AUGUSTANA LUTHERAN CHURCH

The Messenger

Volume 1, Issue 6 September2026

Special points of interest:

- Christmas in July Photos
- Food Pantry Sunday
- Can you help? Assisting Minister Sign-up
- Upcoming Dates to Remember
- RaiseRight Fundraiser

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Pastor's Page

"In the morning, while it was still very dark, Jesus got up and went out to a deserted place, and there he prayed." (Mark 1:35)

The Bible tells us that Jesus frequently looked for opportunities to temporarily leave his disciples. He would physically go to places away from his followers, away from the crowds of people who flocked around him. We are told that Jesus took this time to pray, but we can also assume that he needed time to relax and refresh himself. After his brief times away, Jesus always returned to continue teaching people about God's unconditional love.

I think that most people would agree we occasionally need time away from the demands of our every day lives. This has become increasingly necessary in today's fast paced world. Most of us really do need to take time to renew and restore ourselves.

So far this summer I've been able to enjoy a brief trip to Arizona with my oldest daughter. Setting aside my unfortunate fall and trip to the ER, I enjoyed this opportunity to travel out west and spend time with my sister and sister-in-law. Now I'm eagerly looking forward to visiting my youngest son in Connecticut.

On Saturday I'm driving to Indianapolis and spending the night with my oldest daughter and her family. That evening we're having a family dinner including my other daughter and both of my granddaughters.

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Lessons That Last

Most of us can remember a Sunday school teacher who made a lasting difference in our lives. Sometimes the simplest lessons become the ones we carry with us the longest.

One man recalled his high school Sunday school teacher, a businessman named Mr. Homan, who shared this advice with the boys in his class: "Don't ever go anywhere you would not want your mother or sister to go. Don't ever do anything you would not want your mother or sister to do."

Years later, the man reflected on those words and said, "That advice has served me well. I have always remembered it."

God often uses faithful teachers to plant seeds of wisdom, character and integrity in young hearts. Their influence may not always be seen right away, but the lessons they share can guide lives for years to come.

Never underestimate the power of a few thoughtful words spoken with love and conviction.

Stewardship of our nation

Politics have always been a source of friction in the United States, but things have never been as polarized and ugly as today. We are in a precarious place, where many political and social experts say we are in danger of unraveling altogether.

Christians can help, we who are commanded to love our neighbor as ourselves (Leviticus 19:8, Matthew 22:39) and commended to work for the common good (Isaiah 58:8-14, 1 Corinthians 12:7). In the month of July, when we remember the founding of our nation and all it stands for, we can recommit to good stewardship of our civic virtues, our political process, and national identity.

Here are some ideas:

Seek and Cling to truth: There are enough malicious "fake news" stories and wild conspiracy theories going around to make your head spin. Endeavor to find out what is true. Don't listen to lies and liars, and always speak truth, especially in face of lies.

Love and pray for those with whom you disagree: Jesus taught us to pray for our enemies (Matthew 5:44). Now those who disagree with our politics aren't our enemies, but the principle remains. Love and pray for them.

Don't insult: Jesus taught that when we say "you fool" to our neighbor we have committed murder in our hearts (Matthew 5:21-22). Engage on issues and policies, not personalities.

Settle for what's fair: Politics works best when both sides compromise. Everyone loses when it's played "all or nothing."

Finally, be a peacemaker: Jesus taught, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God."

Our country desperately needs cooler heads to prevail if we are to face the future as a healthy democracy. As Christian stewards, we can lead the way.

--Rob Blezard

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General Stewardship Resource Websites

Stewardship of Life Institute– Headquartered at United Lutheran Seminary, this site has a trove of resources in areas of congregational and personal stewardship. (www.stewardshipoflife.org)

ELCA Stewardship Resources– Our denomination's deep well of materials. (www.elca.org/stewardship)
Center for Stewardship Leaders – Luther Seminary's excellent website. (faithlead.luthersem.edu/stewardship/)

The ELCA Foundation a ministry of our denomination. (www.elca.org/give/elca-foundation)
The Episcopal Network for Stewardship – Solid resources! (www.tens.org/).

Uplift

We look forward to seeing our volunteers again on **Thursday, September 17 at 9am**. Food from Feeding America is being picked up and our food supplies are increasing. If you are available on **Thursday, September 3 at 9:30am** please join us to help unload our latest shipment. You don't need to be a regular volunteer to help out. Come and see what we are all about and learn more about how we serve the students of Pine River.

At Augustana's Annual Meeting in August, it was decided that we would alternate months of food collection between the Food Pantry and Uplift. October will be the month for Uplift and we will let you know what food item to donate.

We need a few more volunteers especially to deliver the totes to the schools. If you know someone who might be interested, ask them to contact an Uplift board member. Our greatest need is from December to March.

For those of you with Thrivent, please remember that you can request a grant specifically for Uplift. Our donations are down and food prices are up. Thrivent grants are an easy way for you to help Uplift. If you have any questions or need help requesting a grant, please reach out to Julie Seguin or Jan Marckwardt.

Rest for the Soul



Studies show many Americans don't get enough sleep, and the effects can take a toll on both body and mind. Whether it's a packed schedule or restless nights, a lack of rest makes it harder to think clearly, stay focused and care for our overall well-being. Over time, that constant fatigue begins to wear us down.

Our spiritual lives follow a similar rhythm. When we rush from one task to the next without pausing to spend time with God, we can feel just as drained. We need consistent, quiet moments with Him to stay grounded, encouraged and strong in our faith.

Even Jesus made space for this kind of rest. Luke 5:16 tells us that He often withdrew to quiet places to pray. If He needed that time with the Father, how much more do we? When we step away from the noise and listen for God's voice, we find the renewal our souls have been longing for.

Charging Forward in Stewardship

Rhinoceroses are remarkable creatures. Strong, sturdy and surprisingly fast, a rhino is built to protect. When it senses danger, especially near its herd or its young, it does not hesitate. It moves with focus, strength and purpose.

There may be a stewardship lesson for us in that.

God has entrusted each of us with gifts, time and resources to use for his kingdom. When opportunities come to serve, give, encourage or help, faithful stewards do not stand still and wait for someone else to go first. They respond with willing hearts and steady faith.

Stewardship is not passive. It calls us to move with purpose, give with conviction and serve with the strength God provides. May we be quick to answer God's call, bold in putting our faith into action and faithful in caring for the people and work God has placed before us.



Augustana Ladies "Christmas in July" & Shelby's Birthday!





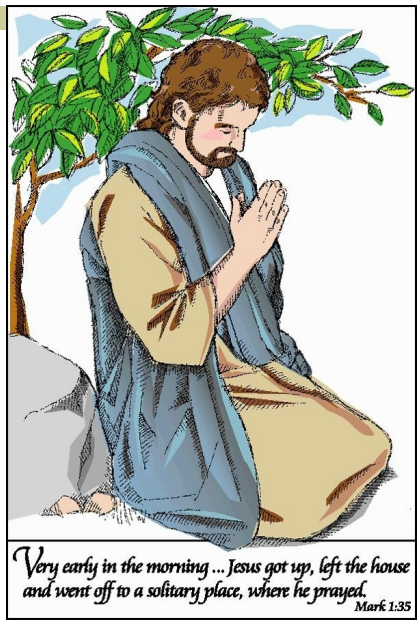


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On Sunday my son-in-law is driving me to the airport (which is a real blessing) and I'll fly to Bradford CT. My return flight is on the following Sunday. Once again, I'll stay with my daughter and will return to Michigan on Monday. I would have preferred a slightly long trip, but finding an affordable flight can be difficult!!

I'm very thankful for the people of Augustana Lutheran Church who understand my need to take time for myself, and extremely grateful that they always welcome Pastor Phil when he's able to take over for me. Unfortunately, he's can't cover the second Sunday because he's already scheduled to be at Victory Trinity Lutheran Church. I'm also very happy that someone else has been found to lead worship for you.

I'm looking forward to my return in September. Perhaps I'll even have some stories to share with you. I pray that all of you remember to take some time for your own relaxation and renewal.



Peace and Blessings,

Pastor Sharon

Church Mission Statement

"We are called through Jesus the Christ to nurture spiritual growth, welcome all into worship and serve the needs of others."



CHURCH COUNCIL

Title	Name	Phone	Email
President	Becky Miller	231-920-7883	beckymiller81@live.com
Vice-President	Heather Hammar	231-629-2359	heather.hammar@gmail.com
Secretary	Julie Seguin	231-878-3119	jkseguin@gmail.com
Treasurer	Terry Marckwardt	231-872-0149	etmarck@sbcglobal.net
Members:	Michael Barnes	231-884-7128	birdhunterup@gmail.com
	Jim Carmody	231-288-0731	sjcarmody85@yahoo.com
	Brian Hammar	231-920-4087	bhammar@att.net
	Kurt Hammar	231-578-1153	heatherhamar1@gmail.com

September 2026 Assisting Ministers

Date	Projector Operator	Communion Assistant	Commun-ion Preparer	Greeters/ Open/ Close Church	Lector/ Prayer Leader	Tellers	Coffee Hour Host
Sept 6	Julie Seguin				Harvey Miller	Julie Seguin & Ruth Hammar	
Sept 13	Julie Seguin	Becky Miller		Doug & Becky Miller	Heather Hammar		Heather Hammar
Sept 20							
Sept 27 Food Pantry Sunday							

FOOD PANTRY

If you were at Augustana's Annual Meeting in August, you are aware that those present voted to share food collection between the Food Pantry and Uplift. We collect food/product by the 4th Sunday of each month. We will alternate months between both community outreaches. October's collection will be for Uplift with the food product to be determined. Then in November our collection will be for the Food Pantry and so on.

This month's food suggestion for the Food Pantry is **CANNED FRUIT, SIZE APPROXIMATELY 15.25**
As always if you are unable to shop, the shopping can be done for you. Please let Jan Marckwardt know and she will be happy to purchase items on your behalf.



PRAYER CONCERNS: The family of Sandra Bottorff, Tom, Heather A., Danielle, Jan & Bob, Sarah M., Devere Byers, Amy Brown, Lexi, Carlton, Anissa, Men and women serving in the military – Ian Little.

Upcoming Dates to Remember

- *Labor Day, September 7, 2026*
- *National Grandparents Day, September 13, 2026*
- *Council Meeting, September 13, 2026 10:15am*
- *WELCA, September 15, 2026 10:30am*
- *Food Pantry, September 21, 2026 9-11am*
- *First Day of Autumn, September 22, 2026*
- *WELCA Fall Retreat, September 26, 2026 10-3pm in Cadillac*
- *RaiseRight fundraiser due, September 27, 2026*
- *Deadline for October Messenger, September 28, 2026*





RaiseRight

The complete list of gift cards are now available and Becky is taking orders for Christmas. Please see her if you have any questions or to place an order. Orders are due at the end of September.

WELCA NEWS

Our August meeting was cancelled as it came so close to the Annual Meeting. Our next meeting is scheduled for **September 15 at 10:30**. All women of Augustana are invited to attend and we would love to see you on September 15.

Happy Anniversary

Jim and Sue Carmody – Sept. 21

Office Hours

Monday – Thursday

9am - 1pm

e-mail: azlcp@att.net
www.augustanatustin.com



Happy Birthday!

Ava Hammar – Sept. 7
Tim Seguin – Sept. 26





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Tustin, MI 49688
Phone: 231-829-3837
Pastor: 740-296-9176

Please kindly deliver to:

September 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2 Bell Choir 7pm	3	4	5
6	7 Labor Day	8	9	10	11	12
13 Council Mtg 10:15am	14	15 WELCA 10:30am	16	17 Uplift Resumes 9am	18	19
20	21 Food Pantry 9-11am	22	23	24	25	26 WELCA Fall Retreat 10-3pm
27 Food Pantry Sunday- Canned fruit	28 Newsletter Due	29	30			