

# The Friendly Communicator

## May 2026

### A Word from the Pastor

Spring is in full bloom! The month of May brings with it many opportunities for us to continue celebrating the new life of Eastertide (which is traditionally celebrated for eight Sundays - from Easter Sunday until Pentecost).

As new life springs up all around us, it is important to reflect on God's care for creation. Recently, the American Baptist Historical Society put out a call for articles related to this topic, and I am pleased to share that the article I wrote has been accepted for publication in *Foundations* (formerly known as *American Baptist Quarterly*). The article is titled "The Church-Cosmos Ecosystem: Continuous Creation and Institutional Adaptation." The article argues that creation is not a static event, but a dynamic, interdependent, and ever-unfolding reality — much like an ecosystem. Drawing on the "Body of Christ" imagery in 1 Corinthians 12 and Ephesians 4, I explore how the church itself is called to participate in this continuous creation: adapting, growing, and responding to the ecological, social, and spiritual contexts in which we are embedded.

The subject of the article is deeply connected to the life we share together as a congregation, and I think you may find it meaningful. I will let everyone know when the article appears in print. In the meantime, I am always happy to discuss these ideas further — whether over coffee, after worship, or wherever good theological conversation happens to take root.

Spring is also the time when we celebrate our mothers — **Mother's Day is May 10<sup>th</sup>**. The Bible gives many examples of how God cares for us like a mother — as a hen gathers her chicks (Matthew 23:37), as a bear protects her cubs (Hosea 13:8), as a mother comforts her child (Isaiah 66:13), etc. I encourage everyone to bring the mothers and mother-figures in your life to worship with us that morning. Whether you are celebrating a mother, honoring a memory, or carrying a tender ache in your heart, you are welcome here.

Finally, mark your calendars for our **Annual Church Picnic on Sunday, June 7<sup>th</sup>**! Few things reflect the joy of Christian community more than sharing a meal together outdoors, and this year's gathering promises to be a wonderful time of food, fellowship, and fun for all ages. Details about how you can contribute a dish or help with preparations will be forthcoming. I hope to see every family represented — come ready to relax, reconnect, and celebrate the bonds that make us a family of faith.

This May, may we continue to grow — as individuals, as families, and as a community — rooted in God's creative love.

*In Christ's Service,*

Pastor Stephen

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### March 2026 Financial Income Report

**General Receipts**

Envelopes	\$11,990.00
Loose Offerings	201.00
Church School	82.00
Birthday	20.00
Tithely	9.41
Easter	25.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$12,327.41</b>

**Miscellaneous Receipts**

Pow wow	50.00
MMCC	400.00
Initial Offer	2.00
Indivisible SE WI	51.45
Postage	10.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$513.45</b>

**Communion Offering**

Good Samaritan	175.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$175.00</b>

**Memorial Fund**

	0.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>

**Mission Offering**

America for Christ	1018.00
Camp Tamarack	400.00
Grand Avenue Club	150.00
MCC	150.00
St. Ben's	400.00
Project Focal Point	300.00
New Life Center	300.00
Love Gift	29.87
ABWN-National Support	400.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$3,147.87</b>

**Deposited Total** **\$16,163.73**

### May Birthdays

- 1 Bonnie Holl
- 8 Maxine Gapinski
- 14 Maria Reyes-Ramirez
- 14 Nancy Byleen
- 15 Linda Hazard-House
- 17 Debra Radakovich
- 20 Brody Oleson
- 23 Peter Radakovich
- 29 Demetrius Hernandez
- 30 Marjorie Burns

If we have inadvertently missed your special day, please accept our apologies, and let the office know so we can change our records.

**Spring Workday - Saturday May 16 from 9 AM to Noon** - Please come help us do some spring cleaning! There will be a mix of chores to do, both indoor and outdoor. Many hands make light work! If you have any suggestions on things that need to be done, please contact one of the Trustees.

**Scholarship applications** for the 2026-27 academic year are due June 1, 2026. The form is available on the CONNECT page of the church website.

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### Golden Guys and Gals

At 11:30 am, Thursday, June 4, the Golden Guys and Gals (3Gs) will meet at church for a tailgate party before carpooling to the 1:10 pm baseball game at American Family Field. It will be Kids & Seniors Discount Day. Kids 14 and under and seniors 60 and older get tickets 50% off. The Milwaukee Brewers will play the San Francisco Giants.

We will purchase a block of tickets on May 18, so please let us know on or before May 17, if you would like us to buy a ticket for you. There is a sign-up sheet in the foyer of the Education Wing. The cost will be approximately \$20 per ticket. If you prefer, you can purchase tickets yourself at [mlb.com/brewers](http://mlb.com/brewers) or you can buy tickets at the stadium the day of the game.

Everyone is welcome to join us! If you can attend the tailgate but not the game, or the game but not the tailgate, that's fine too.

### May Communion

The **Communion Offering** for the month of May will go to Camp Tamarack which is owned and operated by the American Baptist Churches of Wisconsin. Located on over 130 acres outside of Waupaca, and holding considerable frontage on the beautiful Chain of Lakes, Tamarack offers a retreat for youth and adults of all beliefs throughout the year.



### All-Church Picnic

Everyone is invited to the All-Church Picnic after morning worship on Sunday, June 7th. The picnic will be held on the church lawn. Grills will be available, so please bring your favorite meat to grill and a dish to pass.

Workout tip: Come early, before worship, and help to move tables and chairs from Fellowship Hall to the church lawn.

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We have just gone through one of the most musical times in the Christian calendar – Palm Sunday through Eastertide. During this time frame, we sang/rang the following:

- 2 praise songs

- 4 anthems (1 handbell and 3 Chancel Choir)

- 6 pieces of service music (preludes, postludes)

- 13 hymns with **37 verses!**

All of that music was prepared and/or reviewed by the choirs. Some of it – the anthems – were prepared just by the choirs. Some of it was reviewed so that the choirs could assist the congregation in singing with joy and purpose. Some of it serves as a way for people to move from one worship element to another.

Music as a form of worship can be found in many places in the Bible. It has always been a part of the praises of God's people. As we continue in Eastertide, take note of the variety of hymns, songs, and spiritual songs that are a part of our worship. To God be the glory!

Mary Schecher

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## May 2026

### Historical Reflections: Rev Bonnie Bell

Age 74 years. Born to life July 28, 1951 in Milwaukee

daughter of Richard Earl Bell and Betty Bulger Bell. Born to eternal life April 19, 2026 at Aurora St. Luke's Hospital South Shore. Preceded in death by her parents Richard and Betty and her older brother Thomas Bell. Dear sister of Lawrence (Jeannine) Bell. Aunt of Richard Bell and Erin (Shawn) Zinke. Great aunt of Zach and Nick Zinke. Cousin of Gary Hutchinson. Further survived by other relatives and friends.



A Celebration of Life was held on Saturday, April 25, 2026 at First Baptist Church of West Allis, with Rev. Christal Bindrich officiating.

Rev. Bonnie Bell, retired clergy, was a full member of the American Baptist Church who found her place among the United Methodists and served faithfully in the Wisconsin Annual Conference from 2002-2020. She served churches in North Prairie, Concord and Sullivan, and Kenosha: Immanuel. She was ordained in 1989 and recently served as a part-time consulting pastor with Community Baptist Church in Honey Creek in 2023-2024. In her retirement, she was actively involved at Underwood Memorial Baptist Church until its closing in 2024.

Rev. Bonnie Bell was ordained at Underwood Memorial Baptist Church in 1989, and served several United Methodist churches. She was active with Baptist clergy groups, preaching at several of our churches and recently served as a part-time consulting pastor with Community Baptist Church in Honey Creek in 2023-2024. In her retirement she was actively involved at Underwood Memorial Baptist Church until its closing in 2024.

Please keep her family and friends in your prayers. Bonnie was well known in the area among folk music groups, ministers, and activists over the years, participating in the work for peace and justice. She will be missed, and we give thanks to God for her life and service for Jesus Christ. [The above information combines input from the funeral home and ABC of WI.] *This is the 111<sup>th</sup> of periodic historical articles.*

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### Rev. Bonnie May Bell

Age 74 years. Born to life July 28, 1951 in Milwaukee daughter of Richard Earl Bell and Betty Bulger Bell. Born to eternal life April 19, 2026 at Aurora St. Luke's Hospital South Shore in [Cudahy, Wisconsin](#). Preceded in death by her parents Richard and Betty and her older brother Thomas Bell. Dear sister of Lawrence (Jeannine) Bell. Aunt of Richard Bell and Erin (Shawn) Zinke. Great aunt of Zach and Nick Zinke. Cousin of Gary Hutchinson. Further survived by other relatives and friends.

A Celebration of Life will be held on Saturday, April 25, 2026 at First Baptist Church, 1576 South 78th Street , [West Allis, WI](#) with a memorial visitation at First Baptist Church from 10:00 AM until the Services at 12:00 Noon, with Rev. Christal Bindrich officiating.

Rev. Bonnie Bell, retired clergy, was a full member of the American Baptist Church who found her place among the United Methodists and served faithfully in the Wisconsin Annual Conference from 2002-2020. She served churches in North Prairie, Concord and Sullivan, and Kenosha: Immanuel. She was ordained in 1989 and recently served as a part-time consulting pastor with Community Baptist Church in Honey Creek in 2023-2024. In her retirement, she was actively involved at Underwood Memorial Baptist Church until its closing in 2024.

In lieu of flowers, memorials in Rev. Bonnie's name to your favorite church or charity appreciated.