



WWW.HALFWAYCREEK.ORG

Halfway Creek

LUTHERAN CHURCH

CURRENTS

SEPTEMBER 2025

Reach Out , Share Christ with All

Dear Halfway Creek Family,

And just like that, in the blink of an eye (or so it seems), we say goodbye to summer. Gone are the late sunsets and the carefree schedules. Our youth are heading back to school or off to college, and beginning a new year of Sunday School and Confirmation.

As we step into September, we are reminded that this is a season of change and harvest. Summer winds down, routines shift, and we begin looking toward the close of the year with renewed purpose and hope. It's a time to reflect on what God has been doing in our lives and to prepare our hearts for the new opportunities He is placing before us.

Thankfully, our church continues to grow in faith, service, and fellowship. Whether you're returning from summer travels, starting a new school year, or simply settling into a new rhythm, we invite you to stay connected. There are so many ways to get involved—from Bible studies and outreach events to worship and even daily maintenance and upkeep.

Let's continue to walk together in love, encourage one another, and remain faithful in all we do. May this September bring a fresh wind of God's grace into your life.

Blessings,

Patti Happel, Synod Authorized Minister

UPCOMING EVENTS

September

- 1 Labor Day
- 7 10:30 a.m. God's work. Our hands. worship & service at the bandshell
- 11 6:00 p.m. Vision Board Meeting
- 14 **10:00 a.m. Worship;** Pastor Tara Shilts presiding; Rally Sunday;
Cookies due for LuMin; Items for LWR personal care kits due
- 21 9:00 a.m. Sunday School; Blessing of the Bibles at worship
10:00 a.m. Worship; Pastor Garman presiding; assemble personal care
kits after worship. All are welcome to help!
- 24 6:00 p.m. Confirmation Student and Parent meeting at HCLC
- 28 9:00 a.m. Sunday School
10:00 a.m. Worship; Patti Happel presiding



GOD'S WORK. OUR HANDS. SUNDAY



Join the Holmen Area ELCA churches for God's work. Our hands. on Sunday, September 7 at 10:30 a.m. We'll have coffee and donuts to start the day followed by worship with Pastor

Kathryn Thompson of LuMin Campus Ministry preaching. We'll participate in a service project by assembling Lutheran World Relief kits and have a light lunch! Plan to bring a chair or blanket to sit on. Let's fill the lawn! Also, if anyone would like to help serve coffee and donuts, please let Bette or Patti know. Thank you!

Reminder: No worship at HCLC on September 7!

VISION BOARD

President

Bette Pedretti
bettepedretti@yahoo.com
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Treasurer

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payne.carrie@hotmail.com
608-790-4401

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608-317-1638

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608-738-3896

Synod Authorized Minister

Patti Happel
pastor@halfwaycreek.org
608-317-9525

Please contact the vision board with any input you may have. The next Vision Board meeting is Thursday, September 11 at 6:00 p.m.

FINANCIALS THROUGH JULY 2025

	<u>Total Offering</u>	<u>Rent Income</u>	<u>Expenditures</u>	<u>Difference</u>
January-25	\$11,212.00	\$2,150.00	\$13,676.56	-\$314.56
February-25	\$10,732.00	\$2,150.00	\$11,094.45	\$1,787.55
March-25	\$12,072.18	\$2,150.00	\$13,616.82	\$605.36
April-25	\$13,895.00	\$2,150.00	\$16,634.74	-\$589.74
May-25	\$10,455.00	\$2,150.00	\$13,731.81	-\$1,126.81
June-25	\$13,480.00	\$2,150.00	\$14,350.63	\$1,279.37
July-25	\$10,921.00	\$2,150.00	\$16,254.89	-\$3,183.89
Totals	\$82,767.18	\$15,050.00	\$99,359.90	-\$1,542.72

HALFWAY CREEK LUTHERAN CHURCH

Vision Board Meeting Minutes

AUGUST 14, 2025

Members present: Patti Happel, Amy Noel, Carrie Payne, Bette Pedretti, Nancy Holley, Nicole Stumlin and Wayne Atchley

Members absent: Andrea Baxter, Michelle Olson, Ema Nedoba and Olivia Nedoba

Guests: Lynn Wegner

Call to Order @ 6:00PM

Approval of Agenda -Motion made and seconded to approve agenda.

Devotion/Prayer by President Bette Pedretti. We will begin to take turns doing devotion. Amy will do September.

Actions since last meeting:

- Approved June VB minutes via email 6/22/25.
- Approved purchase of patio door for parsonage from Clear Choice via email 7/16/25.

Financial Report for JUNE and JULY Received:

- Noisy Offering:
 - September: Suicide Prevention - La Crosse Area suicide Prevention and Wills Project (Will was a young Melrose farmer who committed suicide)
 - October - Breast Cancer Awareness
 - November - STAR Center - The **STAR Center** helps all **La Crosse**-area community members live their best lives through adaptive fitness programming, wheelchair sports and more.
- Congratulations on paying off the mortgage 7/2/25!
- **Motion made and seconded** to set up two separate Thrivent accounts, with a Building and Property fund being one account and the Dedicated Funds being the second account. **Motion passed.**
- **Note:** At the June meeting it was approved to put \$1000 per month into the building and property account. Jodi has also reached out to individuals who gave to debt reduc-

tion electronically and asked if they wanted to continue this donation for the building and property account.

- TriCor building property insurance began 8/1/2025, this replaces our policy with Brotherhood Mutual.
- Church property maintenance expenses were high in June due to paying Krause instruction for work on the leak on the roof, the payment to Dave's tree service for tree removal and a payment to Ziegler Heating and Air/C.
- **Motion made and seconded** to use church maintenance account to pay \$750 for additional tree removal (it died after the others were removed). **Motion passed.**
- **Motion made and seconded** to use undesigned dedicated funds in the amount of \$1000 to pay for SAM ministry application evaluation. (Note: Total amount is \$1631, we will ask the Synod to pay the rest.) **Motion passed.**
- **Motion made and seconded** to use dedicated funds in parsonage, windows and building repair accounts and the Krause memorial along with undesigned funds in the amount of \$7633.60 to pay for gutter covers, the patio door at the parsonage and back door off the old office. **Motion passed.**

Ministry/Office/Music and Liturgy Update:

- SAMs report - Patti shared her activity of past couple of months. Bette will begin a process of evaluating the role as indicated in the contract signed earlier this year.
- Lynn highlighted some of the planned activities of the fall calendar. On September 14, we will return to a 10AM service with weekly Sunday School before the service.
- We are planning a celebration on October 26th to acknowledge successfully paying off our mortgage. Amy will check with some members of the WELCA group to find out if they are willing to help pay the cost of a catered meal by L&M Catering of Melrose.
- Sound System update - Sound board is ordered, and on schedule to be installed early this fall. Plan to order microphones next. As of today, contributions of \$2440, have been given.
- HCLC will co-host with Mindoro Lutheran/Lewis Valley at HCLC, Hymns & Pies.

Continued on page 6

Old Business:

- Tech team recommendations - Wayne, Aaron and Shari met
 - We have four computers that need to be upgraded to Windows 11 at a monthly fee of \$3 per computer, previously there was no charge.
 - Jodi's computer cannot be upgraded and will need to be replaced.
 - Patti has been using her personal computer for pastoral work. Future consideration: Providing a computer for pastoral role.
- Property Team update-Trees cut down; back door ordered; patio door ordered; Gutter covers installed.
- Outreach - Lutheran World Relief personal care packages for God's Work, Our Hands.
- Safety plan/policies - Carrie and Michelle met with Jeremy Cook and did a walk through of the building. He offered many helpful tips and ideas. Carrie will provide that list to the property team to prioritize.
- Youth team has been meeting over the summer and making plans for weekly Sunday School. Teaching will be shared. Teachers are very excited about planned activities and curriculum for the kids. Rally Sunday on September 14, 2025
- Confirmation will kick off on October 1 under the leadership of Nicole Stumlin and Kari Washburn. They will meet first three Wednesdays of the month and do some additional service projects/activity. Anticipate five confirmands in grades 6 - 8. Confirmation planned May 3, 2026.

New Business:

- **Motion made and seconded** to allow Shari Ireland to host a Scrapbooking weekend yearly on the first weekend October. **Motion approved.**

September Agenda

- Using Church as Wedding Venue for outside Pastors- Set up a policy?
- Constitution Changes introduced
- Legacy Committee Report
- Job descriptions of current staff members and review of church policies

- Worship Volunteer Roles
- Welcome brochure for review
- Health Fair or activity for the congregation

Closing Prayer

Adjourned at 7:53

Next meeting(s): September 11, 2025 -6pm

SOUND EQUIPMENT FUNDRAISING UPDATE

Sound Equipment Fundraising Update

As you might have heard, we are fundraising to replace some of our sound equipment used by the Worship Team. Worship Team has been using the original sound equipment that is approximately 25 years old. The age of the equipment has been starting to show and giving us sound issues the last few years. Here's a quick summary of our immediate needs and our wish list needs.

Immediate Needs and costs:

- Digital mixer \$1,978
- Six new mics, cords, and stands \$1,412

TOTAL for IMMEDIATE NEEDS \$3,390

Items needing to be replaced soon:

- Electronic keyboard - \$2000

Wish list items:

- Two wireless mics - \$2845

As of the end of August, we raised \$3140 and were able to order the digital mixer and six new mics, cords, and stands. We hope to raise enough money (approximately \$5000) in order to replace our electronic keyboard and order two wireless handheld mics. Thanks to everyone who has contributed.

FINANCIAL CORNER: STEWARDING GOD'S PROVISIONS

- If you are a Thrivent member, check to see if you have Choice Dollars to designate. In 2024, Halfway Creek Lutheran Church received \$1,231.00 from Thrivent.
- Tired of writing checks for your offering each week? Signing up for automatic electronic giving is easy! You can choose how often, how much, and a specific day that you want your offering to be deducted from either your savings or checking account. Forms are available outside the church office if you want to switch to electronic giving. Contact Jodi if you have questions.
- Thank you for your generosity. HCLC has collected \$1,723.15 in noisy offerings during the first six months of 2025.

GIVING AT HCLC

HCLC uses on-line giving through VANCO. You can also use Paypal—just search for Halfway Creek Lutheran Church or scan this QR code to go directly to the App. Thank you for helping us further our mission.



NOISY OFFERING

The August noisy offering supported God's work. Our hands. Sunday with \$183.50 collected prior to printing! Thank you for your continued generosity!

In September we'll be collecting for suicide prevention organizations. See the article on page 12 of this newsletter for more information! Let's keep making some noise!

HOLMEN LUTHERAN FOOD PANTRY

Food Pantry Requests for September: **chili, canned chicken, baking items, pasta/rice sides, peanut butter, spaghetti sauce.** Thank you for your support! Items dropped off at Halfway Creek will be delivered to the Food Pantry!!

PROPERTY TEAM

This has been a busy summer for the property team and helpers, with more work to be done!

The projects that have been completed so far: several dead trees were cut down and some removed by Dave's tree service; a new water filter was installed (in the old furnace room) for the water line, as sand build up was causing problems in the water lines/malfunctioning of urinal in new addition downstairs bathroom; gutter clean out and covers were installed to prevent further need for renting a lift and having someone available to clean gutters regularly. This was causing leakage of water into the basement back hallway at times of heavier rainfall. The trees in the parking lot were trimmed as there were many low branches that would hit vehicle tops when parking in the lower lot. It has also improved visibility when driving out of the driveways. One of the motors on the furnace was not working and so that was replaced.

The paint for the ramp has been purchased and there will be a painting day soon, once weather is a little cooler. The back door of the church (left over from the last phase from our window project last year) is ordered and will be installed this fall. The patio door at parsonage needs replacing and that is on order and will be installed before winter. There is significant air leakage at the base of the windows in the sanctuary. These will be caulked and new boards installed to improve this.

There are a couple of known projects that will be addressed in the future-placement of water softener in parsonage at some point and rewiring of the stoves in the old kitchen.

It is important to note that as much of the work that can be, is being done by our members. But a lot of these projects have needed outside services to complete. A big thank you to all that have helped in any way with completing these projects and to the hard work of the property team!!

Please consider giving to our new maintenance account, which will be a Thrivent account and earn us considerably more interest than the bank. As you well know, maintenance and repairs are an ongoing need when you own property. Thanks for your generosity and prayers!

OUTREACH MINISTRY

Outreach project: Care Packages to be sent to the College Students-Class of '25

We had several of our young members that graduated high school this year and are headed into their next chapter. Most are pursuing further education and many will be away from home. It's an exciting time in their lives but also stressful. A care package from HCLC seems like a great way to let them know that we are thinking of them and praying for their success.

Our young adults recently completed "My Favorite Things" forms, and we'd love to gather some of those items for them. Please consider contributing an item from the list to help with this effort. We'll also have a container for cash donations, which will go toward buying any remaining gifts. This is a great way to invest in our young adults who are the future of our church!

These are the items we are looking for:

Gift cards: (3) Culvers; (1) Chik fil A; (1) Jersey Mike's; (1) Qdoba

Candy: 100 grand bar; Twix; Nerd gummy clusters; Milk chocolate bars; Starburst minis. Snacks: Goldfish; Cheez its; Microwave popcorn; Baked Cheetos; Oatmeal Crème Pies.

God's Work. Our Hands. HCLC additional outreach

Be sure to join in on our Health Kit assembly after church on Sunday September 21st! HCLC is assembling 50 additional Lutheran World Relief Health Kits to add to the God's Work. Our Hands. project done at the community service on September 7th. All the supplies will be provided, we just need some extra hands, young or old, to help with assembly. It is another easy way to join in our outreach program that is

so important in supporting our mission to “Reach out and share Christ with all!”

Holmen’s Hope Summer Lunch Program

Thanks to all who donated food and money, or helped with the Summer Lunch Program. There were a total of 1812 lunches made, which is 400 more lunches than last summer. There were only 469 lunches leftover and taken to the Boys and Girls Club in Holmen. This is a higher percentage of delivery in the community than we have had in the past!

The Holmen’s Hope weekend Backpack Program begins this fall. If you want to help assemble bags of food that are delivered to the schools for students please contact: hello@holmenshope.org. or Facebook: Holmen’s Hope. Thank you.

SUNDAY SCHOOL & CONFIRMATION

Information letters were mailed to Sunday School and Confirmation families in August and registration forms may be found on our website under Sunday School and Confirmation or there are copies at church! Please bring all forms to Rally Sunday on September 14. Worship starts at 10 a.m. that day (new fall schedule).

Sunday School will begin at 9:00 a.m. on September 21st and will meet each Sunday through Spring.

Confirmation will begin with a Parent and Student meeting on Wednesday, September 24 at 6:00 p.m. Confirmation will meet the first 3 Wednesdays of each month from 6:00–7:30 p.m. The first official class is set for October 1st.

We welcome all to Halfway Creek! Feel free to ask your friends to attend Sunday School or Confirmation with you!

Thank you to the Education Team for meeting and preparing for this new year of faith formation!

NOISY OFFERING: SUICIDE PREVENTION

The greatest thing we can do is let people know they are loved. Fred Rodgers

This month we are focusing on Suicide Prevention and raising awareness of this and other mental health issues. We plan on donating our proceeds to two different services.

#WillPProject was launched in 2021, by Brianne Massman, to raise awareness of issues related to mental health and suicide. Her brother, Will, died by suicide. He was in his 20's, had grown up on the farm, graduated from UW-River Falls. He worked for Federation Cooperative, using his experience to help farmers. In 2020, he became a business owner, buying a bar/restaurant. When COVID struck, Will made the best of it. He had his "ups and downs" but he was excited about his new business and appeared to be doing ok. It was a shock to his family when they got the call in September 2020 that Will had taken his own life. According to Brianne, there were not any warning signs, and "he certainly wasn't talking about struggles with mental health. He was a farm kid, after all."

"According to the WI Department of Health Services, the suicide rate among young farmers is 3 times higher than the national average. Those impacted most are men aged 25 and older."

The day-to-day life of a farmer, or many professions for that matter, are stressful and many feel like they don't have time to ask for help. There is still some stigma with asking for help for mental health issues. In 2021, Brianne decided to pursue raising awareness about the issues of mental health and suicide. Hoping to prevent others from going through the pain that her family experienced with the loss of Will.

This nonprofit often works with other organizations. They participate in parades and events, providing resources to help start the conversation about mental health. They have provided donations to schools for helpful materials.

You can learn more about #WillPProject or make a donation: #WillPProject; c/o Brianne Massman W11945 Prindle Road Alma Center, WI 54611 or Facebook:

www.facebook.com/groups/willpproject. Check it out, it's a very inspiring site.

La Crosse Area Suicide Prevention Initiative has a 21-year history of providing education, advocacy, access, knowledge and safety to the community. Part of their education efforts includes an Annual Suicide Prevention Summit, which is on September 17, 2025 at UW-L. They also provide advocacy at the state and national levels. They improve access to resources in hope of reducing the stigma of mental health issues and suicide. They increase knowledge of risk factors, warning signs and preparedness response. They also focus on safety such as gun safe locks, gun storage and community pill collection. More information can be found at www.lacrossesuicideprevention.org.

HALFWAY CREEK CEMETERY NEWS

Turn, turn, turn is a hit 1965 folk song written by Pete Seeger and performed by the Byrds. It expresses the reality of a changing, or turning, world in which there is a time and place for everything. I remember listening to this song in 1965, seasons are changing! It's time to get back to school, time to harvest the squash, pumpkins, and apples. Time to rake leaves and jump into the piles. Time to remember:

[Chorus]

To everything (Turn, turn, turn)
There is a season (Turn, turn, turn)
And a time to every purpose under heaven

It's never too early to purchase your final resting place. If you wish to purchase a lot for either full casket or cremation burial, please contact one of the Trustees below. Lots are \$300 for members of Halfway Creek and \$600 for non-members. A single lot can be used for either one full casket burial or up to four cremation burials.

Dan Brudahl, 608-526-6950; Mark Witte, 608-317-0183
Hannah Scholze, 608-797-9388



SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

If your birthday is missing, please notify the office.

1	13	20	28
Rachel Temp	Jason Bramwell	Dawn Rink	Aaron Balow
3	Susie Johnson	21	Jason Ruhbusch
Adalyn Ruhbusch	Emersen Strangstalien	Nicole Lepsch	30
5	14	22	Jessica Cook
Gregory Britton	Darlene Feltes	Bob Cottrell	Josh Kinsman
6	Buelah Sanders	Hannah Wegner	Maverick Ruhbusch
Teagan Yahnke	Shelly Thompson	23	Nash Ulrich
7	17	James Hansen	Julia Yahnke
Adler McDowell	Kaden Casberg	Morgan Jostad	
8	18	Stan Schwier	
Angela Kinsman	Diane Jostad	Lila Sutherland	
11	Emily Jostad	25	
Brody Happel	19	Ruth Jostad	
	Alyssa Shisler	Richard Pedretti	



IN OUR PRAYERS

We pray for friends and family of those who have recently passed: Harvey Miller, Charles Severson, Ray Cook, Madilyn Vang.

We pray for Gayle "Susie" Johnson, Laurie Gillespie, Cathy Braund, Diane Jostad, Betty Bender, Stacey Fredricks, Robin Ruhbusch, Mike & Pat Martin, Laurie Noelke, Megan Sacia Ulrich, Perry Voshage, Marjorie Lee, Jean Latham, Joan Vaughn, Bridget Ferk, Thelma Severson, Katie Wier, Phoebe & Bill Kitzke, Gayle Kuespert, Beulah Sanders, Cary Heyer, Jenny Lee, Mary Dokkebaken, Karla Johnson, the Coats family.

SERVING AND WORSHIP

	WORSHIP TIME	SEXTON	ALTAR GUILD	OFFERING COUNTERS
SEP 7	10:30 am at bandshell	God's work. Our hands.		
SEP 14	10:00 Pr. Tara	Stan	Bette	Bette Susan
SEP 21	10:00 Pr. Garman	Archie	Nancy	Jodi E
SEP 28	10:00 Patti	Joe A.	Bette	Mike

Volunteer to help at Worship

Use [Sign-up Genius](#) button on the website or E-News; call the office or email assistant@halfwaycreek.org.

Volunteer Clipboards are also in the gathering space.

Gifting your time is important to help meet the needs of this congregation at each service.

Thank you so much for sharing your time and talents!

Check out our Google Calendar now on the home page of our [website](#)!

TRAINING

Training is available for volunteers! If you have been considering helping and are not quite sure of the duties, reach out to Patti or Shari. We'll get you the information you need, training and support to be successful and have a great time!

Halfway Creek Lutheran Church
608-526-3701
www.halfwaycreek.org

WORSHIP & EDUCATION

9:00 AM Sunday School

10:00 AM Worship

OFFICE HOURS

Monday—Closed

Tuesday—9:00 a.m.—3:00 p.m.

Wednesday—9:00 a.m.—3:00 p.m.

Thursday—9:00 a.m.—3:00 p.m.

Friday—Closed

Saturday—Closed

Sunday—Worship

PASTORAL CARE

If the need arises for Pastoral Care,
please contact Patti at 608-317-9525.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Find us on Facebook, Instagram,
YouTube and our website

@halfwaycreeklutheranchurchholmen

#halfwaycreeklutheranchurch

#reachoutsharechristwithall

Halfway Creek Lutheran Church
W6016 County Road W
Holmen, WI 54636





Join us at

Halfway Creek Lutheran Church

W6016 County Rd W

Holmen, WI 54636

For

Community Trunk-or-Treat

Saturday, October 25

1:00 p.m.—3:00 p.m.

Wear your costumes and enjoy Trunk-or-Treating, cookie decorating, games, snacks and more.

Bring your friends!

**In the case of inclement weather, we will set up inside!*

Let's Celebrate

Join us as we give thanks and celebrate God's faithfulness in a significant milestone: paying off our church addition mortgage! This is a joyous and grateful time for our congregation, and we want to honor everyone who contributed with their time, talent, generosity and/or prayers.

What: Special worship service and mortgage "burning", followed by a fellowship meal catered by L&M.

When: **Sunday, October 26, 2025 at Halfway Creek Lutheran Church**

Time: 10 a.m. worship service; 11:30 a.m. meal

R.S.V.P. by October 1s to help us plan for the meal.

We hope you will join us for this momentous occasion as we look back on God's blessings and prayerfully look forward to the future.

Living in God's grace,

Halfway Creek Lutheran Church Vision Board

I will be attending the Halfway Creek Celebration on October 26.

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Number Attending: _____

Please drop off RSVP at church, mail to HCLC, W6016 County Rd W, Holmen, WI 54636, or email to assistant@halfwaycreek.org.