

Middleton Community UCC The Communicator February 2023

MCC Beloved,

There's a beautiful phrase in the letter to the Ephesians that describes followers of Jesus as "being rooted and grounded in love." I've been thinking a lot lately about what it means to be "rooted" both in faith and practice. To be grounded implies that I am stable in, connected to, and supported by my immediate surroundings. When I invite us to plant our feet firmly on the ground every Sunday morning it is a reminder that your immediate surroundings are good and holy and include the very real presence of God.

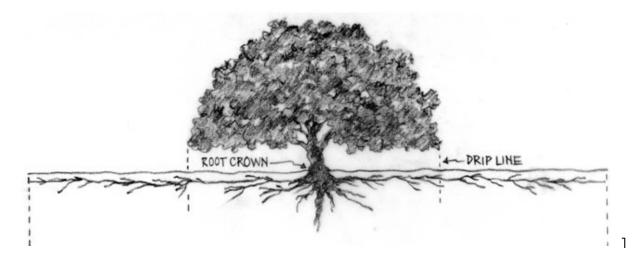
Growing up I was under the impression that the root system of a tree mirrored the branches, taking up the same shape and area below the surface that the tree did above ground - this is often how tree roots are portrayed in drawings. But that's not true! The roots of an oak can spread out as far as 90 feet beyond the edge of a tree's widest branches as illustrated below.

In the spring a series of new paths, benches and trees will take root in our meadow - a partnership project between MCC, the Elderberry Neighborhood Association, and a local Boy Scout. Part of the project includes planting three new oak trees that will hopefully provide oxygen and shade to our great-great- grandchildren. This project isn't just for MCC. It's for our neighbors, and hopefully it will be enjoyed by anyone who needs a space to sit, reflect, and be grounded in the natural beauty of our meadow – regardless of their faith background or future.

We are called to be a congregation rooted in our love of God and our love of neighbors. How might we continue to take root in the physical place of our church and in the community that we're a part of? How might we be a place of rootedness – of stability, connection, and support for one another and for others?

I don't have all the answers to that question, but I do have some ideas - and I know many of you do too. And as we continue to find ways to be "rooted and grounded in love" I imagine we will find that our growth as a congregation and our impact in the neighborhood reaches far beyond what you can see of our building above ground - all for the pursuit of God's more just and generous world. And that's just awe-some.

Yours, Pastor Zayna



Pastor's Public Office Hours - Barriques on Old Sauk Road Thursday, February 2, 9, and 16

Come share a cup of coffee, a quick treat, or just a conversation. Pastor Zayna will be working from Barriques from 11am to 1pm and invites you to stop by for any (or no!) reason at all.

Upcoming Special Services...

Ash Wednesday, February 22nd Reflection and Ashes 4 – 6:30pm (Sanctuary) Documentary Viewing and Discussion – 6:30pm (Gathering Room)

Pastor Zayna will be in the sanctuary from 4-6:30pm, where she'll be providing readings, communion, and ashes every 15 minutes.

At 6:30, the Confirmands will be viewing and discussing a one-hour documentary about bread as an introduction to our Lenten worship series. All are welcome to join!

Guest Preacher: Rev. Julia Weaver – February 19

Rev. Julia Weaver is called to specialized ministries as an artist and chaplain. On February 19, she will share a message with us about <u>The Backyard Mosaic Women's Project</u>

Lenten Worship Series: Let Love Rise



We remember that Jesus called himself "The Bread of Life," or that he said at the Last Supper, "This is my body broken for you." We have come to know those elements as part of our ritual life of faith. Bread is part of church. What is harder to understand is what that bread meant to Jesus and to the people of his time. What is the connection between the physical recipe of bread and the spiritual preparation of Lent? How is God harvesting, mixing, and rising in our lives? How are we preparing and sharing those blessings of God?

Bread goes on quite a journey- from a single grain planted and nurtured, through the transformation of dough raising, to the final breaking and sharing of bread at a table. In this Lenten series we travel that same journey with one truth: Jesus offers us himself as the bread of life. Every time we share the bread and cup together, we proclaim the risen Christ. Join the journey toward rising and sharing that bread this Lenten season! The first Sunday in Lent is February 26th.

February Star Word Reflection Questions

- What have you learned about your Star Word in the first month of the year? Did anything surprise you?
- Who have you shared your Star Word with? What did you notice about their reaction?
- Where have you kept your Star Word? Is it in a place you notice it regularly? If not, could you consider a new place?

Adult Games & Crafts | February 15

The last two times we met, we had a blast tea, and hot chocolate will be provided. Friends

making some pretty amazing fall wreaths and beautiful holiday cards. It's time we play a game! Some of us were talking about Februarv being the "heart" month. so it only seemed appropriate that we play the card game "Hearts"!

If you've never played before, no

worries! It's easy to learn and we will teach you. Join us in Fellowship Hall on February 15 from 11:00am-12:30pm. A light snack and coffee, hot

from the community are welcome to join us. Sign-up in Fellowship Hall (not required), as it helps us to plan appropriately.

Do you have some ideas for future events? Talk to Darci or any of the Board of Membership & Fellowship members, or tell us on the clipboard at the Adult CE &

Fellowship Table in Fellowship Hall.

Superbowl Party - Sunday, February 12, 2023

Are you ready for some Football? or Board games? Hosted by BOMF, our church will have a potluck, board games, and the Superbowl game on our big screens on Sunday, February 12th. Kickoff is at 5:30 Central time, and doors will open at church at 5:00pm.

Bring your favorite party food, your best football gear, and, if you want to participate in our charity fundraiser fishbowl game, 1\$ bills to play! If you have any questions feel free to reach out to BOMF or lararomine@gmail.com.

Pie Auction for Youth Mission Events - Sunday, February 12, 2023

UCTIO

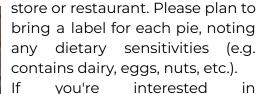
February 12, 2023

Join us after worship service on Sunday, February 12, when our in-house auctioneer, Patrick Coughlin, will be auctioning off pies to the highest bidder. All funds will be used for future Youth Mission Events.

If you are willing to donate one (or more?) pies, please sign up at the Board of Mission and

Stewardship table located right outside the Sanctuary in Fellowship Hall, or you can sign up online at: http://bit.ly/3WyBdV0.

Donated pies can be sweet or savory, homemade or purchased from your favorite



volunteering to help with the pie auction the weekend of and/or

during the event (set-up and facilitation), please contact Kristin Friel at boms_chair@middletonucc.org.



Follow us: https://www.youtube.com/MiddletonUCC

Thank You to the Popcorn Shelling Volunteers

I wanted to Thank You all for helping to shell and bag up popcorn for the Madison Area Food Pantry Gardens last Tuesday. We finished shelling, cleaning and bagging 400 popcorn packets in record time and I have an additional 40 pounds of kernels in reserve if needed for the upcoming PBS Lawn and Garden Expo. If we don't hand out all the popcorn at next month's event it will go to youth groups that come out to Forward Garden this season.

Our Open Volunteer Sessions will start up at the end of April and continue every Tuesday/Thursday from 4:30-6:30 and Wednesday/Saturday 9-11am. I hope to see you all out there, even if it is only for a brief tour of the farm and growing operation. All ages, ability and experience levels are welcome. Lastly, I send out a weekly e-newsletter from Forward Garden outlining gardening plans for each volunteer session. Our Marketing Team also sends out a monthly MAFPG e-newsletter that encompasses all of our gardens. If you would like to be added to either or both of these distribution lists please let me know.

This may only be a partial list of participants from last Tuesday so please forward this message of gratitude on to those whose email address I may not have.

Thank you,

Matt Lechmaier Forward Garden Farm Manager Madison Area Food Pantry Gardens



#HATNOTHATE

Calling all who knit or crochet! #HATNOTHATE is an anti-bullying campaign that began in 2018. October is National Bullying Prevention Month. This campaign reaches across our nation by offering school assemblies and distributes hand-made blue hats to students.

Why blue? This color represents awareness, peace, and solidarity. It is the color chosen to wear in support of anti-bullying. The founder of this campaign, Shira Blumenthal, was bullied as

an elementary student. Since 2018 over 106,000 hats have been donated to this cause.



Hats need to be made of 75% blue yarn. Hat circumference should be 16-20" to fit kids who are 5-18 years old. Pom-poms are optional. Any design is appreciated.

Hats for October 2023, Anti-bullying Month, need to be received by July 16. On display in Fellowship Hall are copies of Shira's story, knit and crochet patterns, and yarn that has been donated. A collection container for completed hats is also available. And, there is a basket on the table for any yarn donations.

Questions? Please contact Joan Richner at bjrichner@gmail.com or 608-228-2500.

Adult Faith and Fellowship Opportunities

Adult Sunday School will finish our series on "Confronting Christian Nationalism" on February 5, and then we'll start a Lenten series on Bread on February 26. Join us in the Gathering Room after worship.

If you'd like to be put on our mailing list, contact Lara Romine, <u>lararomine@gmail.com</u>.

Mind/Body/Spirit

This mindfulness group meets in the sanctuary every **1st and 3rd Thursday at 6:30 pm.** We're reading Tara Brach's book called *Radical Acceptance*. For February 2, we'll finish Chapter 2 and discuss some "meditations" by Richard Rohr. Everyone is welcome! Please join us! <u>Contact Brian at BrianWKoenig1@gmail.com</u> for more information.

Choir

Join the MCC Choir! We are a welcoming group of individuals who enjoy singing and learning about music. Rehearsals are **Wednesday evenings at 6:30 pm** and we sing in worship about twice per month. Come once to try it out if you're not sure. It's also a great way to connect with fellow MCC members!

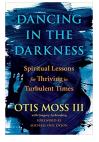
Instrumentalists are needed for worship too! We can support and organize solos and ensembles. Contact Deb Neuman for more information: <u>mccmusic@mccucc.org</u>

Adult Games and Crafts

This fellowship group meets on the **third** Wednesday of the month from 11am-12:30pm. Join us on February 15 to play Hearts (the card game). Snacks and beverages provided, along with instruction, if you don't already know how to play. **Tuesday Night Fellowship** is continuing with the book: *The Righteous Mind: Why Good People are Divided by Politics and Religion* by Jonathan Haidt. Buy your own copy and join us next month **Tuesdays at 6 pm** in the Gathering Room for soup, bread, and dessert. Discussion starts at about 6:30, and we try to end by 7:30. Questions? Contact Dave Werner with guestions at davewerner86@gmail.com.

Coffee and Conversation

This group meets in a Hybrid format on the first and third Wednesdays. Church doors are open by 7:45 am, the discussion starts at 8:00. Coffee is brewed hot and fresh, hot tea and hot chocolate are also available!



This month we will be reading Dancing in the Darkness by Otis Moss III

<u>February 1:</u> Intro-Chapter 2 <u>February 15:</u> Chapters 3–6 <u>March 1:</u> Chapter 7–Epilogue

Everyone is welcome at these discussions.

The Knitting Group will meet twice in February. On Thursday, February 9 we will meet at 11:00am in the Heritage Room. On Thursday, February 16 we will meet at 6:30pm in the Heritage Room. If you enjoy any needlecraft and would like some fellowship while doing so, please email Beth Michaels at bethmichaels57@gmail.com or simply show up at one of our meetings.



Like" our public page: <u>facebook.com/MiddletonCommunityChurch</u> Join our Members & Friends group: <u>facebook.com/groups/mccmembersandfriends</u>

Connect in Sunday School!

We are happy to offer Sunday School for all ages at MCC!

On non-communion Sundays, we offer classes after Moment with Children for **Preschool** (3 years-preK), **Elementary** (K-4 grade), **5/6** grades, and **7/8 grades**.

High School Youth meet for Faith Formation on the second Sunday of each month from 6:30-8:00 pm. We serve a snack, and spend time learning, but also allow time for fellowship.

Our friends who are in 4th-12th grade are encouraged to reach out to <u>Rich Pleva</u> and sign up to do liturgy if they are interested. This involves leading the call to worship and reading scripture during worship.

Please register your children to help keep our records, and permissions, up to date. Thank you!

Children: Birth-4th Grade (2022/23) Youth: 5th-12th grade (2022/23)

Masks are optional for church activities **Family Movie Event** Sunday, February 5 2-4 pm in the sanctuary.

Cinderella from Amazon Prime



This fun musical is a modern, live-action movie with a bold new take on the classic fairy tale. Ella has big dreams, and with the help of her Fab Godmother her dreams will come true! This is a fun musical that challenges gender stereotypes.

The all-star cast includes: Idina Menzel, Minnie Driver, James Corden, Nicholas Galitzine, Billy Porter and Pierce Brosnan.

> Popcorn and snacks will be served. Bring your own water bottle/drinks. Cinderella is rated PG.

We are no longer allowed to advertise our community events through MCPASD school newsletters. Please spread the word and invite your friends or the children in your life to this fun event!



MCC Youth Middleton Community Church

January Youth Group Highlights

The Middle School Youth Group built bluebird High Schoolers attended the Winter Retreat at houses for the church's fields. It was a great Camp Balsams. It was a weekend full of learning opportunity for team building, learning new skills, discovering more about our bluebird kin, and having fun together.

about Indigenous justice issues, playing in the snow, growing friendships, faith, and our relationship with Nature.



Youth Winter Retreat at Camp Balsams Middle School | February 24-26 Registration closes end of day Sunday, February 19



Cost: \$75 for the first child, \$125 for two, \$150 max per family. (family discount applies across both retreats)

Hiking - Games - Fellowship - Learning - Outdoor Play

Our Winter Youth Retreats are a wonderful opportunity for our Youth to learn, play and bond up in the beautiful Northwoods! This year's topic is Racial Justice. The Middle School retreat is for youth in 5th-8th grades. We will meet at the church at 2:30 pm, and be on the road no later than 3:00 pm on Friday afternoon. We will plan to arrive back on Sunday between 3:00 & 5:00 pm.

February Youth Groups – Movie Nights

Both youth groups will be watching movies in February. This is a great opportunity to invite friends to join the fun! **Please note the <u>EARLY STARTING TIME</u> (6:00pm) for both movie nights.**



Middle School Movie: Mr. Magorium's Wonder Emporium – Feb 19

Magic abounds within the Wonder Emporium until there is a mysterious change. The team must then discover the magic within themselves.

Middle School Sign-up <u>https://signup.com/go/bQzaOUT</u> Registration Required by Wednesday 2/15/23





High School Movie: Soul – Feb 26

"Soul" is a heartfelt story about second chances and finding real purpose in your life. It's about obsessions, mortality, and finding the true qualities that matter. This award-winning Pixar film features popular stars and musicians.



High School Sign-Up <u>https://signup.com/go/zdZtyzF</u> Registration Required by Wednesday 2/22/23

Fair Trade Sale – Thank You!

Many thanks to everyone who helped support fair trade and fair employment through our 2022 Fair Trade Sale. By supporting the fair trade sale we:

- Helped to create a world where coffee and chocolate farmers can live and prosper
- Supported environmentally sourced and produced candles, Nativity sets, ornaments, and jewelry
- Helped women survivors of sexual exploitation find safe housing, meaningful work and a healing network of support
- Supported year-round work where employment for decent pay is scarce
- Supported women experiencing chronic unemployment to transform their lives as they develop job skills, discover their talents and break the cycle of poverty

In addition, we were able to add more than \$1,200.00 to the MCC Youth Mission Fund.

Thank you!

Camp Balsams: Our Lakeside Retreat Online Summer Reservation Lottery for 2023

Camp Balsams is a personal, family and group retreat, owned by Middleton Community Church, United Church of Christ. Located on the shore of Bass Lake, five miles east of Eagle River, Wisconsin, it is perfect for active family fun: fishing, swimming, or hiking. Camp Balsams is also perfect for quiet spiritual retreat, cooking s'mores, singing songs, counting stars, and sharing faith around the fire.

We own five cabins rentable by MCC members for the summer season, this year from May 23 through October 5. One of those, Charlie's Cabin, is rentable year around. Since pandemic restrictions have eased, **full-week reservations during the summer of 2023 will be for 7 nights, with arrival on Sunday, no earlier than 3:00 pm and departure the following Sunday, no later than 2:00 pm**. Cabin rental rates were raised for the first time since 2015 to help ensure our future financial viability. Beginning with the summer season, the weekly rates are as follows: Cabin 2-\$245; Cabin 3-\$420; Cabin 4-\$385; Cabin 5-\$490; Charlie's Cabin-\$805. No deposit is required. Health care in the Eagle River area is limited. If anyone in your party has been exposed to COVID-19 or is experiencing symptoms, they should not travel to Camp Balsams. Refunds will be provided if you must cancel.

It is the intention of the Camp Balsams Committee that the camp be **accessible to all members. If the rates present a hardship**, please contact <u>Pastor Zayna</u> or one of the camp co-chairs, <u>Ross Michaels</u> or <u>Joe Tennies</u>.

Summer cabin reservations will happen as described in the schedule below. **Those who need to rent Charlie's Cabin for reasons of handicap accessibility or who, for medical reasons** need a bedroom with an air-conditioner, may reserve that cabin prior to the lottery as described in the schedule.

Sign Up Schedule

- Member households wishing to enter the lottery for one 7-day reservation must submit their name, email address and phone number no later than midnight Sunday, February 12 using the following link: https://forms.gle/ZkenOCFeZGJpOvCV7 Shortly thereafter, members of the Committee will hold a random drawing to determine the order of cabin selection and provide that to participants.
- Beginning at noon on Sunday, February 12 and continuing through noon, Saturday, February 18, member households who need to rent Charlie's Cabin for the accessibility or medical reasons described above may reserve a full week by contacting Ross Michaels at (rossmichaels53@gmail.com) Those reserving a cabin in this manner may not enter the lottery.
- Beginning at 1:00 PM on Sunday, February 19, member households in the lottery will be phoned in number order using the phone number you provided. If we get no answer within 2 minutes, we will move to the next household on the list. After that, we will attempt to contact you once between each successive household. Please be ready to take a call any time after 1:00 PM. Please have a few options ready for your week/cabin and note that a few weeks on the schedule are shorter than 7 days. Short week rates are prorated based on 1/7th of the weekly rate per day. The schedule will be updated online in real time during signup at the following link: http://www.middletonucc.org/2021/01/20/balsams-schedule/
- *Feb. 20 March 5: Member households who missed the lottery may reserve one 7-day week
- *March 6 19: Member households may reserve one cabin for one additional 7-day week
- *Beginning March 20: Member households may reserve any cabin for any additional weeks
- *Beginning April 3: Member households may reserve any cabin for individual days

*Reserve cabin by emailing Anne Tennies mccucc@middletonucc.org



Winter Retreats at Camp Balsams

Camp Balsams, on Bass Lake near Eagle River, is a great base camp for your retreat in the north woods this winter, with snowshoeing, cross country skiing and ice fishing available nearby. Charlie's Cabin is open year-round and is a warm and inviting place for relaxing, reading and sharing good fellowship.

Please contact Anne in the church office (<u>mccucc@middletonucc.org</u>) about winter openings.





Office Hours:

Monday-Thursday 8am to noon

Stay in touch: Contact the staff via phone and e-mail. If we don't answer the phone, please leave a message; our voicemail messages are automatically forwarded to staff email.

Office: (608)831-4694

Pastor Zayna Thomley

mccpastor@middletonucc.org

Anne Tennies, Office Manager

mccucc@middletonucc.org

Darci Warner, Faith Formation Director mccfaithformation@middletonucc.org

Carol Bennington, Youth and Children Coordinator

mccyouth@middletonucc.org

Deb Neuman, Music Director

mccmusic@middletonucc.org

Barbara Brown, Pianist

mccpianist@middletonucc.org

Gary Eckstein, Building & Grounds Manager

mccbuildingmanager@middletonucc.org

Website: www.middletonucc.org

Middleton Outreach Ministry Needs Your Help

As a member of the MOM Community Service Council, I attended a meeting where Executive Director Ellen Carlson told the group that the food pantry really needs **food donations and plastic and paper bags**. The increased need for food is due to the 116% increase in households that use the food pantry and the same supply chain problems that have plagued every aspect of the marketplace. In response to this request the MOM donation barrel will be placed in the front entry to the church so that you can leave your donations there and I will collect them weekly and take them to the MOM pantry.

Another easy way to donate food is to go to the <u>MOMhelps.org</u> website, select the **TOP 10** tab at the bottom of the main

page and then select "<u>Wish List</u>" at the bottom of the Top 10 needs page. You can then make your selections from Amazon with a couple of clicks that will be shipped directly to MOM. MOM's Food Pantry Wish List

Thank you in advance for your continued support of MOM and the people they serve. –Jim Neuman Questions? <u>ineuman253@gmail.com</u> or call/text 608-347-4911.







MCC Care Ministry

If you would like a telephone check-in, please contact Jim Neuman at <u>ineuman253@gmail.com</u> or 829-0698. We can also help you problem-solve to get your needs met. The card team sends cards to members, friends, and immediate family who are at home or on our church prayer list. If you would like to be a part of our Care Ministry, receive services or make a referral, contact Jim Neuman at 347-4911.





Easter Flowers

Easter flower order forms will be available in the Sunday bulletin starting February 26. This year, you will be able to order tulips, hyacinths, and daffodils. Flowers may be ordered in memory of or in honor of family members or loved ones. A list of donors will be published in the Easter bulletin, and donors are welcome to take home their flowers after the Easter service.

Post-COVID Transition Team Update

MCC's COVID response is tied to the current COVID-19 Community Level in Dane County. When the level is LOW, masking is completely optional. When it rises to MEDIUM, masks are required while singing. <u>Find the current level</u> <u>here.</u> Our church strives to provide as many opportunities to connect as possible, and for that reason, we are continuing the live-streamed service and hybrid activities.

If you have any questions, please contact Sarah Sund at <u>moderator@middletonucc.org</u>

Happy February Birthday!

Eliza Armstrong Beth Audhya Edie Birmingham Laura Cantrell Nicholas Cupery Lisa Duernberger Shayne Fickling Sam Gessler Chad Halverson Alex Hammes Lori Hilgers Stephanie Iliff Linda Jaberg Marie Jackson Ralph Jackson Rose Lockwood Chandra Osterhaus Leah Patullo Tom Richner Elaine Schultz Danielle See Ted See Donald Sprang Joan Sulser Matthew Sund Aubrey Tank Esther Tinglum David Wiens Kelly Wilson Birthdays & Anniversaries

Happy February Anniversary!

Steve & Sherry Huibregtse Emily Kuhn & Sam Rajkowski Erin & Evan Rogers Barbara & Steve Weber

Did we miss yours? Contact the church office and let us know.

If we missed yours, please contact the office.

February 2023						
Click the links to join the online meetings. Visit our <u>Google Calendar</u> for dial-in instructions.						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
"There is always in February some one day, at least, when one smells the yet distant, but surely coming, summer." – Gertrude Jekyll			8amCoffee &Conversation H6:30pmChoir Rehearsal7:45pmA/V Tech Check	2 11-1 pm Pastor's Public Office Hours 6:30pm Mindfulness	6pm — Conf. Retreat	4 > 3pm Confirmation Retreat
5 9:30am Communion Worship (<u>YouTube</u>) 10:30am Just Bakery Fellowship Adult Sun. School	6 10am Staff Meeting 1:30pm Sanctuary Arts 6:45pm <u>Bd of Christian Ed</u> 7pm <u>Board of Worship</u>	1pm Mad City Quilt Guild 6pm Tuesday Night Fellowship	8 9am EV Charger Mtg 6:30pm Confirmation Choir Rehearsal 7:45pm A/V Tech Check	9 11-1 pm Pastor's Public Office Hours 11am Knitting Group 5:30pm SWA Mtg	10	11 Mad City Quilt Guild Workshop
12 9:30am Worship (<u>YouTube</u>) 9:45am Sunday School 10:30am Fellowship Pie Auction 5:00pm Superbowl Party 6:30-8pm HS Sunday School	13 10am Staff Meeting 6:30pm Board of Finance Bd of Membership and Fellowship Board of Mission and Stewardship	6pm Tuesday Night Fellowship	15 8am Coffee & Conversation H 11am Adult Game/Craft 6:30pm Confirmation Choir Rehearsal 7:45pm A/V Tech Check	16 9am Pastoral Rel Cmte 11-1 pm Pastor's Public Office Hours 6:00pm Condo Assn 6:30pm Mindfulness Knitting Group	17	18
19 9:30am Worship (<u>YouTube</u>) 9:45am Sunday School 10:30am Fellowship 6:00-8pm MS Youth Group	20 10am Staff Meeting 6:45pm Council Mtg H	21 Spring Primary Election 6pm Tuesday Night Fellowship	22 4-6:30pm Ash Wednesday 6:30pm Choir Rehearsal Confirmation Documentary 7:45pm A/V Tech Check	23	24 Middle School	25 Balsams Retreat
26 9:30am Worship (<u>YouTube</u>) 9:45am Sunday School 10:30am Fellowship Adult Sun. School 6:00-8pm HS Youth Group	27 7pm Mad City Quilt Guild	28 6pm Tuesday Night Fellowship		LET LOVE	RISE	

Sunday worship: 9:30am – In-Person and LiveStream at youtube.com/MiddletonUCC

BLUE indicates online meetings/events **H** indicates hybrid (in person or online)