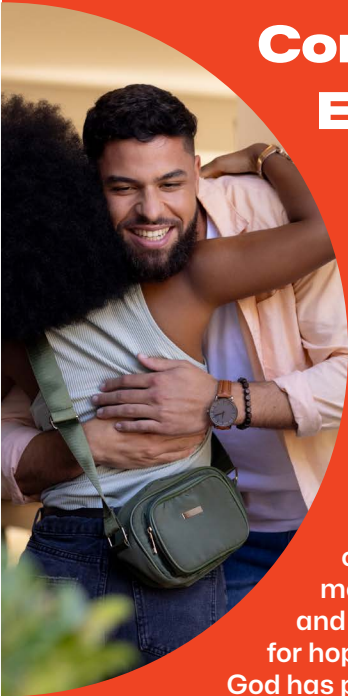
Stevie Stibor  
Director of Children and Youth Ministries

## Women of Faith

**W**omen of Faith will meet on the second Monday, with *Peaceful Living*, Chapters 8 and 9, up for discussion in the CUMC library on February 9 at 1:15 p.m. This lively group welcomes new members anytime. Please contact Barbara Anne Ridgely about ordering a book or if you have any questions.

"4th Monday coffee fellowship" for all interested women of the church and friends is planned for 9:30 a.m. on February 23 at Big Apple Bagels, located on Wisconsin Ave., Grafton, between Culver's and Pick 'n' Save.

# Community Outreach and Evangelism – Called to Reach: Sharing Christ Together



**W**e live in a world that is more connected than ever and yet, many people have never felt more alone. Behind the smiles at work, the small talk at school, and the carefully curated posts on social media, there are neighbors and friends quietly searching for hope, meaning, and belonging. God has placed us right where we are for a reason. Our everyday lives are the mission field, and our everyday relationships are the way his love travels.

Evangelism can sound intimidating. It often brings to mind awkward conversations or pressure-filled moments. But at its heart, evangelism is simply sharing good news with people we care about. It's telling the story of what God has done in our lives and inviting others to experience that same grace. It's not about winning arguments; it's about loving people well and pointing them to Jesus.

Jesus never separated faith from community. He called his disciples into relationship with him and with one another, and then he sent them out together. The early church grew not because of flashy programs or perfect sermons, but because ordinary believers lived out their faith in visible, loving ways. They ate together, prayed together, served together, and welcomed others into their lives. Their community became a living invitation to the gospel.

That same calling is ours today. When we choose to be present with our neighbors, listen to their stories, show compassion, and offer help in practical ways, we are living out the message of Christ. When we invite someone to church, to a small group, or to share a meal, we are opening a door for God to work. Sometimes the most powerful form of evangelism is simply showing up consistently and caring deeply.

Reaching others is not the job of a few "spiritual experts." It's the shared mission of the whole church. Every one of us has a circle of influence, family members, coworkers, classmates, friends, teammates, and neighbors, who may never hear the gospel unless they hear it from us. God doesn't call us to be perfect; he calls us to be faithful. He uses our willingness far more than our words.

Community is both the starting point and the outcome of evangelism. As we reach out to others, we grow closer to one another. As we welcome new people into our lives and our church family, our community becomes richer, more diverse, and more reflective of God's heart. Evangelism is not about filling seats; it's about forming relationships that lead to transformed lives.

So how do we begin? We pray. We ask God to open our eyes to the people around us and soften our hearts toward their needs. We look for small, intentional ways to love others. We listen more than we speak. We share our stories honestly. And when the time is right, we invite others to take a step toward Jesus, knowing that God is the one who does the real work.

Our church exists not just for ourselves, but for those who are not here yet. Every act of kindness, every invitation, every conversation, and every prayer matters more than we realize. God is already at work in the lives of the people around us. He is simply inviting us to join him.

Let's be a church that reaches beyond our walls, builds genuine community, and boldly shares the hope we have in Christ. Together, we can make a difference – one relationship, one invitation, and one life at a time.



# Wilderness Wednesdays: Trusting God in the In-Between



**T**he season of Lent invites us into a slower, more thoughtful rhythm. It's a time to reflect, repent, and prepare our hearts for Easter. But in a world that's always rushing toward the next thing, it can be tempting to treat Lent like something to "get through" rather than something to live into. That's why we're excited about Wilderness Wednesdays.

The goal of Wilderness Wednesdays is not to rush people through Lent, but to help us notice God's presence in the in-between places of life and learn how to trust God more deeply, together.

In the Bible, the wilderness is rarely a shortcut. It's a place of waiting, testing, and transformation. The Israelites wandered in the wilderness for forty years before reaching the Promised Land. Jesus spent forty days in the wilderness before beginning his public ministry. These wilderness seasons weren't wasted time. They were holy time, moments when God shaped his people, taught them to rely on him, and revealed his faithfulness in new ways.

Most of us know what our own "wilderness" feels like. It's the season of uncertainty, grief, transition, or unanswered questions. It's the stretch of life when things don't make sense yet, when prayers feel heavy, or when the path forward isn't clear. Wilderness Wednesdays is an invitation to bring those in-between places into community instead of carrying them alone.

Each Wednesday evening at 6:00 p.m., we'll gather to pause, pray, and reflect together. Dinner will be served, so come straight from work or school and share a meal with your church family before we spend time in Scripture, conversation, simple practices, and meaningful activities. Together,

we'll explore what it means to trust God when we don't have all the answers. We won't rush toward Easter joy without acknowledging Good Friday pain. We won't pretend everything is fine when it isn't. Instead, we'll make space for honesty, hope, and the gentle work God does in us when we slow down and pay attention.

Wilderness Wednesdays is also about remembering that faith is not a solo journey. We are formed best in community, when we listen to one another's stories, pray for one another's struggles, and encourage one another to keep going. Trust grows when we walk side by side through uncertain terrain and discover that God is meeting us there, together.

This season is not about perfection or performance. It's about presence, God's presence with us, and our presence with one another. It's about learning to notice the small signs of grace that show up in ordinary moments: a meaningful conversation, a quiet prayer, a song that speaks to your heart, a moment of peace in the middle of a hard day.

As we journey through Lent, our prayer is that Wilderness Wednesdays will become a sacred pause in the middle of busy weeks – a place to breathe, reflect, and remember that God is, even in the wilderness.

**We invite you to join us on Wednesday evenings at 6:00 p.m. throughout Lent, from February 25th through April 1st.** Dinner will be provided, and all are welcome. Come as you are. Bring your questions, your hopes, your doubts, and your stories. Together, let's learn to trust God more deeply in the in-between places of life and discover that the wilderness can be a place of transformation, not just waiting.

*Stevie Stibor*  
*Director of Children and Youth Ministries*