



# WEEKLY BULLETIN

DECEMBER 10TH, 2023

live life  
together

# THE SPIEL

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## EMBRACING THE UNEXPECTED

### JAMES CONRAD

Leadership Board

*James is the Vice Chair of the Church Leadership Board.*

It comes as no surprise to many of you in our Church body that I'm a numbers guy. I've been an accountant specializing in nonprofit organizations for over nine years, and before that, I was a meteorologist from 2007 until 2014. Both deal with numbers, but in very different ways. Accounting is a Type A personality holder's dream: everything has its place and there are generally clear-cut rules to follow. Meteorology, on the other hand, relies on rounded spatial mathematics and equations that don't perfectly simulate our turbulent atmosphere. I grew up wanting to be a meteorologist, but ended up as an accountant through a series of life events. I expected one path, but was sent down a very different one.

Our theme this year has been all about the Unexpected. Every one of us has our unexpected moments – the vacation plan that went awry, a car accident that ate into the family nest egg, the list goes on. As my term on the Leadership Board is coming to an end at the end of December, I am taking a moment to reflect on how it has had its Unexpected moments.

Prior to joining the board, I had acted as the Church's outsourced accountant, and prior to that, as a volunteer helping with paying the bills. Upon joining the board, I was expecting a lot of the same, acting more or less like a Treasurer. Fun fact: our Leadership Board does not have a Treasurer. Suddenly, I was unexpectedly feeling out of my element. I was also not familiar with the Policy-Based Governance model our Church employs. While it has similarities to other methods of nonprofit board governance, it just wasn't what I was used to... or what I was expecting.



# THE SPIEL

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As time passed, I found myself becoming more used to the methods and actions of the Leadership Board, eventually acting as Vice-Chair last year and as Secretary in 2023. Yet, another unexpected event popped up: I was overextended. Job responsibilities, family events, kids in sports, sitting on two boards... I realized it was all too much and I knew I wasn't giving my best effort to any of them. I decided to cycle off the Leadership Board after my three-year tenure was complete at the end of this year, opting out of a second three-year term.

I didn't expect how hard the decision would be on me. It felt like I was giving up and throwing in the towel on what should be one of the most important aspects of my life: my faith journey. After prayerful consideration, I knew that I would continue to serve the Church in other ways and not completely disappear like a thief in the night.

My message to you: take your Unexpected to God. Sit with Him in prayer. When the Unexpected happens, I've found that two prayers work for me: asking God for strength to carry me through, and His will to be done and for me to accept the outcome. I'm not in control, He is. Knowing it's not my plan, but His plan, is sometimes all I need to keep pressing on. Those two prayers haven't broken through my Fear of Flying barrier, but I know they'll be part of the solution.

I know that Dave and Chad will do a wonderful job after my tenure wraps in a few weeks. I ask that you pray for them, and for their Unexpected. May your Advent and Christmas seasons be blessed, and I thank you for allowing me the opportunity to serve.

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CHECK OUT MORE  OPPORTUNITIES ONLINE



# HIGHER GROUND

equipping our youth with life-long skills to be followers of Jesus.

## COMING FOR YOUTH:

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10TH: 5:30PM-8PM CHRISTMAS PARTY

Appetizer potluck for our Christmas Party.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17TH: 5:30PM-8PM MOVIE NIGHT

Pizza and movie night with Life in the Word.



SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17TH: 5:30PM-8PM MOVIE NIGHT

Pizza and movie night with Higher Ground.

NO LIFE IN THE WORD IN DECEMBER

QUESTIONS? CONTACT EMILY POWERS: [EPOWERS@LIVELIFETOGETHER.COM](mailto:EPOWERS@LIVELIFETOGETHER.COM)



Our Adopt a School Partner is:

### **WAYS TO SERVE:**

## **LEOPOLD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

If you want to volunteer at Leopold in the classroom you will need to go to this website and follow the steps necessary. They are in need of people to read with students and help with classroom celebrations.

### **WE'RE COLLECTING GIFT CARDS**

Join us in encouraging the staff at Leopold Elementary this Christmas. We are collecting \$10 gift cards to local businesses to be included in cards for staff at Leopold. Gift cards can be dropped off at the Church between now and December 1st. *Suggested places: Kwik Trip, Culvers, Starbucks, Target, or other local coffee, shopping or dining establishments.*

Leopold has received a Fresh Fruits and Vegetable Grant so they receive those daily and are in need of someone from **8:30 - 9:30am Tuesday - Friday** to help sort and count out the amount needed for each class. Even if you could take one of those days it would be greatly appreciated.

*Questions? Contact Amy Meyer: [ameyer@livelifetogether.com](mailto:ameyer@livelifetogether.com)*

# *Kids* **CONNECTION**

Kids Connection is for children 4<sup>th</sup> grade and under, and their parents. Kids learn bible stories through games, crafts and songs. Kids build strong relationships with each other while learning truths about Jesus. 5th and 6th grade students are invited to attend this class as junior helpers. Contact Emily Powers at [epowers@livelifetogether.com](mailto:epowers@livelifetogether.com).

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10TH: 10:15AM-11:30AM**

This week we are learning about the Magi and their adventure to find baby Jesus. Children will discover how they, too, can be like a star and point the way to Jesus.

# MESSAGE & NOTES

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## SPROUT

Isaiah 11:1-10

*Focus: Stump. Dead. "Stumped" Dead end. Yet, God does the unexpected. From the dead stump of Jesse, a sprout emerges. Explore Isaiah's vision of a flourishing hope, where the unexpected becomes the extraordinary.*

### WORD

Read Micah 5:1-5a

Play or sing the Christmas Hymn: "O Little Town of Bethlehem"

Another prophecy fulfilled, the Messiah born in Bethlehem. What comes to mind for you when you consider this.

What stands out to you as you read these verses.

As you look at verse 5a - what do you notice about who our source of peace is?

Where else do you seek peace besides Jesus?

How will you prepare your heart and home to keep Jesus at the center of your Christmas celebration and the source of your peace?

### PRAY

After the group shares the practical ways they want to keep Jesus center pray for each other. Also pray for those in your life who may be seeking peace in other places and that they would come to know Jesus as their source of peace.

### LOVE

How will you show love this week to someone in your church?

# CALENDAR & EVENTS



## UPCOMING:

### ***SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10TH: 9AM WORSHIP***

Join us for our in-person and online worship on Sunday at 9am. Join us online at [lifelifealtogether.com/thisweek](https://lifelifealtogether.com/thisweek). You will find the livestream, the bulletin, the link for 2\*22, the lifeLines and all that you need for the week, on this page. We look forward to worshipping together.

### ***SUNDAYS THROUGH DECEMBER 10TH: AFTER WORSHIP 2\*22: THE 7 CHURCHES OF REVELATION***

Today's our last day working through the 7 Churches of Revelation. Join us as we finish this series together after worship on Sunday.

### ***MEMORY TREE***

We will be offering our memory ornaments once again in honor of those loved ones who have passed away in 2023. These ornaments are keepsakes for you. There will be blank tags available as well through Christmas.

### ***SATURDAY, DECEMBER 16TH :11:30AM-2PM DUDE CREW***

Join us on December 16th! We're getting together to hang out, eat some food and have some fellowship! RSVP to Chad at [chadenright\\_wa@yahoo.com](mailto:chadenright_wa@yahoo.com).

### ***SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17TH :AFTER WORSHIP ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING***

Join us for our annual family advent service. We'll vote for incoming board members, talk about the year in review, and get a preview of 2024.

### ***SUNDAY, DECEMBER 24TH: 4PM CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP***

This year, we will have one worship service all together at 4pm. Join us! There will be no morning worship service on Christmas Eve.



***MONDAY, DECEMBER 25TH 9AM CHRISTMAS DAY WORSHIP***

Join us for Worship on Sunday on Christmas Day at 9am.

***DECEMBER STORY TOPIC: LISTENS FOR INSIGHT***

**What have you learned about God and your walk with him this year?**

We are collecting stories as a way to inspire and encourage others. We'd love to hear from you! It can be anything, big or small. You can write on our story wall in the Welcome

***POINSETTIAS:***

We'll be decorating our altar with poinsettias. Purchase a poinsettia to honor a loved one. Sign up in the Welcome Area and donate \$15 in the designated envelope. You may take your poinsettias home after Christmas.

**SPECIAL NOTE:**

***DEADLINE TO RECEIVE END OF YEAR OFFERINGS IN THE CHURCH OFFICE IS THURSDAY, DECEMBER 28TH AT NOON.***

**Gifts For Jesus**

You've probably heard about Gifts For Jesus by now. But, as we come to the end of the year, we'd love for you to consider a special donation for Gifts For Jesus. Your gift will go toward our most immediate repair needs, which include our fire suppression system (interior sprinkler system) that needs to be replaced and landscaping that will prevent water from entering the building. Those gifts can be brought to the manger in the Sanctuary, or given online. You can find out more by visiting our Gifts For Jesus page [HERE](#). If you have any questions, you can contact Jess O'Malley at [jomalley@livelifetogether.com](mailto:jomalley@livelifetogether.com).

**SEE THE BACK PAGE FOR SUNDAY WORSHIP TIMES**



**CHECK OUT UPCOMING OPPORTUNITIES ONLINE**



# PRAYERS & ANNOUNCEMENTS & CELEBRATIONS//



SCAN THE CODE TO CONNECT  
TO OUR YOUTH MINISTRY!

SCAN THE QR CODE TO  
CONNECT WITH US!



## BIRTHDAYS

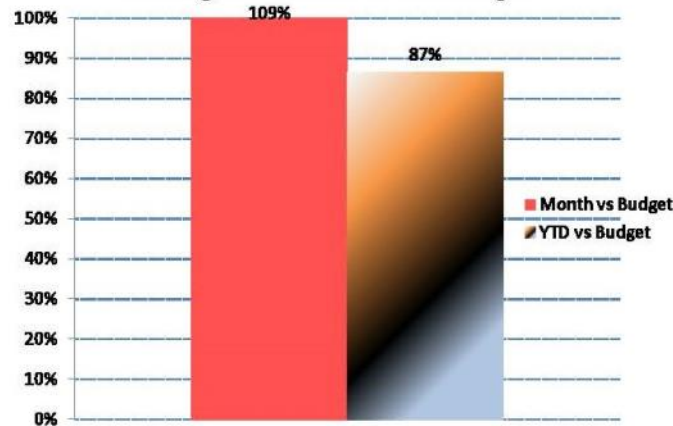
12/11 Greg Curless  
12/11 Fred Tiemann  
12/16 Ginny Mclaury  
12/17 Nick Cavis  
12/17 Julia Halopka

Birthdays and Anniversaries for this week! If your special day does not appear,  
please contact the church office to update your records.

# GLANCE *at the* FINANCE



Offerings: Month and YTD vs. Budget



Tithes and Offerings as of November 30th, 2023

November Received	\$ 52,884	2023 Received	\$ 530,938
November Goal	48,561	2023 Goal thru November 20	537,442
November Total Last Year	62,087	Total 2023 Goal	612,376
		<b>Left to Reach Annual Goal</b>	<b>81,438</b>
		This Year Surplus/(Deficit)	(6,504)
		2022 Total	661,724

Additional Information as of November 30th, 2023

Line of Credit Balance	<b>ZERO</b>	2022 Loan Balance	<b>\$ 77,778</b>
Paid off on 11/01/23		Last paid 11/24/23	

Church and Preschool Finances for October 2023

	2023	2022		2023	2022
Church Rev.	512,902	475,566	Preschool Rev.	131,169	115,335
Church Exp.	578,583	552,154	Preschool Exp.	121,885	110,096
Net Income	(65,681)	(76,588)	Net Income	9,283	5,239
YOY Difference	10,907		YOY Difference	4,045	

## COMMUNION

If you're a guest, you're welcome to attend the Lord's Supper with us this morning. We only ask of you what God asks of us all - that you can answer 'yes' to the following questions:

- ♦ Have I been baptized in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit?
- ♦ Do I believe that I am a sinful human being without hope of eternal life except for God's mercy in Christ Jesus?
- ♦ Do I believe that Jesus is God's Son and my personal Savior?
- ♦ Do I believe that Jesus' true body and blood are present in the bread and wine?
- ♦ Do I desire by the Holy Spirit's power to live a Godly life?

If you have questions, please feel free to speak with a Pastor, a Worship Assistant, or someone sitting near you.



## SERVICE TIMES:

the Church  
2833 Raritan Rd.  
Fitchburg, WI 53711

Combined Traditional & Exalt Worship  
9:00AM [In-Person & Online]

UNEXPECTED...Endings: Sprout [December 10th, 2023]