



# *The First Word*

*June 2026*

*First United Methodist Church, Racine*

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## **A Message from our New Pastor**

**Welcome to the month of June. When I was a child and school let out for the summer, June marked the beginning of new possibilities, adventures, and experiences. I looked ahead with great anticipation, eager to discover what the summer season would bring.**

**This year, I am grateful to begin our shared ministry at First UMC Racine. As we come to know one another's stories, gifts, and areas of growth, it is my prayer that we will enter this new season with open hearts and discerning spirits, attentive to the new possibilities through which God is calling us to serve in Racine.**

**By way of introduction, I would like to share a few details of my background. I was raised in Milwaukee and have lived in Menomonee Falls, Germantown, Mayville, North Prairie, where our children were raised, Greenfield, and Oak Creek. I also spent two years in Seminole, Florida, and two years in Manchester, Tennessee. In July 2025, I returned to Wisconsin to be nearer to my daughter and grandchildren. I am blessed with four children. My oldest daughter, her husband, and my grandson live in the Raleigh, North Carolina, area. My son resides here in Wisconsin. Another daughter and her husband live in Portland, Oregon. My youngest daughter lives in Oak Creek, Wisconsin, with her husband and my two grandchildren. I am also blessed with a granddaughter and her husband in Fond du Lac, as well as two great-grandchildren.**

**I was married for 36 years to my beloved husband, Jerry, who died from COVID in 2020. I now reside in Oak Creek, Wisconsin, with my emotional support dog, Maezy, an 8-year-old bichon frise. Those who visit the office during office hours may have the opportunity to meet her, as she**

occasionally accompanies me and offers a warm greeting.

I bring with me 30 years of ministry experience. Among the strengths I offer are worship planning, pastoral care, a deep love for God, and a sincere concern for all people. I am also deeply committed to social justice within the Wesleyan tradition. Throughout the years, I have found great joy in working with youth, teaching classes, and helping others discern their gifts and faithfully live out their calling.

Fondly, Rev. Christal Bindrich

**June Scriptures and sermon titles**

**June 7 – “It is Time For Change”**

**Ecclesiastes 3:1-8, Matthew 28: 16-20**

**Rev. Wendee Nitz, guest preacher**

**June 14 “Answering the Call”**

**Matthew 10: 1-8**

**Holy Communion will be observed**

**June 21 - “Do Not Worry”**

**Matthew 10: 26 – 39**

**June 28 – “Reward”**

**Matthew 10: 40-42**

**WISCONSIN ANNUAL CONFERENCE**

**JUNE 5-8. Please keep our connectional church and its leaders in your prayers!**

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY IN JUNE**

**5 - Paul Burlingame**

**6 - Harv Randecker**

**15 - Deb Johnson**

**16 - Shardae Feest**

**18 - Dylan Olson**

**22 - Charlotte Schnaare**

**29 - Charlotte Hirth**

**HAPPY ANNIVERSARY IN JUNE!**

**18 - Paul & Karen Burlingame**



**REMINDER** - Beginning Sunday, June 7 our worship time will change to 10:00 am each Sunday morning. June 7 is also FFRANC breakfast Sunday so join us in the social room at 9:00 am for food and fellowship.

**LOOSE CHANGE OFFERING FOR JUNE** will support the Racine-Kenosha Habitat for Humanity. “Every family that becomes homeowners and experiences their newfound strength is a powerful reminder that home matters, and the vision of a world where everyone has a decent place to live is worth building for.” Simply place your loose change, or more, in the envelopes found in the pew racks and indicate “mission project” on the envelope. Thank you for your continued support of our mission projects.

**FOOD PANTRY ITEMS FOR SUMMER**

The North Side Food Pantry has continued operation serving families of our community. Your continued support is very much appreciated. The next few months we will be collecting the following:

**June – Toilet Tissue**

**July – Juice**

**August – Pork & Beans**

**EDITORS NOTE: Some interesting news  
from Africa**

**Blessings and Welcome to Jabez Newsworthy  
Notes from the USA Board of Directors of  
Jabez School, May, 2026**

**Happy Mother's Day to: Mother Esther Voker!** Esther, Rev. Jakes' wife, believed so strongly in building Jabez School and ministry in Liberia that she cashed in her 401(k) in order to help get the project off the ground in 2009. And now, since they returned to their home country, her role is to first be a prayer warrior, then encourage and counsel the school's teachers, especially the young women and girls whenever they have a concern. She also serves on the Local School Board and is a member of the Parent-Teacher Association. Her grandson graduated from the 9th grade from Jabez last year. Probably her most difficult job is helping Rev. Jakes slow down. That is what mothers and wives do! Esther told us she has 7 children born of her and an extended family who rely on her. They are family members and church friends. As a sign of their gratitude and appreciation, they all refer to her and Rev. Jakes as 'Mammie and Daddy'. She also has 19 grandchildren who reside in Liberia and the USA. On Mother's Day Esther will be attending Jabez Community Christian Congregation worship service. At the service they will crown one of the women as Mother of the Year. Most Christian families in Liberia will celebrate in this same way. Thanks to a great "Mammie"

**Former student of Jabez Christian School  
works in Immigration Office.**

Rev. Jakes did not know Wesley personally when he was a student at the school as that was during the time Rev. Jakes was living in the USA and visiting Jabez periodically. Rev. Jakes said, "yet Wesley knew I was one of the founders and when I was on the campus had

"Popcorn Parties' with them." "Three weeks ago, Esther and I were driving to Sanniquellie City to complete documents for the school when immigration and police officers stopped us at the gate for proper identification. Right away we heard the voice of an Immigration Officer approaching behind us saying "Those are my Jabez people! They are my people! They help me to be where I am today!" Rev. Jakes continued by saying, "at that moment he and Esther were allowed to proceed." Rev. Jakes talked with Wesley about how he knew them. Wesley explained that he was a former student of Jabez School. He credited his time at Jabez as his way to success. Then Rev. Jakes asked him if he could take a photo with him and Wesley consented. The picture shows two very proud and happy Jabez enthusiasts. That's an example of why we can't be weary of doing good. Jabez is definitely "Blessed to be a Blessing".



***The First Word***

is published monthly by  
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## **First United Methodist Church**

**The Vision statement:**

**Inspire all to live faithfully in Jesus Christ**

**The Mission statement:**

**Gather, Equip, and Serve our community and the world in the name Jesus Christ!**