



West Denmark Lutheran Church Luck, Wisconsin

WHAT'S GOING ON AT WEST DENMARK!

Saturday, September 11-13th: Wedding and reception at the Hall.

Tuesday, September 15th, 6 pm: Polk Burnett Indivisible Community screening of *Bad Faith 2026: Christian Nationalism in Power*. Discussion to follow. Come talk with your neighbors about this important issue. All are welcome.

Sunday, September 20th: New Pastor Jason Cifton-Meller's installation with Pastor Randy Olson of the Northwest Synod preaching. A lunch reception will follow the service in the fellowship area and weather permitting, outside. Come meet, welcome, and celebrate Pastor Jason and spouse James as they begin their life in the West Denmark Community!

Sunday, September 27th After worship: Special fellowship to thank Pastor Shawn for serving with the West Denmark leadership team. Pizza, music, dance and much frivolity to express our love and gratitude for the energy, care and leadership he has given in the past 2 years and to re-welcome Shawn into the congregation. Don't forget your dancing shoes!!!

October 4th: West Denmark Harvest Fest! Potluck lunch to follow worship. Singing, games, contests, prizes and a whole afternoon of fun to welcome Fall! For more information, speak with Harry Johansen.

Saturday October 10th Wedding reception at the hall

Sunday October 11th, 7 pm: West Denmark Heritage Council Concert featuring the Swedish band Jaerv. Watch for more details in the October newsletter.

◇ Special Days in September ◇

Birthdays

- 10 Marlis Petersen
- 11 Brian Hacker
Mark Johnson
- 22 Maggie Petersen
- 26 Todd Johnson
- 27 Joyce Kessler
- 28 Britta Petersen

Anniversaries

- 1 Shawn Mai & Chuck Parsons
- 6 Karn & Hans Hanson
- 21 Jenni & Ty Tretsven
- 29 Pam & Roger Petersen



SHARE THE BOUNTIFUL HARVEST



Produce-sharing table is up and running in the entry. Bring your excess produce, take what you can use, and put a donation in the canister for the local food shelf. There will also be a cookbook or two from time to time.

A SEASON OF HARVEST AND NEW BEGINNINGS

As the air begins to crisp and the golden hues of autumn begin to settle over our landscape, we find ourselves in the season of harvest. It is a time for gathering, for reflecting on the seeds we have sown, and for recognizing the abundance that surrounds us.

Looking back on my time as your interim pastor, I am filled with gratitude for all we have cultivated together. We have seen our congregation grow, not only in numbers—with a dozen new members and a 30% increase in worship attendance—but in spirit and depth. Our commitment to a theologically grounded, robust Sunday morning worship experience remains a cornerstone of who we are, and it has been one of the great joys of my life to collaborate with such a creative and dedicated worship team.

Just as the fall reminds us that every ending is an invitation to a new beginning, I am thrilled to welcome Pastor Jason Clifton-Meller to West Denmark. Jason brings a wealth of gifts, ministry experience, and leadership that will undoubtedly nurture the health and growth of our church in the years to come. It is a joy to welcome Jason and his husband, James, into the parsonage and into our community; their presence will be a blessing that I know we will all cherish.

As I step away for a season of travel and reflection this fall, I do so with a heart full of excitement for what lies ahead. I am eager to see how the seeds we have planted together will continue to bloom under Jason's leadership.

Thank you for the honor of serving alongside you. It has been a privilege to be part of this community, and I look forward to continuing our journey together as we move into this vibrant new season in West Denmark's history.

In Christ's love
Pastor Shawn Mai



Saying "Thank you" and "Welcome Back" to West Denmark's Interim Pastor



Over the past two years, West Denmark Church has been blessed to have Interim Pastor Shawn Mai guide us through the hard work of searching for a new rostered minister. With us, he has traveled a path of discernment as we figured out the church's goals going forward and accomplishing the tasks needed to Call a new Pastor.

Throughout the process, Pastor Shawn has given deeply of himself. He has energetically and graciously shared his kindness, wit, wisdom and spiritual leadership with us, the surrounding community and the members of the Apple River Conference.

With Pastor Jason's call, we look forward to welcoming Shawn back into the membership of West Denmark Lutheran Church. Please come to the Church Hall on Sunday, September 27, 2026, immediately following worship service, for a pizza party and dance that is both a "THANK YOU to Interim Pastor Shawn and a WELCOME BACK to congregational member Shawn"!!

WELCOMING A NEW PASTOR



On Sunday, August 9, 2026, the members of West Denmark Lutheran Church unanimously voted to extend a Call to Pastor Jason Clifton-Meller to become the next rostered ELCA minister to serve our church. We are pleased that Pastor Clifton-Meller has agreed to accept our Call to join the church's shared ministry team, beginning on September 20, 2026.

For the past 11 years, Pastor Clifton-Meller has been serving as the Rector of Our Savior's Lutheran Church in Solon Springs, WI. During his tenure he has been instrumental in expanding church membership, helping church services "go online", creating specialized programming for children, youth and their families, and partnering with the local school district and School Board, non-profit agencies and the Synod to support and advance the ministry of Our Savior's Church within the community. Pastor Clifton-Meller is an avid reader, walker and hiker. In his spare time, he loves to garden and is looking forward to putting his creative "stamp" on the gardens around West Denmark's parsonage.

Pastor Clifton-Meller will be formally inducted into his new position on Sunday, September 20 at the 10:00 am worship service. Pastor Randy Olson will preach and represent the Bishop of the NW Area Synod at the induction ceremony. Please mark your calendars for September 20, immediately following the service, to help extend a warm West Denmark Church and Danish "Hello" or "Heg med dig" (hello there) to our new Pastor and his husband James Clifton-Meller.



AN EXAMPLE OF CAMPUS STEWARDSHIP

The congregation of West Denmark Lutheran Church has been blessed with a beautiful 19-acre campus. The grounds and the buildings on the church campus are the most tangible and visible resources we have available to us, to advance and help support the ministry and mission of our church. Through our prudent use of this gift of land and buildings, we are fortunate to have a hand in continuing West Denmark's 150 year-plus place in the Luck community.

One of the campus stewardship projects the Building Committee has undertaken this year has been to renovate and restore the parsonage, getting it ready to welcome a new pastor. Many of you have volunteered your time, talents and energy to this project, as well as stepping up financially to help "do the work." Your most recent efforts on the parsonage and grounds included a clean-out/clean-up day, complete with filling up a large dumpster and arranging to donate usable items to local thrift stores. Pictures from this day can be found on page 8.

Pastor Jason and his husband, James, will begin moving into the parsonage over Labor Day weekend and start to enjoy your efforts. Thank you to everyone who has contributed their time and talents to this living example of Campus Stewardship...it wouldn't have happened with you!!

The Church Council and the Building Committee

SEPTEMBER 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!

COMMUNION IN SEPTEMBER

will be on the first and third Sundays as usual.

PREACHERS IN SEPTEMBER

September 6th Anne McKee

September 13th Christy Wetzig

September 20th Pr. Randy Olson

September 27th Christy Wetzig

JUST A CLOSER WALK... or BEER CHURCH!

The next "Just a Closer Walk" will be on **Wednesday, September 16th**, beginning at 6:00 pm. Meet behind Café Wren to walk to the Bon Ton. Come talk with us about Spiritual Practice. What brings you closer to God? We have had great conversations and shared with each other: Why Jesus? Why we find God in nature? What we believed as a child that we wrestle with now? We just enjoy each other's company. Youth are welcome. (Facilitated by Terra Lumley).

COUNCIL VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

The Church Council is looking for two-three volunteers to serve as a nominating committee to find new Church Council members. At the Church's Annual meeting in December 2026, we will be electing two new Church Council members to replace 2 current members. The nominating committee will be asked to find congregation members to fill these positions. Please let any of the current Council members know of your willingness to serve on the nominating committee.

Ongoing Activities at West Denmark...

Chair Yoga with Connie

Tuesdays 10-11 am at the parish hall. Join the growing group of participants for an excellent hour of stretching, balance, mobility and flexibility exercises led by Connie Wicklund. Bring a mat and yoga block and elastic band if you have one. Donations welcome.



West Denmark Bible Study

Wednesdays at 1 pm in the fellowship area. Wander through the interesting book of Acts with glimpses of the early church! This is an excellent time to join an engaging, relevant, low stress study led by Christy Wetzig. No prep necessary! Our motto is: Not all who wander are lost! All are welcome!

Encore: Conversations About Aging Thursday September 24th

10:30- noon in the fellowship area in the church. Upcoming topics, How to recognize and prevent scams, Longevity, What does pastoral care look like as we age. Join us!!!

West Denmark Book Club

September 9th - At the Church!
See Page 6 for full details!

Men's Breakfast

Mondays 7:30am

Meets at the Tin Shed in Frederic



Women's Breakfast

Mondays 10 am

Mondays 10 am at the Tin Shed in Frederic except the last week of the month when they meet on Monday at Cafe Wren at 11:40am.

Quilters!

Finish your garden work soon! We will be starting to piece quilts with the pieces already cut and accepting fabric for more. We need cutters and people to sew. Then crews to assemble, tie and bind the quilts. Call the church for meeting times. (We often meet on Mondays at 11:30 after the women's breakfast.) All skill levels are welcome!!!

Choir Resumes

Choir practice begins September 2nd at 7 pm.

Come and sing beautiful music! All voices are needed!

Fall Choir Schedule:

September 2nd - Rehearsal

September 9th - Off, no rehearsal

September 16th - Rehearsal

September 20th - Pr. Jason's Installation -
My Shepherd Will Supply My Need

September 23rd - Rehearsal

September 27th - Pr. Shawn's Thank You
Service - *We Are Not Alone*

September 30th - Rehearsal

October 4th - Harvest Fest - *For the Beauty Of
the Earth*

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY, RIC!

This month, we are joyfully celebrating our 21st anniversary as a Reconciling in Christ (RIC) ministry! Marking this milestone invites us to reflect with gratitude on the journey that brought us here and to recommit ourselves to the ongoing work of welcome, inclusion, celebration, and advocacy for LGBTQIA+ people and their families.

Becoming Reconciling in Christ was not simply a moment in our ministry's history—it was a public commitment to living out God's expansive love in meaningful and visible ways. Through worship, community life, leadership, and advocacy, we continue striving to be a place where all people know they are beloved, valued, and called.

As we celebrate this anniversary, we give thanks for the courageous leaders, faithful members, and community partners who have helped shape this ministry. We also recognize that the work of justice and inclusion is ongoing. Our RIC commitment continues to call us deeper into learning, relationship, action, and love.

Thank you for being part of this journey. We celebrate where we have been, give thanks for where we are, and look forward with hope to how God will continue to move through this ministry.

WEST DENMARK BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP

First Meeting: Marcus Borg

As announced last month, the WDLC group that reads and discusses books—“theology-adjacent” but not too narrow or scholarly about defining that—is starting up for the 2026-2027 season.

Ordinarily we meet by zoom every other month on the second Wednesday at 11 AM. But this first time, September 9, we are meeting face to face at the church. The reading is *Convictions* by the Biblical scholar and public intellectual Marcus Borg. It builds on Borg's life story (which started Lutheran in Western Minnesota) and synthesizes his work on the Bible, with many extrapolations into commentary on US religion and politics. On deck for November is a book on Grundtvig that somewhat pairs with Borg.

Perhaps it bears repeating that the full slate of readings is as follows:

September 9 Marcus Borg, *Convictions: How I Learned what Matters Most*

November 11am Allchin, *Grundtvig: An Introduction to His Life and Work*

January 13 James McBride, *The Heaven and Earth Grocery Store*

March 10 David Treuer, *Rez Life*

May 12 (Still open for emergent ideas, since there was no clear fifth place vote.)

Please consider joining us for this season!

GOING ON A BEAR TREE HUNT

Fall is a great time to take a walk in the woods. The WD Woodland School invites you (and your children, grandchildren, or a friend) to take a short walk on the Woodland School Trails and participate in a Tree Identification Scavenger Hunt! We recently installed tree identification signs for 9 specimens found in the woods. The trunks of these 9 trees are encircled with light green flagging tape. At the base of the trunk is an arboretum-style sign with a photo of a leaf from that species and sometimes a photo of its bark as well. All but 1 of these sample trees are alongside the trail. (You'll have to keep your eyes peeled though for that 1, which is about 20 feet off the trail. Good Luck!)



Included below is a checklist of our 9 sample trees. Your challenge is to find at least 8 of them. Afterwards or on another walk, you might want to try to find matches for each of these sample trees.

Another challenge for the same day or a future walk would be to download the free Seek app by iNaturalist, which allows you to take and store photos of your tree and plant observations. It also helps you to identify other trees and plants.

In the future, we plan to offer special Woodland School Family Events like this tree scavenger hunt. Initially, though, we would focus on basic observation skills, such as the use of the senses in our woodland.

WD Woodland School Trail: Tree Identification Checklist

☐ Sugar Maple



☐ Black Ash



☐ White Pine



☐ White Ash



☐ Red Oak



☐ Yellow Birch



☐ White Oak



☐ Basswood



☐ Elm



LOAVES & FISHES MONTHLY REPORT AUGUST 2026

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

Households served: 37
Luck: 24; Unity: 11
Adults: 60; Children: 12
New families: 2
Total people: 72

Donations: Money: \$866
(Below includes TEFAP, purchased food, donations)
Weight of food coming in: # 1,732
Weight of food going out: # 1,985
Volunteer hours: 51 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: diced tomatoes, spaghetti sauce, fruit, green beans, Chinese foods, saltine crackers, tuna without soy, spices, personal needs.

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

RENOVATE & RESTORE

Pictures from the Building Committee's clean up day at the parsonage! Thank you to all the volunteers.

Not pictured: those who donated to financially support the project!

THANK YOU!

Pictured (in order of appearance) from Top Left:
Carl Hansen, Bill Krueger, Mike Miles, Bill Brumfield, Terra Lumley
(and one more person we can't quite see...)



West Denmark Heritage Council

Presents

From Sweden!



Jaerv

JOEL HAGEN: FLUTE, WHISTLES

ANDERS BERGSTEN: DOUBLE BASS

HARALD NILSSON: GUITAR

MARKUS GUSTAVSSON: FIDDLE

TOBIAS HEDLUND: PUMP ORGAN

West Denmark Lutheran Church

Sunday, October 11 at 4:00 pm
West Denmark Lutheran Church
2478 170th Street Luck, WI 54853
Reserved Seating \$25
Open Seating \$20

Tickets available at door
Or online at:
westdenmark.net



The doors will open at 3:30. There will be one 75 minute set.

www.jaerv.com

For more information call: 715-529-0830 westdenmark.net

West Denmark Lutheran Church



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

Return Service Requested

September 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, 11:40am, usually Cafe Wren	

TUESDAY

Chair Yoga with Connie	10am
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WEDNESDAY

Bible Study	1pm
Choir Practice	7pm

THURSDAY

Every Other week:

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

9/2	Choir Resumes (except 9/9)
9/20	Welcome Pastor Jason!
9/27	Thanks to Shawn service
10/4	Harvest Fest

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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.