



West Denmark Lutheran Church Luck, Wisconsin

UPCOMING EVENTS at WEST DENMARK

March 4, 11, 18, 25: Lent Soup Supper at 6, Service at 7 with Holden Village Evening Prayer and Reflections on the petitions of the Lord's Prayer

March 7th West Denmark Heritage Concert: Randy Sabien and Gary Rue 7pm at the church

March 14th Pi(e) Day!!! 10-12:30 in the fellowship area of the church. Needed are pie bakers, servers and eaters. (You can do all three!) Sign up sheets are on the info table.

March 21st 8-4 Synod Walking Together 2026 at Bethany Lutheran Church Rice Lake \$25.

March 29th Palm Sunday

April 2nd Maundy Thursday: Middle Eastern Supper at 6, Worship with Communion at 7.

April 3rd Good Friday: Fish soup supper 6, Tenebrae Service with the choir at 7.

April 5th Easter Sunday: Worship at 8am, Children's Egg hunt follows worship, followed by breakfast in the hall. Please sign up to bring something to the breakfast.

◇ **March Birthdays & Anniversaries** ◇

Birthdays

Best wishes for the coming year!

- 1 Elodie Lumley
- 2 Jenni Tretsven
Johanna Tretsven
- 4 Anne McKee
- 10 Hans Hanson
- 11 Tasha Johnson
- 15 Molly Tulkki
- 17 Heath Jensen
- 24 Greg Marsten
- 25 Macy Johnson

Anniversaries

Congratulations!

- 30 Chris & Randy Petersen



**The Season of Lent 2026
West Denmark Lutheran Church**

LENT, PRICKLY PEAR AND FASTING FROM INTRUSIVE THOUGHTS

“And the peace of God, which passes all understanding, will keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus, our Lord.”

Philippians 4:7

“Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight, O Lord, my rock and my redeemer.”

Psalms 19:14



Last Saturday, in winter's icy grasp, I found myself outside pruning trees, cutting away the prickly pear and buckthorn in my woods, clearing out space for native plants and trees to thrive. It was also a nice reason to get outside and look for early signs of spring. Then, as I toiled, the thoughts started spinning their troubling stories. I wasn't really present to my task, I became lost in anxious thoughts. I am a master at weaving intricate stories in my mind—tales of what could have been, what wasn't, and what might never be.

In the sermon on Ash Wednesday, Christy framed fasting as an internal discipline. What I began to think about is how I might consciously “fast” from some of this internal noise. As I pruned and stacked the dense growth of undesirable, invasive trees and shrubs, I became more conscious of what was in front and around me in the present moment. It's then I noticed my dachshund Trudy and the joy of her getting the “zoomies”, running around and from nothing particular. Then I noticed bright green moss on the logs facing south, defying the winter air, whispering life and resurrection.

Putting a chink in these thoughts has become my Lenten discipline. I'm working on making gratitude and acceptance my Lenten companions. I'm working on noticing what is around me in the present moment to set my sights on the simpler, tangible blessings around me. Not necessarily to judge my thoughts and feelings, but to become more conscious and tend to my inner life.

Lent invites us to journey deeper into our hearts, to consider fasting from mindless habits. Is that fasting from the news or mindless doom scrolling, or my propensity to sow fear in my neuro-pathways?

It is in the paradox of winter—the biting cold juxtaposed with the warmth of a crackling fire—where I discover the beauty of existence. I can be grateful for the resilience in my heart, for the clarity that comes when I slow down to truly observe the world around me.

I'm enlivened by the refreshing release of sweat as I move from the chilly outdoors into the comforting warmth of my sauna, a reminder of life's contrasting experiences.

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...continued from Pastor's Column on page 2

I'd like to leave you with Mary Oliver's poem, Mindfulness as it seems to echo the wisdom of the verse from Paul and the Psalms.

Everyday I see or hear something that more or less kills me with delight, that leaves me like a needle in the haystack of light.

It was what I was born for--to look, to listen, and to lose myself inside this soft world--to instruct myself over and over in joy, and acclamation. Nor am I talking about the exceptional, the fearful, the dreadful, the very extravagant--but of the ordinary, the common, the very drab, the daily presentations.

Oh, good scholar, I say to myself, how can you help but grow wise with such teachings as these--the untrimmable light of the world, the ocean's shine, the prayers that are made out of grass?

Blessed Lent to all!
Pastor Shawn Mai

MARCH WORSHIP NOTES

SUNDAYS AT WEST DENMARK:

8:30 MEDITATION GROUP

You are invited to join our 8:30 Meditation Group, which meets in the balcony of the church. In a world that can often feel chaotic, this gathering has become a grounding and connected time for all participants. We start with a short reflective reading, follow it with 15 to 20 minutes of silence, and wrap up with a discussion about our experiences. It's a beautiful way to center ourselves and find peace together.

10 AM WORSHIP

Join us for our thriving 10 AM worship service, filled with inspiring music, engaging lay participation, and thoughtful reflections on lectionary texts. Invite neighbors who may be looking for community to experience our eagerness to welcome. Stay afterward for coffee, delicious treats, and meaningful conversations at 11 AM!

Preachers in March

March 1	Christy Wetzig	March 22	Terra Lumley
March 8	Pam Hanson	March 29	Christy Wetzig
March 15	Christy Wetzig		

No Sunday School: March 15, April 5, April 12
Last day of Sunday School for spring is May 17
Easter is April 5, there will be an Easter Egg hunt after the early service

Ongoing Activities at West Denmark...

West Denmark Bible Study

Wednesdays at 1pm

In the fellowship area in the church. An engaging, relevant, low stress study of 1st Peter is being led by Christy Wetzig. No prep necessary! Our motto is: *Not all who wander are lost!* All are welcome!



Encore: Conversations About Aging

Thursday March 26th

10:30- noon in the fellowship area in the church.
Topic: Recognizing and navigating physical and mental decline as we age.

Encore will meet monthly going forward

West Denmark Book Club

Wednesday

February 25th

The WDLC book discussion group, which in Spring 2026 will meet via zoom at 11 AM on the FOURTH Wednesday of every other month (note change from third) has chosen a book for our next meeting on April 22. This is Richard Higgins' favorably-reviewed book *Thoreau's God*.

<https://press.uchicago.edu/ucp/books/book/chicago/T/bo236936515.html>.

Our group practice is for everyone to access the books in whatever way that seems best to them. If you want on or off the group's email list, which is where we circulate a zoom link for our meetings and handle various other things, please let Mark Hulsether know at mhulseth@gmail.com.

Choir Practice

Wednesdays after Lenten services, @7:45.

Men's Breakfast

Mondays 7:30am

Meets at the Tin Shed in Frederic



Women's Breakfast

Monday's 10 am

Mondays 10 am at the Tin Shed in Frederic except the last week of the month when they meet on Tuesday at Cafe Wren at 12pm.

Peanut Butter

is always needed for the backpack program at Luck school.! Thanks for the great response! I drop off jars every week! Either purchase peanut butter and leave at church, or earmark a donation, put it in the offering and I will purchase. *Thank you!! Barb Kass*

Quilters!

We have finished and delivered the "nearly finished" quilt tops found in the church, and will be starting to piece quilts with the pieces already cut and accepting fabric for more. Call the church for meeting times. (We often meet on Mondays at 11:30 after the women's breakfast.) All skill levels are welcome!!!

IMPORTANT CHANGE OF DATE:

ÆBLESKIVER SUPPER IS MAY 9th

Due to the Luck Prom on May 2nd and involvement of several West Denmark youth and families, we are moving Aebleskiver to the 2nd Saturday of May. Please let others know as it is pretty set in stone that it is always the first Saturday. Sign up sheets will be on the info table right after Easter.

LOAVES & FISHES MONTHLY REPORT

JANUARY 2026

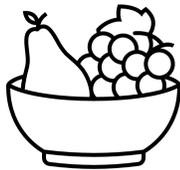
Open Tues. & Thurs. 11 – 1:00
Lions Hall, 300 S. 1 st Street Luck, WI
P.O. Box 554 Luck, WI 54853

Households served 41
Luck 33; Unity 8
Adults: 45; Children: 28
New families: 3
Total people: 104
Donations: Money: \$2,776
(Below includes TEFAP,
purchased food, donations)
Weight of food coming in: # 2,172
Weight of food going out: # 2,541
Volunteer hours: 52 hours.

The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) is a federally funded USDA food program, which is administered through the State of Wisconsin Department of Health Services and Loaves & Fishes is a recipient agency.

Needs for next month: Vegetables: canned tomatoes, peas, mixed vegetables. Pasta: macaroni, rice, elbow noodles, spaghetti. Misc. peanut butter, cake mix, brownie mix, muffins.

We can always use more volunteer workers. If interested, please contact:
Pam Girtz 320-232-7541
email: girtzp@gmail.com;
or Gena Bugno: nobug115@yahoo.com



WINTER FARMER'S MARKET

One more chance to buy local and support the local economy!

Saint Croix Valley Food Alliance Winter Market March 22nd 12-3 in the Greenhouse at the Acreage in Osceola. 2585 State Hwy 35, Osceola. West Denmark is a member of the SCVFA.



PI(E) DAY! MARCH 14! 10am-12:30

We are grateful for math and science and the mysteries that have been unveiled to us through them. The third annual Pi(e) day on March 14, is a fun way to gather for pie, coffee and conversation. Come early to pick your favorite slice of pie, served from 10am to 12:30 pm for the bargain price of \$5. Pie bakers are still needed. You can drop off pies either Friday March 13, from 4:30-5:30, or Saturday March 14th at 9am. Help is also needed for set up on Friday evening, pie cutting and serving on Saturday morning, and for clean up afterward

DID YOU KNOW THAT WEST DENMARK HAS A REVAMPED WEBSITE?

Over the past few months, our staff has worked with an outside consultant, who is also a friend of the congregation, to create a refreshed website that gives a more complete description of the mission and ministries of West Denmark Lutheran Church.

Check it out at: www.westdenmark.org

The website includes many photos of our life together as a congregation, including a slide show on the home page. The goal is to routinely change the photos to keep the site fresh and inviting.

You can help! These days most people have a camera in their pocket on their phones. You are encouraged to help capture our life together by taking a photo of people in action at an event or activity or even just chatting over a cup of coffee.

Send photos to be considered for publication on the website to westdenmarklc@gmail.com. Some may even end up on our Facebook page.



LUTHER POINT UPDATE

Luther Point Bible Camp in Grantsburg, Wis is the Outdoor Ministry program attached to churches in our Conference area. In the past few years we have had several of our youth attend these camps, as well as two of our students serving as Camp Counselors in Training. Although we haven't had a lot of activity between our members and Luther Point in the past decade, we'd like to encourage everyone to consider the many opportunities and benefits that Bible Camp offers. Here is the latest update from Luther Point:

- 1) Search for new Executive Director: A search committee has been formed. It hopes to have the position opening listed by March 1.
- 2) Registrations for summer camp and the "best week ever" are coming in. Fun new activities are being planned.
- 3) We are looking for a person who will be our summer cook. If you know anyone who may be interested, please have them contact the camp at 715-689-2347 or info@lutherpoint.org
- 4) Your year-round staff is busy preparing for retreat center guests and summer camps.
Ella is busy as the event coordinator and bookkeeper. Give her a call if you need to reserve Retreat Center rooms, Family Cottages, or learn how to have a great time at Luther Point.
Carissa is busy recruiting summer staff and firing up children and youth for a summer of "Wear Love."
Henrik is making sure that the equipment is running, the buildings are ready, and food is plentiful.

Nancy Belle Cook (Koch in Danish)

Nancy was born in St. Paul Minnesota, in November, 1934. Her parents were Danish (Schleswig Holstein), and English/ Scotch-Irish. She had a wonderful childhood in St. Paul. She skated, downhill skied in the winter, and water skied in the summer, played piano, and had many friends, as you can imagine. She was always a beauty, inside and out. She loved her family, and they attended Central Presbyterian Church in St. Paul, where they were very active.

She worked with her father who was a dentist, as a dental hygienist, then went on to work at the St Paul Pioneer Press, where she met Dawn's father, Roger Sax. It was during this time she became a candidate for the Princess of the Snows for the St Paul Winter Carnival. She was that beautiful, smart, and congenial. They both continued at the U of M, where she hoped to become an international affairs expert. Instead of that, she became a mother to Dawn and Scott, became Mrs Minnesota, and worked with my father (a criminal attorney, and politician) on his, Hubert Humphrey, and Walter Mondale's campaigns. We all had an active household, and a good base in activism.

She lived in Birchwood, Minnesota, on White Bear Lake, where she loved water sports, and parties. She was a hit on the lake; first bikini slalom skier with a wig! (later ask me about the time it flew off, and I, Dawn, was in charge of fetching it out of WBL.) She studied for, and became a stock broker during this time, and worked at the IDS Center in Minneapolis. Always a positive, optimistic and fun person, she had a job that took her to Chicago, and New York, where she was able to feed her love for jazz and classical music, as well as her love of art, and the party.

Recently divorced she started traveling to Mexico, Puerto Rico, and Costa Rica. Dawn was able to hitch rides from her not only to New York, but to Mexico (where Dawn is today) where she learned from Nancy the importance of loving all people. Nancy worshiped the sun, ocean, and sand. She yearned for travel, and was always open to all cultures; their food, people, lands, and drink--she loved a good adult beverage.

Later, she married again, and had fun living on Half Moon Lake, traveling around the globe, and entertaining neighbors. She also was able to go to Sun City, AZ, and to enjoy the sun, book club, volunteering, and foods from around the world.

Nancy was never judgemental, and always taught us by example that women, and minorities, or just plain anyone, were worthy of respect and love. Her love of life diminished with her physical difficulties, and she was sad not to have more social contact. It became extremely hard for her to follow conversations, and to add anything to them. Dementia was not kind to her, and although many of us learned a lot from her in the final years, we are sorry she had to endure the reduction of her capabilities.

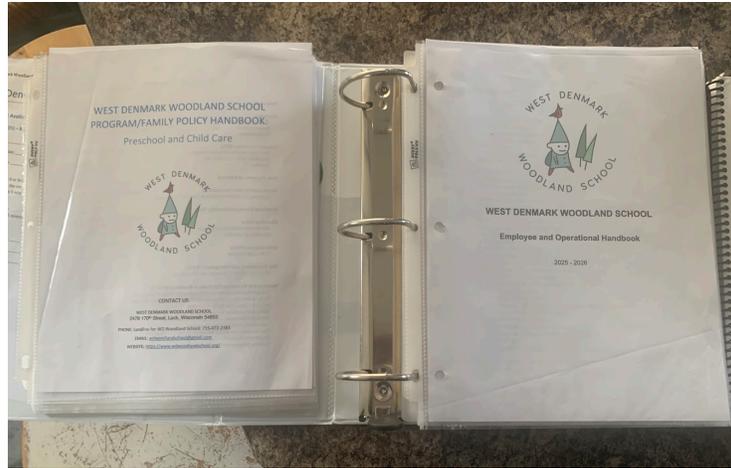
She spent her last years going back and forth to Mexico with Dawn and Manuel, visiting with her son Scott, and wife Doreen, attending Endeavors, looking at the lake and pond, and having nightly fires outside with Manuel. Neighbors, Barb Kass, Pastors Christy, Linda and Shawn dropped by for visits, and we were all so grateful for them, as it is the presence of kind souls that carries a person to peace. She was grateful for the love and care from West Denmark Church, always had a smile for everyone who greeted her, and enjoyed some happy moments knowing that she could go there to be closer to God.

WHAT IS TAKING THE WOODLAND SCHOOL SO LONG TO OPEN?

Have you been questioning why the Woodland School isn't open yet? Wondering why it takes so long to get this project off the ground? This article is an attempt to give our readers a realistic idea of the steps taken and the efforts made to work within the Wisconsin Child Care Licensing rules as we look forward to bringing our vision of an early childhood forest school childcare to life.

When we started this project in 2022, we knew it would take some time to bring to fruition. We were energetic and enthusiastic and optimistic. We were also realistic, realizing that starting a childcare center at West Denmark would take perseverance.

We were correct!



First, we had to revise our plan to use the Dane School classroom due to its age and its limited bathroom access. We settled on using the classrooms in the church. Then we had to raise the funds to add the locking door, the bathroom accessibility fixtures, additional electrical safety upgrades, a security system, and finally pass a building inspection. We've cleaned and painted and set up furniture and play spaces. We've completed at least two sets of radon testing, water testing, fire inspections and had a building design consultation. In addition, we had to receive congregational approval to move forward on the project, as well as to use the church non-profit status as the umbrella entity for the Center. We received a large start up grant from the state funding after Liz Dodge participated in a 12-week Child Care Business Foundations course.

We've received financial and budgeting consultation from First Children's Finance, drafting and redrafting our start up and operational budgets. We've been trying to keep the tuition affordable while still planning to pay our staff living wages. This is a big challenge in the childcare world.

We had to find a new insurance company that would cover our childcare operations. This required preparing a portfolio of required documents and pictures and going through an extensive underwriting process. We have now signed with Brotherhood Mutual, a company that insures many other non-profit and religious settings such as ours.

Currently we are in the pre-licensing stage. This is a requirement in Wisconsin - to get the sign off from our pre-licensor before we can complete and submit our actual license application. We submitted our extensive Employee and Operational policy materials and our Family Handbook to our pre-licensor and were told to redo a number of items. We met with state licensors and their director who then identified areas in our outdoor program that needed additional policy and procedures.

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We are a unique program in central and northwest Wisconsin, and regulators have asked us to modify some of our activities to be in line with existing rules. We have also been asked to create Exception Requests for at least one of our outdoor activities. This means that we are documenting how we intend to meet the intent of the rule while asking the state to approve a slight modification. This will require that request to go to a higher level of decision making within the system.

Throughout this time, we've been actively fund raising, writing grants, working with generous donors, soliciting materials, sourcing food, cleaning supplies, first aid and safety supplies, and office materials. We've completed fingerprinted background checks, CPR/AED training, and other required training courses in order to document our eligibility to be temporary Administrator/Director/Food Service/etc.

Yes, it is a lot. We still have a way to go. Our posters that said we planned to open in September 2025 were a bit too optimistic. But we press on and are so grateful for the support of our congregation and our friends. Please don't hesitate to keep asking questions.

Liz Dodge, Mary Jensen, Carrie Petersen and Nicole Lalond
(with special consultation from Terry Speiker)
- Woodland School Development Committee

GRATITUDE!!!

from Barb Kass

Thank you from all of the Catholic Workers who gathered February 13-16th on the West Denmark campus. The spirit, the beauty and the warmth of West Denmark hospitality provided the perfect setting for our weekend together. Thank you for welcoming our other beloved community!!! The group represented 12 states and over 20 communities- both urban and rural. Here are some excerpts from a really wonderful (and long) article written by Jerry Windley Daoust after the gathering. (you can find the entire article on the West Denmark Facebook page or ask Mike or Barb for a hard copy).

The past few months have been particularly dark and intense for anyone concerned with justice, peace, and human dignity. Catholic Workers have always been particularly attuned to injustice, of course. And when about 60 of them gathered in Luck, Wisconsin, last weekend for the Catholic Worker Farm Gathering, they brought the weight of it all with them: the oppression of immigrants, the attacks on the people of the West Bank, the politics of division and hate.

But then they did what Catholic Workers have always done. They fed one another, made music, danced, prayed, and shared stories of hope and encouragement—practicing, as Dorothy Day often recommended, the “duty of delight.”

In an interview a few days after the gathering, Mike reached for something larger to describe what the weekend had meant to him. “I really am feeling that something’s going on with the presence of God in the world right now that we have to be attentive to,” he said. What struck him most was the enthusiasm in the room — the sense that people had not surrendered to the weight of the moment. “Instead of despair, it’s like — yeah, it’s really tough right now, but doggone it, we are here. The Catholic Worker is alive and well, and Catholic Worker farms are coming more and more into their own.”

Hans Holzen Nicholas Vanhaute David Hawas

West Denmark Heritage Council

Presents:

Gary Rue & Randy Sabien



West Denmark Lutheran Church

Saturday, March 7, 2026 @ 7:00pm

Tickets: Reserved \$25 Open Seat \$20

No fee for k-12 students with purchase of ticket by parent.

Artist Information:

garyrue.com/rue-and-sabien

See web page: www.westdenmark.net
for information about purchasing tickets



West Denmark Lutheran Church
2478 170th Street Luck, WI 54853

SAVE THE DATES FOR FAMILY CAMP 2026

JULY 1, 2 AND 3, 2026

BONUS: Come early for June 30 pre-Camp ice cream social plus singing and craft introductions, 6 p.m.

Watch the April Newsletter for information on registration!



LEARNING AND ENGAGEMENT AT THE DANEBOD FOLK MEETING

A quick reminder to mark your calendar for the Danebod Folk Meeting in Tyler!

New friends are made, old friends reunited. Teachers and students learn from each other.

These are some of the foundational tenets of the Danish folk school tradition and the annual Danebod Folk Meeting. At the 2026 Folk Meeting, Aug. 19-23, professionals and participants will come together for three and a half days of mutual hands-on learning.

This is your opportunity to not only hear from experts on topics such as economics, political campaigns, and new methods for learning with Legos, but to let your voice, questions, and curiosity be heard! All events, from lectures to leisure, are designed for maximum interaction and engagement.

Don't let another season go by. Mark your calendars today and join us in Tyler for three days of lively discussions and experiential learning!

West Denmark Lutheran Church



2478 170th Street
Luck, WI 54853
www.westdenmark.org

Return Service Requested

March Weekly Calendar

SUNDAYS

Contemplative Meditation	8:30am
Worship	10am
Fellowship time	11am

MONDAYS

Men's Breakfast - Tin Shed, Frederic	7:30am
Women's Coffee Tin Shed, Frederic	10am
last week of month: MONDAY, 12pm, usually Cafe Wren	

WEDNESDAY

Confirmation, Luck Lutheran,	6pm
Choir Rehearsal	7pm

THURSDAY

Every Other week:

ENCORE	10:30am
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SATURDAYS

AA -	9-10:30 am
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Mark Your Calendars! Upcoming Events

3/4, 11, 18, 25	Lent: Soup and Services
3/7	Rue/Sabien Concert
3/14	Pie Day!
3/29	Palm Sunday
*5/9 <i>New Date!</i>	Æbleskiver Supper

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West Denmark is a safe place
to worship, study,
and build relationships with God
and others,
regardless of race, creed, sexual
orientation, gender identity, or cultural
background.