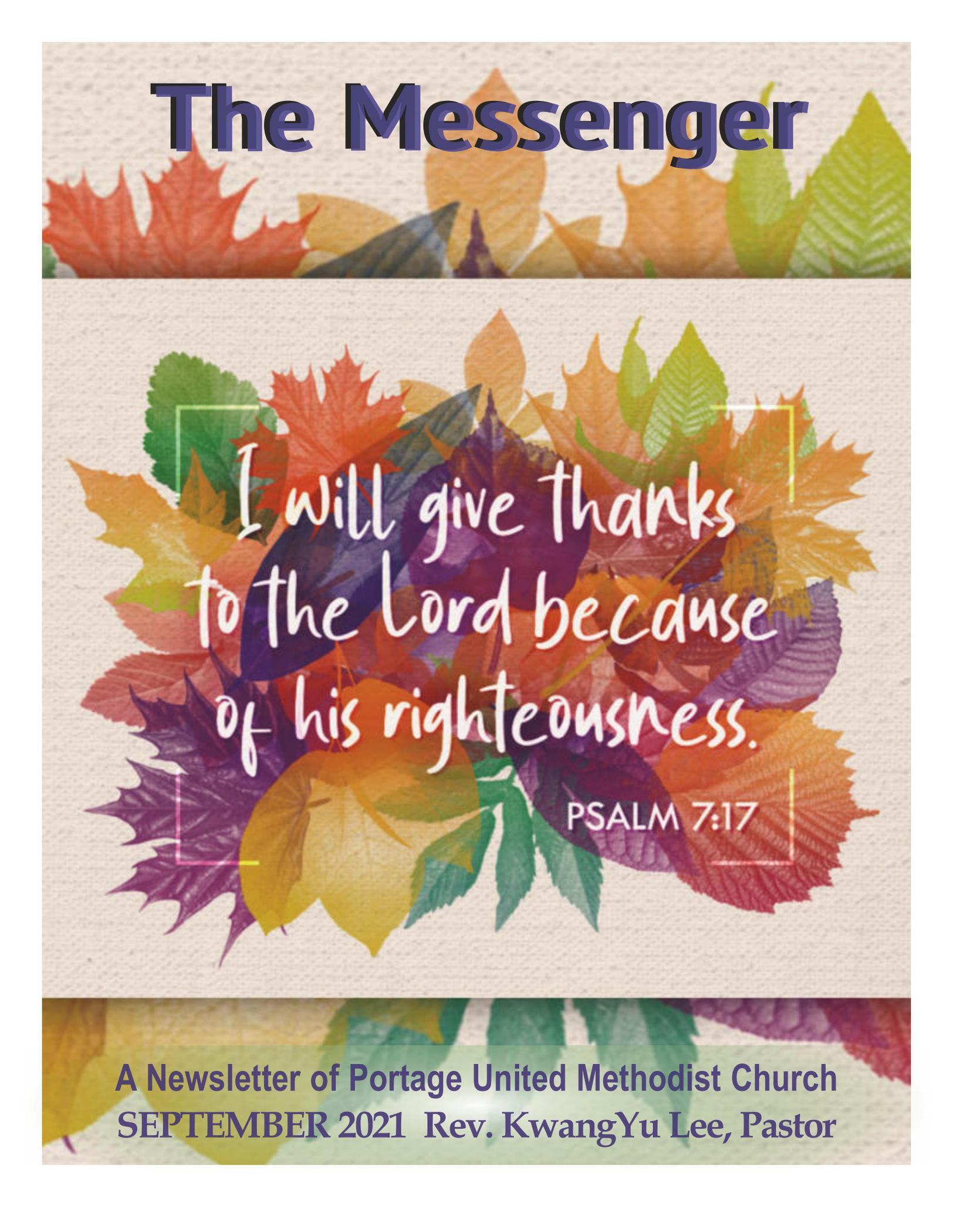


The Messenger



I will give thanks
to the Lord because
of his righteousness.

PSALM 7:17

A Newsletter of Portage United Methodist Church
SEPTEMBER 2021 Rev. KwangYu Lee, Pastor

FUN TIMES AT Rocky Railway Vacation Bible School





Peace, coming from God, be with you!

My July in Portage, WI, was tough in various ways. At the same time, it was a good-enough exercise for my body and soul. To satisfy your curiosity about how it was oddly so, I am going to explain.

First, my July in Portage was tough because it forced me to humbly accept the fact that I am an urbanite to the bone. I was born in a port city of S. Korea, Busan. Located far southeast of the peninsula, it is S. Korea's second-most populous city after Seoul. If you know something about the Korean War (1950-53), I believe that you remember Pusan, once the last bastion of the Allied Force against N. Korea backed by the People's Republic of China right before General MacArthur adamantly carried out Operation Chromite, also known as the Incheon Landing Operation. In 2000, the city name Pusan was changed to Busan. At the age of 19, I went to Seoul to study at Korean Methodist University. 8 years later, I came to the US and settled down in Madison, NJ. 14 years later, I came to Portage, WI.

From time to time in the past, I told my wife, "If possible, I would like to live in a rural area." Portage taught me that it was nothing more than my daydreaming. That realization began from our two boys' abnormal behavior. They have a couple of gaming consoles. We had a strong family rule about how to use their gaming consoles. During the semester, they can play with them for 2 hours only on Sat. and Sun. During the break, they can play for 2 hours every day. As soon as we moved to Portage, they made a request: "Mommy and Daddy, we have nothing to do here. No friends. So, can we play video games?" Thinking that we were in the same boat, my wife and I gave permission to them, without knowing where it could lead us. While we were busy trying to figure out how to settle down in a new place, their silence, caused by their being absorbed into the 'unreal' world, seemed OK at first glance. However, the more time they spent playing video games, the more complaints they shared with us about their new place to live.

When we bring something to God in prayer, it means that usually our own ways to handle it proved unfruitful. One morning I brought the matter to God in the sanctuary. I asked God, 'I decided to come here for their life in the US. If my decision to live here harms

them, what can I do now?' Unfortunately, no response from God. Hopelessly, nothing. Really nothing.

Second, my July in Portage was a good-enough exercise for my body and soul. While I was packing things in NJ in late June, Shar sent an email, asking if I can lead a memorial service for a family on July 10, 2021. I said yes. After leading that small family memorial service, I thought to myself, 'I made a right decision.' On Aug. 4, there was another memorial service. On Aug. 8, there was another one. On Aug. 28, there will be another one. Elisabeth Kübler-Ross, a pioneer of near-death studies and Hospice Movement, said: Living is dying. So, dying is living. To prepare four memorial services, I talked with family members of the deceased. They genuinely shared their recollections about their beloved ones. What captivated my attention was that their recollections revolved around their struggles for how to live without their father, husband, wife, and mother. What they were endeavoring to do internally can be boiled down to one thing: to draw a clear line between where they are living and where their beloved ones went, leaving them behind.

Third and last, to help my two boys create a meaningful, purpose-driven life in Portage, I disconnected a Wi-Fi router at the parsonage – not permanently, but only temporarily. Their complaints went to extreme, immediately. However, they began to talk about their mixed feelings – frustration, anger, rage, and fear – to my wife and me because they no longer hid themselves in their own fantasy. The more they talked about what was going on inside them, the more time we could spend together. The more time we spent together physically, the more interactions take place among us. In the process of an urbanite family's adaptation to Portage, video gaming did not work at all. Wi-Fi did not either. The only thing that worked was rebuilding relationship in the old-fashioned way – attentive listening, honest talking, and sharing pains, dreams, and hopes.

Now I know why God did not respond to me. I pretended to be OK, blaming my two boys for my uneasiness, worry, and anxiety. God answered me by silence, which deepened my pretension to a breaking point where I was able to see myself reflected on them, only playing video games.

Pastor KwangYu



Articles for the
October newsletter
are due September 15



Church Office Closed
September 6 for Labor Day

You Can Donate

Directly from Your Smartphone!

It's simple and easy! Just text the amount you want to donate, including the dollar sign (ex. \$20) to 844-556-1238 and click on the link they send you. Follow the prompts to complete your donation.

Red Cross Blood Drives

Sponsored by MATC
Tuesday, Sept 21, from 9:00am - 2:00pm

Red Cross Blood Drive
Thursday, Sept 23, from 11:30am - 5:30pm

Best to make appointments by calling
1-800-RED-CROSS

Volunteer Still Needed for Roadside Message Sign

We are still looking for a volunteer to take over putting the messages on our outdoor sign.

As we've said, Carrie Scherbert has been doing this for the past 12 years, but please don't think you have to do it for the next 12 years (unless you really want to, of course!)

It's just a matter of changing the letters on the sign in the church yard once every week or two, depending on what's going on. She would be happy to spend some time with the next volunteer, showing them the ropes and sharing ideas.

Please call or email the church if you might be willing to fill this need.



CUB SCOUTS

Join Us!

The calendar has already been planned for our new scout year beginning with the new school year in September. We are excited to continue our Cub program!

Cub Scouts is open to boys and girls in Kindergarten through 5th grade, or ages 6 through 10.

Join us for an informational meeting on September 16th at 6 pm at the Portage Public Library for more information or to sign up.

For questions, contact Judy Jesberger at (608) 347-9844, or jjesberger@portagescouts.com. I'm the new face as Committee Chair for Pack 70.

Thank You Notes

Many thanks to the faithful group of Newsletter volunteers, who prepare the NL for mailing. Thanks to the following for helping in June and July: Rosemary McTier, Darlene Craig, Karan Barreau, Shirley Harty and Judy Banks.

Many Thanks to Our Newsletter Sponsors

We thank all the businesses who support our monthly newsletter by advertising on the last page. Please check out the ads, and whenever possible, patronize their businesses.



Children's Ministries



BACK TO SCHOOL

September means back to school and that also means back to Sunday School!

Beginning September 12th we will be back to our Simply Loved Sunday School Curriculum in person! Sunday School will be held on the 2nd, 3rd, 4th (and the occasional 5th!) Sunday of the month at the same time as the second service.

I'm looking for a few volunteers that would be willing to teach the lesson once per month so that I can catch the sermon from time to time. Please message me and we can work something out.

On the first Sunday of each month there will be a "Family Service" during the second service time. (For September, this will occur on the second Sunday because of the holiday weekend preceding it.)

VBS Wrap-up: Vacation Bible School this year was a great success. It looked different than other years, but the kids had fun and so did the teens and adults! Many of the activities were conducted outside and when we needed to be indoors we all wore masks. There were a total of 30 registered children from all over Portage, 8 of them claiming Portage UMC as their church home. The kids raised money throughout the week for River Haven Homeless Shelter and will be donating a check for \$126.79.

Bible Bash will take place during the September 12th 9:30am service. Any 3rd grade student and/or any older student who didn't receive a Bible over the last couple of years will receive a Bible. Please contact Amanda or the church office to add your child's name to the list.

Each child will receive a Bible and a few tools to use their Bible easier.

After the presentation the students will be invited to a celebration in Fellowship Hall to play games and learn about their new Bibles.



Thought for the day:
Religion is bread for daily use, not cake for special occasions.

Why Youth Group??

A message from Niki Briggs, Youth Coordinator

Last Sunday I had the opportunity to be back at worship. It felt so good to hear my pew neighbors singing hymns next to me. To "feel" the smiles behind the masks of the people in our church family. To worship Jesus next to other believers. As we slowly make our way back to our pre-Covid state, some people may wonder: "Why is youth group important?"

As I pause to answer this question thoughtfully, I came across a blog that articulated it well. Here are excerpts from an article by Greg Stier, June 2021, in combination with David's and my own experiences:

Why is youth group important?

Dear Parents of Teenagers,

Thanks for all you do to invest in the life of your teenager(s). You probably feel like an Uber driver, a coach, a tutor, a guidance counselor, and, sometimes, a jockey (pushing them to cross the finish line)...all wrapped up in one! :)

That's why, with all the crazy busyness of parenting a teen, it's easy to let youth group attendance slide off the grid. It's tempting to think, "My kid's just too busy for a night of hanging out with other teenagers, playing some goofy games and hearing another Bible lesson." Why is youth group important to my kids' faith?

As parents of 2 teenagers within the last 5 years (who had tons of homework, played year round sports, and held jobs in WI Dells, we were constantly under pressure to measure every event through the lens of "what matters most". We decided that youth group and church must be a priority. Even though we knew that we were the primary spiritual influence of our 2 kids, we also believed that youth ministry plays an important role in spiritual development.

What did that look like? It meant going to our child's coaches and saying, "Our son/daughter has to be done with practice at _____. We want them at church." Or, "Sorry, we can't be at practice or a game on Sunday morning. We have church." We will never regret that decision, but it wasn't "smooth sailing." Jaden and Taya were always nervous about us having that conversation with their coaches. Would their coaches penalize them? Would the other kids give them a hard time? But the truth is, their coaches and their peers understood. The earth did not cave in.

Fast forward a few years. Jaden is done with college. He is now 24, and getting married soon. I can't control his choices anymore, but I am proud to say that he goes to church... on his own! Taya is in her last year at UW. She also attends the Prez House (short for Presbetyrian) on campus. It's not that we think our kids are "perfect". We are just thankful that they continue to worship. That there is another generation of believers.

What do they not do anymore now that they are "out of the house?" Jaden does not run cross country, track or go curling. Taya does not swim for miles, go curling, or run track. While they might run for exercise, neither has made it a career, or even a lifestyle hobby. With this as "food for thought" from a parent one season ahead, here are a few powerful reasons you should encourage (make?) your teens attend youth group:

1. Teenagers need models and mentors.

"O God, You have taught me from my youth, And I still declare Your wondrous deeds. And even when I am old and gray, O God, do not forsake me, Until I declare Your strength to this generation, Your power to all who are to come." Psalm 71:17-18

Parents are called to be the primary spiritual mentor of their own child, but he/she also needs other godly adults. It's important for young people to know that Christianity is more than just their mom's and dad's belief system. They need to have other models and mentors who reinforce this too.

2. Teenagers need community.

"And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching." Hebrews 10:24-25

In a time of seeing bullying, gossip, and slander on the news and in social media, young people need other young people who can lift them up, encourage them, and challenge them in all the right ways. Youth group is a place where teenagers can discover their spiritual gifting and begin to use it to serve others. This will help them have a heart to serve others.

3. Teenagers need mission.

When Jesus challenged his disciples to "go and make disciples of all nations," he was tapping into the activist wiring of these young men. In the same way, teenagers need to be challenged with the mission of reaching out to others in whatever ways they are able.

4. Teenagers need theology.

"Then we will no longer be immature like children. We won't be tossed and blown about by every wind of new teaching. We will not be influenced when people try to trick us with lies so clever they sound like the truth. Instead, we will speak the truth in love, growing in every way more and more like Christ, who is the head of his body, the church." Ephesians 4:14-15

Youth group is a place where teenagers can wrestle through the theology they have learned. This should result in your teenagers knowing and owning their faith on a deeper level. Youth groups should be a place where teenagers can ask tough questions and even share doubts and struggles with their beliefs without fear of rebuke.

5. Teenagers need a safe place to share.

"Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed." James 5:16

Often teenagers struggle with sin and temptation, but have nowhere to go with it. Youth group creates a safe space for teenagers to talk honestly about their struggles. It doesn't mean they should confess every sin to everyone. But it does mean they should have a handful of others who know their struggles and can pray for and encourage them.

So as we begin the process of rebuilding some of our ministries, put on hiatus because of Covid, I would prayerfully ask you to consider--what do you want your children to value when sports, clubs and HS activities are no longer part of their daily routine?



SEPTEMBER 2021- WORSHIP WANDERINGS

FALL SERVICES

Fall services will continue at 8am and 9:30am on Sunday mornings. Weather permitting, there will be tea/coffee fellowship time following each of the services. Sunday School will run during the 9:30am service. At this time, there will be no planned nursery care, but parents and caregivers are welcome to use the nursery.

The first Sunday of the month will be a Family Worship Service at the 9:30am service. There will be no Sunday School on these Sundays, but will allow families time to worship and share in communion together. NOTE: The first Family Service will be SEPTEMBER 12 at 9:30am due to the holiday weekend prior. Third graders and others will be receiving their bibles this Sunday as well. Family Service dates to follow are October 3, November 7, and December 5.



We are working to move towards a live stream format for our online service. This means, you can watch the 8:00am service LIVE at home via our Youtube Channel.

Go to Youtube

Go to Portage UMC channel

You should see the service LIVE at 8am. You can also view it later as you wish.

If you don't see the service on a Sunday, it is probably due to the fact that no one was available to live stream it. We apologize if this happens. We are looking for volunteers to help. It is pretty easy, but does require a small amount of computer knowledge. If this is something that your gifts might fit, please let me know. A special thank you to Chris Dreyer who has already volunteered and helped in August live stream the service.



I want to thank all of those who have volunteered to help with ushering, being a liturgist, and/or sharing in special music. Thank you to Jen Powers, Ashlyn Kohler, Chris Hurd, Joel Engelland, Jim Kuhl, Sheril Lannoye, Tygh Stewart, Julie and Marc Briggs, Sara Brockley, Dianne and Jim Lawton, Phil and Barb Berg, Bill Johnson, Barb Jensen, and Rich Jacobson. If I missed anyone, our apologies. Your time and talents are greatly appreciated by all.

We are still looking for more people to volunteer. Many hands make light work. Please call/text or email Katie Zirbes at kzirbes3@gmail.com or 608-417-0247.

September Calendar of Events

Sunday Worship is in the sanctuary at 8 am & 9:30 am. We are still working at providing a consistant Live Streaming of the 8 am service, and then having it available on YouTube at Portage UMC for later viewing. Watch for updates on this.

September 5, 12, 19, 26 - Sundays

8:00 & 9:30 am Service in the sanctuary
 8:00 am Live Stream of service
 Recording on YouTube
 9:30 am: Radio Service (AM 1350, WPDR)

September 21, Tuesday

9:00am-2:00pm: MATC Blood Drive

September 22, Wednesday

2-5 pm: Pop-up Pantry Drive-thru

September 23, Thursday

11:30am-5:30pm: Red Cross Blood Drive

Portage

Pop-uP

Drive-thru

Pantry

Fresh Produce & Perishables

2:00 - 5:00

Every 4th Wednesday

held at

1804 New Pinery Rd., Portage

Portage United Methodist Church



Something to smile about.....

Get the Message?

Everybody knew the roof was leaking, but the church kept putting off replacement. Finally some areas of the ceiling in the sanctuary began to sag. They called a congregational meeting. A very wealthy member rose and pledged \$300 toward fixing the roof. Just then a small piece of the ceiling fell and hit him on the head. Somebody in the back of the church said, "Hit him again, Lord!"



SEPTEMBER Birthdays		
1 Katie Zirbes	12 Jessie Balsiger	24 Pam Lawton
3 Taya Briggs	Abbey Francis	Misty McMorro
Chris Dreyer	Abbagail Harkner	25 Jeanny Ray
Trish Petersen	14 Eric Luedeman	26 Marc Briggs
4 Eric Myhre	Maggie Zirbes	Brandon Losacker
5 Tom McTier	15 Mike Cullen	27 Angie Banks
Brian Telindert	17 Mike Powers	28 Stacy Banks
8 Louise Luedeman	19 Chris Banks	Cory Ebert
Carter Petersen	20 Abby Weidling	29 Sharon Behnke
9 Annika Hentz	21 Ruth Budde	30 Karen Boyd
	22 Roger Mateske	
	23 Mark Paske	

MEMORIAL GIFTS

WITH SYMPATHY

We extend our love to
the families of

Bob O'Halloran,
David Rogers
&
Alice Richardson

at the recent loss
of their loved ones

Trustees Fund

In memory of Rick Barreau.

Music Fund

In memory of Dave Rogers by Royden/Jean Atkinson.

Undesignated Fund

In memory of Alice Richardson by Gary/Barb O'Hearn and Kay Jenkins.

In memory of Nancy Boyd by "The Magnificent 7(minus 1).
In memory of Rick Barreau by Jim/Barb Jensen, Margaret Cryer, Herb Jones and Gary/Barb O'Hearn.

In memory of Dave Rogers by Dennis/Liz Mahy, Ann McNeary and Connie Shirkey.

The following is our list of the churches in the South West District we will pray for in September.

Please take a moment to lift each church below in prayer during their week. We are all in need. Send them a simple card letting them know you are praying for their health and welfare amidst these challenging times.

North Freedom UMC: Clergy, Carol Quinn and the 55 members. North Freedom is part of North Freedom, Denzer charge located at 301 E Walnut St, North Freedom, WI 53951; August 29, 2021 – September 4, 2021.

North Windsor UMC: Clergy, Penny Dahl and the 48 members located at 7523 S Meixner Rd, DeForest, WI 53532; September 5, 2021 – September 11, 2021.

Oakley: Union UMC: Clergy, Kelly Jahn and the 33 members. Oakley: Union is part of Juda: Zion, Oakley: Union charge. Oakley: Union is located at W2388 Gerber Rd, Juda, WI 53550; September 12, 2021 – September 18, 2021.

Oregon: People UMC: Clergy, Dan Dick and the 431 members located at 103 N Alpine Pkwy, Oregon, WI 53575; September 19, 2021 – September 25, 2021.

Pardeeville UMC: Clergy, Sergio Tristan and the 191 members located at 101 Wisconsin St, Pardeeville, WI 53954; September 26, 2021 – October 2, 2021.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY SHEET

July 30, 2021

GENERAL FUND

Income: 12,554.93

Expense: -20,196.17

(7,641.25)

DEDICATED FUNDS

Income 274.97

Expense 617.79

FUND BALANCES

General Fund	(6,144.23)
Dedicated Fund	58,976.23
*Checking Account Balance (total of Gen. and Ded. Fund)	52,832.20
Memorial Checking	11,032.18
Jenkins Fund	53,179.91
Anderson Fund	25,098.03
Wiedenhaupt Fund	6,415.81
Endowment Fund	20,366.60
Hamele Fund	13,056.66
TOTAL *(checking balance not in total)	181,981.39

Rich Jacobson, Church Treasurer

Little Free Food Pantry

We are so thankful to people for donating items for the Little Free Food Pantry outside our church, and yes, there is a “but” coming...

BUT, please stop giving items that are past their use by/sell by dates.

We find it necessary to dispose of so many of the items donated because they are not within their usable dates. We are unable to share them with the community because of that.

Big THANK YOU to the person who donated several boxes of personal care products!
Very helpful!



Need: Shelf stable (packages or canned) meals, like beef stew, chicken and dumplings, or soups.

Support our ADVERTISERS

Atkinson Real Estate Inc.
608-742-2848 
 When Buying or Selling Your Home Call!
Jim Atkinson, Broker/Owner
 jim@atkinsonrealtor.com
 www.atkinsonrealtor.com



BHA
 Ben H. Anderson Mfg.
 Specializing in
 Stainless Steel
 Manufacturing
608-846-5474
 www.benhanderson.com

Community Bank of Portage
 A Branch of Bank of Wisconsin Dells
608-745-4300
 2930 New Pinery Rd, Portage
 dellsbank.bank 



CHARLES MANTEY
ROBERT MENDRALA
Pflanz Mantey Mendrala
 Funeral Homes
 Locally Owned & Operated Since 1853
 Portage & Poynette Wisconsin
WWW.PMMFH.COM
PORTAGE 742-2126
POYNETTE 635-2763



Heritage House OF PORTAGE
 Assisted Living - Caregivers available 24-hours a day
 TOURS AVAILABLE BY APPOINTMENT
608.448.6181
 Call today and ask about a more in gift!



Aspirus Divine Savior Hospital and Clinics is proud to be a part of the Aspirus family.
 Find a healthcare provider: call 608.742.4131 • visit aspirus.org
 Watson Health
15 TOP HEALTH SYSTEMS 2020

GROTHMAN & ASSOCIATES, S.C.
 LAND SURVEYORS
 JAMES R. GROTHMAN * PLS
 SCOTT P. HEWITT * PLS
 625 E. Slifer St. Portage, WI 53901
 Phone 608/742-7788 Fax 608/742-0434



BREMNER GRANITE CO. LLC
 For All Your Memorial Needs
Mark Bublitz - Owner
 N6828 Hwy 51-16 S • PO Box 78
608-742-3939

SUPPORT OUR ADVERTISERS! 

ASPIRUS



Pizza Ranch
 2905 New Pinery Rd, Portage | 608-566-1750



WIESER CONCRETE Innovation, Quality and Service Since 1965
800-362-7220
 www.wieserconcrete.com
 2815 Riley Rd. • Portage, WI 53901

Kelly J Krueger
 Independent Insurance Agent
 (608) 697-8282 Direct
 311 E. Wisconsin St. Ste. 108 • Portage WI 53901
 kkrueger@retirementspecc.com
 Helping you make sense of your insurance choices
 *Supplements *Dental *Life *Marketplace Options *Annuities



AVAILABLE FOR A LIMITED TIME!
ADVERTISE HERE NOW!
 Contact **Marcia Boswell** to place an ad today!
 mboswell@4LPi.com or **(206) 550-5220 x2246**

Joe's Auto & Truck Service, LLC
 Lifetime Customer Care
(608) 742-2776
 24 Hour Towing
 1515 New Pinery Rd • Portage

Thrive Locally



WE'RE HIRING
AD SALES EXECUTIVES
BE YOURSELF. BRING YOUR PASSION. WORK WITH PURPOSE.

- Work-Life Balance
- Full-Time with Benefits
- Serve Your Community
- Paid Training
- Some Travel


 Contact us at: careers@4lpi.com | www.4lpi.com/careers

The Messenger is published monthly by
Portage United Methodist Church
1804 New Pinery Road, Portage WI 53901
Ph: 608-742-2107

VOLUME 21 ISSUE 9

Staff:

Rev. KwangYu Lee, Pastor
Shar Kuhl, Office Administrator
Rich Jacobson, Church Treasurer
Amanda Thiele, Children's Coordinator
Niki Briggs, Youth Coordinator
Katie Zirbes, Worship Coordinator
Chris Hurd, Church Musician
Scott Maass, Custodian

E-Mail:

General Office: office.portageumc@gmail.com
Pastor's Office: pastor.portageumc@gmail.com
Youth Director: nikipumcyouth@gmail.com

Facebook: Portage United Methodist Church

YouTube: Portage UMC

Website: www.portageumc.com



ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

PORTAGE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
1804 New Pinery Road
Portage, WI 53901

NON-PROFIT ORG
US POST PAID
PORTAGE, WI
PERMIT NO. 91