



Winter 2024-25 Newsletter

Pastor Kevan's Letter

"Love invites you in." We've been hearing that sentence often here at Unity as it is the beginning of our new vision statement and reflects our commitment to be an inclusive church in becoming a Reconciling In Christ congregation. We are doing the work to ensure anyone, who has been hurt by the Body of Christ on account of who God has created them to be, will experience the celebration of true belonging in our community centered around Christ.

There is a difference in saying "All are welcome" compared to "Love invites you in." One distinction is in who is addressed – "all" or "you." This isn't a generalized announcement. Rather, it's specific and intentional. We see you. We respect you and your experience. We embrace you. Another difference is in the verb – "welcome" compared to "invite". Whereas "welcome" can be passive and conditional – we'll receive you if you come in and be like us – "invite" on the other hand is active. We go out to meet you, to get to know you, to befriend you, and to accompany into a community formed in God's love. That's the final and most important difference.

God's love in Christ seeks you out to draw you into God's presence. This is the message of Christmas in a nutshell. It is the gospel, the good news of God for us. As such, "Love invites you in" will be our theme this winter season for studying scriptures during worship each Sunday. Come, hear the good news of God for you. Come, experience a community in which God's love embraces you. Come, give witness to our world that God is with us – Emmanuel, Prince of Peace, Jesus the Lord.

Christmas Worship Schedule

Saturday, December 21 st	Las Posadas Tradition Experience	4:00 pm
Sunday, December 22 nd	Sunday Worship	10:00 am
Tuesday, December 24 th	Christmas Eve-Spanish Language	2:00 pm
Tuesday, December 24 th	Christmas Eve	7:00 pm
Wednesday, December 25 th	Christmas Day	10:00 am
Sunday, December 29 th	Sunday Worship	10:00 am

***We Share the Heart of Jesus in the Community
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www.unitymilwaukee.org
1025 E. Oklahoma Ave.
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Experience the Las Posadas Tradition

Saturday, December 21 at 4:00 pm Josepha will lead us in the Las Posadas tradition. All are welcome, especially families, to participate in the las posadas tradition of experiencing Mary and Joseph's struggle to find a place to stay in Bethlehem as Jesus is about to be born. Participants will visit three homes of members in the neighborhood, only to hear that there is no room for them and will then move on to ask someone else. Our group will then return to Unity for cookies and a pinata for the kids. Invite a friend or family and join us for this experience!

Spanish Language Worship

In addition to Unity's Spanish Language Service which is held the first Sunday of each month at 12:00 noon, Unity will host a Christmas Eve Service on Tuesday, December 24th. Christmas Eve worship will include children performing the Dance of the Little Shepherds. A meal with fellowship will follow the service. These services are led by Josepha Puerta-Villacrez as she continues her seminary program and candidacy for ordination. These services do not replace any of our other worship services. As our 10:00 worship service is scripted in Spanish, these worship services are scripted in English. Please join us and spread the word! The next several service dates are: December 1, December 24, January 5, February 2, and March 2. You're invited!

KidsTime Schedule Update

Kid's Time meets each Sunday immediately following worship. They will not meet on December 29 between Christmas and New Years or on January 26 during Unity's Annual Congregational Meeting. The model is to have a brief Kids Time following worship, during a Cross+Generational fellowship time in the back of the sanctuary. In other words, ALL are encouraged to participate in Kid's Time and Coffee Connections as we build community together.



Annual Meeting January 26th

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Mark your calendar: Unity's Annual Congregational Meeting is scheduled for **Sunday, January 26th, 2024** in Unity's sanctuary following worship (11:15 am). The format will be similar to the past couple of years. You will hear more about this as the date approaches. This is an important meeting for all members of Unity!



This Photo by Unknown

Active Adult Center News

Unity's Active Adult Center has been meeting on **Tuesdays from 9:00 – 1:00 am** in Unity's Fellowship Hall. Their Christmas Party is scheduled for Tuesday, December 9th. Their last meeting for the calendar year is December 17th. They will be on a winter break from December 24 through January 27th. Active Adult Center will resume on Tuesday, February 4, 2025. You are invited to join in their weekly events!

Unity Becomes a Warming Shelter

Unity is one of four warming centers in Milwaukee which will provide nightly refuge and resources. Unity entered a partnership agreement for our building to serve as a warming shelter this winter with Milwaukee Coalition on Housing & Homelessness. This program began on Monday, November 25 and will run through Saturday, March 31, 2025. They will use our building from 7:00 pm – 7:00 am 7-days a week and will give Unity financial compensation. The county will provide trained staff. Check out the link on Unity's Facebook page from Channel 12 news from November 19th!

CommUNITY Meal Continues!

Unity's CommUNITY Meal continues to serve our neighbors! We continue our monthly gatherings with a hot meal on the third Wednesday, serving from 5:00 – 6:30 pm. Our to-go meals are served all the other Wednesdays from 5:00 – 6:00 pm during our Food Pantry.

Thank you to the many volunteers who help with this important ministry! If you have any questions, please contact Unity's office or Lynn Rinderle. Here are specific dates to mark on your calendar:

- Hot Meal Dates: December 18, January 15, February 19, March 19
- To-Go Meal volunteers needed: Wednesday, January 29th from 1:00-2:00 pm

Thank you to Karen Penvose, Jim Liedtke, and all who helped with our Thanksgiving Meal!

Strategic Visioning Work Continues

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We have adopted our new Mission statement, Vision statement and Core Values to lead us in strategic planning. This fall, the two task forces were formed and have begun their work to develop proposals for the plan. The purpose of the Revamp Task Force is to align all of our resources with our primary mission. Resources include disciple-making ministry programs, staffing model, organizational structure, utilizing endowment, robust stewardship team, finances, etc. The group will identify needs in the community that involve educational opportunities, especially around our two target communities: single parents/starters and those experiencing housing insecurity. The Campus Development Task Force is exploring options to maximize our impact and efficiency at our location by shifting to a multi-use campus partnership with a developer providing services in mission alignment with Unity, such as integrated affordable housing and educational/life-skills training services. Both task forces will report their work thus far at Unity's annual meeting on Sunday, January 26th.

A follow up retreat with Kevin Ford, from Leighton Ford Ministries, is scheduled at Unity for Saturday and Sunday, May 3-4, 2025. Please mark your calendar if you would like to join us!

Mission Statement: (What God sends us out to do.)

We share the heart of Jesus in the community by loving people through life's struggles.

Vision Statement: (Where we are heading and what the end goal looks like.)

Love invites you in. Community cultivates growth. Compassion sends us out.

Core Values: (Who we are at our best.)

Affirm All – We welcome and include all people! We love because God first loved us. By affirming and embracing all people unconditionally. God's love shines through us. (1 John 4:19)

Follow Jesus – Faith is a way of life. Through worship we encounter Jesus among us. As we go out into the world, we experience him leading us in sharing God's love. (Matthew 16:23-25)

Empower Individuals – The church isn't a place; we are the church. We help every person discover, grow and share their unique gifts given by the Holy Spirit. (1 Corinthians 12:4-6)

Cultivate Community – Blessed to be a blessing. Unity exists to foster caring relationships among our neighbors as we bear one another's burdens. (Galatians 6:2)

Vote Occurs at Annual Meeting

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The RIC Core Team and Council are recommending that Unity members vote to become an official RIC Church at our 2025 Congregational meeting on January 26! This would affirm what we mean when we say, "Love invites you in." As a reminder, RIC is short for Reconciling in Christ, and it means that we would be certified in being an open, affirming, and inclusive church with practices to create a sense of belonging, safety, and respect for all people, regardless of their sexual orientation, gender identity, or other characteristics, such as race, ethnicity and people with disabilities. Unity would be nationally recognized through the Reconciling Works program and listed in their directory for those who specifically are searching for an RIC affiliated church. Furthermore, this would mean that we would have a symbol (logo) on our church signage to indicate we are community where everyone is safe and celebrated as a unique child of God.

In voting yes to become an RIC church, Unity will agree to the following:

1. The following welcome statement which Unity's RIC Task Force has developed: Love invites you in! Unity Lutheran Church unconditionally celebrates you as created in God's image regardless of your gender identity, sexual orientation, race, age, physical ability, neurodivergence, culture, family status, faith background, or income. Be your authentic self as we worship God, affirm all, serve our community, advocate for justice, and empower our neighbors. All are welcome, for the gifts of God are free!
2. Open and supportive to call a Rostered Leader who is LGBTQIA+ and Black, Brown, Indigenous, Person of Color (BIPOC) when the need arises.
3. Allow our sanctuary and community space to be used for LGBTQIA+ weddings and blessings.
4. Make a meaningful contribution annually to support the national RIC program. Unity has added an extra envelope in our offerings for this purpose.

If you have any questions regarding this vote, you are encouraged to ask Rachel Hahn, Pastor Kevan or any of the other members of Unity's RIC Task Force.

Stewarding our resources for Jesus' mission

Thank you for your generosity and for sharing your blessings and supporting Unity's ministries. This is our financial situation (General Fund) through October.

<i>Total Income</i>	\$ 131,127.43 YTD	<i>Annual Budget</i>	\$151,330.00
<i>Total Expenses</i>	\$ 127,490.27 YTD	<i>Annual Budget</i>	\$183,296.66



Use your QR code reader on your phone to give securely through the VANCO.

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Unity's Stewardship Campaign 2025



The theme is:
Loving God Big

Our center Bible verse is:
*You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and
with all your soul and with all your mind.*
Matthew 22:37

A huge **THANK YOU** for all those who responded to and turned in a pledge card this fall for 2025. If you have not turned in your pledge card, you are encouraged to do so. We value your ongoing partnership with Unity in Jesus' mission!

CommUNITY Notes from Council....

Here are just a few highlights of what your council has been doing and what issues we are facing. Please note that these are highlights and will not include everything.

- Staffing updates: Doug Henning was hired as Groundskeeper. Our Office Administrator, Jamissa West, resigned. Her last day was November 21st. Council will be working to fill that position.
- Thank you to all who baked and/or welcomed our neighbors during the November 5th election! We raised a little over \$800.
- Unity Night at Panara was enjoyed by those who attended! We earned \$107.35 from that fundraiser night.
- Two upper windows on the Logan Avenue side were replaced due to severe rotting and to prevent potential damage to our building. New tile was laid in the back-alley entry. Thank you, Jake and Laura for doing this!
- We continue to work on the internet issues we have experienced.
- During this winter, council will meet on the following Thursdays at 7:00 pm: December 19, January 23, and February 27.

Deadline for the Spring 2025 Newsletter is Tuesday, February 18.

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Apply Now for a Zirwes Scholarship

The Unity Endowment board invites any confirmed member of Unity to apply for a Zirwes Educational scholarship. The application window runs from December 3, 2024 through January 12, 2025. The application can be found on Unity's website.

**Unity's Food Pantry is open every
Wednesday from 5:00 - 6:00 pm.**



**To-go meals are available each Wednesday,
except on the 3rd Wednesday of the month when the
hot CommUNITY meal is served!**

Unity Hosts One of the First Co-ed Scout Troops!

Unity hosts Scout Troop 79, one of the first co-ed troops in the nation! In 2019, Scouting America (formerly Boy Scouts of America) opened to allow both girls and boys to join. However, girls and boys could not be in the same troop. So, while Troop 79 operated largely as one group, we were Troop 79B (for boys) and Troop 79G (for girls), each with their own scoutmaster, registered leaders and infrastructure.

In June 2024, Scouting America invited a select number of troops to participate in a co-ed troop pilot, where both girls and boys can be in a single combined troop. Unity's Troop 79 was one of the first to sign up! The scoutmaster of our single co-ed Troop 79 is Mindy Stollenwerk, with Jason Porter (former scoutmaster of Troop 79G) serving as assistant scoutmaster.

Troop 79 continues to focus on the principles of scouting & we warmly welcome difference and gender diversity. Our primary objectives are camping, conservation and service to the community. Our goal is for the scouts to lead the troop - the adult leaders are coaches.

For more information, please contact Jack Kosmoski, Troop 79 committee chair.

Sunday Worship Schedule:

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Ushers, Online Host, Producer, Altar Guild, Lectors

	12/1/2024	12/8/2024	12/15/2024	12/22/2024	12/24/2024
Ushers	Erin Whitehead, Nicholas Whitehead, Jacki Davis, Chris Davis	Kitty Dinauer, Josefa Puerta-Villacrez, Jorge Tores Munoz, Wayne Pratis	Erin Whitehead, Nicholas Whitehead, Jacki Davis, Chris Davis	Kitty Dinauer, Josefa Puerta-Villacrez, Jorge Tores Munoz, Wayne Pratis	Erin Whitehead, Nicholas Whitehead, Jacki Davis, Chris Davis
Online Host	Laura McVann	Laura McVann	Chad Lyden	Laura McVann	Chad Lyden
Director/Producer	Kyle Davis	Chad Lyden	John Lyden	Kyle Davis	John Lyden
Altar Guild	Wayne Pratis	Josefa Puerta-Villacrez	Stacy Davis	Wayne Pratis	Josefa Puerta-Villacrez
Lector	Wayne Pratis	Wayne Pratis	Nick Latona	Lynn Rinderle	Nick Latona
	12/25/2024	12/29/2024	1/5/2025	1/12/2025	11/19/2025
Ushers	Kitty Dinauer, Josefa Puerta-Villacrez, Jorge Tores Munoz, Wayne Pratis	Erin Whitehead, Nicholas Whitehead, Jacki Davis, Chris Davis	Kitty Dinauer, Josefa Puerta-Villacrez, Jorge Tores Munoz, Wayne Pratis	Erin Whitehead, Nicholas Whitehead, Jacki Davis, Chris Davis	Kitty Dinauer, Josefa Puerta-Villacrez, Jorge Tores Munoz, Wayne Pratis
Online Host	Patsy Lenz	Chad Lyden	Laura McVann	Chad Lyden	Patsy Lenz
Director/Producer	Kyle Davis	John Lyden	Kyle Davis	John Lyden	Kyle Davis
Altar Guild	Stacy Davis	Josefa Puerta-Villacrez	Wayne Pratis	Stacy Davis	Josefa Puerta-Villacrez
Lector	Wayne Pratis	Nick Latona	Janet Dunst	Lynn Rinderle	Wayne Pratis
	1/26/2025	2/2/2025	2/9/2025	2/16/2025	2/23/2025
Ushers	Erin Whitehead, Nicholas Whitehead, Jacki Davis, Chris Davis	Kitty Dinauer, Josefa Puerta-Villacrez, Jorge Tores Munoz, Wayne Pratis	Erin Whitehead, Nicholas Whitehead, Jacki Davis, Chris Davis	Kitty Dinauer, Josefa Puerta-Villacrez, Jorge Tores Munoz, Wayne Pratis	Erin Whitehead, Nicholas Whitehead, Jacki Davis, Chris Davis
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Altar Guild	Wayne Pratis	Stacy Davis	Josefa Puerta-Villacrez	Stacy Davis	Wayne Pratis
Lector	Janet Dunst	Nick Latona	Wayne Pratis	Lynn Rinderle	Nick Latona

If you would like to serve in any of these ministries
 please email our office at unity@unitymilwaukee.org to learn more.

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We remember the following people as we pray...

Ebony Brown and family (friends of Unity); **Gail Senelon** (AAC member); **Mary Cicerelli** (member); **Dareyl Wahl** (member); **Jeff Tessmer** (son of Marge); **Keith Mueller** (brother of Kim Thomas); **Jean Weibner** (mother of Tricia Skinner); **Don Plant** (friend of Jeff Kornreich); **Blake Oleson** (friends of Unity); **Dorothy C.** (outreach member); Pastor **Kevan Penvose**; **Patsy Lenz** (member); **Patricia Orłowski** (friend of Unity); **Sandy LeBombard** (friend of Unity); **Jerry & Nellie Javorski**; **Cindy Larson** (friend of Frank Jendis); **Bonnie Ziowkoski**, **Lori Jameson** (member); **Kathy** (friend of Unity); **Joan** (friend of Unity); **Jack Badalik** (friend of Unity); **Andy Wegner** (member); **Mary Noe**; **Robin Servantez** (friend of Lori Jameson); **Kim Deschler**; **Justin, Nathan, and Frank**, (friends of Unity); **Jamie Kornreich** (member); **Elaine Kornreich** (member); **Joe, Shelly, and Joey Tuzzo** (friends of Unity); **Gloria Brandenburg**; **Jeannine Lau** (member); **Trudy Rossman**; **Neil Larsen**; **Thom R. Bagley, Marty**; **Cindy Bereiter**; **Susan & Betty Johnson** (Ross); **Paul, Donna, Paula, Cathy, Izzy & Lee**; **Hernandez family**; the **Toni Fare family** (member); **Nicholas Whitehead** (member); **Rita Smith & Junior** (members); **Thurston, Isaac, Eric, the Zolinsky family**; **Tricia Skinner** (member); **Scott Neumann** (friend of Cindy Flechner); **Dennis Block** (member), and **Irvin Smith** (AAC – Charolette Smith’s husband); and **Matthew Robert Van Etta** (dad of Ophelia); **Pam Padgett** (member); **Wayne Pratis** (member); **Dave Emmons** (Friend of Unity); family & friends of **Sandi Buchman** (sister of Lori Jameson); family & friends of **Chuck Williams** (member); and **Jason** (Friend of Unity).

**Please notify the office to add or remove someone from Unity’s prayer list.)*

Unity has TWO ways to join our worship services if you are unable to make it in-person. Here are the direct links.

Watch it live stream at: <https://facebook.com/unitymilwaukee>.

Watch the recording on YouTube at: [Unity Lutheran Church - YouTube](#)

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"Love Invites You In"

Scripture Messages & Daily Readings

"To Hope"

Dec. 1st
Sunday Daniel 6:11-27
Monday Luke 4:16-21
Tuesday Isaiah 56:1
Weds. Isaiah 57:14-15
Thurs. Isaiah 59:1-8
Friday Isaiah 59:9-15
Sat. Isaiah 59:16-21

"To Love"

Dec. 8th CAMP SUNDAY
Sunday Joel 2:12-13, 28-29
Monday Isaiah 11:1-9
Tuesday Isaiah 42:1-4
Weds. Isaiah 49:1-7
Thurs. Micah 4
Friday Mark 1:1-11
Saturday Isaiah 53

"To Joy"

Dec. 15th
Sunday Isaiah 61:1-11
Monday Luke 1:26-49
Tuesday Matthew 1
Weds. Matthew 2
Thurs. Luke 1:1-20
Friday Luke 1:21-25
Saturday Psalm 113

"To Peace"

Dec. 22nd
Sunday Luke 1:26-56
Monday John 1:1-5
Tuesday John 1:6-8
Weds. John 1:9-13
Thurs. John 1:14-18
Friday Luke 2:1-7
Saturday Psalm 123

"To Revelation"

Dec. 29th
Sunday Luke 2:21-38
Monday Proverbs 1

Tuesday Proverbs 2
Weds. Proverbs 3
Thurs. Proverbs 4
Friday Proverbs 8
Saturday Psalm 131

"For Formation"

Jan. 5th
Sunday Luke 2:41-52
Monday Luke 2:39-40
Tuesday Mark 1
Weds. Matthew 3
Thurs. Matthew 4
Friday John 1:19-34
Saturday Luke 4:1-13

"To Show People Jesus"

Jan. 12th
Sunday Luke 3:1-22
Monday Matthew 5:1-16
Tuesday Luke 3:23-37
Weds. Proverbs 9
Thurs. Proverbs 10
Friday Psalm 51
Sat. Psalm 146

"To the Lord's Favor"

Jan. 19th
Sunday Luke 4:14-30
Monday Luke 4:31-37
Tuesday Luke 4:38-41
Weds. Luke 4:42-44
Thursday Proverbs 11
Friday Psalm 1
Sat. Psalm 8

"To Follow Jesus"

Jan. 26th
Sunday Luke 5:1-11
Monday Luke 5:12-16
Tuesday Luke 5:17-26
Weds. Luke 5:27-32
Thursday Luke 5:33-39

Friday Psalm 92
Sat. Psalm 90

"To Rest with God"

Feb. 2nd
Sunday Luke 7:1-17
Monday Luke 6:17-26
Tuesday Luke 6:27-36
Weds. Luke 6:37-42
Thurs. Luke 6:43-45
Friday Luke 6:46-49
Sat. Psalm 119:105-107

"For Healing"

Feb. 9th
Sunday Luke 7:1-17
Monday Matthew 5:1-12
Tuesday Matthew 5:13-20
Weds. Matthew 5:21-42
Thurs. Matthew 5:43-38
Friday Proverbs 12
Sat. Psalm 146

"Into Wisdom"

Feb. 16th
Sunday Luke 7:18-35
Monday Matthew 6:1-15
Tuesday Matthew 6:16-24
Weds. Matthew 6:25-34
Thurs. Matthew 7:1-12
Friday Matthew 7:13-29
Sat. Psalm 130

"Through Forgiveness"

Feb. 23rd
Sunday Luke 7:36-50
Monday Luke 8:1-4
Tuesday Luke 8:5-17
Weds. Luke 8:18-34
Thurs. Luke 9:1-6
Friday Luke 9:7-17
Sat. Luke 9:18-27



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Fall 2024 Newsletter

Mission: We share the heart of Jesus in the community by loving people through life's struggles.

Vision: Love invites you in. Community cultivates growth. Compassion sends us out.

Values: Affirm All
Follow Jesus
Empower Individuals
Cultivate Community

Please join us for worship on Sundays at 10 a.m. We are worshipping in-person and by live stream at facebook.com/unitymilwaukee.

STAFF

Kevan Penvose, Pastor kevan.penvose@unitymilwaukee.org 414-744-6311 x1001
Maureen W, Bookkeeper bookkeeping@unitymilwaukee.org x1002
Michael Lindemeyer, Musician
Paul Lindstrom, Housekeeper
Doug Henning, Groundskeeper

Office Hours: Tuesday – Thursday, 9:00 am - 1:00 pm
Friday is Pastor Kevan's day off.

COUNCIL (council@unitymilwaukee.org)

Laura McVann – President	Wayne Pratis
Stacy Davis – Vice President	Lynn Rinderle
Pat Gain – Treasurer	Jim Liedtke
Erin Whitehead -Secretary	Massamba Smith Jr.

ENDOWMENT (endowment@unitymilwaukee.org)

Jody Stack – Chair	Rachel Hahn
Jill Wisniewski – Treasurer	Jack Kosmoski
Phil Vogel - Secretary	

***Transformed by our Lord, Jesus, we go into the community
to serve and welcome all people.***