

CHAPEL BELLS

St. Paul's U.C.C. - Erin



August, 2026

PASTOR'S MESSAGE



What does a pastor's message following the passing of her husband say? Thank you to each and every one of you who shared your memories with me of Jeff. I'm not certain why I chose this photo of Jeff's, other than it is dramatic. It is one of his most recent and to me the blurry clouds convey how quickly life passes. This was taken at one of his frequent haunts for photography and to feel the presence of God.

Those of you who attended Jeff's funeral may be curious why I chose the hymn, Joyful, Joyful, We Adore you. A bit unusual for a funeral. There are three reasons. The first is that Jeff associated, as many people do, the tune Hymn to Joy with Beethoven's ninth symphony. The second is it filled him with the joy of living. Something I cherish about him. The third comes from an unpublished poem 'When You Hear of My Demise,' written by Ann Weems.

When you hear of my demise
Don't believe a word of it!
Our God is the God of the living
And I am living still!
If it were not so
He would have told us!
Don't believe a word of it!
And whatever you do
Please please please
Don't eulogize me!
Gather instead for worship!
To celebrate God
Who gives each of us Life Abundant!
Turn mourning into morning
Turn tears into laughter!

Turn sadness into joy!
Turn somberness into celebration!
Remembering that Jesus is
The way, the truth, the life.
Gather to celebrate life with scripture and prayer
With jazz band with choirs, with pipers with dancing
Follow with faithfulness the life you have been given!
I left this earth in Alleluias
Dancing with the angels of life
Among the stars of God.

Another note of explanation, at our legal wedding, I had purchased a bucket of long-stem roses, enough for those who celebrated with us. The location was the fellowship hall of the church which allowed our guests to sit in a circle with the wedding party at the top. At the start of the service, I invited each guest to come forward, share their names and how they knew us, then take a single rose and add it to the beginnings of a bouquet. In a similar manner at Jeff's funeral, the single red rose in a vase represented Jeff and at the close of the service his immediate family took a rose and added it to his.

Lunch was all about Jeff...pizza, egg rolls, chocolate ice cream, shrimp salad, and cookies. Next time you enjoy any of his favorites, think of him. Amen.

ST. PAUL'S WOMEN'S GUILD

Our summer outing, after being rained out in June, was held on July 15 at the Fork and Tap in Port Washington. It was too hot to stroll the harbor or do any shopping, but thirteen of us had a tasty lunch, made an ice cream stop in Jackson, and enjoyed our time together. Thanks Betty for organizing our day!

The Guild next meets on Wednesday, August 19. We will be discussing our participation at St. Paul's Brat Fry on September 13. All St. Paul's women are invited to join us. No need to bring a lunch at our August meeting. We will serve pizza and chocolate ice cream from Jeff G's funeral luncheon. Thank you, Pastor Bonnie!



COUNCIL NOTES

Hello! The last few months have been busy ones for the council. We have had discussions about the condition of the church roof as a result of the storms earlier this year. At the beginning of July, we had an independent inspection of the roof to help determine its condition and expected life. This will help with planning for anticipated expenses. The landscaping project approved by the congregation at our annual meeting is also underway and it looks quite different already. Late last year, the council proposed an investment committee to help build an investment strategy and to make recommendations to the council to be better stewards of our funds. The council gave an initial approval as to the structure of the committee and will hear their recommendations at the August council meeting. The council has had preliminary discussions about the need for a bathroom on the first floor of the church. I've talked with some of you about this possibility and I've received some very positive feedback. Discussions will continue and we hope to discuss this at our annual meeting, or possibly a congregational meeting prior to that. Sunday school classes will start soon and we can always use additional help.

I enjoy talking with each of you about our church and it's future. We have much to be thankful for! If you have any questions or concerns, please reach out to me or any of the council members. Everyone is welcome to attend council meetings and we would love to see you there!

Debbie Schlafer
Council President



Thank you to Carol and the Women's Guild for serving the lunch for Jeff's funeral. To Jacquie B. for cleaning up the garden near the Rooster doors. To Lynn .D for her newest bulletin board (see picture below)

A personal note from Pastor Bonnie: All your thoughts and prayers, phone calls, and cards, for Jeff and myself throughout Jeff's illness were so greatly appreciated and continue to be. I believe Jeff would have asked you to be kind to the living and generous with what you have - be it your love, hope or wealth. Do better unto others as you would have done to you and reach back to those in need - lift them up, raise them higher, and love, love, love your neighbor.

Truthfully, most of July is a blur to me so I can't begin to thank all those who were there for me the day of Jeff's funeral. It is a blessing to feel so blessed by each of you.

THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS



Please pray for John and Polly E., Diane S., Joyce O'K., Mark G., Steve M., Cheryl F., Pastor Bonnie and Jeff's family

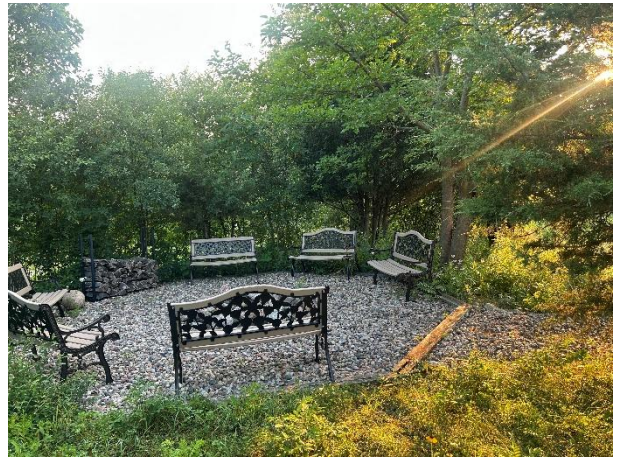
The people of Winnebago County affected by the recent tornados.

In Our Prayers

CREATION CARE

What do you think of the southern area from the driveway? Be sure and thank Curt H. and his team for their insight and organization of this project.

Pastor Bonnie is inviting you to “Meet Me in the Prayer Garden” on August 20th at 1:30. Just show up!



Mark Your Calendar *Monches Ballpark Brat Fry – Sunday, September 13th*

August	GREETERS	LITURGIST
2 nd	Dave & Betty Z.	Alice M.
9 th	Roy & Carol K.	Kay O.K.
16 th	Jeff & Jean S.	Jill P.
23 th	John & Lynn D.	Misti S.
30 th	Norb & Barb B.	Jacque B.



August 2026



Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Sat

						1 Tom P. Misti S. & Nick's Anniversary
2 9:30 Worship	3	4 Seniors	5 Bill & LouAnn E. & John & Lynn D. Anniversary	6	7	8 Isabel H.'s Celebration of Life 11 AM Chelsea B. Lori S.
9 9:30 Worship	10	11 Roy K. Brett M.	12 Cindy C.	13	14	15 Levi J.
16 9:30 Worship Clara B.	17	18	19 Women's Guild Ari M. Ava R.	20 Meet in the Garden 1:30	21	22
23 9:30 Worship	24 Anna O.	25 Diane S.	26	27 Marilyn D.	28	29 Jeff M.
30 9:30 Worship	31					