

Who We Are

We are a community of believers in Jesus Christ whose vision is to welcome people in our community to share in our journey of Christian faith as we follow in the footsteps of Jesus. We strive to accomplish our vision by actively living out our mission: being open and accepting of others; searching for truth by looking to the Holy Scriptures and the Holy Spirit for guidance; challenging each other to grow spiritually through Bible study, public worship and prayer; seeking ways to deepen our friendship and love for one another; supporting each other in the good and hard times; forgiving each other as God forgave us; sharing the good news of Christ's love; helping those in need; seeking to offer Christ in creative ways to new generations; and working together in God's Kingdom with other churches and denominations.

Our Abbreviated History

Memorial Baptist Church, founded in 1955, is affiliated with the American Baptist Churches of Wisconsin. Over Memorial's 65 year history, we've been blessed with six different full-time pastors and several interims. In the 1990s, we embarked upon a major building project adding a new fellowship hall, youth room, nursery and an elevator. Following in the 2000s, we renovated sections of our facility including the sanctuary, rest rooms (upper and lower), and lower level kitchen, and relandscaped the perimeter of the church. Also, in the early 2000s, a team of people participated in a program titled *New Church/New Century* that resulted in changes to our constitution, bylaws and structure of the church. Following *New Church/New Century*, a Vision team formed to study God's kingdom on earth leading to participation in new ministries. In 2015 several groups, including some from the FDL community, embarked upon a study titled *ABCs of Life Change* by James Reeves; a Biblical process for every Christian in how to effectively deal with emotional wounds of the past in order to develop an intimate relationship with Christ. We celebrated the church's 25th, 50th, and 60th anniversaries, respectively.

Our Church Life

Memorial's church life is as varied as its members. We offer several spiritual enrichment and fellowship opportunities. Sunday School classes run September through May for all ages. Intergenerational events occur four times a year during the Sunday School hour. During worship, children 2 – 10 years old have the option to attend Children's Church which reinforces the Sunday School lesson. Memorial offers several small groups that meet periodically including men's monthly breakfast, women's weekly Bible study, monthly Yarnians, bi-monthly choir practice, women's monthly circles, and monthly Diaconate and Administrative meetings. Occasionally, we host punch fellowships or a potluck. Denominationally, we participate in camp Tamarack and various functions at Green Lake Conference Center.

Our Worship Life

Worship is the major focus of Memorial's life together. The Worship Team along with the pastor's input design the worship service. During the service, the pastor is assisted by a lay worship leader. A typical service flows as follows: announcements, call to worship, Joyful Noise leading congregation in singing two contemporary praise songs, choir anthem, sharing time, morning prayer, scripture reading, sermon, offering, closing hymn, and benediction. The congregation is open to and welcomes changes in the worship service order/style. The pastor leads the congregation in the observance of communion, monthly. Sometimes communion is served to parishioners as they sit in the pews and other times people come forward to receive the elements. On occasion, we incorporate into the service, life changing celebrations such as baptisms (2 in the past year) and child dedications (2 in the past year). Children/youth are encouraged to participate in worship through singing/signing a song, ringing hand bells, or performing a skit. Youth, who have reached a certain age, are presented with new Bibles (2 Bibles presented in past year) during worship. Periodically, our Missions Team provides oral reports on the status of various missionaries supported by Memorial. Memorial strives to involve as many lay persons as feasible in the worship service.

Our Out Reach

Currently, MBC is reaching out through a number of different ministries; Stone Soup (a weekly meal and community fellowship); Christmas Dinner (holiday dinner for those alone); Back to School (hats, mittens and school supplies for children); and a monthly offering that goes to several local nonprofits. Within our walls various groups share our facilities including Iglesia Pentecostes De Paz (Spanish speaking congregation), Stone Soup, Women's Chorus, and Girl Scouts. In the past we have participated in the following reach out ministries: Loaves and Fishes (twice weekly meal), SHARDS (mental health counseling), yard rummage sale (for surrounding community), prison services, (Taycheedah Correctional Institution), and Bread of Life (African American church who shared our facilities).

Our Tendencies

Memorial's congregational tendencies are as follows:

- Lay persons share in the leadership of the church.
- Conflict resolution is a difficult task to get our arms around.
- We are open to change and trying new things.
- Our approach to social issues is educational leaving any action to individual conscience.
- We value our ABC relationships.
- We involve ourselves in community affairs.
- Our ideas and plans are made and implemented by responsible officers and ministry team leaders.
- The congregation in compliance with our Constitution has the final say in decision making.
- Decisions are communicated formally through worship announcements, bulletins and newsletters.
- We support missions.
- We are avid supporters of sports teams (Packers, Brewers, and Badgers).

Our Demographics

The city of Fond du Lac has a population of 43,000 of which 90% are white, 6% Hispanic, 2% black and 2% other. Memorial follows this pattern as we are mostly white with a few Hispanics. We have a membership of 100. 50% are retired, 25% are employed full-time and 25% are either employed part-time or unemployed. Those employed work in health care, as laborers or machine operators, as professionals, in service occupations, as technicians, in child care or other areas. We range in age from 6 months to over 80 years old. The largest age grouping is 66-74, second largest 30-45, third largest 56-65, and fourth largest 46-55.

Our City

Fond du Lac is located at the south end of Lake Winnebago strategically positioned between Green Bay to the north, Madison to the west and Milwaukee to the south. It offers many family friendly amenities such as the YMCA, Children's Museum, Thelma Center for the Arts, Lakeside Park, County pool, Little Farmer, and the County Fair. Special events hosted throughout the year include Walleye Weekend, fall/winter concert series at the PAC, outdoor summer concert series at Buttermilk Creek Park, ice cream social at Galloway House and Village, and Sturgeon spearing on the ice. We enjoy four distinct seasons and the activities available: boating, swimming, fishing, hunting, skiing, and golfing. Not too far from Fond du Lac are other attractions including the Packer's stadium, Experimental Aircraft Association, Elkhart race track, Brewer's stadium, Lifefest (weekend of Christian music), Countryfest (weekend of Country music), and Green Lake Conference Center (American Baptist affiliated). Last, but not least, Fond du Lac is home to three institutions of higher learning: Moraine Park Technical College (associate degree), University of Wisconsin-Fond du Lac (associate degree) and Marian University (bachelor, master, and doctorate degrees).