

THE PARISH CONNECTION

September 2025

A Community of Faith, Inspired by Christ, Gathered to Grow, Empowered to Serve.

September 2025 Lectionary Readings

SEPT 07 | 13th Sunday after Pentecost (Green)

Jer 18:1-11; Ps 139:1-6, 13-18 (UMH 854);
Philem 1:17-27; Luke 14:25-33

SEPT 14 | 14th Sunday after Pentecost; Grandparent's Day (Green)

Jer 4:11-12, 22-28; Ps 14 (UMH 746);
1 Tim 1:12-17; Luke 15:1-10

SEPT 21 | 15th Sunday after Pentecost (Green)

Jer 8:8-9:1; Ps 79:1-9 or Ps 4 (UMH 741);
1 Tim 2:1-7; Luke 16:1-13

SEPT 28 | 16th Sunday after Pentecost (Green)

Jer 32:1-3a, 6-15; Ps 91:1-6, 14-16 (UMH 810);
1 Tim 6:6-19; Luke 16:19-31

IN OUR PRAYERS:

Joys—Great granddaughters, Brooklyn, weather grows the corn, County Fairs

Concerns—Tim Dreier, Linda O., Debbie, Penny, Ruth, Meghan, Vern, Jan, all countries with wars—Ukraine, Israel, Gaza—especially the children, and Iran, Sheldon, migrants, immigrants, and refugees under the threat of forced deportation, Lon, Kay, JD, Merlin, Roger B, Carla, Jaylea, Betty L, Maple and Mary Johnson, UMC RF CC youth leadership, Lake St. UMC Linda and Dick, no swing beds in Eau Claire and all affected by that situation, Paul W, Flooding victims, Fred Booth, Joanne, Rusty Witthoft, Craig Paulson, Charlotte Corbin, and the children and their families who were killed or injured in the recent Minneapolis shooting
Remembering—family and friends of Ashlie Rosen and Ron Woolever

Church Times Change

Clear Lake 8:30 am
Faith Family (& zoom) 9:45 am
Deer Park 11:00 am



Zoom: Please use the following information to join us on Sundays for worship at **9:45 a.m.**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88613652777?pwd=UlpSVhGN0g1Qnc3VDV5T0Jhcn83UT09>
Meeting ID: 886 1365 2777 Passcode: 421072



Join us for the Parish Picnic!
at Emerald Park, Sunday, Sept 7 at 10 AM

Communion (with gluten-free), Potluck Lunch, Bingo, Prizes
Bring family, friends & neighbors! (and your own chairs too!)



5th Sunday Schedule

November 30, 2025 --- Deer Park
March 29, 2026 --- Clear Lake
May 31, 2026 --- Emerald
August 30, 2026 --- Clear Lake will be celebrating their 150th Anniversary
November 29, 2026 --- Deer Park
January 31, 2027 --- Emerald

UMC Special Sundays: Listed below are the remaining special Sundays for 2025. Donation envelopes will be at the back of the churches.

- World Communion Sunday ~ October 5
- United Methodist Student ~ November 30

September Birthdays

Megan Zimmer	9/02
Craig Paulson	9/02
Dick Danielson	9/05
Camilla Pietz	9/08
Genevieve Malack	9/09
Summer Webster	9/09
Maddie Thompson	9/15
Peyton Lillie	9/15
Nancy Stutter	9/16
Ron Jurisch	9/18
Pete Thompson	9/19
Diane Blanchard	9/21
Debi Ahrens	9/24
Carrie Blanchard	9/25
Hakki Min	9/26
Jeff Wilson	9/27
Madison Blanchard	9/28
Emma Olson	9/28

September Anniversaries

Gregory & Heidi Olson	9/04
Jon & Holly Malak	9/07
Fernandez & Renae Johnson	9/08
Tyler & Mandy Sharpe	9/10
Roger & Diane Blanchard	9/14
Dick & Vickie Danielson	9/24
John & Sandi Reed	9/24
Pete & Janice Thompson	9/27

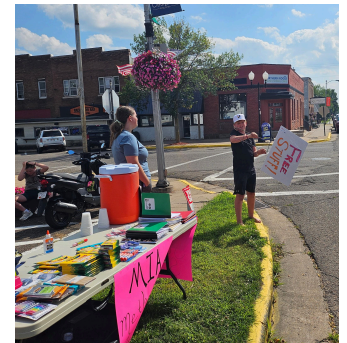
Ruby's Pantry distributes food at Pop-Up Pantry locations across MN & WI. There is no income or residency requirement and for a \$25 bundle donation you will receive an abundance of groceries. One food distribution will take place **September 13th** in the **SMC LTD** parking lot at 9000 Griffin Street E in Amery. This is a drive-thru distribution from **7:30 am to 9:00 am**. Volunteers are greatly appreciated and should arrive at **6:45 am**. If you would like to volunteer or if you would like more information, please contact 715-268-7390 or email office.ameryucc@gmail.com.

Willow River Facebook Page

<https://www.facebook.com/Willow-River-Parish-103076225619623/>. Please send any information you would like posted to Heather Greene mr.mrs.greene5@gmail.com or Gail Kuhl kuhlg@cltcomm.net

Willow River Parish Youth:

Clear Lake MIA- school supplies event was a success! Community members were able to stock up on school supplies for their kids to help have a successful year at school!



Next Youth Event: Wednesday, September 24th- 3:30-6pm at CL Methodist Church. Baking goodies for the Rummage Sale to earn money for their Missions. Supper provided.



- Parish Picnic @ Emerald Park Sept 7; 10 am
- CL Thrift and Bake Sale—Sept 25 & 26; 9-5
- October Newsletter Deadline is Sept 26th

WORSHIP MINISTRIES

Clear Lake

Sept 7th **10 am at Faith Family Church Picnic/Potluck**
Sept 14th Reader: Debi Ahrens
 Acolyte/PwrPt: Oliver Wood
 Coffee: Camilla
Sept 21st Reader: Lily Avery
 Acolyte/PwrPt: Ben Avery, Jr
 Coffee: Linda Jurisch
Sept 28th Reader: Diane Blanchard
 Acolyte/PwrPt: Oliver Gorres
 Coffee: Dylan Gorres Family
Oct 5th Reader: Alison Blanchard
 Acolyte/PwrPt: Lily Avery
 Potluck/Coffee: Roger & Carla

Counters for September: Linda & Joan
Counters for October: Carla & Diane

Faith Family

Sept 7th Paul Webster
Sept 14th Terri Wilson
Sept 21st Debbie Stevens
Sept 28th Michael Clark
Oct 5th Paul Webster

Peace United Methodist Church is hosting a Grilled Chicken Dinner on Thursday, September 18th from 3:30-7 pm at Our Savior's Lutheran Church Hall, 602 W Main Street, Wheeler, WI 54772.

The menu will include grilled chicken, potato salad, cole slaw, cowboy beans, buns, desserts, beverages. FREE WILL DONATION. Dine in or carry out. Everyone is welcome!



Grace Place Salvation Army

Hello everyone! We are in need of some items for the shelter. If you are out shopping and could grab an extra item or two that would be great!

Below is what we are in need of:

13 gallon trash bags, Facial tissue (kleenex), Paper towels, Disinfecting wipes, Wash cloths Shampoo/conditioner-this does not have to be new bottles.

****We receive many calls about donations of clothing and due to our storage limitations we ask that you bring clothing donations to Two Fish Thrift store or the Heritage Barn.**

Thank you for your support!!!

Deer Park UMC News

Greetings from Deer Park!

Here we are with September just around the corner, where did the summer go? Praise the Lord for sending all the rain especially to help the farmers, the flowers, the lawns & to keep the bounty of the earth.

Thinking of all the students, especially the college students leaving their homes and off to a big change in their life.

We are thankful that Pastor Hakki is back with us and is feeling better. Not the way to spend a vacation but I have realized it is a good way to really appreciate one's good health, something that we tend to take for granted.

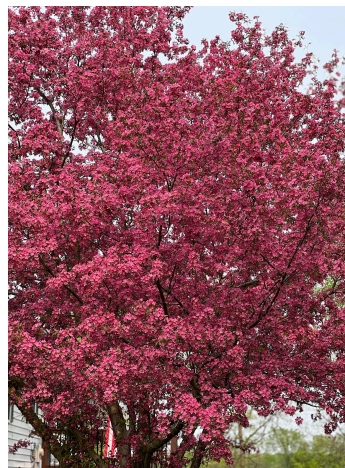
It is a year that we have shared our church with Pastor Henson and his parishioners, we hope they feel at home here and feel the presence of the Lord.

Again many thanks to Joyce for her wonderful music and of course her chauffeur, to Pete for the lawn care and to JoJo for being my computer tutor and everyone that helps us to keep our church going.

Have a wonderful safe, healthy fall everyone and God Bless.

Send Offering to: Janice Thompson, 110 North Street E, Deer Park, WI 54007

Noisy Can--3rd Quarter to Various Charities



Speaking of the bounty of the earth and all the rain; the crops, flowers and trees prove that.

Letter from Bishop Schwerin

2026 Will Be a Year of . . .

Let me begin with gratitude.

Thank you for your faithfulness, especially for how you have offered the peace and presence of Christ in tumultuous days.

You have been planning trainings to make clear how our mission is antithetical to Christian Nationalism. You have been organizing to provide sanctuary for people who have been harassed by the empire. You have been experimenting in ministry, some with mergers, some with reaching new people—and practice grace for the experiments as needed. I have seen your energy about vacation Bible school and supporting our camps.

I also celebrate the increase in apportionment payments in both annual conferences. Your gift helps us advance vocations into service, develop programs and connections that a local church cannot do alone, and help us grant and coach congregational development so that we might innovate and bless our ministries in this space and time.

This year I have appreciated the ways that the Northern Illinois and Wisconsin conferences have been living out a year of grace. Even before it is visible to us, we know prevenient grace is at work.

Grace is the unconditional, expansive love of God offered to all people in every moment. We have learned how we are here to grow by grace working in love. Thank you for the ways that you have explored and lived gracefully in your communities.

Obviously, we share a common mission: to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. My life is seized by that mission and has been transformed in it. I trust your life has as well.

I'm very grateful that The United Methodist Church adopted a new vision statement. I do believe we are here to "love boldly, serve joyfully, and lead courageously." I celebrate this vision for our steps together.

Let me now look ahead to 2026 by turning to scripture; specifically, Psalm 130:5: "I wait for the Lord; my soul waits, and in his word, I hope."

This is a psalm for the night. Poets and prophets have spoken eloquently about our night prayers or our dark nights of the soul. One of my favorite lines in the scripture is John 20:1, which introduces Jesus's resurrection by saying, "while it was still dark . . ."

I love the fact that God is working while it is still dark and when God's ways are unseen to most of us. When I was born, the doctor told my mother a message about the night. I was born with pneumonia and jaundice. "If he gets through the night, he may make it," the doctor said.

Maybe this reminds you of the ways you have found God or reached out in prayer while it was still dark. We all have had those nights when we prayed fervently for healing or wellbeing, or we have had some experience of the dark night of the soul or an experience of night that seeks the hand of God.

Meantime, what kind of spiritual focus is needed for our leadership in this moment?

It is a time when many are dispirited for a variety of reasons. We have been divided by powerful monied interests who want us to fear and distrust each other so that we can be administered by fear. That has robbed us of our conviction that Christ is more than our opinions and that we are building back church unity, local collaboration, functional systems, and relationships at our holiday tables. It must be said that we are now being administered by misinformation that takes us toward darkness.

But we are people of hope. There is always more God than meets the eye.

I was attending United Women in Faith's Mission u in Northern Illinois and listened to a study on "practicing hope." I was touched and moved by the ways in which UWF recognized that the challenges in this time start with the soul and how we can remain grounded and oriented to Christ when political messages threaten people groups.

They explored how the nature of our God is hope, how God's coming in the flesh is hopeful, how there is always more God than meets the eye, and how our life together is one of practicing hope.

A deaconess (a lay order of women who pursue love and justice) named Martha Lundgren, who is a member of Renewed Hope UMC in Chicago, sat next to me at lunch. She told me how her congregation realized that they spent most of their budget on maintaining the building. Wasn't God calling them to do more and be more?

So they prayed, grounded themselves in God and discernment, and considered what Jesus would have them do with the people they were given to love. They eventually sold the building and focused on how they might bring Christian love and a faith community into the neighborhood to impact the lives of people in their area.

Now they have a powerful ministry with residents of a nearby nursing home.

"I think we are practicing hope in our ministry," she said, "and I wonder, Bishop, if what you say is true for almost everyone: that most churches have 35 or fewer in worship. Maybe for the year 2026 we should pray and think about our theme's being "practicing hope"?"

I put down my pea soup and knew God was whispering.

In this dark time we might be stronger if we practiced hope. I love the idea that we are not alone; we practice hope as a community of faith.

We are practicing hope when we worship together and decide we will not isolate but bear witness with and to each other.

We can practice hope as we "resist evil, injustice, and oppression in whatever forms they present themselves," to quote our baptismal vows. What does it mean to do this? What brings hope for you?

I sense that the churches that are trying to decide their futures could make better decisions if they were practicing hope as they discern what God may have for them in the future.

We will still live out our vision and be seized by the same mission, but we can be stronger in this moment when we know our two conferences, our episcopal area, is practicing hope together.

I believe we are grounded in the hope of our baptism, where we have joined Christ, where we belong to Christ, and Christ belongs to God.

I believe the creativity and freedom of God calls us forward in hope. This is not fake happy talk, or hope on a shelf, but gospel grounded life lived on the foundation of our baptism: the never-ending love that is poured into our hearts and life in Jesus Christ.

Hope allows for newness. Hope allows that God will call us forward. Hope allows us to say yes to whatever call is placed on our lives.

I believe that as long as we have a relationship with Jesus Christ, we have a relationship with hope. John Wesley reminded us that we are not defined by our opinions or agreements, but by the image of God born in us and growing by grace in and through us. All people bear the dignity of the image of God. Our discipleship itself is a stance against racism.

I wonder if we might think about the end of this year as a time to ground ourselves in grace so that we approach Advent and the new year asking the question, How is God calling us to be people who are practicing hope?

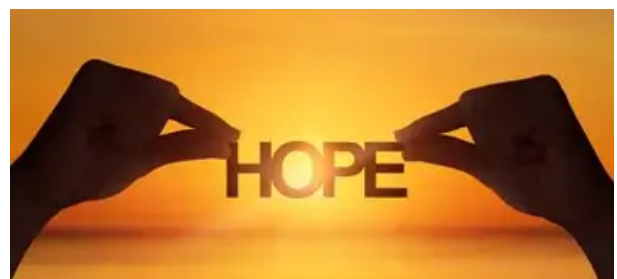
I know that our God offers us a hopeful imagination. We are children of an Exodus God, a God who knows how to carry us through exile; a God who knows the path from death to resurrection. How might hope grow in your life and lives of our churches and how might that bring hope to those God has given us to love?

Best of all, God is with us, and God is not finished with us yet.

"I wait for the Lord, my soul waits, and in his word, I hope."

Thanks be to God.

Hope to you in the power and love we know as Christ.



It's Time to Renew Your Newsletter "Subscription"

Please select the option below that best fits your lifestyle. If you would like to make a change, please return this form to your church or the Parish office no later than September 25th. If you choose to have your newsletter mailed, please enclose a \$10 payment (postage is \$.78 per issue and there are 12 issues; \$9.36).

Name _____

_____ I would like to receive the newsletter in the mail for a \$10 donation

_____ I will pick-up my copy of the newsletter from the back of my church.

_____ I read the newsletter online at www.willowriverparish.org or via email.

_____ I would like to make a \$10 contribution so our elders can continue to receive the newsletter by mail.

Clear Lake UMC News

- Coffee and pot luck **AFTER** church at 9:15.
- Potluck-1st Sunday of each month **FOLLOWING** church.
- Food shelf donations any Sunday

Send Offering to: Josy Wood, 260 40th Avenue, Clear Lake, WI 540045

CL Noisy Cans:

3rd Qtr.- Family House (Polk/Barron Shelter)
4th Qtr- Salvation Army

United Women in Faith: We will be visiting Arlene Althoff in September; day to be determined; will let everyone know later. Also September 10th we go to Willow Ridge to play Bingo. Please be there at 1:45-Bingo at 2:00. We will have prizes and pumpkin bars.

On OCTOBER 8th, 2:00 we will have a UWF meeting at Ridgeview Commons with Pot Luck. We will be discussing the Church's 150th Anniversary.



The UWF has sent the personal care items with Patty, the person in charge at the Polk/Barron Family Shelter. In the future we will give personal products to Homeless Shelters closer to us, Barron/Polk County and Grace Place.

Patti from the Polk/Barron Family House picking up food on the 18th.

Holy Socks

The United Women of Faith are gathering clean, mismatched, old, worn out holy socks for a cash donation to Northcott Neighborhood House in Milwaukee. We'd love to have anyone's donations.

Meals for the Family House Shelter were picked up August 18th, Big thank you to all those who cooked or baked.

Dorcas Piecemakers Work Days: On Monday, September 8th, we will meet at noon at Irma's for lunch then sew from 1-3. On Monday, September 22nd we will meet at Irma's at noon and sew from 1-3. We will continue sewing walker bags for the Amery Hospital, aprons for the nursing homes and pillowcases. We will deliver to the hospital and nursing homes the first Monday of October. Please join us for lunch only, working, visiting, whatever works for you!

Clear Lake UMC Fall Thrift Sale:

Thurs, Sept. 25th & Fri, Sept 26th

9 am-5 pm.(set up after church on Sept. 21st)

You may bring your items and place them in the correct places Sunday, Sept. 21 through Wednesday, Sept. 24. The church will be open 8-8. Make sure things are clean. No electrical items that don't work; if they need batteries put them in please. The Youth will have goodies for sale.

PLEASE UNLOAD YOUR BAGS AND BOXES AND PUT ITEMS ON DESIGNATED TABLES.

****Each church family; please bring one dozen cookies/treat bags/bars for us to sell.****





MEETING MINUTES

CL UMC Ad Council:

Old Business:

1. Nothing new from the insurance adjuster. Josy is paying the Conference the same amount as she was paying Church Mutual in the interim.
2. Debi Ahrens paid the cleaning bill from Dorcas Circle last month.
3. All church picnic is September 7th at the Emerald park with Faith Family hosting.
4. 150th church anniversary is tentatively scheduled for August 30, 2026. More information to follow as the event is planned.

New Business:

1. A schedule of the dates and locations of the 5th Sundays will be made.
2. A motion was made by Dawn to give the 10% from Clear Lake Days to the Salvation Army Shop with a Cop Program. The motion was amended by Dawn as this event is over for this year. Amended motion by Dawn is to split the 10% 50/50 between the Clear Lake School and the Salvation Army. 2nd by Debi, motion carried.
3. We have several people in our congregation that are gluten free, so will try using gluten free bread for communion. Diane will make a loaf of gluten free bread for September communion.
4. The washer and dryer in the parsonage need to be replaced. Dawn will coordinate with TruValue to schedule.

Pastor's Notes:

- The DS is meeting with Pastor Hakki. He will ask for the date for the Charge Conference.
- The Ministry Plan needs to be updated. Pastor Hakki gave us a copy of the Ministry Plan. After reviewing the plan we will discuss any changes at the September meeting.
- Pastor Hakki will be attending a week long class at Evanston IL.

Next meeting September 3, 2025 at 4:00.

We'll Get Through This

By Joanna Fuchs

Lord, our troubles
Are so great,
We don't know what to do;
The price for our
Iniquity
Is finally coming due.

The world is crumbling
All about;
No safe place can be found.
Right is wrong,
Wrong is right;
The change is quite profound.

Lord, we need
Your guiding light
To lead us out of here;
We'll focus on
Your Word, and prayer,
To take away our fear.

Temptations of
This dying world
We'll rule out and let go;
Give our burdens
All to you,
Shed all worldly woe.

That's how we'll
Get through this, Lord,
Fixed on heaven above,
Assured of your
protection, help,
And everlasting love.



Faith Family Church News:

Discussed Rustic Lore: We are going to pray about the community and event and host a parish wide/community wide church service in the Park on Sunday with a pot luck to follow.

Garage sale: Wait until spring

October horsing around days: Pray about the event, community and participate/help out as we are able however not host anything ourselves at this time.

Church picnic: September 7th at the park if weather permits. We will have a pot luck lunch and play Bingo as a community building event to foster relationships within our parish. Those that want to can go to the parade after or play a game of volleyball at the park if weather permits.

Building updates: Leak has been fixed, bathrooms need to be cleaned.

Update on funday school: Funday school has been helping with the Homeless Mats at the Glenwood City UMC. Invited others to join tomorrow.

Community service opportunity: Do we want to collect bags and work on the homeless mats? Do we want to collect pill bottles or is there another community service project we can support?

Stewardship: Discussed Stewardship campaign and encouraged Pastor to potentially discuss stewardship during the picnic and celebrate together afterwards about all of the amazing things our churches do. We discussed the importance of talking about stewardship coming from this is what it takes to run the church, these are the amazing things we are doing as a church and if you want to pledge to support the church, this is how you can do it.

Discussed having a spaghetti supper however did not set a date.

Next meeting in October.

Fun Day School Kids:

This past month our kids have been helping out with making Homeless Mats. This has been a joint project with numerous churches in the Northern District. The loom comes from Elk Mound and the Glenwood City UMC has invited others in the community to help make the mats so we have joined them numerous Wednesdays in August. This has been an educational experience where we have learned

about weaving a mat out of walmart bags and our homeless community.



Noisy Can–Autism Awareness

Send Offering to:

Terri Wilson: 3127 200th Ave
Glenwood City, WI 54013

Community Events:

Rustic Lore Days

Horsing Around Days is in October

CHECK US OUT ON FACEBOOK:

Faith Family Church | Facebook





THE WILLOW RIVER PARISH
CLEAR LAKE, DEER PARK, FAITH FAMILY
420 4TH AVENUE – PO BOX 269
CLEAR LAKE, WI. 54005-0269

Address Service Requested

The Willow River Parish United Methodist Churches

Parish Office Phone: 715-263-2700

E-Mail: willowriverparish@gmail.com

Website: www.willowriverparish.org

Willow River Facebook Page

<https://www.facebook.com/Willow-River-Parish-103076225619623/>

Hakki Min, Pastor

Office Hours: Tues-Friday 9-11 am

Anitra Kaczmariski, Parish Secretary

Email: wrpsecretary@gmail.com

Amanda Millermon, Parish Treasurer

Email: WRParishconnect@gmail.com

Sunday Worship

8:30 a.m. –Clear Lake

9:45 a.m. – Faith Family (also Zoom)

11:00 a.m. – Deer Park

Church School @ Faith Family & Clear Lake

“Fun Day” School– Select Wednesdays @ Faith Family

Bible in a Binder Sundays @ Clear Lake