

September
2026

Volume 33
Issue 9

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Accept who you are and revel in it. – Mitch Albom

What a journey this summer has been. Most recently, I had the privilege of paddling and portaging through the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness (BWCAW) with five others from Messiah and two guides from Wilderness Canoe Base. Each morning, right before we began our first paddle, we would pause, hear words of scripture, and read a focus quote. The words italicized above are one of those quotes shared by one of our young adults.

These words became the heart of our group that week. Yes, we paddled over fifty miles in a five-day period, and we portaged (carried all our gear, food, clothes, and canoes) over a combined three miles of trails. But when I asked the group, what are we taking home with us? What did we learn, and how are we different because of this trip? Every answer came back to the heart of this quote. "I feel more confident in myself." "I feel like I can do anything." "It made me feel strong." "I discovered my resilience and strength."

Venturing into the deep wilderness, with nothing but what we carry on our backs is no small feat. And I am deeply proud of the women (I was the only male!) who not only out-paddled, out-portaged, but in so many ways showed more strength, courage, and care than any other group I have gone with. Each morning, we would bless one another with the waters from the lake. As they dipped their finger in the lake, made the sign of the cross on the forehead of the person next to them, we would recite these words: "[Name], *beloved child of God, you are fearfully and wonderfully made, deserving of love and respect.*" And as we blessed each other, I saw each one of them becoming a little more of themselves.

And that's who we are called to be as a faith community, people who always support, encourage, and empower one another to be our whole, authentic, fearfully and wonderfully made selves. In the ways we live this life, in all its joys, challenges, strengths and fragilities, together. Because at the end of the day, our faith never grows in isolation. We need to

Office and Contact Information

PHONE 608-222-3833

OFFICE EMAIL

..... ourchurch@messiahchurch.com

OFFICE CORRESPONDENCE DROP BOX

..... outside the main front entrance

WEBSITE messiahchurch.com

OFFICE HOURS

Monday - office closed

email/phone monitored

Tuesday - Thursday..... 8:00 AM - 2:00 PM

Friday 8:00 AM - 12:00 PM

LEAD PASTOR Jeff Vanden Heuvel

..... pastorjeff@messiahchurch.com

ASSOCIATE PASTOR Dan O'Brien

..... pastordan@messiahchurch.com

BUSINESS MANAGER Tim Coulthart

..... timc@messiahchurch.com

OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR Judy Armelin

..... ourchurch@messiahchurch.com

WORSHIP AND MUSIC Clyde Nyhus

..... music@messiahchurch.com

MINISTRY SUPPORT Elizabeth Crummy

..... volunteer@messiahchurch.com

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY Brittany Rusch

..... CFM@messiahchurch.com

YOUTH MINISTRY Teresa Palumbo

..... youth@messiahchurch.com

Adult Ministry Pr. Renee Kiel

..... adulateducation@messiahchurch.com

SENIOR ADULT MINISTRY

..... Keith Schlesinger

..... SAM@messiahchurch.com

FACILITIES MANAGERS

..... Dan Battist and John Nerad

..... building@messiahchurch.com

VISITATION TEAM Pastor Dan

MEDIA & AV Clark Kellogg

..... AV@messiahchurch.com

JANITORIAL SERVICE Chrissy Moore

remind ourselves and others of just how much we need community.

In the final weeks of August, we saw that need firsthand. We witnessed our need for community in celebrating the over 250 backpacks *you all* gave to children returning to school, and in celebrating our LGBTQIA+ siblings during the Madison Magic Pride Fest. And we witnessed our need for community as we grieved the loss of many dear friends, including little Sam. In the heaviest moments of life, when grief and loss seem to hold us down and everything, even taking a breath seems impossible, is the exact moment we need community the most. Because like portaging through the Boundary Waters, when we share the heaviness of our lives, the stories of love and loss, of joy and celebration, of life as we live it, the more we share that with others, the lighter the load becomes. Not because the pain or the grief are gone, or even because it got easier, but only because we've begun to carry it together.

Having strong community, deep connections, trusting friends, is not an easy thing to hold. It requires work, it requires showing up, it requires the acts of love that show us just how important we are to those who share it. One place that I have witnessed these connections form is during our annual Family Camp Weekend. Each year, the families who join us leave with such a deeper sense of knowing, of friendship, and of connection that carries them into the year ahead.

And I want to reiterate, this is NOT tent camping. We are at a retreat center, where each family will have a room with multiple beds to themselves. This is a weekend for families, in all the forms family come. Whether you have young children, older youth, no children, as a couple, or just on your own, this weekend is for *you*. If you have any questions, feel free to reach out to me.

Whether you can attend Family Camp, our upcoming Spirit Weekend, or even be able to get to church, however you find yourself in a state of worship, I want you to remember always: you are a beloved child of God, fearfully and wonderfully made, deserving of love and respect. And I pray that you find it within yourself to accept who you are, and revel in it. Always. *Pastor Dan*

Len and I have had the privilege of visiting Leo and Lorna Sebald since last fall.

At each visit, we anticipate new reports and stories of their childhood, married life and family celebrations. Lots of times we have a good discussion on the Packers or one of the Badger teams.



On June 6th Leo turned 96!! They also celebrated their 67th wedding anniversary, and other family members birthdays with an outdoor patio party! Fortunately ALL their family were in attendance.

Leo and Lorna always ask what's new and what's happening at Messiah. As we share scripture, prayer, communion and strawberry ice cream, (Leo's favorite), we too are blessed and grateful to stand beside Leo and Lorna in this mission.

Mathew 18:20 - "For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in the midst of them" Reassurance we all can find Peace in! Come join the visitation team and you too will be blessed!

From the Gather magazine - Open our eyes to recognize your presence. Open our ears to hear your voice. Open our hearts to receive your call. Amen

Next Sacred Circle: September 27th between the services

If Lenny & Lanette Bruflat's reflection has inspired you and you feel that you might be called to this important ministry, please contact Pastor Dan at [***pastordan@messiahchurch.com***](mailto:pastordan@messiahchurch.com)

The Road Home Speaks at Messiah

Messiah has a long history with The Road Home, an agency in Madison that provides opportunities for homeless children and their families to achieve self-determined goals and affordable, stable housing.

During services on September 19th and 20th, we will have a chance to hear directly from their representatives about their programs, growth and progress.

There will also be a table set up to stop by and visit with them before, after and between services. The Community Outreach Ministry Team is excited to arrange this opportunity for the Messiah community to have direct interaction with one of our ministry partners.



Please Welcome New Members

Timothy & Trish Karls

Bradley & Mary Beth Olm

Jody Smalley

Sean Gensch & Scott Steen

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

Holy Baptism

Hattie Pearl Freidel

Child of
Sean & Carli

Callie Mae Lyght

Child of
Scott & Megan

Family Camp in September

Mark your calendars for Messiah Family Camp 2026!

Where: Bethel Horizons Camp

When: Friday, September 11th - Sunday, September 13th 12:00 noon

Cost: Friday to Sunday \$150 per person,
Saturday and Sunday \$80 per person,
Saturday only \$40.



Sign up on the Kiosk or visit the Weekly News for the QR Code or form.

Spirit Weekend



The weekend of September 26th-27th is Spirit Weekend.
Where is the Holy Spirit calling you to be involved?

Wear your favorite team attire, enjoy tailgate snacks and check out the different ministries to find your niche at Messiah.

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.



We are seven months into the budget year and the Pledged Revenue received to date is \$522,900, the budget for the same time period is \$498,600, so we are \$24,300 ahead of the budget. The excess can be attributed to the 52 families that have met their 2026 commitment. General Fund expenses were \$492,100 compared to the budget of \$511,200, so we are \$19,100 under budget.

The Gundlach Family Fund supported seven rental requests, \$2,450, with requests received from Hope Inspired and the Dane County Crime Victim office.

In July, we exported \$562 of electricity back to MG&E and produced a 10.6 MWh in July. In total Messiah has exported \$5,524 worth of electricity back to MG&E.

Tim Coulthart, Treasurer

Sunday School Registration is LIVE!

The first day of Sunday School is Sunday, September 27th and children ages 3 (as of September 1st) through 4th grade are welcome! Sunday School meets from 9:15 AM to 10:15 AM most Sundays until the end of April. Please visit our website to sign up and to view the lesson schedule! If you have questions please reach out to Brittany at cfm@messiahchurch.com



Interested in helping with Sunday School?

We are still looking for teachers, assistants and substitutes for Sunday School! No teaching experience necessary and lesson outlines are provided. If you are interested please reach out to Brittany at cfm@messiahchurch.com

Is your information up to date?

Families with children who will be 3 years old by September 1st should have received information about their being eligible for Sunday School. Families with children who are entering 2nd-5th grade should have received information about communion instruction. Families with children who are entering 3rd grade should have received information about receiving a Bible.

If you did not receive this information, please contact the office to update your records.

Trunk or Treat - Save the Date - October 25th



Starting September 1st, you can sign up on the Kiosk to be part of our community-wide Trunk or Treat event, on Sunday, October 25th at and after the late service. Check the Weekly News for information about the full event.

Craft Fair & Bake Sale - November 7th

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The Messiah Community Outreach Ministry will host the 2026 Annual Craft Fair and Bake Sale on Saturday, November 7th, 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM. This year's event will benefit Briarpatch, Friends of State Street Family, and Madison Street Medicine.

We will be at Spirit Weekend September 26th-27th with information on how you can help us with donations and volunteer time. If you miss, Spirit Weekend see the chart below for tips of how you can help. For more information, please contact the Area Lead or Elizabeth Crummy. **We need you!**

Join the Craft Fair & Bake Sale Team! - Help us make the Craft Fair & Bake Sale a HUGE success!

All interested volunteers, feel free to contact the coordinator with questions and availability as helpers before, during or after the sale.

Area-Lead	Donations	Volunteers (Flexible shift times)
Crafts Dawn Olson Olson_dawn54@sbcglobal.net	Direct New Vendors to Lead	• Vendor setup Fri. 3:00 - 6:00 PM • Sale host Sat. 8:00 AM - 12 noon or 12 noon - 4:00 PM
Bake Sale Louise Fosdick fosdickmad@gmail.com	Homemade baked goods. Sign up on Craft Fair board in Gathering Space	• Baked goods intake Fri 4:00 - 6:00 pm • Sale host Sat. 8:00 AM - 3:00 PM
Gift Shoppe Karen Verhagen Verhagen@charter.net	Gift Baskets Sign up on Craft Fair board in Gathering Space Info and theme ideas in the Weekly News	• Sale host Sat. 8:00 AM - 3:00 PM • Basket intake/setup week of Nov. 1
Book Nook Nancy Beszhak nbeszhak@gmail.com	Books - Gently used, gift ready, recent editions Child, Teen, Adult	• Sale host Sat. 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM • Set up Fri. 3:00 - 6:00 PM • Pre sale: Sort and Cull donations • Post sale: Box donations & transport to charity
Miscellaneous Dawn Olson Olson_dawn54@sbcglobal.net		• Set up spaces Fri. 9:00 AM - 11:30 AM • Clean up Sat. 3:00 - 4:00 PM • Final Cleanup Sun. 11:30 AM - 1:00 PM

Senior Choir Resumes - Come Join In the Song



Senior Choir resumes with our first rehearsal on **Thursday, September 17th.**

We meet at 7:30 PM in the Community Room. We provide music at the 8:15 AM worship service two to three Sundays per month, from October through May. We also sing on Thanksgiving Eve, Christmas Eve, Ash Wednesday, and Maundy Thursday.

If you are interested in joining, have musical gifts you would like to share, or would like to hear about other music opportunities, contact Clyde Nyhus, Coordinator of Worship and Music, at (608) 516-4926 or **music@messiahchurch.com**



SAM Hosts Open House at Food Bank

Have you thought about what it is that SAMies do at Second Harvest Food Bank (SHFB) and how you can join in on the fun? Well, **September 21st** is your chance to stop by SHFB and see the SAMies in action.

The open house starts at 1:30 PM where you will see SAM in action prepping various foods for distribution to over 300 food pantries in 16 south central Wisconsin counties. At 2:00 PM, we have "recess" with a homemade treat from one of the volunteers. This is your chance to sit down with SAM volunteers in the break room and ask questions about volunteering at the food bank. At 2:30 PM, you will

have the opportunity to take a tour of the food bank. You will be amazed at all the activity behind the scenes!

To sign up for the open house, send an email to [**SAM@messiahchurch.com**](mailto:SAM@messiahchurch.com)

SAM Season Opener Will Be Spectacular

Mark **September 30, 2026**, on your calendar in pen. Do that right now before you forget. Use a pen so you cannot erase it. Move your doctor appointments. This is the date for Messiah SAM's 2026-2027 kickoff! Our catered meal will be provided by Stoddard's Meat Market & Catering, Cottage Grove, WI. We will enjoy a pig roast with all the trimmings. Even dessert and beverages will be provided. Then sit back and enjoy the music of Toco Beach Steelpan. Their music will make you think you are smack dab on the beach in the Caribbean. Advance registration is NOT required. There is NO sign-up. There is NO charge for this event. Your admission ticket is plenty of non-perishable food items for The Empty Table.



SAM Fall Hike Season Starts

Tuesday, September 22nd--**McCarthy Park**, 4841 Co. Hwy. TT, Cottage Grove, WI 53527.



Meet at McCarthy Park parking lot near the park shelter to depart for the hike at 10:00 AM sharp. This is a favorite 1.5 mile walk on unpaved and uneven trails in woods and along fields with open views of the countryside and gentle hilled areas. A non-flush comfort station is available at the parking lot. To sign up, please call or text Barb Herrod's cell (518) 567-6816 or send an email to [**bwhfam@gmail.com**](mailto:bwhfam@gmail.com). Leave your cell phone number so we can notify you of last-minute changes/cancellations.

Human Trafficking Awareness Team

- ▶ Jevon Diming with Pierre Outreach Services Safe House (POSSH) was awarded a state Violence Prevention Grant, enabling her to secure a permanent space for her Wellness Lab. We visited her new space in early August and look forward to following up with Jevon after she is settled in.
- ▶ Staff from Briarpatch Youth Services spoke at the services June 27th-28th to share their mission. Although they do not explicitly serve victims of human trafficking, building stronger family and community connections is a preventative measure to help keep youth from being exploited.

Racial Justice Team

- ▶ Plans are underway for the next Guns to Gardens event on Saturday October 17th.
- ▶ The team purchased shelves for the books they bought last December with the themes of inclusion, identity and social justice. Special thanks to Nancy Beszhak for her expertise in curating the collection, writing summaries and conversation starters and an organizational system.
- ▶ A new course has just come out from the Nehemiah Center called Justice for a New Day. It will focus on understanding incarceration and building stronger communities, and give a glimpse into the criminal legal system we were never taught. It meets for nine sessions starting in September and the team will pay a portion of each person's tuition. Visit the Racial Justice Webpage for details.

Social Justice - Recycling Changes

Please help us to be good stewards of the earth by checking the improved signage by trash and recycle cans and be sure to put your items in the correct container. **"If in doubt throw it out"**.

FYI, the trash and recycle cans that the city picks up each week have been moved to outside the community room.



Community Meals



The next Healing House Week is **August 30 - September 5**.

We will make and serve a meal at Triangle Community Ministry on October 5. Signups for both of these opportunities are on the kiosk.

"Thank you" to those who provided/served at the July Healing House and TCM meals.

The Reconciling in Christ Team (RIC) sponsored two events the weekend of August 15th and 16th.

Madison Outreach Magic Pride Festival

Fifteen members of Messiah joined Pr. Jeff and Pr. Dan at Pride Fest at Warner Park. Here are some comments from those who spent time at Messiah's table at the event. "My heart is full after a great, uplifting day at Pride - and the weather even cooperated all afternoon!" "It was a great experience talking to so many attendees, and meeting some fun Messiah folks I didn't know before. I'm so glad to have the opportunity to participate in 'walking the walk' and spreading the word that Messiah truly is a welcoming community." "It was delightful to talk with so many attendees and see how happy they were just walking in such a safe place. We really enjoyed the day and getting to know some of our church family better. So much love!!



Guest Speaker: Mikah Meyers

Mikah's 3-year, world record road trip to all 419 U.S. National Park Service sites made him the first to experience all federal parks in a single journey. His work was additionally recognized by NBC during NYC's World Pride 2019 as one of their Stonewall **#Pride50** "innovators and changemakers".

He's continued that passion in the 2020s with the creation of the **Outside Safe Space** Program, which provides allies a simple way of making The Great Outdoors more accessible for LGBTQIA+ people. Since its launch in 2020 with a **Run Across Minnesota**, it has sold over 100,000 symbols.

Join Mikah Meyer, his mentor Larry, and three friends as they journey down Utah's Green River, in Desolation Canyon, on a river rafting trip centered around friendship and joy. Canyon Chorus is a story about being your true self in the outdoors, about advocacy, and about recognizing the important people in our lives. Watch the film with link in Weekly News.



Community Outreach Collection Schedule

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Our Next Community Outreach Team meeting is Thursday, September 24th At 10:00 AM

Please visit the Community Outreach team's page on Messiah's website for a list of ongoing collections that we have for The Road Home, Circles of Support, and St. Stephen's Food Pantry.

Hard copies of these collection items are available in the Collection Area at Messiah, between the Gathering Space and the Community Room.

Community Outreach Team Collections for 2026

April - Give Families a Lift Special Collection 2026

May - Mountain of Food

June / July - Backpacks for Schools

August -

September - Dignity at School

October/November - Virtual Pies
for "Share Your Holidays" (Second Harvest Food Bank)

November - Craft/Bake Sale

November/December - Christmas Collections for:
The Road Home, YWCA, Triangle Ministry, East Side Community/Truax, & Madison Area Jail Ministry

Backpack Collection

Messiah members donated over \$4,000 and lots of supplies to fill 269 backpacks for Kennedy and the Family Shelter, Lake View, Elvehjem, Carey, Schenk and Henderson schools, as well as DAIS and The Road Home.



Pam Aldrich and her granddaughter spent hours of time on this project. The backpacks were blessed the weekend of August 8-9 and Dave Lindorff, Nancy Battist, Kelli Weisinger and Val Roman delivered them the following week.

Boomerang Bag Workshop

Tuesday, September 15th
10:00 AM - 12:00 NOON

In the
Social Hall



The Prayer Shawl Ministry
will meet
Monday, September 28th
1:00 PM



LOWER LEVEL
MEETING
ROOM

Dignity Project Workshop

Saturday, September 5th
9:30-11:30 AM

In the last Sunday
School classroom
on the right.



Dignity Project

July mailing

388 pads - 92 panties

2026 Totals

2679 pads - 646 panties

Ronald McDonald House

We collect pull tabs from all
types of aluminum cans.

Place your tabs in
container on the
Hospitality Kitchen shelf.

Thank You!



The Community Outreach Ministry will again sponsor a fundraiser during the month of September for the two projects that focus on dignity for students.

One is headed by Bernie Hartwig. Bernie goes to garage sales and thrift stores to collect sweatpants and other clothing items. She launders all of them and gets them ready for distribution by social workers or nurses in 11 local elementary schools and one middle school for students in need. She also purchases underwear and socks for distribution.

The Dignity Project, led by June Nyhus, is the second group. Their portion of the money collected will be used to purchase flannel fabric, **100% cotton batting**, 2 inch safety pins, and underwear for when donations of these items do not cover the group's needs. We are now at the end of the flannel and batting we purchased before JoAnn Fabrics' store closure so our need for donations will be greatly increasing.

Both of these groups provide assistance for children. Please consider a monetary donation, allowing Messiah to continue supporting children in local schools and across the world. You may donate online, with cash or with a check indicating Dignity at School on the memo line. "Thank you"

Craft Fair & Bake Sale

St. Stephen's Food Pantry



Fall Craft Fair & Bake Sale

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 7TH

**Messiah Lutheran Church
Main Entrance** **9:00 AM - 3:00 PM**

The Craft Fair & Bake Sale is sponsored by the Community Outreach Ministry Team
*All proceeds from this year's event will benefit
Briarpatch, Friends of State Street Family and Madison Street Medicine*

Crafts Handcrafted Glass • Metal • Wood • Stone
Cards and Paper Crafts • Alpaca Wool Items • Jewelry
Textiles • Home Décor • Candles • Holiday Decorations

Baked Goods Bake Sale - Homemade baked goods including: pies, cakes, cookies, bars, breads, snacks and special international treats

The Book Nook Gently used books in gift giving condition
Favorite reads for children, teens, and adults

Gift Shoppe Baskets for a special holiday gift - cash & carry
Chance for a quilt, New Messiah Cookbook

Food 11:00 AM-1:00 PM Lunch Items for sale by Youth Ministry
Proceeds benefit Messiah's Youth Programs

Messiah Lutheran Church
5202 Cottage Grove Rd., Madison
608-222-3833 • www.messiahchurch.com

St. Stephen's Food Pantry Monthly Collection Items

We will be collecting different items each month for the food pantry.

Clear plastic soda bottles will still be collected all year round.

August - toothbrushes & toothpaste
September - unscented laundry soap
October - hot cocoa, teas & coffee
November - canned cranberries & pumpkin
December - baking supplies - flour, sugar, etc.
January - hot cocoa, teas & coffee
February - cake & brownie mixes
March - unscented laundry soap
April - salad dressings
May - BBQ sauces
June - relish & pickles
July - ketchup & mustard

Thank you for your support of St. Stephen's Food Pantry

Messiah

LUTHERAN CHURCH - ELCA

5202 Cottage Grove Road
Madison WI 53716

Nonprofit Organization
U. S. Postage
PAID
Madison, Wisconsin
Permit No. 999

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



Save the Date for Divine Yoga

We will have
Divine Yoga
Fall and Advent
sessions.

All Messiah folks and their friends are
invited to attend on Tuesdays from
6:00 - 7:15 PM in the Community Room.

Bring your own mat.

Fall Series: October 6, 13, 20, 27 and
November 3

Advent Series: December 1, 8, 15, 22

Ladies Lunch Bunch



**Wednesday,
September 9th
at
11:30 AM
Tully's II**

6401 Monona Dr., Monona, WI

Please sign up on the Kiosk.

**Please be there by 11:15 AM
Orders will be taken at 11:30 AM**

For questions call Claire at 920-319-6731
or Mary at 262-716-4600.

**The Ladies Lunch Bunch August Gathering
donated \$70.00 to the Boomerang Bag Group.**