

August
2025

Volume 32
Issue 8

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Recently, I had a conversation with a friend that trended to the philosophical. How do we reconcile the presence of evil with an all loving Creator? As you might imagine, we came up with no good answer.

Not long afterward, I was reading a magazine that came across my desk and it told the story of Arthur Ashe, the number 1 ranked tennis player in the world in 1975. Ashe was the first Black player selected to the United States Davis Cup team, and the only Black man ever to win the singles titles at Wimbledon, the US Open, and the Australian Open. He retired in 1980. Ashe is believed to have acquired HIV from a blood transfusion he received during heart bypass surgery in 1983. He publicly announced his illness in April 1992, and began working to educate others about HIV and AIDS. He founded the Arthur Ashe Foundation for the Defeat of AIDS and the Arthur Ashe Institute for Urban Health before his death from AIDS-related pneumonia at the age of 49 on February 6, 1993.

During his illness, he received letters from his fans, one of which conveyed: Why did God have to select you for such a bad disease? To this Arthur Ashe replied: "The year I began playing tennis as a boy, 50 million children started. Of them, 5 million stuck with it. Of those 5 million, 500,000 went on to try out as professionals. Of those 500,000 only 50 played on the pro circuit, and only 5 reached one of the Grand Slam Events. Of those 5, 4 reached the semi-finals and 2 reached the finals. And of those two, I won Wimbledon! When I was holding the cup in my hand, I never asked God: Why Me? Of those 50 million children - Why me? So now that I'm in pain how can I possibly ask God: Why Me?"

Arthur Ashe wasn't trying to understand why bad things happen to good people, why there is evil in the world, or how we can reconcile evil with a loving Creator. Rather he based his answer on faith. He went on to write: "Long to be happy. Happiness keeps you sweet! Trials will keep you strong. Sorrow will remind you that you are human. Failure will help you to

Pastor Jeff's message continues on page 2

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be humble. Success will keep you glowing. But faith, only faith will keep you going! Have faith!"

This story of the great Arthur Ashe challenged me to live my life as a mystery and cease trying to always figure it out. I think this was the mission of Jesus as well. All through this year, we have been reading from the gospel of Luke. In the 13th chapter of Luke's gospel, people come up to Jesus and want him to make sense of evil. They want to know why certain Galileans died at the hands of the Romans, why there is evil in the world, and how to make sense of the goodness of God. Jesus refuses to enter this philosophical debate! Like Arthur Ashe he answers: Stop asking: Why me? Live life as a mystery! Love each other! Jesus encourages his followers to take all of it in, the trials and sorrows, the failures and successes - live all of it fully as an adventure - and have faith! Faith that God will be God through all of it; faith that we never walk alone; faith that death is never the final word, and along the way love each other.

I find this especially meaningful in a month where so many children died from flooding in Texas, where there is suffering on the Gaza Strip, where immigrants are being housed in internment camps and there is evil all around. We can expend so much energy with Why me? Why them? Why us? And the story of Arthur Ashe and the message of Jesus is clear - stop with the questions! Rather we are called to believe and to do. Heal where you can. Contribute generously from what you have been given. Get involved in the work of justice wherever you are - this is faith! Have faith!

Have
★
Faith

Pastor Jeff

*Please Welcome
New Members*

Byron & Janelle Bunge

Loren & Grace Kylo

*We're Glad You Have Chosen Messiah
as Your New Church Home!*

Holy Baptism

Everett Michael Ivers

Child of Erik and Maureen

Hattie Moffett-Hills

Child of Sarah and Kayla

Harrison Garrett Haise

Child of Garrett and Samantha

Ayla Joan Puisto

Child of Kyle and Jamie

*I have called you by name,
you are mine.*

"Strangers are Friends We Haven't Met" - Helen Steiner-Rice

'God knows no strangers, he loves us all. The poor, the rich, the great, the small.

He is a friend who is always there, to share our troubles and lessen our care.

For no one is a stranger in God's sight, for God is love and in his light.

May we too, try in our small way, to make new friends from day to day.

So pass no stranger with an unseeing eye, for God may be sending a new "Friend" by.

This is a special poem by my favorite writer. I feel we all need to have love, peace, and healthy friendships. Those of us on the "Visitation Team" have developed meaningful friendships with those we visit. We bring the Word of God and the gift of communion to all. The friendships we have created are going to be lasting ones and by being together, we can feel the love.

As I end, I'd like to say, I feel loved everyday, especially on Sundays. That is one of the reasons I keep coming back. Thanks be to God.

This month's reflection was written by Linda Olson.

Linda has been a member of the Visitation Team for three years.

NO Sacred Circle in August.



Message from the New Council President

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Before I tell you about myself, I'd like to thank Kathy Lukens for serving as Council President for the past 2 years!

My wife (Brittany) and I joined Messiah back in 2011 or so. At the time, we lived on the Northeast side of Madison and tried a couple different churches. We knew we wanted to join a Lutheran Church but were searching for the one that felt right. We finally found Messiah and have been members ever since. We now live in Sun Prairie and have two sons – Henry (12) and Sam (9). Both boys were baptized at Messiah and have had their First Communions here.

Growing up, my parents were always heavily involved in our church, so it set the example for me. My first time volunteering at Messiah was with our Visitation Ministry where I got matched with a wonderful woman, Marge Reek. Unfortunately, she passed away, but the entire experience was fantastic and so rewarding. If anyone is curious about the group, I'd encourage you to talk with Pastor Dan.

I've served on the Church Council for the past 3 years and was recently appointed President. I always thought that if I'm going to be involved with something, I should go all in.

I look forward to serving as President for the next two years and seeing all the good that Messiah can do!



Adult Ministry - Bread Breakers - All Adults Welcome

Messiah's Bread Breakers is an adult fellowship opportunity. Whether you're single, young, senior, partnered, can't drive, have a small living area, are going south for the winter – no problem – there is flexibility. It's a fun way to get acquainted with fellow Messiah members.

The groups of (usually) 5-8 adults (couples & singles) host each other for meals at each other's homes between fall-early summer on a schedule determined by the group's members. The host household provides a main dish and beverages, with others bringing items requested to round out the meal: appetizers, salad, side dish, or dessert.

If you're gone most of the winter, you can host first or last, and your group will keep meeting while you're gone. When you host, the meal is however you want it to be – brunch or dinner, cook-out/fancy/casual, on a weekend or a weekday.

Sign-up by Labor Day to participate. **Call** Barb & Walt Herrod 608-318-2129, **text** Barb at 518-567-6816, **email** bwhfam@gmail.com, or sign up on the Kiosk.

June 2025 Treasurer's Report

We are six months into the budget year and the Pledged Revenue received to date is \$509,700, the budget for the same time period is \$401,700, so we are \$108,000 ahead of the budget. The excess can be attributed to the 43 families that have met their 2025 commitment and a large IRA distribution.

General Fund expenses were \$405,300 compared to the budget of \$412,200, so we are \$6,900 under budget.

The Gundlach Family Fund supported 3 rental requests, \$1,100, received from Hope Inspired and the Dane County Crime Victim office and matched the Mountain of Food Campaign, \$8,724.

Tim Coulthart, Treasurer



Community Meals

Triangle Community

Thank you to the 16 volunteers who served the Triangle Community Ministry meal on July 7th. The next opportunity is October 13th and there will be a signup on the Kiosk. You can: prepare food at Messiah around noon and/or set up, serve, eat with residents, clean up 4-6:30 PM, and/or prepare dessert ahead of time - there are many ways to be involved in this ministry!



HEALINGHOUSE
A JustDane Initiative

Healing House

Thank for to the 9 volunteers who prepared and delivered meals in July. Our next week to serve is September 7-13. Sign up on the Kiosk to prepare a meal for 12 people and bring it to Messiah to be delivered.

Please contact Elizabeth at volunteer@messiahchurch.com or call/text 608-235-6910 .

Messiah Madison Mission Trip - It was epic fun and meaningful service!

Our youth served locally for this year's Mission Trip, from July 21 - July 23. There were many wonderful service opportunities planned including helping these organizations: The River Food Pantry, St. Mark's Food Pantry, The Boys and Girls Club, The United Way, Babies and Beyond, Madison Christian Community Garden, Habitat Restore, plus visits to several nursing homes.

The days began at 8:00 AM with hot breakfast at Messiah and concluded at 4:30 PM. On Wednesday, we headed to Noah's Ark for some water fun.

Stay Tuned to the September Newsletter for pictures!



Sunday School Volunteers Needed and Registration Form Information!

Sunday School resumes September 28th and we are in need of teachers, assistants and substitutes to help educate our children about our faith. You do not have to be a certified teacher to be a successful Sunday school teacher! Lesson ideas and materials are provided. Working with our Sunday school youth is a great way to build connections across generations within our congregation!

Sunday School registration forms will be emailed to families and available online the week of August 4th. Please email cfm@messiahchurch.com if you have questions or would like more information.

Spirit Weekend - September 20 - 21



Where might the Spirit be calling you to serve?

Wear your favorite team attire, enjoy tailgate snacks and check out the different ministries at Messiah to find your niche. Ministry leaders will be available before and after the Saturday service and before, after, and between the Sunday services to answer questions and sign you up.

Family Camp at Horizons Camp - September 20 - 21, 2025

Messiah Family Camp!

Join us for outdoor adventure including campfire worship
a nature hike, an arts & crafts activity, and more!

When: Saturday, September 20 at 9:00 am
to Sunday, September 21 at 12:00 pm

Where: Bethel Horizons Camp

SATURDAY ONLY COST: To Be Determined
SATURDAY - SUNDAY COST: To Be Determined

Volunteer for Kitchen Crew

We are looking for 4-6 people to volunteer as cooks for the trip.
Reduced rate for overnight.
Free if you are only spending the day.



- We will stay in **cabins** with multiple bunk beds and a private bathroom per cabin.
- **Overnight cost** covers lodging, Saturday snack, lunch, dinner, and Sunday breakfast.
- **Saturday Only Cost** covers Saturday snack, lunch, and dinner



Shower House and cabins



Shower House

New Dates Announced for Second Harvest Food Bank

Now is the time to sign up to volunteer at Second Harvest Food Bank (SHFB) as new dates have been announced through the end of the year. Please note that all the volunteer days are Mondays. We report at 12:15 PM for sign-in and start our shift at 12:30 PM. We stop at 2:00 PM sharp for RECESS and a treat brought in by one of the SAM volunteers. After recess, we only have an hour of work left in our shift. We go home exhausted but everyone knows they made a significant dent in food insecurity that day. Oh and do not forget the fellowship that goes on throughout the entire shift. This is a wonderful way to get to know fellow SAMies in a small group setting. Remember to wear your SAM shirt as this is a sanctioned outreach ministry activity. Here are the new dates...September 8, September 22, October 6, October 20, November 3, November 17, December 1, December 15, and December 29.

Here is how you sign up....

1. Send an email to SAM@messiahchurch.com
2. List the dates you are interested in to volunteer.
Do not say "all dates". Please list the specific dates.
3. If your dates are filled, tell me YES or NO if you are willing to put your name on the waiting list.
4. Include your Name, Email Address, and Cell Phone Number.
5. Wait for a confirmation email which will tell you if you are confirmed or on the wait list.
6. Do not just show up at SHFB as we can only have fifteen people per shift. It is important to wait for your confirmation.
7. Act fast as dates will fill fast.



SAM's Fall Color Tour Is Heading to Oklahoma! - October 16th

Mark your calendar for Thursday, October 16, when SAM heads to The Fireside Theater in Fort Atkinson, WI for the production of Rodgers and Hammerstein's production of



Oklahoma! We will arrive at the theater aboard a Kobussen motorcoach. Upon arrival, we will share a meal together and there will be time to visit the theater's impressive shops! This is a matinee performance. We will leave the church at 9:45 AM and return at approximately 5:30 PM. Please note that ticket sales started on Saturday, July 26, and SAM tours have a history of selling out very quickly. If you are interested in this tour, pick up the tour application form from the kiosk at church or request one from SAM@messiahchurch.com If the tour is sold out, you can add your name to the waiting list.

Women's Ministry Retreat - October 11

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Save the Date - Saturday, October 11, 8:30-11:30 AM for a morning with Heather Rainwater. Knowing how much people enjoyed our time with Heather last year exploring spiritual practices, we have asked her to return.

Members of the Women's Ministry Group on REALM received an email listing potential topics. If you would like to be part of the group and get your vote in, please contact Elizabeth at volunteer@messiahchurch.com.

More details will come in later months. Keep watching the Weekly News or, better yet, become part of the Women's Ministry Group and get updates delivered to your inbox!

RIC Book Study - *Transforming* - September 14 - October 5



transforming

The Bible & the Lives
of Transgender Christians

Austen Hartke

Foreword by Matthew Vines,
author of *God and the Gay Christian*

Please join us for our 2nd RIC book study on *Transforming* by Austen Hartke.

We will meet between the services 9:25-10:25 AM on Sunday September 14, 21, 28 and October 5.

Our facilitator will be Pam Shellberg, who holds a PhD in New Testament studies and who was our guest presenter at our book study in the spring.

Last spring, when we read *One Coin Found*, we took several essential detours that were informative and important, but some people were disappointed that we did not discuss the book as much as we planned. Our intention with this book is to stick closer

to the text and collect ideas for possible further study in the future.

Please sign up on the Kiosk. We will ask participants to pay \$10, part of the cost of the book, if possible. Books will be ordered on August 15th.

Goodreads summary:

Many people—even many LGBTQIA+ allies—still lack understanding of gender identity and the transgender experience. Trans-biblical scholar Austen Hartke brings a biblically based, educational, and affirming resource to shed light and wisdom on gender expansiveness and Christian theology.

The book offers updated terminology and statistics, weaving ancient and modern stories that will change the way readers think about gender, the Bible, and the faith to which Jesus calls us.

Hartke helps readers visualize a more inclusive Christianity, equipping them with the language, understanding, confidence, and tools to change both the church and the world.

Messiah's Green Team is hosting a 2-part event! You can join us for either or both activities!



Dane County Landfill Tour

Trash is a fact of life, even for the most conscientious of us who make the effort to reduce, reuse, and recycle. Educating ourselves about what happens to that trash can help us be even better stewards of the earth. Join members of Messiah's Green Team for a tour of our county landfill!

When: Wednesday, September 10th from 1:00 PM – 2:30 PM.

Location: Dane County Landfill (*Hope Park*) 3656 County Highway AB, McFarland, WI.

Cost: Free! CLOSE-TOED SHOES REQUIRED.

The doors open at 12:30 PM for us to explore the mobile Trash Lab Exhibit. The Trash Lab exhibit will be parked out front, with signs to mark where the tour will be gathering. We will then get on the Waste + Renewables bus for the grounds tour.

Those who have been on tours previously have found it to be "amazing," "informative," and "fascinating!"

Dane County Recycling Program Dinner and Conversation

That same day, Messiah is hosting a supper and conversation with Brian Johnson, from Madison's recycling program. He will join us for dinner, show us a PowerPoint presentation and short video, and stay as long as people have questions.

When: Wednesday, September 10th at 6:00 pm

Where: Messiah Lutheran Church, Social Hall (Downstairs)

Cost: Free!

Please sign up on the kiosk even if you aren't sure if you can come. September is a long way off, and we know plans change, but we need an approximate number of participants in order to book the tour.

Social Justice Ministry - RIC Watch Party



On July 16, a little over 45 people came to Messiah to watch the movie "1946 The Mistranslation that Shifted Culture".

The movie was about three people's search for how the word "homosexual" was added to the bible. They found that two Greek words describing "male sexual behavior" similar to pedophilia was translated, in the RSV as homosexual "a name for a person". How one man's thinking that it could be used as a "sacred weapon" caused the translators to remove it in the next version, but damage was already done.

“Dignity at School Fundraiser”

Community Outreach Ministry is sponsoring a fundraiser during the month of August to help two long-term projects focused on dignity for students.



One project, headed by Bernie Hartwig, involves 11 local elementary schools and one middle school. Bernie scours garage sales and thrift stores for gently used sweatpants and other clothing items so that schools have resources when accidents happen and dry clothing is needed. She also launders the clothes to get them ready for distribution by the social workers/nurses. New underwear is also provided for students in need.

The second part of this fundraiser is the Dignity Project, which is part of Little Dresses for Africa, and is led by June Nyhus. According to UNICEF, one in ten schoolgirls in Africa miss classes or drop out completely due to their period. They welcome the pads as a safer and more absorbent material than the rags, newspaper or bark they were using. To help with this issue, volunteers at Messiah cut and sew sanitary pads for the girls so that there is no need to miss school due to their menstruation cycle. In addition to making the pads, the Dignity Project also sends new underwear and safety pins with the pads, so the girls have what they need. Money collected will be used to supplement fabrics, pins and underwear when donations do not cover the group's needs.

Both of these projects produce immediate assistance to children. Please consider a monetary donation, allowing Messiah to continue its support of children in local schools and across the world. You may donate online, or with a check indicating Dignity at School on the memo line.

Prayer Shawl Ministry News

At our meeting on July 28, the Messiah Prayer Shawl Ministry welcomed two of its members as the new coordinators. Welcome Maren Anderson and Paula Stadtmueller to your new role.



Thank you to Kathy Digman for all her years of service to this very important ministry. She will still be a member of the ministry team, sharing her knowledge of knitting and crocheting and being the keeper of the history.

Kathy shared that over the past 20 years, this ministry has provided prayer shawls for baptisms, and to the sick and dying. More recently they have added providing them to confirmands, and high school seniors. They now are donating shawls to Agrace Hospice, Breast Cancer Recovery, Triangle Community Ministry and most recently to the Badger Childhood Cancer Network.

St. Stephen's Food Pantry Wish List

**Clear 16.9 oz.
Soda Bottles**

*no water, green or Gatorade bottles
please be sure they are rinsed & dry.*

Ronald McDonald House

We collect pull tabs from all
types of aluminum cans.



Kennedy School Wish List ►

- Boots
- Smaller sized sweatpants sizes 5-8
- **Waterproof** mittens/gloves
- New, unopened packages of socks and underwear for boys and girls



**WE ONLY COLLECT CHILDREN'S CLOTHING
FOR KENNEDY SCHOOL**

No Adult sized clothes for any groups

Boomerang Bag Workshop

**Tuesday, August 19th
10:00 AM - 12:00 NOON**

In the
Social Hall



Circles of Support Wish List ►

*(Just Dane's Circles of Support
provides a support system for
individuals leaving prison)*



Items needed include:

laundry detergent, laundry basket
shampoo/conditioner, soap, toilet paper
bath towels, hand towels, washcloths
toothpaste, deodorant, razors, shaving cream
dish soap, kitchen towels, dish cloths and scrubbers
facial tissues, paper towels, garbage bags
multi-surface spray cleaners
blankets (full or queen)

The Prayer Shawl Ministry will meet

**Monday, September 29th
1:00 PM**

**LOWER LEVEL
MEETING ROOM**



Dignity Project Workshop

**Saturday, August 9th
9:30-11:30 AM**

In the last Sunday School classroom
on the right

Last Dignity Shipment
388 pads - 100 panties

Project Total
16,397 pads - 3,421 panties



The Road Home Wish List►

- Cleaning supplies
- Diapers
- Baby wipes
- Laundry and dish detergent
- Feminine hygiene products
- Toilet paper and paper towels
- Gift cards for gas and groceries



We only accept unopened full-sized items.

No Adult sized clothes for any groups

Messiah

LUTHERAN CHURCH - ELCA

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Streamed Worship Schedule

Saturdays

5:00 PM Evening Worship

Sundays

8:15 AM Worship Service

10:30 AM Worship Service

You can watch services
anytime from the "Recent
Sermons" on our website.

Office Hours

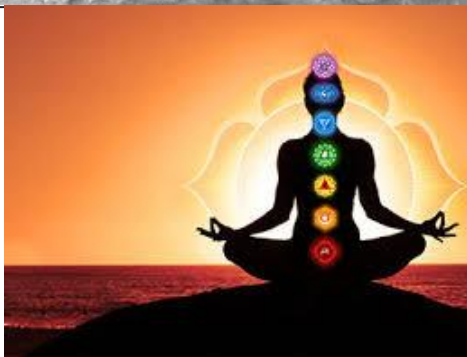
Monday- Office closed

Tuesday - Thursday

8:00 AM-2:00 PM

Friday 8:00 AM-12:00 NOON

Divine Yoga Returns



Divine Yoga will return in September or October.

Keep watching the Weekly News or,
better yet, become part of the Divine
Yoga Group and get updates delivered
to your inbox!

Ladies Lunch Bunch



We will be meeting on

**Wednesday
August 13th
at 11:15AM**

at Rex's Innkeeper

301 N. Century Ave Waunakee, WI 53597

Sign up sheet is posted on the Kiosk in
the Gathering Space.

Women of any age are invited.

**Please be sure you are there by 11:30AM as
orders will be taken at that time.**

If you have any questions, please contact
Claire Gensch at (920) 319-6731