



WWW.HALFWAYCREEK.ORG

# Halfway Creek

LUTHERAN CHURCH

## **CURRENTS**

OCTOBER 2025

***Reach Out , Share Christ with All***

Dearest Halfway Creek Family & Friends,

I am sitting here thinking about October coming, and I can't help but think about where we currently are as a congregation, and reflect on where we have been.

To think that just a little over one year ago, the consideration that we might have to close the doors, was a very sad reality. Yet here we are, planning a celebration. Not only a celebration of having been able to pay off the mortgage, but also celebrating our congregational family. The smiles, the hugs, and the fellowship each week, has my heart feeling like it could burst.

I know I have expressed my heartfelt appreciation on numerous occasions, but I feel the need to do it again. So, THANK YOU!! Thank you those who have made generous donations (small and large), THANK YOU to those who have been volunteering in every aspect of this church and making sure that everything keeps running smoothly, and THANK YOU for all the prayers. Somehow, we have come out on the other end.

Just a reminder, if you have not yet RSVP'd for the celebration dinner, please do so as soon as possible (today would be great)!! We need to get a final count to the caterer. You can either call, or email, Shari.

### Proverbs 11:24-25

<sup>24</sup> One person gives freely, yet gains even more;  
another withholds unduly, but comes to poverty.

<sup>25</sup> A generous person will prosper;  
whoever refreshes others will be refreshed.

Happy Fall & Blessings to you all ~

Patti Happel – Synod Authorized Minister

## CALENDAR

### October

- 1      6:00 p.m. Confirmation Class
- 3-4    Scrap and Craft event at HCLC hosted by Jodi and Shari, RSVP to attend
- 5      9:00 a.m. Sunday School  
9:15 a.m. Pet Blessing upper parking lot (see article page 9)  
**10:00 a.m. Worship**, welcome Pastor Tara Shilts  
5:00 p.m. Union Mills 4H meeting Heritage Hall
- 7      Care package items are due (see Outreach article page 7)
- 8      6:00 p.m. Confirmation Class
- 9      6:00 p.m. Vision Board Meeting
- 12     9:00 a.m. Sunday School  
**10:00 a.m. Worship**; Patti Happel presiding
- 14     6:00 p.m. Confirmation
- 15     11:00 a.m.—1:00 p.m. Card ministry with light lunch. All supplies provided.  
Drop of coats for Thrivent Coat Drive.
- 16     Happy Anniversary HCLC
- 19     9:00 a.m. Sunday School  
**10:00 a.m. Worship**; Pastor Garman presiding
- 25     1:00—3:00 p.m. Trunk or Treat
- 26     9:00 a.m. Sunday School  
**10:00 a.m. Worship**; Pastor Wayne presiding  
11:30 a.m. Program and Celebration Luncheon catered by L & M; RSVP to  
the office (assistant@halfwaycreek.org) by October 1.

## VISION BOARD

### President

Bette Pedretti  
bettepedretti@yahoo.com  
608-526-3241

### Treasurer

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

Nancy Holley  
5445nanh@gmail.com  
608-526-3418

### Vice President

Nicole Stumlin  
bigfarmer053@yahoo.com  
608-769-3642

### Members

Wayne Atchley  
atchleyw@charter.net  
608-317-1638

Michelle Olson  
michelle@abeeinc.com  
(608)780-9802

### Secretary

Amy Noel  
noelprairie@icloud.com  
608-386-0299

Andrea Baxter  
baxtera42@gmail.com  
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, October 9 at 6:00 p.m.*

## FINANCIALS THROUGH AUGUST 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       |
| August-25   | \$12,859.00           | \$2,150.00         | \$13,557.12         | \$1,451.88        |
| Total       | \$95,626.18           | \$17,200.00        | \$112,917.02        | -\$90.84          |

**HALFWAY CREEK LUTHERAN CHURCH  
VISION BOARD MINUTES  
SEPTEMBER 11, 2025**

**PRESENT:** Patti Happel, Amy Noel, Andrea Baxter, Bette Pedretti, Nicole Stumlin, Wayne Atchley, Ema Nedoba, Olivia Nedoba

**ABSENT/EXCUSED:** Nancy Holley, Carrie Payne, and Michelle Olson

**GUESTS:** Jodi Anderson

**Call to Order @ 6:02**

**Approval of Agenda:** Motion made and seconded to approve the agenda. Motion passed.

**Devotion/Prayer** by Amy. Nicole will do October.

**Actions since last meeting:** Approved VB minutes 8/20/2025 via email  
Approved replacement of two basement furnaces 9/4/2025 via email

**Financial Report Received**

- Noisy Offering:
  - October: Breast Cancer
  - November: The **STAR Center** helps all **La Crosse**-area community members live their best lives through adaptive fitness programming, wheelchair sports and more.
  - December: ELCA Good Gifts (Ornaments)
- 2026 Budget planning meeting set for November 1, 2025 at 9:00AM.
- Recommend changing the name of the Building and Property Account to Maintenance Fund which will be opened with Thrivent in September 2025.
- With the support of several WELCA members, we will use their monies in Dedicated Funds to cover the cost of catering at the October 26, 2025 celebration for paying off our mortgage.

**Ministry/Office Update:**

- SAMs report - Patti shared with the VB, how she spent her time in ministry and education over the past month. At the October meeting, the VB will do a six month evaluation of the role.
- Invitations for the October 26 celebration have gone out to all active members. Bette shared the L&M menu for that day. We will ask the congregation to provide dessert.

**Music and Liturgy:** Update on sound system - Microphones here and set-up. SIMS will be here next week to install the new sound board.

**Old Business:**

- Tech Team - Wayne reported that the new computer is set-up in the office and is available for both Jodi and Patti.
- Property Team - The ramp is painted. The dead tree on the hill is gone. They are still waiting for the replacement doors for the church and parsonage. Two new furnaces installed in the church. Thank you to the generous member who paid for this project.
- Outreach - We will be putting together more kits for Lutheran World Relief after church on Sunday. HCLC will be providing the cookies for LuMin this week. Please consider making a donation to the care packages for college kids. The packages will go out in mid October. Working on plans for a November 17, 2025 blood drive here.
- Legacy Committee - Meets the third Thursday. Discussion was answering the key questions from the Holy Conversation book. Check the Synod website for more information.
- Youth team - Rally Sunday along with the blessing of the backpacks this week. Confirmation starts Oct. 1 and will meet the first three Wednesday's of the month. Truck or Treat is scheduled for October 25th.
- Safety plan/policies - On October 17th, Sargent Bauer of the La Crosse County Police Department will be doing a walk through with us.
- Welcome brochure completed.
- Health checks for congregation - No date set.
- Review of current church policies - Andrea will take a lead on this.
- Job descriptions - Amy and Patti will work on this and create a plan for evaluations of staff members.

**New Business:**

- Patti, Nancy and Amy reviewed the Constitution and shared their recommendation with the VB. Plan to approve the changes next month in preparation for the next annual meeting.
- Andrea will review and bring back recommendations on the Wedding Policy, considering how we might engage outside pastors.

*Continued on page 6*

### ***October 2025 Currents***

6

- Invitations extended for: La Crosse Area Coalition of LGBTQ+ Affirming Christians and La Crosse Area Church Security Network. Please let Bette know if you are interested or would recommend someone in the congregation.

#### **Agenda items in October:**

- Patti's six month evaluation.
- Approval of recommended changes in constitution.
- Begin policy review.

**Closing: Lord's Prayer**

**Adjournment @ 7:43**

**Next meeting(s): October 9, 2025**

## **PROPERTY TEAM**

Another busy month for Property team and helpers! The ramp was painted and looks great. Thanks to all who assisted and enjoyed a little appreciation lunch.

The dead pine tree at the top of the parking lot was removed by Dave's Tree Service.

The basement furnace was found to be nonfunctional upon routine check by Ziegler's. Both the furnaces that supply heat/air to the original part of the church were 23 years old. Both were replaced, thankfully while the weather was still warm. God has once again blessed us with a generous member, who paid for the furnaces and installation. Thank you so much!!

The Property Team is always at work and can use additional helpers throughout the year. Let Mike Martin or Rich Pedretti know if you are interested in helping. Thank you for keeping our property in great shape!

## **OUTREACH**

LuMin Cookies were provided to the La Crosse area colleges/universities on September 16. Thank you to all our wonderful bakers and to Gaye for delivering them!

Fifty (50) Lutheran World Relief Health Kits were assembled after church on September 21st. This was in addition to the kits assembled at God's Work. Our Hands on September 7th. The kits will be delivered October 11th to the drop off site at Good Shepherd in La Crosse and transported to the LWR warehouse for distribution. Thank you to all who donated and helped assemble the kits. We appreciate the support and prayers of all for this ministry that helps fulfill our mission to Reach Out, Share Christ with All!

Our most recent outreach involved supporting our 1st year college students who are members of HCLC! We are sending **care packages** to these young adults who are moving forward in the next chapter of their lives. If you haven't had a chance, you can still **donate items** or a monetary gift to purchase items we don't receive, **through Tuesday, October 7th!** These young adults are our future!

Our **card ministry will be meeting Wednesday, October 15th from 11 AM-1 PM.** This is a fun way to send well wishes to those inside and outside of our congregation to brighten someone's day. We provide the supplies, just need some well-wishers to help write out the notes. We also provide a light lunch and good fellowship! Come join us.

Other upcoming events include a Blood Drive November 17, ELCA Good Gifts and the Caring Tree in December. Thanks for all your generosity in supporting our local, regional and global projects.

Join us in living our mission: Reach Out, Share Christ with All!!

## **C E L E B R A T I O N   C H O I R**

In honor of paying off the church mortgage, we will offer a special choir anthem on Sunday, October 26 at the 10 am service. All singers are invited to join the worship team on this day for the anthem. We will be rehearsing on the following Thursdays at 6:00 pm: October 9, October 16, and October 23. We hope you can join us! Please contact Lynn Wegner at 414-305-4803 if you need more information.

## **SUNDAY SCHOOL & CONFIRMATION**

### **Youth Education is in Full Swing!**

A huge thank you to our incredible education team and volunteers who are regularly guiding our youth through Sunday School and Confirmation. Your dedication is truly helping to shape their faith!

**Sunday School (Grades 4K–5th):** Join us every Sunday at 9:00 a.m.! It's not too late to start—even if you haven't registered yet, please just come on by! You can find registration forms on our website or at the church.

**Confirmation Classes:** Confirmation is meeting on the first three Wednesdays of the month from 6:00–7:30 p.m., starting October 1st. There's still time to register, and all are welcome, so please invite your friends!

We're looking forward to a great year!

## **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**

In September, we collected for suicide prevention organizations: #WillPProject and La Crosse Suicide Prevention Initiative. We collected a total of \$196.63 for the month! Thank you! In October the Noisy Offering will support Breast Cancer organizations.

## **HOLMEN LUTHERAN FOOD PANTRY**

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

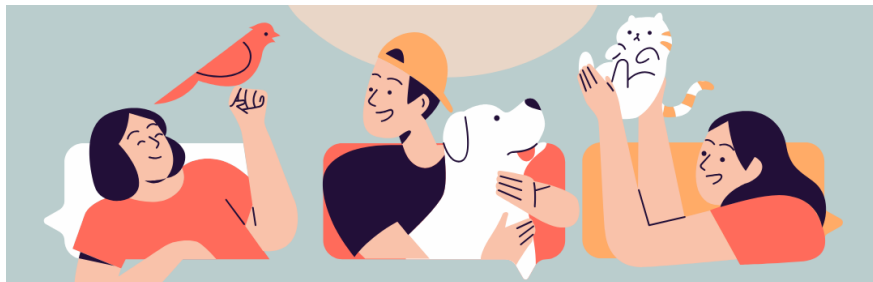


## **PET BLESSING OCTOBER 5TH**

In honor of the Feast of St. Francis, we will be holding a Pet Blessing on Sunday, October 5th at 9:15 AM. The Feast of St. Francis of Assisi is observed on Oct. 4th. St. Francis was an Italian friar who took a vow of poverty and cared for the poor. He also believed nature – including its creatures – was the mirror of God. He preached that it is our duty to protect and enjoy nature as both the stewards of God's creation and as creatures ourselves. In 1979, Pope John Paul II declared St. Francis to be the Patron of Ecology.

Many ELCA congregations celebrate the wonders of God's creation and the legacy of St. Francis by holding pet-blessing services and activities for the community around this time of the year. It is a time to remember how God's creatures – of all sizes, shapes and species – bless our lives and are essential to the environment that sustains all living things, including humankind. We commit ourselves to caring for their wellbeing in the world whether they be service animals, pets, domesticated animals, wild animals, pets in shelters, bugs or creatures that fly, crawl, run or swim.

Our Pet Blessing will be held outdoors in the upper parking lot on Sunday, October 5th beginning at 9:15 AM with a short 5 minute prayer service and then individual pet blessings. We welcome animals of all kinds! **WE ASK THAT ALL ANIMALS BE CONTAINED; EITHER ON A LEASH OR INSIDE A PET CARRIER.** We also ask that attendees be responsible for picking up any animal waste left by their pet in our parking lot. If your pet can't be here, please bring a photo so we can still pray for them. We hope you will join us for this special blessing!



## **OUTREACH MINISTRY**

### **New Outreach Opportunity**

James 2: 14-17 “What does it profit, my brethren, if a man says he has faith but not works? Can his faith save him? If a brother or sister is ill-clad and in lack of daily food, and one of you says to them, ‘Go in peace, be warmed and filled,’ without giving them the things needed for the body, what does it profit? So faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead.”

HCLC has an opportunity to act on our faith by helping the local Salvation Army. Acting on faith means demonstrating care for the needy through concrete actions, not just words.

We at HCLC are blessed with a strong caring and resilient history. One of our marks left on the community is our past Lutefisk and Meatball suppers. HCLC is well known for our wonderful food and hospitality. Food is a basic need and a common thread that connects all people throughout our community and the world. We have an opportunity to share our wonderful food and hospitality with our local Salvation Army.

Our local Salvation Army provides meals on a daily basis to 64 residents. There are volunteer groups that come in to assist with serving the evening meals. We have an opportunity to prepare a meal once a month to deliver to the Salvation Army and help them out with feeding those in need.

There is a variety of opportunities to participate in this ministry, no matter your age, ability or schedule. You may participate by: donation of food items-as requested per our menu for the meal; monetary donations to purchase food needed for the meal; preparing the meal; baking dessert items for the meal; delivery of the meal to the Salvation Army; and prayers for this outreach ministry.

Let’s put our faith into action, caring for the needy and reflecting God’s mercy and grace! Sign up sheets for this ministry are in the gathering space or please express your interest in helping by contacting the office or Bette at 608-526-3241.

## What's happening?

### Thrivent ANNUAL Coat DRIVE IS



**Thursday, October 16th!!**

Please bring new or gently used coats to Halfway Creek by October 15 and we'll drop them off at Thrivent. Or call Bette at 608-526-3241 and she will coordinate a pick-up.

*Thank you!*

### Card Writing

October 15 from 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Join us for a wonderful opportunity to reach out to our church family! We'll be meeting to write cards for members who can't attend church and those on our prayer lists. We'll also be putting together Care Packages for our young adults.

All supplies will be provided, and a light lunch will be served. Come lend a hand and be part of this meaningful ministry!

### Holmen Lutheran Church W-ELCA A Taste of Norway Meatball & Lefse Norwegian Dinner Saturday, October 18, 2025 4:00 p.m.-7:00 p.m.

\$18.00 Adults, \$5.00 Children (ages 3-10)  
Children 2 and under FREE



**Norwegian  
Cookies  
for Dessert**



Our thanks to Diane and Ed Eisermann  
for donating this  
extra long King Sized quilt with a  
"Starry Night Scrappy Log Cabin" Pattern  
Hand made by a  
La Crosse Synod ELCA Women's  
Congregation Group  
for our Door Prize



**Holmen**  
LUTHERAN CHURCH  
228 Morris St. • Holmen, WI  
(608) 526-3621

### TRICK OR TREAT SO OTHERS CAN EAT

October 31, 2025

5:30 PM – 7:30 PM

Looking for  
volunteers!

Sign-up

[HERE](#)



### Halfway Creek Lutheran Church Community

## Trunk or Treat!

October 25 from 1-3 PM

Wear your costumes and enjoy trunk or treating,  
games and more! Invite everyone!

[www.halfwaycreek.org](http://www.halfwaycreek.org)



## 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 1st to help us plan for the meal (late RSVP by Oct 10th accepted).***

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: \_\_\_\_\_

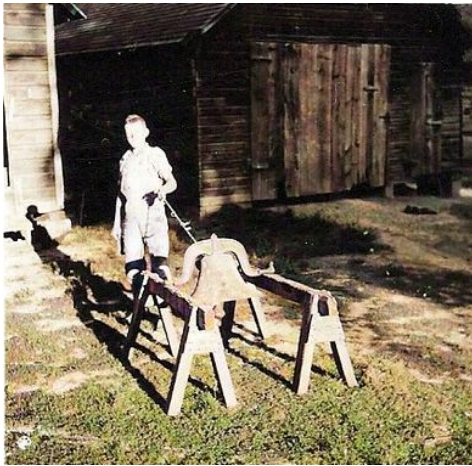
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Number Attending: \_\_\_\_\_

*Please drop off RSVP at church, mail to HCLC, W6016 County Rd W, Holmen, WI 54636, or email to [assistant@halfwaycreek.org](mailto:assistant@halfwaycreek.org).*

## HALFWAY CREEK CEMETERY NEWS

“My grandfather, Sherman Witte, was 14 years old when he rang an old dinner bell that was pulled out of the granary on the family farm east of Holmen, Wisconsin on VJ Day in 1945 to signal the end of World War II,” says Hannah Scholze, President Halfway Creek Lutheran Cemetery.



Sherman was the youngest child of Gustav and Nellie Witte and helped his parents on the farm throughout the 1940s. They would have experienced the rationing of sugar, rubber, gasoline, and other items that were commonly restricted on the United States home front during the war.

Furthermore, his father would have been one of the few people of German descent in the mostly Norwegian community in which they lived.

Both of his sisters moved out to Washington D.C. to work during the war, and one of his brothers-in-law served in the Army from 1942–1946. “Hearing the news about the end of the war would have likely brought feelings of hope for future peace, safety, and prosperity to Sherman and his family,” says Hannah. Today the bell hangs in the Halfway Creek Lutheran Cemetery where Sherman is buried and is rung during funerals. Thank you to all the Veterans who have served keeping our country safe.

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

## OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

*If your birthday is missing, please notify the office.*

|                    |                     |                  |                |
|--------------------|---------------------|------------------|----------------|
| <b>2</b>           | <b>9</b>            | <b>16</b>        | <b>28</b>      |
| Steven Johnson     | William Achterkirch | Micah Hill       | Lori Anderson  |
| <b>3</b>           | <b>10</b>           | <b>18</b>        | <b>29</b>      |
| Leanne Erdman      | Cary Heyer          | Mary Crocker     | Nicole Stumlin |
| <b>4</b>           | <b>11</b>           | <b>20</b>        | <b>30</b>      |
| Ronald Johnson     | Daniel Ulrich       | Julie Hemp       | Mark Witte     |
| <b>5</b>           | <b>12</b>           | <b>21</b>        |                |
| Christopher Baxter | Jimmie Ann Gates    | Shari Ireland    |                |
| <b>6</b>           | <b>13</b>           | <b>24</b>        |                |
| Jason Pralle       | Kate Pederson       | Rubianne Kinsman |                |
| <b>8</b>           | <b>14</b>           | <b>25</b>        |                |
| Archie Achterkirch | Ezekiel Finnell     | Jen Strangsalien |                |
| Joe Lepsch         | Sue Kolbo           |                  |                |
| Shawn Wegner       |                     |                  |                |



## 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<br>TIME           | SEXTON | ALTAR<br>GUILD   | OFFERING<br>COUNTERS |
|-------------------|---------------------------|--------|------------------|----------------------|
| <b>OCT<br/>5</b>  | 10:00<br>Pastor Tara      | Mike   | Carrie<br>Nicole | Rhonda<br>Sonja      |
|                   |                           |        |                  |                      |
| <b>OCT<br/>12</b> | 10:00<br>Patti            | Stan   | Bette            | Bette<br>Susan       |
|                   |                           |        |                  |                      |
| <b>OCT<br/>19</b> | 10:00<br>Pastor<br>Garman | Archie | Nancy            | Jodi E               |
|                   |                           |        |                  |                      |
| <b>OCT<br/>26</b> | 10:00<br>Pastor<br>Wayne  | Joe    | 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](mailto: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

We can help you get started as a volunteer! If you're interested in helping out but want to know more about the duties, contact Patti or Shari. They'll give you all the information, training, and support you need to be successful and have a great time.

Halfway Creek Lutheran Church  
608-526-3701  
[www.halfwaycreek.org](http://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

