



FOCUS

September 2025

Daleheightschurch.org

A Blessing of the Backpacks

Dale Heights Staff

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Dr. Alissa Freeman

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Acting Moderator:
Kristin Frederich

Clerk:
Gale Oakes

Verena Straubhaar (2025)
Gerry Klump (2025)
Edi Chan (2026)
Gale Oakes (2026)
Barb Fleishman (2027)
Wendy Weber (2027)

God of love, of wisdom and of grace,

Today we honor and celebrate our students, your children, as they begin another season of learning.

God bless your children and their backpacks. Bless all the teachers, staff and community members who serve those who wear these backpacks. Empower the adults in their lives to make decisions that are truly in their best interest. May each child flourish and participate in the flourishing of all creation.

God bless your children and their backpacks. In a world so often plagued by violence, hatred and fear, may those who carry these backpacks know peace, mercy and friendship. May your children feel safe enough to learn, to take healthy risks that lead to growth, and to extend compassion to others.

God bless your children and their backpacks. Be with those who use these knapsacks to carry home food to hungry families. Be with those who fear the weekend, as it means less security.

God bless your children and their backpacks. We pray for the families who surround, sustain and send your children into the world. Bless the sacrifices these families have made to stock these backpacks. Bless the communities that support these families in times of joy and hardship.

God bless your children and their backpacks. Grant to each rest at the end of the day and the end of the week. Free your children of anxiety and unhealthy stress; lead them to trust that they are beloved no matter their accomplishments or failings. May they know that they are enough, just as they are.

With gratitude at the wonder of being human, of growing, of learning, of making friends, we give thanks to our creator for all God's children and all they carry. AMEN.

Adapted from an essay by Rev. Jess Rigel in the Presbyterian Outlook

September



Breakfast

The Dale Heights monthly breakfast will be held on:

**Saturday
September 13, 2025.**

Serving will begin at 8:30 am.

The suggested donation is \$5.

RSVP to Roy L. if you have not already done so.



Nowadays, Labor Day is more commonly associated with barbecues and beach days, but this federal holiday was created to celebrate the hard-won rights of American workers. Before early labor laws came into play in the 20th century, the average U.S. worker's schedule spanned 12 hours a day, 7 days a week, with low wages and few protections.

The culmination of years of strikes and protests by American workers to secure better job conditions, Labor Day was signed into law on June 28, 1894, by President Grover Cleveland.

September Birthdays

- 4 Bill Sebert
- 9 Alicia Shumate
- 17 Carey Fleischmann
- 18 Jack Rose
- 20 Sandy Weigt
- 25 Roy Lembcke
- 28 Mary Becker
- 30 Elma Metzloff

September Anniversaries

- 24 Jamie & Matt Engebregtsen

Church Office Hours:

9:30-1:30
Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday

**Note: The office will be closed
September 16-18 for vacation**



*The deadline for article submissions for the
October issue of the FOCUS is September 25, 2025.*

Outreach Committee

News and Events

A big **THANK YOU** for your generous support for the annual WayForward Backpack and Back to School Drive. Let's literally imagine and pray for the children and families receiving the gifts! We are in this together.



Church Women United Meeting at Dale Heights



Topic: Housing Stability

Dale Heights will host Church Women United (and **yes, men are also invited**) representing different faiths and congregations working together to do God's work in our world. **Please invite others to learn of the housing issue and how it relates to food security with this informative presentation offered by WayForward.**

Friday, September 5

- **9:30 a.m.** Coffee and Fellowship / **10:00 a.m.** Presentation
- Come meet other people of faith in our community and bring a friend
- **Please consider offering to be a hostess or host if you are able to help**
- All are welcome to attend
- Please contact Wendy if you have questions or are willing to help.

Forum Program

Building Housing Stability: Challenges, Insights and Solutions

The lack of affordable housing in Dane County is a pressing issue in our community. Madison Mayor Satya Rhodes-Conway called a lack of housing the "defining problem of our region right now." And Madison Alder Tag Evers wrote, "We need to see our city's crisis as a local emergency." Join us to learn more about how the housing crisis impacts people in our community and how WayForward Resources is working to be part of the solution. The presentation will include an overview by WayForward staff and time for Q&A.

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Outreach Committee



Presenters:



Jill Bradshaw is a Community Engagement Manager at WayForward Resources. As a member of the Development Team, she engages with area faith-based organizations and other community organizations to connect them with the work and mission of WayForward. She also runs the Back-to-School program and coordinates the Holiday Baking Baskets program



Taylor Rozman is the Housing Stability Director at WayForward Resources. She and her team provide case management and financial assistance to people experiencing barriers to finding or maintaining stable housing in Middleton, Cross Plains, and parts of west Madison.

Grandparents Day is Sunday, September 7!



Grandparents bring a lot of joy and wisdom to our lives. Let's take a moment to reflect on our family stories and heirlooms as we celebrate the emotional connections we maintain with our past.

Grandpa's Piano Song lyrics by Adam Brand

Grandpa had a piano, it was built in 1904.
He brought it down from Sydney town before
the First World War.
He'd sit down and crack his knuckles and put
his glasses on his head.
When he'd start to play, the cat would run and
hide behind the bed.

Well, his right foot stomped the pedals and his
left foot stomped the floor.
His wrinkled hands would skip the keys that
wouldn't play no more.
He'd play Onward Christian Soldiers and the
window panes would shake,
When the man of 87 played his old 88.

The piano sat in a corner on a sagging
hardwood floor.
On top was a frame I made for him, with a
picture of the Lord.
A faded Baptist Hymnal took its place above
the keys;
We'd take turns sitting by him, he'd nod to
turn the page.

Well, the old piano's silent now, it don't ring
with joy no more,
Except sometimes when the cat jumps down,
when there's someone at the door.
I can see him up in Heaven, with a smile upon
his face,
When God and all the angels, let him lead
Amazing Grace.

Grandma's Apron Essay by Melanie Furlong

The principal use of Grandma's apron was to protect the dress underneath, but along with that, it served as a potholder for removing hot pans from the oven. It was wonderful for drying children's tears, and on occasion was even used for cleaning out dirty ears.

From the chicken coop, the apron was used for carrying eggs, fussy chicks, and sometimes half-hatched eggs to be finished in the warming oven.

When company came, those aprons were ideal hiding places for shy kids. And when the weather was cold, grandma wrapped it around her arms. Those big old aprons wiped many a perspiring brow, bent over the hot wood stove.

Chips and kindling wood were brought into the kitchen in that apron. From the garden, it carried all sorts of vegetables. After the peas had been shelled, it carried out the hulls. In the fall, the apron was used to bring in apples that had fallen from the trees.

When dinner was ready, Grandma walked out onto the porch, waved her apron, and the men knew it was time to come in from the fields to dinner. It will be a long time before someone invents something that will replace that "old-time apron" that served so many purposes.



All women of your churches are cordially invited to the

**JOHN KNOX PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN
FALL WORKSHOP**

Saturday, September 20, 2025

at First Presbyterian Church, W. Florence Street, Cambria, WI

♥ *For the Love of Orphans* ♥

*“Religion that God accepts as pure and faultless is this:
to look after orphans and widows in their distress.” ~ James 1:27*

Our speaker will be Megan Elmore, founder and director of “For the Love of Orphans,” supporting the Mansa Fountain of Blessings Orphan Care Center in Mansa, Zambia, Africa.

www.fortheloveoforphans.org

Cash donations will be gratefully accepted. Other needs include decorative pencils, lightweight socks, boxer shorts for boys and underwear for girls (kids sizes M-XL and adult size S).

At this meeting we will also dedicate the Thank Offering, and we will hear suggestions for future JKPW gatherings different start time, having an overnight option, moving to one per year instead of two, etc. Please come prepared to share your thoughts and opinions.

The Cambria church has a wheelchair accessible entrance, a wheelchair accessible parking lot, and a wheelchair accessible restroom. Lunch cost is \$8.

To assist them with their planning, **please RSVP by Friday, September 12** by calling or texting 563-419-7371 or email ripleyjb56@gmail.com. (Indicate if you have any dietary restrictions.)

Thanks, and we look forward to seeing you!



What is SUN day?

SUN Day, September 21, is a DAY OF ACTION
to celebrate the power of clean energy.

**People everywhere will showcase solar installations, electric homes,
and vehicles running on clean power.**

One of the featured events in Madison will be a **Free Concert and Celebration of the Power of the Sun** at Westmoreland Park from 1:00 – 5:00 PM.

Click [here](#) to register.

But ... there will be events throughout the month of September!

On *Sunday, September 7*, another event is a **tour of a solar and all-electric 90-year-old home here in west Madison**. Read about the home and register for the tour by clicking [this link](#).

You may also be interested in this **walking tour** on *Thursday, September 18* from 5-6:30 p.m. Please register in advance. [Click here](#).

With thousands of events on the fall Equinox, SUN Day can regenerate enthusiasm about our clean energy revolution: we **have** the technology and the solutions, but we **need** to build political will to scale-up and accelerate in the U.S. what's already happening around the world.

WHO IS ORGANIZING SUN Day?

A coalition of grassroots organizations, clean energy experts, solar industry and worker organizations, schools, affordable housing, farmers, and creative partners. For more information, go to [SunDay.earth](#).

Third Act Wisconsin is our leading organization. Click on the link to learn more about this great organization connecting older adults:

<https://thirdact.org/>

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WHY SEPTEMBER 21st?

It's the solar equinox - one of two days when the whole world gets an equal amount of sunlight, showing how the sun unites us.

September 21st is also right before the UN General Assembly's annual meeting, so we can send a message to US and world leaders on the urgent need to accelerate and scale-up clean energy.

[Click here for more information about Sun Day.](#)



LANDSCAPING HABITS TO SUPPORT WILDLIFE & WATERWAYS



SKIP THE RAKE. LEAVE THE LEAVES.

MAKE YOUR YARD AND GARDENS HEALTHIER WITH FALL LEAVES.

- MOW THEM SEVERAL TIMES AND LEAVE THEM ON THE LAWN AS MULCH.
- ADD THEM TO YOUR COMPOST PILE AS LAYERS TO COVER FOOD WASTE.
- SPREAD A THICK LAYER AROUND TREES AND FLOWER BEDS.

Following are some tips for supporting wildlife and our beautiful lakes, rivers, streams and wetlands:

Skip the Rake

Leaving the leaves is a best practice for invertebrates and keeps nutrients out of our waterways. Nitrogen feeds lake weeds and algae, which can bloom and make the water unsafe – even deadly. Leaves left whole (as mulch, e.g.)

house and feed wildlife. Mulch mowing or keeping a thin layer of leaves chopped up by your lawnmower, feeds your lawn and builds your soil as it mulches over winter – and saves time, effort and expense. Whole leaf mulch or a leaf pile, space permitting, is even more beneficial, especially for eggs, caterpillars and cocoons. Learn more here: xerces.org/blog/leave-the-leaves .

Relax Yard Cleanup

It's beneficial to a range of wildlife to leave yard waste. For a "nature made" bird feeder, leave native plants up as a food source for birds and wildlife over winter. If you do trim your plants and flowers, leaving "straws" or stalks of varying heights and calibers can house native bees and their eggs. If you leave things a bit messier in fall/winter, postpone spring clean-up until after the pollinators emerge after hibernation. You can plan your spring cleanup without killing all the invertebrates you protected over winter and then "chop and drop," so the plant/stem pieces settle in and decompose: xerces.org/blog/dont-spring-into-garden-cleanup-too-soon .

De-lawn

De-lawning, a growing trend in native landscaping from the UK, replaces turf grass with alternatives like sedges or no-mow lawn mixes (e.g., Prairie Nursery's blend). Avoid invasive groundcovers like pachysandra, vinca, or ajuga. For shade, try native wild ginger; for sun or part shade, wild strawberry is a great option.

Start small and expand gradually. **For inspiration, visit Olbrich's Meadow Garden**—featuring drought-tolerant fescue, wildflowers, and bulbs—mowed just twice a year.

Leave a Brush Pile

Leaving brush and cut-off stems and branches provides habitat to a number of species from swallowtail butterflies to luna moths to stick insects. Other critters like chipmunks, voles, and squirrels, along with amphibians and reptiles such as salamanders and snakes, also reside in brush piles. Critically, old chipmunk, mice or rabbit nests provide nesting space for bumble bees, which are struggling here and worldwide. The American bumblebee population has plummeted by 90% in the last 25 years!

Plant Natives

Whether you want to support pollinators, endangered species (e.g., the rusty patched bumble bee or Karner blue butterflies), lightning bugs, birds or more, just plant native.

Avoid pesticides

Pesticides kill the insects, which are the foundation of our food web. Pollination is an essential ecological function upon which the human race and terrestrial ecosystems are based. According to the National Park Service, "One out of every three bites of food you eat exists because of the efforts of pollinators, including many fruits, vegetables, and seeds. Pollinators not only are necessary for our own food but support the food and habitat of animals."

Think Before You Fertilize

Chemical fertilizers don't stop at your yard. When it rains, nitrogen and phosphorus wash into waterways, overfeeding algae and aquatic plants. As these die off, they trigger algal blooms that block sunlight and deplete oxygen, creating "dead zones" where fish and other life can't survive. Decaying algae consumes even more oxygen and harms recreation like swimming and fishing—and can even impact drinking water. Warming temperatures make algal blooms more likely and increase greenhouse gases like CO₂ and methane.

From The Midvale Heights Green Team



TRANSFORM

YOUR FOOD SCRAPS INTO SOIL!

FREE drop off for all residents within Dane County!

The Dane County Department of Waste + Renewables, Purple Cow Organics, and your municipality are working to divert your food scraps from the landfill and recycle them into compost.

Over 30% of food in the US ends up in landfills, where it produces greenhouse gases that are bad for our environment. When food is composted instead, its nutrients can feed the soil and be used to grow healthy food.

FOOD SCRAP STOP
FROM KITCHEN TO COMPOST | DE LA COCINA AL COMPOST

<p>RESIDENTIAL ACCEPTED</p>	<p>FRUITS & VEGETABLES Fruits & vegetables—pits, peels, cobs and all</p> 
<p>COFFEE & TEA Grounds or loose tea without filters or bags</p>	
<p>EGGSHELLS Shells, but not the eggs</p>	
<p>BEANS & NUTS All beans, seeds, nuts, and shells</p>	

DANE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF WASTE + RENEWABLES

NOT ACCEPTED

<p>NO MEAT No meat, bones, seafood, or animal products</p>	
<p>NO DAIRY OR EGGS No cheese, cream, yogurt, or other dairy and egg products</p>	
<p>NO BREADS OR BAKED GOODS No breads, pastas, baked goods, or candies</p>	
<p>NO LIQUIDS No milk, coffee, juices, sauces, fats, oils, greases, or waxes</p>	
<p>NO PAPER* No paper, napkins, tissues, pizza boxes, parchment, wax paper, or cardboard (*paper bags for collecting food scraps are an allowed exception)</p>	
<p>NO INORGANICS OR HAZARDS No plastic, metal, or Styrofoam (inorganics), or glass, sharps, chemicals, animal waste, or litter (hazards)</p>	
<p>NO PACKAGING No produce stickers, twist ties, staples, rubber bands, food service products, or "compostable/biodegradable" items</p>	

SIGN UP TO UNLOCK:

For lock code access to the free drop-off, please register online at [**Resident Food Scrap Stop Registration**](#)

DALE HEIGHTS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

5501 University Ave.

Madison, Wisconsin 53705

SEPTEMBER CALENDAR

- 01 LABOR DAY
- 05 Church Women United 9a-12n
- 07 Worship – K. Owens - *Communion*
- 09 Property & Finance 7p
- 13 Church Breakfast 8:30a
- 14 Worship – K. Owens
- 16-18 Office **closed** for vacation
- 20 Westside Warblers 11a
- 21 Worship – M. Schmidt
- 28 Worship – M. Schmidt

Liturgists

- September 7: Carey Fleischmann
- September 14: Jim Fleischmann
- September 21: Janice Krall
- September 28: Barb Fleishman

