

FOCUS

November 2026 Daleheightschurch.org

The Joy of Serving

We commit to serve one another as we serve our God. This is not done out of a mere sense of obligation, but from a love that seeks to build up others.

God has given gifts and talents to each of us. Whatever our gift, God has uniquely made us to serve our brothers and sisters. There is joy when we are able to utilize the gifts that God has given us.

The Joy of Serving Your Neighbor

Serving witnesses to those who do not know Christ. Serving is essentially loving our neighbor. It is putting others first and seeking their good over our own. It is a tangible display of God's love for them. Christ saw serving through love as an indicator of one's discipleship.

When we serve, we are witnessing to the goodness of Christ. We are sharing his love with others. We are giving a visible, real, and tangible display of God's love. There is joy when we are able to utilize the gifts that God has given us to witness and share his love with those who may not know him.

The Joy of Serving Your God

Ultimately, we serve not for our own glory, but to honor our LORD.
As stewards, we honor God by utilizing the gifts he has given us and glorifying God in all that we do. The parable of the talents in Luke 19:11-28 comes to mind. God has uniquely created us with gifts to be shared. Through the gifts that God has given we glorify and honor him. Serving is not about ourselves, though there is joy for us as we serve; it is not about others, though there is joy for them as we serve; it is about honoring God and glorifying him.

Consider the gifts God has given you and where best they can be utilized.

Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received.
1 Peter 4:10

Adapted from an essay by Jim Fowler, Redeemer Fellowship in St. Charles, Illinois

Dale Heights Staff

Pastor:
Pulpit Supply

Treasurer:
Wendy Weber

Music Director
Dr. Alissa Freeman

Accounts Manager:
Dawn Westhoff

Office Manager:
Deb Hughes

Custodians:
Felipe Ruiz
& Lily Fabella

Session Members

Acting Moderator:
Rev. Kathleen Owens

Clerk:
Gale Oakes

Edi Chan (2026)
Gale Oakes (2026)
Wendy Weber (2027)
June Zeeh (2027)
Gerry Klump (2028)
Melanie Klump (2028)



Breakfast

The Dale Heights monthly breakfast will be held on:

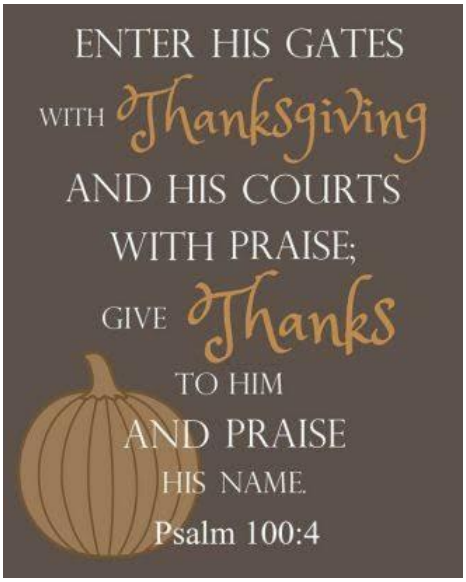
Saturday
November 14, 2026.

Serving will begin at 9:00 am.
The suggested donation is $5.
RSVP to Roy L. if you have not already done so.

November Birthdays

15	**Brad Harris**
16	**Ian Rogers**
30	**Abigail Rogers**





Church Office Hours:

Tuesday and Thursday
9:30a-1:30p
Wednesday
10:30a-2:30p



The deadline for article submissions for the December issue of the FOCUS is November 24, 2025.

Stewardship is more than just money.

As we enter our Stewardship drive period, please remember that time is also a gift that we can use. There are volunteer opportunities for everyone, regardless of age, physical ability, and time issues.

<u>If you would like to volunteer</u>, please mark it on your pledge card or contact a Session member or member of the committee you are interested in helping. (See next page). Stuffing envelopes can also be God's work.

Some volunteer opportunities at Dale Heights for you to consider:

SUNDAY MORNING GREETER
Greet and welcome all who come to worship with us.

SUNDAY MORNING READER:
Read Liturgy and Scripture during worship.

SEASONAL HELP NEEDED:
Lenten Readers
Advent Readers
Help decorate the sanctuary for Easter and Christmas by signing up to purchase Easter flowers and poinsettias.
Assist with the hanging and unhanging of the greens during the Christmas season.

STEWARDSHIP:
Contribute of your time, talents and resources to the church. Volunteer to serve on one of our committees.

COFFEE HOUR
Help during Fellowship to provide a welcoming atmosphere for all.
Come early to brew coffee and help set up for Fellowship. Assist with cleanup and dishwashing afterwards.

MONTHLY CHURCH BREAKFAST
Help prepare and serve breakfast on the second Saturday of each month. Assist with cleanup afterwards.

RIDES TO CHURCH
Help provide rides to and from church for those who wouldn't be able to get there otherwise.

HOME COMMUNION / VISITORS
Volunteers visit the sick or homebound, offer prayers, comfort those who are grieving, and provide communion to members at home who cannot attend services. Instruction and supplies are provided.

OUTREACH AND MISSION
Assist with preparation of meals for Pres House students when needed.
Assist with fundraising efforts for church programs and missions.
Events: Help with greeting and/or serving when Dale Heights hosts special events (for example: Church Women United programming).

BUILDING SUPPORT
Assist with the general upkeep and maintenance of the building by completing minor repairs or maintenance.

TECHNICAL SUPPORT:
Assist with media production when needed (cameras, sound, lighting, projection, etc.).

Dale Heights' Committees and Ministry Teams for 2026:

Session:
Edi Chan (2026)
Gale Oakes, Clerk of Session (2026)
Wendy Weber (2027)
June Zeeh (2027
Gerry Klump (2028)
Melanie Klump (2028)

Nominating:
Edi Chan (Session Rep)
Roy Lembcke
Jim Tracey
June Zeeh

Care and Fellowship:
Verena Straubhaar
Edi Chan

Outreach and Mission:
Barb Fleishman
Edi Chan
Jamie Engebregtsen
Melanie Klump
Gerry Klump & Roy Lembcke
(WayForward representatives)
Gale Oakes
Wendy Weber, chair

Personnel:
Edi Chan
Gerry Klump
Jack Rose

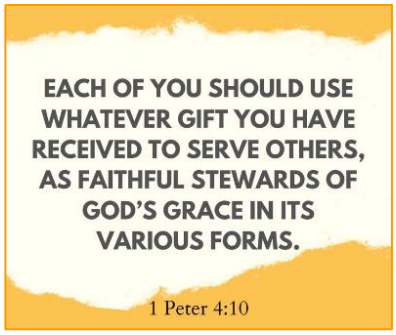
Security: (ad hoc)
Roy Lembcke
Jim Tracey
Jack Rose

Worship and Music:
Janice Krall
Melanie Klump (chair)
Verena Straubhaar (Communion & Fellowship)
June Zeeh (ushers and liturgists)

Property and Finance:
Gerry Klump
Philip Krause
Roy Lembcke, chair
Wendy Weber

Click *here* to see a brief description of the responsibilities of each Committee/Ministry Team.

This list is also posted on the bulletin board outside of the church office.





From co-leaders Judy Loveless & Ann Sowaske:

It is with sadness we announce the possible closing of Madison's unit of CWU, whose history goes back to 1924. These were energized women who helped Headstart get going and other major accomplishments. Our final celebration will be World Community Day on Friday, November 6 at 9:30 at Bethany UMC at 3910 Mineral Pt. Road in Madison.

WOMEN - please come to this event to show you care!!

Church Women United World Community Day
Friday, November 6, 2026
9:30 AM to noon

All are welcome

Bethany United Methodist Church
3910 Mineral Point Rd, Madison, WI 53705

HISTORY OF WORLD COMMUNITY DAY:

World Community Day began in 1943 from discussions at a meeting of denominational presidents and executive secretaries asking that a day be set aside in the fall for the study of peace by church women. Although many denominations were printing their own studies on the new world order, it was determined at this meeting that their unity would be strengthened on one day of united study. World Community Day continues to emphasize peace but has been broadened to include justice, a vital partner of peace. The once clear categories of "domestic" and "foreign" were consciously blurred so the global scope of the wide range of problems could be emphasized on World Community Day.

THE PRESBYTERIAN OUTLOOK

New documentary looks at the changing face of Christian churchgoing

"Christianity at a Crossroads" chronicles congregational church life in the United States as growth has flatlined, younger generations are less religious, and scandal has overtaken nearly every Christian denomination.

by *Yonat Shimron for Religion News Service*
Published: October 9, 2026



Church members at Christ Congregational Church remove the cross from the sanctuary to put in storage after selling their building. Photo by Journey Films)

(RNS) — A 120 year-old United Methodist Church in rural Michigan shutters. A traditional Catholic church in New York's Greenwich Village is packed with young people in their 20s and 30s. And a network of house churches meeting in people's living rooms is growing across the country.

These are among the many snapshots of American Christianity featured in a four-part documentary series that begins airing Thursday (Oct. 1) on public television stations across the country.

"Christianity at a Crossroads," by documentary filmmaker Martin Doblmeier, tells the story of congregational church life in the United States at a critical moment when growth has flatlined, younger generations are less religious and a raft of scandals have overtaken nearly every Christian denomination.

Doblmeier is no stranger to the subject. His "Journey Films" production company has specialized in religious subjects with PBS-style documentaries on theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Catholic activist Dorothy Day and philosopher and theologian Howard Thurman, among others.

The new series, funded by Lilly Endowment, which also provides funding for RNS, features interviews with leading experts: sociologist Ryan Burge, writer and ethicist Russell Moore and pollster Melissa Deckman. But it's the portraits of half a dozen churches and how they've weathered change that provide a glimpse of the variety of Christian church expressions today. There's even a segment on virtual reality church.

RNS talked to Doblmeier about the making of the series, which is also going to be available for free on its website, **https://www.journeyfilms.com/.** The interview was edited for length and clarity.

What prompted this project and how long did it take to film?

Well, the answer to the second part is about 20 months. It was originally conceived as two hours, and then we found we had such good material we asked for, and were allowed to go, four hours with it. We were keenly aware there was lots of data about the decline of Christian life in America, and our objective was not to challenge that, but to understand better what did that mean and who's impacted by it? We tried to do it in a balanced way. If you're patient enough to look, you can see there are plenty of signs of hope, plenty of signs of vitality. Our argument is, these are challenging moments. Christianity is at a crossroads. It's going to have to make some decisions, and I think it's doing that. There may be a decline in numbers. But I think what's going to be left is going to be the foundation of something unique and possibly even stronger.

The series addresses a lot of challenges facing U.S. Christianity: the decline in churchgoing, a younger generation that's less religious, a loss of trust in institutions, the sex abuse crisis, especially in the Catholic Church, declining infrastructure. What's the biggest?

We presented the argument that the biggest factor is people no longer believe in religion. It's not the priority that it was maybe two generations ago. In past generations your faith tradition was passed on from one generation to the next. The comment we have in the film from one person is, "It's just not happening anymore." I think that's a big factor in all of this. The numbers show that if you're not raised in a family where religion is practiced and given a priority, the likelihood of you getting into that practice and maintaining it later in life declines.

You report on the rise of Christian nationalism but you don't examine the political landscape — Trump and MAGA — and how that's affected Christianity. And there's no mention of the impact of Trump's immigration crackdown on Christian communities.

We'd like to hope our films will be around for many years. Who knows what's going to happen in the next couple of years? We wanted to highlight Christian nationalism, but I think we were clear to say the amount of noise that Christian nationalism makes may not really be reflective of the number of people who really adhere to Christian nationalism principles. We believed that was maybe the most important thing. And I also, I know a lot of people who say to themselves, "Well, I'm, you know, I'm a Christian, and I love this country, does that make me a Christian nationalist?" The title of Christian nationalism is most often used by others as opposed to people self-identifying as Christian nationalists.

Also, this film was originally conceived to be a contribution to the America 250 story. So that was kind of the starting place for it. In some ways, we wanted to see if we could possibly tell the story and transcend some of the contemporary politics of it.

Was there any one church portrait you felt was emblematic of what was happening across the country?

The chapter on Resurrection Church in Kansas City. I left Kansas City feeling there was hope that there could actually be a middle ground. There's so much conversation as to whether we'll ever settle these deep divisions, these social political divisions. Adam Hamilton, the pastor who founded that church when he was 25 years old in a funeral home, has continued to build it and try to figure out a way to do it. And yes, he could be labeled a megachurch pastor, but it still has that kind of hometown feel to it. And they're trying to preach a gospel that's socially engaged, politically aware and yet holds true to the high ground, which they feel as though is the gospel tradition, and that gave me hope that things were possible.

And of course, he's running for the Senate now.

He's got his hands filled trying to become the first (Kansas) Democratic senator in 100 years.

You end the series on a hopeful note about the future of churchgoing in America. Am I reading that right?

Yeah, I mean, I don't think reimagining, recalibrating, reevaluating where we are right now at this moment in history is a bad thing. There are thousands of churches across this country that are, kind of, on an edge. They have to rethink what they're doing, and yet some people are forward-thinkers. I admired (Silver Spring, Maryland's Christ Congregational Church), which said, "Look, we don't want to be burdened by the building that we have. So we'll sell the building. But we're gonna stay together as a community. So if we have to meet for two years in the basement of a neighbor's church, we're going to do that." I thought that was a great model.

When you talk about hopeful signs, we thought St. Joseph's Church in Greenwich Village, New York, was an interesting hopeful sign. The Catholic church is completely packed, and the pastor will say, "We're not doing anything different. We're not trying to cater to this younger generation. We're presenting what we think are the Catholic teachings, and we're preaching out of the Catholic texts, and yet the (young) people are coming." So just when you think you've figured out a formula, what's working here, this church presents itself and says, sometimes the old formulas still hold value. These people want something they can think about and hold on to and they can value because they believe there's so little they can actually trust. I think that's the most important message right now: Give me something I can believe in and trust.

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Religion News Service

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The Light from the Milk Barn

by Rev. Dr. Devon M Reynolds

When I accepted the call to be the Executive Presbyter for John Knox Presbytery, I could never have imagined the wonderland we would have the privilege of living in.

I often leave the house before the sun is up and arrive home long after she has set for the day. This provides me with a unique viewpoint on what is happening within the bounds of John Knox Presbytery.

The light streaming out of the milk barns and the way it dances across the ground is something to behold. In winter, the light shimmers like glitter, the wind whipping ice crystals across the windswept terrain. In spring, the new grass and daffodils bring fresh life to the morning light. The same barn, cows, and milkers, yet the light streaming out shifts from a cold shimmer to a warmer glow that comes with new life. Even the mud of the melting snow is preparing the world to be bountiful.

Summer brings the heat and the smells of fresh hay, corn pollen, and warm animals. Then, when all is baked hard by the summer sun, the world turns, and fall welcomes us back. Back to crisp mornings filled with the buzz of a new school year and the promise of all that this new cycle will bring.

Those of us who love the church could learn a lot from those milk barns.

Each morning and each evening, milking must happen. Someone must bring in the herd, wash the teats, prepare them for the teat cups, and begin the milking. This can be done manually with one cow, a small herd, a large herd, or in an industrialized operation. In each of these settings, no matter the size or number of automated systems, someone still needs to look at and interact with each cow. They must be fed, given medical care, have their hooves trimmed, and the herd must be managed.

The same goes for the church.

Large or small, with a pastor or session-led, the people still need to be fed, spiritually cared for, and the flock led. Just as every farm is different, so is every church and the congregation that gathers to be cared for. Unlike our bovine friends, however, we have a choice as to where we go to be fed.

We seek out the warm light that assures us the pressure we are under will be relieved. We seek out the place where our hunger will be satisfied by the Word and where we find an open and bountiful table. A table open to all people. A place where burdens can be

laid down for a while, and our souls and bodies can find rest.

Big or small, session-led or pastor-led, the work continues day after day.

Some days we enter the barn as the farmer or manager, in charge and ready for the day. Other times, we drag ourselves in, tired and cold from the labors of a broken world. Each and every one of us will find ourselves in both of those roles, sometimes on the very same day.

That is the glory of following Jesus the Christ, who showed us how to live, how to love, and how to serve one another. No one person can do all things, at all times, but together we can change the world.

For the work of caring for one another continues through every season, even as the light around us changes. The seasons will come and go, the work will change, and so will we. Yet the call to care for one another remains.

May this fall bring you the joy of knowing that we are not alone. God, who created all things, watches over us. Jesus guides our way, and the Holy Spirit is dancing across the face of this world like the glistening morning light of a warm milk barn. May we always find solace in the light or our Lord and Savior. Amen



An essay by Rev. Dr. Devon Reynolds, Executive Presbyter for John Knox Presbytery
Knox Knotes 10.9.2026

SWEETEN THE SEASON
with Holiday Baking Baskets



Donate a basket, bag, or box of shelf-stable holiday baking essentials to the WayForward food pantry. Make it festive with wrapping, bows, and bonus items! Scan the QR code for details.

Drop off: Dec 7-Dec 11 (9 am-4 pm)
at WayForward's Distribution Center

INGREDIENTS (include all)

- brown sugar
- white sugar
- baking soda
- baking powder
- vanilla extract
- vegetable oil
- flour
- salt

CONTAINERS (pick one)

- tote bags
- giftwrapped boxes
- baskets (wicker, wooden, plastic)
- reusable grocery bags

BONUS ITEMS (optional)

- frosting
- sprinkles
- baking spices
- cookie sheet
- rolling pin
- and much more!

DROP OFF LOCATION
WayForward Resources
3502 Parmenter Street
Middleton, WI

QUESTIONS?
Contact: Jill Bradshaw
jill@wayforwardresources.org
(608) 836-2751

WayForward resources



REVERSE
ADVENT CALENDAR

Each day add an item to a box.

After the holidays, donate the items to WayForward Resources to help start the New Year off right for local families.

December 1 – Spices
December 2 – Cereal
December 3 – Flour
December 4 – Sugar
December 5 – Cooking Oil
December 6 – Baking Soda
December 7 – Baking Powder
December 8 – Coffee
December 9 – Tostada shells
December 10 – Snack Items (fruit snacks, granola bars, etc.)
December 11 – Quick/rolled oats
December 12 – Condiments (any kind)
December 13 – Menstrual products (pads)
December 14 – Toilet paper
December 15 – Hearty soups
December 16 – Canned chicken
December 17 – Canned tuna
December 18 – Canned corn
December 19 – Canned green beans
December 20 – Canned tomatoes
December 21 – Canned fruit
December 22 – canned mixed vegetables
December 23 – Spaghetti sauce
December 24 – Box of crackers

https://www.wayforwardresources.org/

Donations accepted Mon-Fri between 9 am and 4 pm

Gracious God, please bless the lives and bodies of those receiving these gifts. May they be nourished by the food and by your love and presence. AMEN

DALE HEIGHTS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
5501 University Ave.
Madison, Wisconsin 53705

NOVEMBER CALENDAR

01	Worship – K. Owens – *Communion*
05	Choir practice 12n
08	Worship – B. Moten
10	Property & Finance 7p
11	**Veterans Day**
	Property & Finance 7p
14	Church breakfast **9:00a**
15	Worship -- M. Krichko
19	Choir practice 12n
22	Worship – D. Beachey
24	Choir practice 5pm
26	**Thanksgiving Day**
29	Worship – K. Owens (Advent Sunday)



Liturgists

November 1:	Roy Lembcke
November 8:	Barb Fleishman
November 15:	Otty Schaefer
November 22:	Edi Chan
November 29:	Otty Schaefer