



September 2025

the VINE

Hello Grand Avenue Church Family and Friends,

As we transition from the warm days of summer to the cool days of autumn, I am struck by how the seasons mimic the conditions of this life. The changing circumstances of life are like seasonal transitions. That is to say, our lives move from periods of light and warmth to times of cold and darkness. In this seasonal metaphor, the sunny warmth of summer represents periods of comfort, contentment, joy, and happiness. Fall is a season that represents life's struggles, creating a transition from light and warmth to cold and darkness. Winter represents periods of darkness and despair and spring exemplifies times of renewal and rebirth. Light to darkness and back again, over and over.

The one notable difference in this metaphor is that the seasons of our life lack the consistent regularity of the seasons of nature. In our lives, we can have summers that last only days, while we may experience the changing turmoil of fall for years. Perhaps we experience such hardship or grief that our lives are plunged into a seemingly endless winter. While none of us want our metaphorical summer to end, to struggle and suffer, we can say with certainty that, like the changing seasons of nature, changes in the seasons of our lives are unavoidable. Trials and tribulations will visit our doorstep and we will experience the rain and chill of fall and the dark, bitter cold of winter. This metaphorical cold and darkness is not physical but spiritual, but just like the physical seasons, the only way to return to summer is to experience spring.

Spring is the season of rebirth and renewal. For us, metaphorically, this means a rebirth of spirit. To have our spirit renewed from the only source of life – God. This is the only means to endure the trials of fall and escape the torture of winter. Spiritual restoration cannot be achieved through any other means. This is the truth I cling to as I consciously and prayerfully seek to leave my winter.

So, as we navigate the seasons of this life, let us be mindful that even when the cold and darkness seem impenetrable, we must trust and seek God, so that His spiritual spring may restore the sunshine of summer to our hearts.

Psalm 34:18, "The LORD is near to the brokenhearted and saves the crushed in spirit."

Romans 8:18, "I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us."

John 14:27, "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid."

Your brother in Christ,

Pastor Vince

CELEBRATE

September Birthdays

Larry Lueptow	1	Jackie Sorenson	12
Avery Draeger	4	Hope Foster	15
Mike Killey	5	Gailya Geib	16
Joanne Koskamp	5	Jeff Killey	16
Linda Klotz	6	Scott Penkivech	16
Eddie Freier	7	Marc Eernisse	18
Robyn Straughn	7	Jayme Johnson	20
Ardelle Dionne	8	Nicole Didier	24
Ermine De Yarman	9	Charles Lohr	24
Rob Schafman	9	Joshua Meins	24
Grahm Weltin	9	Marty Straughn	25

September Anniversaries

Bob & Jan Griesmeyer 13

VOLUNTEERS

Thank you, Volunteers, for serving in our ministry!

Date	Usher	Liturgist	Cupbearer	Coffee Host	AV
9/7	Larry Maechtle	Rama Bharadwaj	Cathy Guse	Cathy, Dave, & Barb	Scott Penkivech
9/14	Larry Maechtle	Jan Young	n/a	<i>Needed*</i>	Scott Penkivech
9/21	Larry Maechtle	Lin Lohr	n/a	<i>Needed*</i>	Scott Penkivech
9/28	Larry Maechtle	Ardelle Dionne	n/a	<i>Needed*</i>	Scott Penkivech

*Please see coffee hour sign-up sheet on the church bulletin board.

THANK YOU

To All my friends at Grand Ave.,

Thank you for your prayers, visits, and calls during my #3 ankle break. Yes, Mary Kae, #3. I must enjoy the attention. Pastor Dave, thank you for the nice visits. It may be a while before my return, but I look forward to seeing you all

Blessing to All! - Barb Frank

MISSIONS & OUTREACH



Non-Perishable Donation Needs

Soup (large and small cans), Canned Chicken (large and small cans), Granola Bars, Spam, Beef Stew, Pudding (large & small), Condiments (Ketchup, Mustard, Pickles, Olives, Relish, BBQ sauce), Rice sides, Pasta sides, Rice-a-Roni or Pasta Roni.

Dine to Donate



Eliminating Hunger
....together



JOIN US AT MOONLIGHT TAVERN!

101 E Main Street Port Washington, WI

**Enjoy a great meal while
supporting a great
organization!**

**WEDNESDAY
SEPTEMBER 24, 2025
11:00 AM
8:00 PM**

A percentage of proceeds benefits The Food Pantry, Inc.

MISSIONS & OUTREACH, cont.



Current Shelter Needs

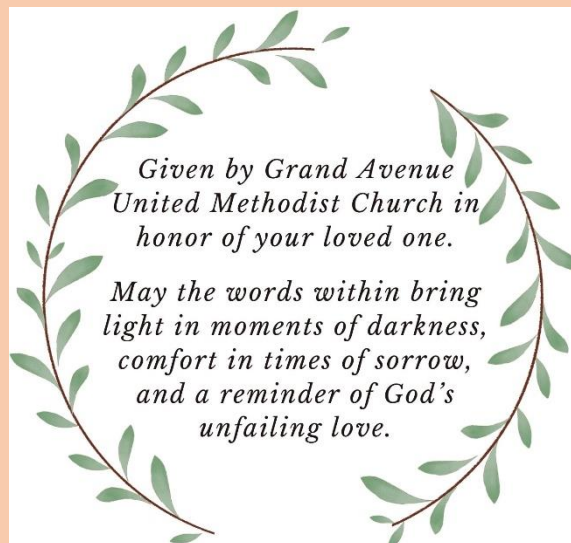
Gift Cards, Full size mattress pads, 30-gallon trash bags, Women's Deodorant, Women's Shave Cream, Laundry Dryer Sheets, 13-gallon garbage bags, and Toilet Paper. [Portlight Shelter Amazon Wish List](#)



CHANGING THE NARRATIVE ON SUICIDE

September is National Suicide Prevention Month. We'd like to remind everyone that our Church library has many books available as resources for not only your benefit, but perhaps others in your life who have experienced suicide loss. The more we can educate people around us, the more we can reduce the stigma, the shame, and the guilt of suicide! Our mantra lately has been "you never know how you might be helping others!"

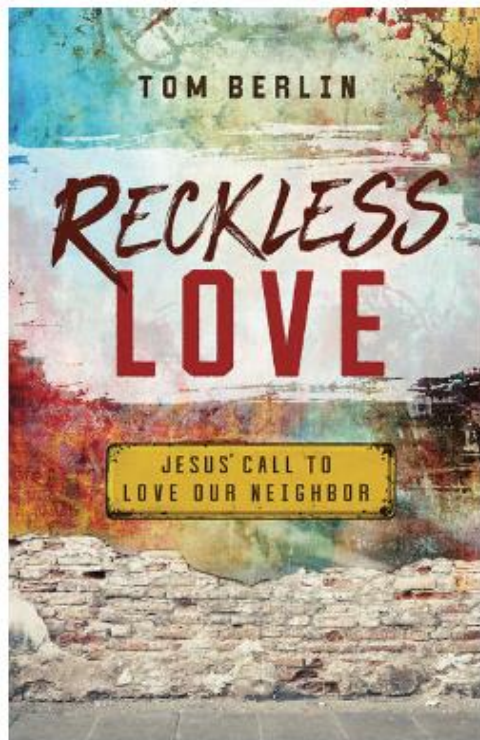
In addition to the resources in the library, we also have begun offering comfort by giving a book to someone we learn has lost a loved one to suicide. The book, *The Wilderness of Suicide Grief*, has the following inscription:



In the past week or so we have already donated two books for such a loss! Please let the church know when you learn of someone who might benefit from this book.

We would also like you to be aware that **September 10th** is World Suicide Prevention Day. This was begun by the World Health Organization (WHO) to raise awareness that suicide can be prevented. Thank you for reading this, learning about suicide by coming to our three-part program on suicide, and supporting us by keeping your own awareness going.

FAITH GROUPS & ACTIVITIES



Fall Book Study

11am – Noon, Fridays

September 26th – October 31st

A six-week study of “Reckless Love (Jesus' call to love your neighbor)” will be offered on Friday mornings beginning on September 26th. According to the introduction, this study will inspire you to “consider your life and learn how loving the people around you will completely renew your faith and give you a new experience of loving God.”

Cost of the book is \$18. Sign up and pick up your book on the counter in the narthex.



Sister Circle - Thursday, September 18th, 7:00 pm

Christ the King Church, 420 W Whitefish Rd, Port Washington

Sister Circle is an ecumenical women's group that meets monthly and offers women an opportunity to share their faith and support one another. We hope you will join us!

We will begin our year by reading and discussing the book, “The Resolution for Women -New Revised Edition” by Priscilla Shirer. For the September meeting, please read **Part I: This is who I am, Sections: Surprisingly Satisfied and Purposefully Woman.**

Questions about Sister Circle or to get our newsletter, please contact Mary at 414-828-4675 or mariwags@gmail.com.

FAITH GROUPS & ACTIVITIES, cont.



As a new school year begins, we are excited to kick off a new year of programming at Lighthouse as well! We had a great summer including a middle school service night in Milwaukee, a fun evening of worship at Lifest in Oshkosh, and of course, our week-long service trip to St. Louis!



The middle schoolers traveled to Milwaukee to serve dinner at the Guest House, which is a men's shelter. We assembled fruit and veggie cups and we took those with us to serve alongside pizza, soda, and desserts to the guests staying there. The boys worked hard and had a great time helping out, and afterwards we enjoyed the opportunity to tour the facility and learn more about the work they do to help those experiencing homelessness in Milwaukee.

In July, our small but mighty team of 3 high school youth and adults set off for St. Louis where we had the chance to partner with seven different service organizations in the community including food banks, a thrift store, an organic farm school, a child development center, and a furniture warehouse. We also had opportunities to learn more about some systemic issues in St. Louis such as racial inequality and socioeconomic divides in various neighborhoods that further exacerbate issues of poverty. In addition, we took time each day for worship and devotions and had time to explore the city and have some fun together as well at places like the City Museum, Union Station, and the Gateway Arch. It was an incredible trip, and be on the lookout this fall for the opportunity to see pictures and hear more stories from the trip participants during/after worship coming soon!



With a new program year just around the corner, I'm excited for what the year will bring as we continue to welcome, empower, and equip students to be all that God creates them to be. New faces are always welcome so if you have kids or grandkids in grades 5-12, please encourage them to check us out by attending any of the events listed below or contacting me or one of the Lighthouse board members (Dan Benning and Jill Eernisse are the representatives for GAUMC).

September 7th from 6:00-7:00 pm – Fall Kickoff

Brats, burgers, ice cream, and yard games, oh my! All students and their families are invited.

September 14th from 6:30-8:00 pm – Lighthouse Life Night

Lighthouse Life Nights will be offered once a month and will be a mix of games, conversation, and activities centered around a particular theme from the Bible each night.

September 21st from 3:00-5:00 pm – Service Project at the New Port Food Pantry

*Drop off/pick up at 1777 State Hwy 33 between Port Washington and Saukville

September 28th from 3:00-6:30 pm – Corn Maze and Pumpkin Carving

Fall fun day including a trip to a corn maze, pumpkin carving/decorating, and dinner together.

Have questions about Lighthouse or want to get involved?

Contact Director Christin Flucke at 262-483-9582 or christin.flucke@lighthouseyouth.org



United Methodist Corner

United Methodists have been charged with not being Bible believing Christians. This charge of late centers around our refusal to condemn homosexuality, but there have been other issues in which we are perceived as not following Holy Scripture.

This accusation that we don't believe in the Bible seems rather odd considering that our founder John claimed that he was a man of one Book. We need to unpack what Wesley meant. Fundamentalist Christians are a people of One Book because they believe in the inerrant Word of God. This means that God wrote all scripture. The author might have had the writing instrument in their hand, but God literally did the rest. We believe that God did indeed inspire the author to write their books and letters. We also believe that human beings are fallible with limited knowledge and the capacity to sin. Scriptures can point us toward God and God's will, but how can we through human language ever capture the wonder and mystery of God?

Wesley said that he was a man of One Book because for him everything necessary for our future salvation and for our wholeness as Christians can be found in scripture. Scripture doesn't address every issue of life but it serves for us a guide and inspiration to live a Christ-like life. Jesus Christ is the way of salvation. The Bible serves as the primary source for Christian living for Wesley, but he encouraged pastors that he appointed to circuits to read other books as well. Wesley was a prolific reader and writer. He was very open to the knowledge gained through the natural and social sciences. We don't treat the Bible as our science book because the Bible is not interested, like science, in how the word began, but who is behind it all and why are we here. The sciences have helped us to understand, for instance, that homosexuality is not a mere choice. People are oriented to be either heterosexual or homosexual.

This may sound a little simplistic, but as United Methodists we can take the Bible seriously without having to take every word literally.

In my next column, I will address Wesley's use of other sources that help us to interpret scripture that has become known as the Wesley Quadrilateral.

In Christ's Love,
Dave

CHURCH NEWS



Rev. Danita Anderson, Assistant to the Bishop
Northern Illinois Conference
danderson@umcnic.org | 872-810-0834

Northern Illinois - Wisconsin Episcopal Area of The United Methodist Church



Rev. Barbara Certa-Werner, Assistant to the Bishop
Wisconsin Conference
bcertawerner@wisconsinumc.org | 608-837-8526

Love should be shown without pretending. Hate evil and hold on to what is good. Love each other like the members of your family. Be the best at showing honor to each other. Don't hesitate to be enthusiastic—be on fire in the Spirit as you serve the Lord! Be happy in your hope, stand your ground when you're in trouble, and devote yourselves to prayer. Contribute to the needs of God's people, and welcome strangers into your home.

-Romans 12:9-13

Grace and peace to you in the hope that is ours in Christ.

When the kids were little, we liked to walk in county or state parks. It was not uncommon for Rachel to see a toad or frog and pick it up. You know the inevitable question: 'Dad, can we keep her?'

I would explain. 'Rachel, that little frog has a mom, maybe a dad or grandpa or little brother, and soon they will start missing her. She will want to go home to her table for supper, and you can imagine how sad it would be for them if their little girl did not come home. She will miss them. They will miss her. Let's let her go so she can hop home.'

I don't know if that was a gold standard answer, but both kids learned empathy. They are kind to animals. They live out Christian love even if they do not set worship attendance records. Rachel is a social worker who manages others and engages the most challenged of those who live in Milwaukee without housing. Once, someone who was distressed asked the police to call her by name. Andrew loves to serve. Siblings in Christ, we belong to each other. Archbishop Tutu of South Africa has described life as 'a bundle of belonging.'

In her book, *Who Do We Choose to Be?* Margaret Wheatley says a decent human being must be willing to serve an inhumane and indecent time. More than being decent, what might a Christian be willing to do in an inhumane, indecent time?

CHURCH NEWS, cont.

Despite the fact that the federal government has built a concentration camp in Florida and has resorted to burning food aid rather than feed hungry children, I am still answering angry letters from the [Council of Bishops' epiphany letter](#), read in our churches, that sought dignity for immigrants.

I feel as if I am crouching down in my gentle fatherly voice and saying, 'the 34 people per cage have a mother, a sister, or a child. They are exposed to the elements and live in their own stench. Most are guilty of no crime. For the first offense, being in the US illegally is a misdemeanor, and when did misdemeanor crimes warrant incarceration in a concentration camp away from family and legal recourse? Their children are traumatized from missing their fathers. Let them go. Let them go back to their dinner tables.'

Bishop Tom Berlin, our bishop assigned to the Florida conference, has raised his opposition to a concentration camp built in Florida that costs \$450 million per year to operate. Inmates are given food infested with maggots. Mosquitoes, some carrying disease, are everywhere. The lights are left on so inmates cannot sleep. Of course, immigration reform is needed. Of course, persons who have committed serious crimes must be addressed. How do you defend a concentration camp with your Christian faith? Might the FEMA money used to maintain this be better spent in Texas or on a natural disaster?

Siblings in Christ, we have been divided by powerful, moneyed voices. Many hearts have been turned to revile immigrants by allowing ourselves to fear them in the most criminal terms. Consider how many United Methodists approve of this example of structural and systemic racism. Who would want to join that church?

Contact your representative and your senator. Join in prayer and protest. Feed those widowed because their husband has been swept up in a needless raid. Contribute to the [Texas flood relief](#) through UMCOR or a short-term mission trip. Love your neighbor. The neighbor, says Luke 10:37, is the one who showed mercy.

Know that your witness to Jesus and your service of the reign of God is critically important. Thank you for your witness and faithfulness. It is good to be in ministry with you.

Peace,

Daniel W. Schwerin, Bishop
Northern Illinois-Wisconsin Episcopal Area
The United Methodist Church

7/18/2025 - by: Bishop Schwerin - Notes from a Circuit Rider

CALENDAR

September Events

Worship Service	Weekly Sunday at 10:00 am	Sanctuary
AA Meeting	Weekly Wednesday at 8:00 pm	FAC
Private Meeting	Weekly Thursday at 5:30 pm	FAC
ADRC Meal Distribution	Mon – Fri from 10:30 am – 12:30 pm	Kitchen
PW Woman's Club	Monday, September 8 at 12:00 pm	Fellowship Hall
Social Principles	Tuesday, September 9 at 1:00 pm	Gathering Area
World Suicide Prevention Day	Wednesday, September 10	
Admin Council	Thursday, September 11 at 7:00 pm	Zoom
Stockbox Distribution	Tuesday, September 16 at 10:00 am	FAC
Sister Circle	Thursday, September 18 at 7:00 pm	Christ the King
Newsletter Article Deadline	Tuesday, September 23	Office
Fall Book Study Starts	Friday, September 26 at 11:00 am	Fellowship Hall



CHANGING THE NARRATIVE ON SUICIDE

World Suicide Prevention Day
10 September

Start the conversation



Suicide can affect every one of us. By raising awareness, reducing the stigma & encouraging action we can help to reduce the instances of suicide around the world. You can find more information about [suicide and recognizing suicidal behavior](#) at www.samhsa.gov.

GRAND AVENUE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

505 W Grand Ave Port Washington WI 53074 262-284-9478 www.portumc.com
 Pastor: Vince Pepin pastor@portumc.org
 Pastoral Assistant: Dave Guse senegaldave1@gmail.com
 Administrative Assistant: Stacy Peters office@portumc.org
 Lay Leader: Dan Benning bennida01@att.net
 Admin Council Chair: Mark Grams mgrams@wi.rr.com
 Bishop: Dan Schwerin / District Superintendent: Rev. Dr. InSun Lee

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Questions? Contact the Kay Hamann at 262-284-3168 or khamann530@yahoo.com

*Each retailer makes a donation to the church for every gift card purchased.
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Amazon \$100		
Arby's \$10		
AutoZone \$25		
Barnes & Noble \$10		
Barnes & Noble \$25		
Bath & Body Works \$10		
Bath & Body Works \$25		
Bed Bath & Beyond \$25		
BP \$50		
BP \$100		
Burger King \$10		
Cousins Subs \$10		
CVS Pharmacy \$25		
CVS Pharmacy \$100		
Dick's Sporting Goods \$25		
Dick's Sporting Goods \$100		
Exxon \$50		
Fleet Farm \$25		
Fleet Farm \$100		
Home Depot \$25		
Home Depot \$100		
Jiffy Lube \$30		
Kohl's \$25		
Kohl's \$100		
Kwik Trip \$25		
Kwik Trip \$50		
Kwik Trip \$100		

RETAILER	QTY	TOTAL
Meijer \$25		
Meijer \$50		
Meijer \$100		
Mobil \$50		
Noodles & Company \$10		
Panera Bread \$10		
Panera Bread \$25		
Papa Murphy's Pizza \$10		
Pick'n Save(WI) \$25		
Pick'n Save(WI) \$50		
Pick'n Save(WI) \$100		
Piggly Wiggly (WI, IL) \$25		
Piggly Wiggly (WI, IL) \$50		
Piggly Wiggly (WI, IL) \$100		
Qdoba Mexican Grill \$25		
Sendik's Food Market \$25		
Sendik's Food Market \$50		
Sendik's Food Market \$100		
Speedway \$25		
Speedway \$50		
Starbucks \$10		
Starbucks \$25		
Subway Restaurants \$10		
Target \$25		
Target \$50		
Walgreens \$25		
Walmart \$25		
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