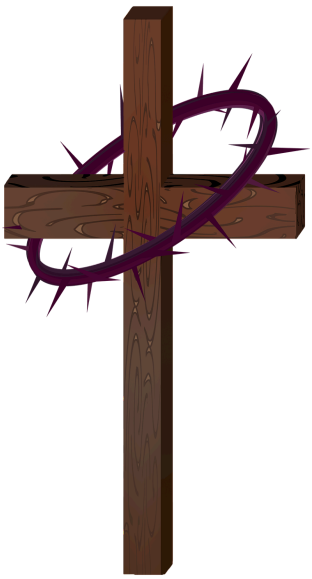
*Pl*easant Valley Lutheran Church
W2450 Cty, Rd. WW
Eleva WI 54738

"That all May come, Serving all the People of God"
Church office: 715-287-4473
Church Secretary: Teresa Johnson – Cell: 608-751-8836
Church Email: pleasantvalleylutheranchurch@gmail.com

Website: www.pleasantvalleylutheran.com

Pleasant Valley Lutheran Church July

Newsletter 2026



All Together in One Place

June 23, 2026 America at 250: Holding gratitude and humility
Presiding Bishop Yehiel Curry issues his second in a series of monthly messages that continue through the end of this year, titled "All Together in One Place." Each message will share a pastoral word, rooted in Scripture, that witnesses to God's presence today, our rich theological tradition and the social teaching that connects us.

Dear church,

As we look toward the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, many of us will celebrate with fireworks, parades and barbecues. Independence Day often brings us together with family and friends. Yet there is more that connects us than our communal celebrations. We are also connected through a common vision.

Signed in 1776, the Declaration of Independence proclaims a vision of equality for all people. While there were other nations pushing for equality at the time, the declaration was and is a monumental document in the way it names the aspiration so boldly. As we observe and celebrate the 250th anniversary of that signing, we also affirm the vision of freedom and equality it casts. We can be grateful.

And with contrition and humility, we acknowledge all the ways we have failed to embody that vision. As members of this church, we are called to "pray, participate in, and advocate for civic life in the United States that reflects God's activity and call, which seek both the well-being of all people and a creation marked by justice and peace" (ELCA social statement Faith and Civic Life, p. 89).

As Lutherans, we know the importance of naming realities for what they are. As citizens, we confess the ways we have not yet realized the vision of the Declaration of Independence and, more importantly, as Christians we confess the ways we have participated in or been complicit in failures to live into the vision God provides. This vision is rooted in creation and redemption. God crafts each person in God's own image and sends Jesus Christ to redeem us, setting us free to follow Christ's new commandment to love one another. The history of the United States is complex, and all too often we have fallen short of our stated values. Indigenous peoples across this land have been forced to cede their ancestral homes and pushed to reservations. Women and men have been prevented from voting because of their sex and race and spat on and jailed when they demanded their rights. Japanese American families were interned during World War II. Queer and transgender people's lives are obstructed by federal and state orders.

There is a photograph of Elizabeth Eckford, one of the nine Black teenagers who integrated Little Rock Central High School in Little Rock, Ark., in 1957. Books under her arm, she faces forward as angry white people crowd behind her. She was just trying to go to school.

Holding both the failures and the vision in our hearts and minds, I invite us to ask ourselves, "What does it mean to celebrate a promise that is real and yet still unfolding? What does it mean to be a people who always live in 'the already but not yet'"?

This is a central question for us not only as we mark the anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence but also in our daily lives as people of faith. The prophets repeatedly remind us of the vision God casts for all of creation, and they call us to account when, as God's own people, we fall short.

When we fall short, we remember we are rooted in the resurrection of Jesus Christ. We think, speak and live out faith through God's future. God's future is resurrection. As a church, we are turned not only to the past but to the future God is making possible right now through us as we love and serve others.

As Lutheran Christians, we believe that God calls us to:

• Remember our connection to each other through baptism, as Scripture teaches us: "We, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another" (Romans 12:5).

• Name sin for what it really is and to repent of it, as the Augsburg Confession and the catechisms remind us.

• Serve the common good in society as "earthly measures toward God's intention" (Faith and Civic Life, p. 11).

As we celebrate 250 years of the Declaration of Independence, we can hold gratitude and humility, possibilities and shortcomings. We continue to live in the already and the not-yet. And we hold fast to the most important promise of all: the presence of God with us, the power of the resurrection of Christ, the accompaniment of the Holy Spirit and the ever-unfolding grace of God. We celebrate this occasion neither as a perfect nation nor as a perfect church but as a people held in God's grace and called into community in service to all neighbors and for the sake of the world God so loves.

In Christ,

Pleasant Valley Lutheran Church Council Minutes
June 3, 2026

The meeting was called to order by President Dwight Sands at 6:05 P.M.
Pastor Dave Sands gave a devotion from the book of Matthew, Chapter 9, verse 9.

Marty Johnson attended the meeting on behalf of his daughter, Teegan. She has raised $700 of the $800 needed to be a camp counselor at Camp Daniels. Council members had agreed to support her efforts and will give her the $100 needed to reach her goal.

A motion was made by Rhonda with a second from Dave to approve the secretary's minutes and treasurer's report as presented. Motion carried. Roxie will do a comparison of expenses versus giving for the next council meeting.

Education Update: The confirmation students ended the school year with pizza and a game of 'Stump Pastor Sands' with questions from the catechism.

Worship Update: Supply pastors/worship leaders have been scheduled through the month of August.

Property Update: Dave is working on the leak in the men's bathroom. He will also change the filter on the well that may be affecting the water pressure and clarity of the water.

Old Business:
~Lidixe Montoya will host a health fair at the church on Saturday, November 14, 2026.

~Kay will add Jeremy Nelson, Heather Metter-Smith and family to the membership spreadsheet.

~The summer community picnic is scheduled for Saturday, July 25, 2026 beginning at 3:00 P.M. A free picnic-style meal will be served at 5:00 P.M. A campfire and yard games will also be available. Roxie will put an ad in the Ad-Delite and connect with Teresa to put the information on FaceBook, our website and newsletter. Kay will apply for a Thrivent Action Team card to support the event.

~Ride Across America (RAW) will use Olson Park from 6 A.M. - 10 A.M. on Saturday, July 11, 2026. Randy Sands will arrange to have the porta-potty checked after the event, since the Isaacson family has reserved the use of the park for Sunday, July 12th.

New Business:
~The Cemetery Association's request for additional funds to support mowing operations has been tabled until a representative from the association can address the council.

~Items from the storage rooms that are no longer used have been placed on tables in the Sunday school area. The items are free for the taking, but a donation to the church is appreciated. Kay will share the information with Teresa to put in the bulletin, newsletter, etc. Any items remaining after June 30th will be donated.

Other:
~The lift has passed the inspection. Teresa will file the paperwork. It was noted that the 9 volt battery needs to be replaced.

~Pastor Dave was the only attendee from Pleasant Valley at the Synod Assembly. He gave a brief report. The Neighbor to Neighbor program spearheaded by Lidixe Montoya was highlighted. There is a three year program to fund it.

~Dwight made a motion with a second from Rhonda to approve the purchase of a new mixer for the sound system. Dave will make the purchase and Praise Team funds will be used to pay for it. Motion carried.

Mission Offering:
June - Luther Park for student scholarships
July - Tony Mocarski
August - Eleva-Strum weekend backpack lunch program
September - Mondovi weekend backpack lunch program

The next council meeting will be on Wednesday, July 1 at 6:30 P.M.

A motion to adjourn was made by Roxie with a second from Dwight. Motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 7:09 P.M.

Respectfully submitted by,
Kay Sands

Members present: Dwight Sands, Roxie Ulness, Dave Vlcek, Rhonda Hoverson, Pastor Dave Sands and Kay Sands

Note: Roxie asked for approval from council members (4) who were at church on Sunday, June 14 to approve the purchase of a new sump pump. The pump quit working and Dave replaced it.

Treasurer's Report:
Summary of Offering and Expenses

	YTD	April	May	June
Offering /Misc	$15,118.81	$5,648.00	$34,150.00	$10,937.00
Expenses	$20,840.72	$6,657.47	$5,343.62	$3520.07

Offering Under Expenses - May - $1,193.62
Offering Under Expenses - June - $7,416.93
Offering over Expenses -Y-T-D-$580.53

Mission Offerings:
Apr- Community Table- $310.00
May- Sojourner House - $265.00
June - Luther Park Bible Camp- $236.00

Memorials:
General Fund:
In memory of fathers, Sam Anderson and Delain Anderson, from Dale & Sharon Anderson

Interested in online giving - go to the church website and click on **"Give Online Now".

Respectfully submitted:
Roxie Ulness, Treasurer

Praise Team News
The Praise Team will play in worship at Pleasant Valley at 9 am on July 26, and will lead worship at the Chippewa Valley Correctional Treatment Facility (CVCTF) that evening at 6:30 pm. Practices are held on Wednesdays at 6:30 pm.

H3 (Holy, Happy and Healthy)
H3 is taking a break for the summer. The group will resume meeting again in September, and continue studying "A Beautiful Year" by Diana Butler Bass. Watch for newsletter for updates. Contact Kim Vlcek for more information.

RUTH (Rural Unity Through Hope)
A presentation by Braver Angels is set for 1-2:30 pm on August 22. The purpose is to learn how to have conversations with people who have differing opinions. The event will be open to the community. The location is TBD.
The next RUTH meeting will be a potluck gathering at Deb's home on July 27 at 5 pm. Contact Kim Vlcek for more information about RUTH.

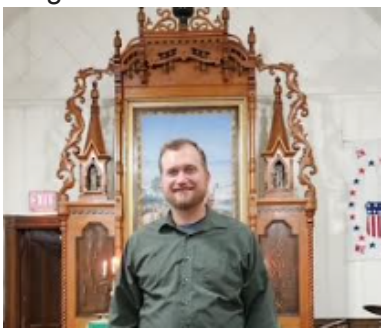
W/ELCA News
The next W/ELCA Triennial Gathering is scheduled for July 16-19, 2026 in Des Moines, Iowa. Make plans to attend. More information is available at New Triennial Event Page - Women of the ELCA.
The SWO **Synod Biennial Convention** will be held this year on September 26 at Bethany Lutheran in Rice Lake. This will be a **one-day** event, unlike other years. The Synod board has been busy planning the convention and Day of Awareness on the topic of ***Who Is My Neighbor?*** Guest speakers are Rev. Lori Ruge-Jones and Deacon Lidixe Montoya. In addition to the business meeting, at which new officers will be elected, worship will be led by Rev. Melinda Halom, and there will be numerous break-out sessions. More information is available on the flyer included in the June 2026 Northwester that was emailed on June 10.

Neighbor to Neighbor (N2N) Ministry
Spanish 101 and 102 are being offered this summer by Deacon Lidixe Montoya, N2N Mission Developer at Trinity Lutheran in Eau Claire. Click on the class titles to register for Spanish 101 scheduled July 15 and 16, 9:30 am to 2:30 pm; and Spanish 102 scheduled for August 19-20, 9:30 am to 2:30 pm. More information is available on the Synod website:
https://nwswi.org/neighbor-to-neighbor

Lisa's IV Hoodies
If you or someone you know is receiving IV treatments, you or that person can receive a Lisa's IV Hoodie …free of charge! Lisa's IV Hoodie has a zipper in the sleeve or in the chest for a port to help make treatments more comfortable. Monetary donations are welcome. If you'd like more information please call or text Ellen Hauser at 715-797-4354.

Thanks to our Worship Leaders and members this month who helped with worship.

Jeremiah Segerstrom



Marty Johnson

TEXTS FOR MAY

July 5:

- Genesis 24:34-38, 42-49, 58-67
- Psalm 45: 11-18
- *or* Song of Solomon 2:8-13
- Romans 7:15-25a
- Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30

July 12:

- Genesis 25:19-34
- Psalm 119:105-112
- Romans 8:1-11
- Matthew 13:1-9,18-23

July 19:

- Genesis 28:10-19a
- Psalm 139: 1-11, 22-23
- Romans 8:12-25
- Matthew 13:24-30,36-43

July 26:

- Genesis 29:15-28
- Psalm 105:1-11, 45b
- *or* Psalm 128
- Romans 8:26-39
- Matthew 13:31-33,44-52

From our Mailbox

Pleasant Valley Church,
Thank you for your generous support as I intern at Camp Daniel – Growing Opportunities for People with Disabilities . I look forward to telling you about my time there.

Teegan Johnson

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Dear Friends,

Over the past couple of days many of you may have received an email that claimed to be me.*(see example below)* If not, you still might as they are being released seemingly on a daily basis. Please know that I will never ask for gift cards via email and that you should avoid replying to the email so that the sender does not take advantage of your generous hearts. These scams happen with far too much frequency and I apologize for interrupting your days like this!

Please **do not** respond to this message or the following email addresses:

mailpastor9891@gmail.com
mhalom.nwswi@gmail.com

They do not belong to me. All accurate contact information for the synod staff may be found here: https://nwswi.org/home/our-staff

Bishop Halom

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To Our Church Family,

We would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to everyone who supported us and celebrated with us during Bennett's baptism. This special day was made even more meaningful by the love, prayers, and encouragement we received from our church family.

We are truly blessed to be part of such a caring and faithful congregation. Thank you for welcoming Bennett into the family of God and for the commitment you have made to support and pray for him as he grows in faith.

Thank you,
The Nelson Family,
Jeremy, Heather, Aiden, Eleanor & Bennett

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Dear Pleasant Valley Lutheran Church,
Thank you so much for your generous donation of $310.00 on 05/05/2026. Thank you again and we look forward to your continued support.
Sincerely,
Ali Sullivan
Community Table, Eau Claire, WI

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If you have any photos you would like to submit to the newsletter email them to:
pleasantvalleylutheranchurch@gmail.com
Subject: "newsletter photos"

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Dairyland Women's Retreat Conference

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Disability Pride Month

July is Disability Pride Month! To reflect on its history, importance and impact, read this July 2023 article in *Living Lutheran* by ELCA Disability Ministries advisory team member Rev. Peter Heide. How might you and your faith communities mark Disability Pride Month this year?

CWO Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility Learning Day

On Thursday, June 11, staff of the ELCA churchwide organization will gather online for DEIA Learning Day. Visit our blog to learn more about this event, which will include a workshop by the Rev. Lisa Heffernan, coordinator of ELCA Disability Ministries.

FEATURED RESOURCES

Upcoming Resource: Individualized Faith Formation Plan

In our most recent blog post, Anita Smallin, a member of the ELCA Disability Ministries advisory team, highlights a resource we will be rolling out later this year: the Individualized Faith Formation Plan. Check out this preview and watch our spaces for when this resource becomes available!

Travelers with Disabilities: CDC Yellow Book

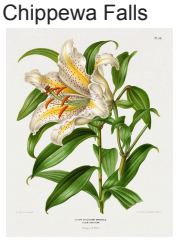
Summer often brings great opportunities for travelling with families and youth groups and for intergenerational mission trips. But for people with disabilities, inaccessibility or a lack of helpful information can create obstacles along the way. The Yellow Book of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention offers contact information for accessible travel resources and answers to questions that may arise as you consider summer plans.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

WE INVITE PRAYERS FOR:

Calling of a new Pastor for our church
Tony Mocarski- Esophagus cancer treatment starting
Juanita Mocarski- Fell breaking both elbows
Martha Johnson- Living with dementia (Marty's stepmom)
Kathy Tweet-healing
Eric Anderson
Beth Stoddard- hospital
David (Red) McElwanie
Kari-Healing
Sadie Hoverson Odegard- healing at home
Sandy Schuh-healing
Karen Voss
Katie (Lammers) Household
Lyle
Sharon Anderson- Healing
Alice-Art's mother-in-law-healing
Barb-Steph's friend
Joy -Kathy T. daughter
Tanner- Hodgkins
Tony- waiting for kidney transplant
Joan Timm- healing
Guy Patrow – Tested positive for ALS
Karl Bahr – continued healing
Lisa & Glen-Fostering children
All our service men and women:
Brenden Poore:deployed to Africa
Alex Bauer- now stationed in Virginia
Middle East
Guatemala
Ukraine
Keyla & Heber - the Sharing the Dream recipients, students in Guatemala
Men incarcerated at CVCTF and **Chaplain Hull**
All those who are missing a loved one:
Those on our visiting list: Gary Hazen, Sandy Schuch, Sadie Hoverson Odegard

July 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 **6:30 Praise Team**	**2**	**3**	**4**
5 **9:00 am Worship in Olson Park** **10:00am Coffee & Fellowship** ***PASTOR:** **Dave Sands**	**6**	**7**	**8** **6:30 Praise Team**	**9**	**10**	**11**
12 **9:00 am Worship in Olson Park** **10:00am Coffee & Fellowship** ***PASTOR/Leader:** **Jeremiah Segerstrom**	**13**	**14**	**15** **6:30 Praise Team**	**16**	**17**	**18**
19 **9:00 am Worship in Olson park** **10:00am Coffee & Fellowship** ***PASTOR:** **Dave Sands**	**20**	**21**	**22** **6:30 Praise Team**	**23** **Daylily Dig for Malawi** Kaufmann Farms, Chippewa Falls 	**24** **Daylily Dig for Malawi** Kaufmann Farms, Chippewa Falls 	**25** **Community picnic** in Olson Park 3:00 P.M. picnic-style meal will be served at 5:00 P.M. **Daylily Dig for Malawi** Kaufmann Farms, Chippewa Falls
26 **9:00 am Praise Team Worship Service in Church 10:00am Coffee, Fellowship** **6:30pm Praise Team leads worship at CVCTF** ***PASTOR/Leader:** **Kim Vlcek**	**27**	**28**	**29** **6:30 Praise Team**	**30**	**31**	

Opportunities to Serve our Community

There are many ways to stay connected in our community and extended rural areas: Many organizations need volunteers. Please sign up ONLINE; many will not take drop in help. If you have any interest to help out or ask questions, you can call Marianna at 715-828-2185 (cell), email: Marianna.gilbertson@gmail.com or go online to view the websites.

Agency	Activity/Program	Contact
The Community Table(TCT)	The Community Table has been nourishing hungry bodies and spirits in the Eau Claire Community by serving one meal each day, 365 days a year on a no-questions asked basis. Anyone can join our table during meal time.	TJ Atkins director email at marketing@thecommunitytable.org OR https://communitytable.org/
Feed My People Food Bank (FMPFB) Our volunteers make our mission possible. Because of their dedication, grit, and passion, they're connecting folks to much-needed food through thick and thin	Feed My People rescues nationally and regionally donated food from manufacturers, wholesalers, retailers, and growers that might otherwise be thrown away. We welcome individuals and groups to come volunteer at the food bank. Opportunities include packing emergency food bags, repacking bulk products, and picking orders for our food pantry partners.	Learn more and sign up through our volunteer portal. **Did you know we have regular group volunteer opportunities on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays?** Your group of 6-15 people can help us pack food from 9-11 am and 1-3 pm. Email Ken at ken@fmpfoodbank.org to get started.
Inclusive Ministry Church	A church experience where you are welcomed with abilities and disabilities, just as you	See their facebook page for more information.
Beacon House	A group of congregations in Eau Claire County collaborated together to support families in our community who were homeless.	https://www.familypromisecv.org/?utm_source=beacon-house.org
Sleep In Heavenly Peace	A group of volunteers dedicated to building, assembling and delivering single beds or bunk beds to children and families in need.	https://shpbeds.org/chapter/wi-chippewa-valley/
Respite for All	Provides training for congregations to launch this outreach ministry and it offers ongoing support and mentoring.	www.respiteforall.org
Chippewa Valley Habitat For Humanity (CVHFH)	Christian non-denominational organization whose mission is “to put God's love into action by bringing people together to build homes, communities and hope.”	Habitat Affiliate Manager, Elizabeth, elizabeth@cvh4h.org or 715-833-8993 Or Use this ***link*** ***today*** and take a look at the volunteer opportunities!
Neighbor to Neighbor	Is organized by Deacon Lidixe Montoya. church about N2N and how we can help or understand our Latin Speaking neighbors.	https://nwswi.org/neighbor-to-neighbor
American Red Cross	Volunteers Urgently Needed	www.redcross.org/volunteer. Contact: volunteerwisconsin@redcross.org for any questions regarding opportunities.
Volunteer Wisconsin	One-stop site connecting nonprofits in need of help with people who can are interested in volunteering	Click here for a full list of every organization currently looking for volunteers. Then, click on “Filters” at the top to sort the openings by city, interest, agency, age range, or about 20 different factors. After doing so, you’ll be left with a list of opportunities.
Agnes' Table	Monday, Wednesday or Friday from 8am to 12pm. Up to 3-4 volunteers at 1 time, preferably 1 shift. The tasks range from: serving breakfast, helping unload food rescue, restocking our pantry, cleaning jobs or meal prep for the next day.	https://www.agnestable.org/