*Pl*easant Valley Lutheran Church
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Eleva WI 54738

"That all May come, Serving all the People of God"
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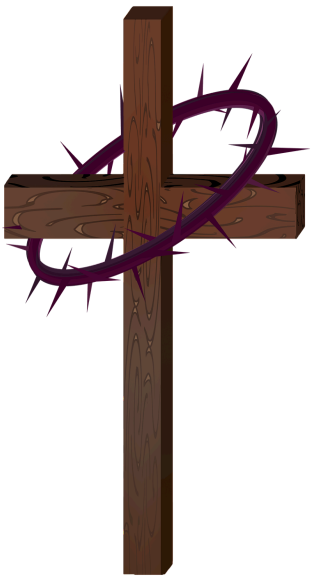
Pleasant Valley Lutheran Church June

Newsletter 2026



NEW THINGS!

Lectionary for May 31, 2026
The Holy Trinity
First Sunday after Pentecost
Genesis 1:1–2:4a; Psalm 8;
2 Corinthians 13:11-13; Matthew 28:16-20

It seems like a lifetime ago, but I had the great blessing to work in ministry under Bill Gafkjen, who was then bishop of the Indiana-Kentucky Synod. Bill was called to help the synod imagine the new things that God is doing in our midst. Unsurprisingly, Isaiah 43:19 was one of his most-oft repeated verses:

"Behold, I am going to do something new,
Now it will spring up;
Will you not be aware of it?
I will even make a roadway in the wilderness,
Rivers in the desert" (New American Standard Bible).

Working for the people of the synod under his guidance has indelibly shaped my understanding of God's mission. I believe that God wants to do the same things that God has always wanted to do, albeit in new and surprising ways. Moses, the prophets, Jesus and the early church championed God's redemptive power for justice, neighbor care and the growth of God's kingdom on earth. But how often do we really think about beginnings and new things? This week, the lectionary helps us focus on God's new beginnings.

If we are to start with new beginnings, we could do worse than to look at Genesis 1. At the beginning of God's creation of the heavens and the earth, the earth was unformed and wild. Oceans existed; darkness and the Spirit hovered above them. Then, God got to work. Light and dark were separated, and waters were placed below and above. Dry land contained the ocean. Then God circled back and modified and filled the work of the first three days on the next three. Sun, moon and stars for lighting the darkness. Birds and sea creatures to fill the mists above and the waters below. Land animals (including humans) for the dry lands. And rest to fill the Sabbath.

Does God doing this new thing feel very orderly, very intentional, and motivated by care and noticing? Others thought so too. There is no cosmic struggle of creation here in Genesis 1 (though we can find traces of it elsewhere). God speaks, sees, separates and gives a sobriquet. God creates spaces and then carefully fills them for life and flourishing. How might God be making space in your communities' lives, and then longing to fill those spaces with lively flourishing?

Jesus intends the world to be full of disciples loving our neighbors—every neighbor—as ourselves. That is the new thing (well, maybe an old thing in a new way) that Jesus is doing.

One example of how God made space and then filled it is through Jesus' Great Commission to his disciples. The disciples returned to the Galilee after Jesus' resurrection. At the base of a mountain, they encountered Jesus who gave them a pre-ascension command. All authority on *the earth and the heavens* had been given to him (Matthew 28:18). Does this sound familiar? And Jesus wanted/wants to fill the heavens and earth. But with what? Disciples! Jesus told his disciples to go into all the world and make disciples of every people-group. We need to be careful, or at least I do, in distinguishing "believers" from "disciples." Jesus doesn't commission his disciples to go out and simply help people believe that he is the Messiah. Instead, disciple-making is a twofold process. First, people are to be baptized into the life, death and resurrection of Jesus in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit (19). Secondly, and this is forgotten all too often, the disciple is formed by learning to *do* all the things that Jesus commands, knowing that our Lord is always with us. When Jesus did a new thing, he created space and then filled it up for life and flourishing.

Believing is merely the first step toward baptism and then discipleship. Jesus commands his disciples to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, give drink to the thirsty, welcome the foreigner, visit the sick and those in prison (Matthew 25:31-46). Jesus intends the world to be full of disciples loving our neighbors—every neighbor—as ourselves. That is the new thing (well, maybe an old thing in a new way) that Jesus is doing.

So, if Jesus is really Lord, and God really wants to do a new thing, how would we notice that? Primarily, it seems like it would look for opportunities to do the things that God enjoys, in contexts where they are not happening yet. Is a foreign neighbor unwelcomed somewhere? This is an opportunity to begin a new friendship. Are people under-resourced somewhere? This is an opportunity for new serving. As my friend Jeff Shulman shows in his film *What it Takes*, there are *always* opportunities to begin loving those in prison. These are the new things that God longs to fill all of creation with!

About the author: Cory Driver
Cory Driver is the director of L.I.F.E. (Leading the Integration of Faith and Entrepreneurship) at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio. His book *God, Gender and Family Trauma: How Rereading Genesis can be a Revelation* was released in March 2025 by Fortress Press.

Pleasant Valley Lutheran Church Council Minutes

May 7,2026

The meeting was called to order by President Dwight Sands at 6:36 P.M.
Teegan Johson attended the meeting and read a letter she wrote about her upcoming internship with Camp Daniel in Northeastern WI for children with disabilities. She asked the council for support in raising the $800.00 fee. She has raised $150.00 so far but is expecting a few other donations from friends and family. A motion was made to cover the balance needed after private donations by Steph and seconded by Rhonda. Motion carried.
Roxie expressed concern about the $5,700 deficit going into the summer months. She will ask Teresa to put a note in the bulletin for members to consider increasing their offering. A motion was made to approve the secretary's minutes and treasurer's report as presented by Dave with a second by Steph. Motion carried.

Education Update:
The last day of Sunday School will be May 17th and confirmation will be June 3rd. For the 2026-2027 school year, confirmation will begin in September and end the first week of May due to conflicts with school activities in the month of May. There are no graduates this year. There will be no VBS.

Worship Update:
Cortney will be sending out requests for pulpit supply for the next few months. She'll fill in Jeremiah's weeks first, then send to our lay leaders, then out to the pulpit supply list. New members Sunday for Jeremy Nelson, Heather Metter-Smith and family will be May 17th. Baptism for their new baby will be on May 24th.

Property Update:
There have been no comments about the water quality since the filter has been replaced. There is a leaky pipe in the men's bathroom. Dwight and Dave will look at it after council.

Old Business:
Kim spoke with Lidixe about dates for the health fair and the dates of October 10, November 7th and 14th were suggested. The two weeks in November would work out better for the church since October 10th is the weekend after the bazaar.
Kay will continue to work on the membership spreadsheet.

New Business:
Summer worship will start June 7th. A motion was made to order the porta-potty by Steph and seconded by Rhonda. Motion carried. Randy will order the porta-potty.

The summer picnic will be held on July 25th at 3:00 with a meal at 5:00. We'll need to order a Thrivent card. Will check with Kay if she remembers who usually gets that card. An ad will be put in the ad-delite and postcards will be mailed in early July.

Someone from the cemetery association should attend the next council meeting to formally request additional funds to support mowing operations.

Ride Across Wisconsin (RAW) will use Olson Park from 6 a.m. to 10 a.m. as a rest stop for the 100-mile bike ride on July 11th.

Mission Offering:
May – Sojourner's House
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, June 3rd.

A motion to adjourn was made by Steph with a second by Dwight. Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 7:52 P.M. and closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted by,
Roxie Ulness

Members present: Dwight Sands, Stephanie Kuehl, Roxie Ulness, Dave Vlcek, and Rhonda Hoverson.

Treasurer's Report:
Summary of Offering and Expenses

	YTD	March	April	May
Offering /Misc	$15,118.81	$4,005.10	$5,648.00	$3,890.00
Expenses	$20,840.72	$5,027.68	$6,736.60	$5,078.62

Offering Under Expenses - April- $1,088.60
Offering Under Expenses - May - $1,188.62
Offering Under Expenses – Y-T-D: $6,981.40

*Expenses have exceeded offering every month this year. If you are able, consider increasing your Offering.

May expenses included:
Hastings Mutual - $1,238.50

Mission Offerings:
Apr- Community Table- $310.00
May- Sojourner House - $

Memorials:
In memory of mothers, Beulah Anderson and Loris 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 June 26, and will lead worship at the Chippewa Valley Correctional Treatment Facility (CVCTF) that evening at 6:30 pm. Practices will be 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 the newsletter for updates. Contact Kim Vlcek for more information.

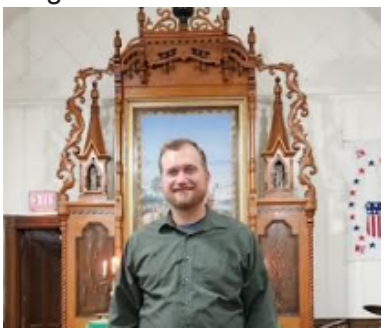
RUTH (Rural Unity Through Hope)
Members met on May 18, 2026 at 6:30 pm at Peace Lutheran, Pigeon Falls and on Zoom. Deb has scheduled a presentation by Braver Angels is set for 1-2:30 pm on August 22. The purpose is to learn how to have conversations with people who have differing opinions. The location is TBD. The website is in progress. Tekla is working on purchasing trees, blueberry bushes and vegetable plants for community gardens in Independence and Blair. Ellen reported 73 IV hoodies have been donated. It was decided to rename the project Lisa's IV Hoodies in memory of Lisa James. Reminder that requests for beds from Sleep in Heavenly Peace may be made through their website. Beds are provided for children aged 3-28. The group will support the Neighbor to Neighbor Health Fair scheduled at Pleasant Valley Lutheran on November 7. Kim will request a Thrivent card and t-shirts with Spanish wording for the event. It was approved to purchase a small scale for the food pantry at the new Independence public library. The next meeting will be a potluck gathering at Deb's home on July 27 at 5 pm. Contact Kim Vlcek for more information about RUTH.

WELCA News
The NW Synod of Wisconsin Women's Retreat will be held on June 29-30, 2026 at Luther Park in Chetek. Note it will be held on Monday and Tuesday, a change from previous years. The retreat flyer and registration form are available at https://nwswi.org/event/tfz5mjb/2026-welca-retreat. 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 https://www.womenoftheelca.org/new-triennial-event-page

Lisa's IV Hoodies
The woman who inspired this IV Hoodie Project, Lisa James, passed away on May 4, after a three year battle with brain cancer. Lisa was the daughter-in-law of Ellen Hauser, who is a member of Our Saviour's Lutheran in Whitehall and the RUTH organization. At the last RUTH meeting, it was decided to honor Lisa by renaming the project "Lisa's IV Hoodies." So far, the project has given 73 hoodies. If you or someone you know is receiving IV treatments, you or that person can receive an IV Hoodie …free of charge! An 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



Stephanie Kuehl

Corissa for leading our Sunday School with patience, joy, and a servant's heart. We appreciate you more than you know.

Welcome new members Jeremy Nelson, Heather Metter-Smith and family

Baptism of Bennett

TEXTS FOR MAY

June 7:

- Genesis 12:1-9
- Psalm 33:1-12
- Romans 4:13-25
- Matthew 9:9-13, 18-26

June 14:

- Genesis 18:1-15, (21:1-7)
- Psalm 116:1, 10-17
- Romans 5:1-8
- Matthew 9:35-10:8(9-23)

June 21:

- Genesis 21:8-21
- Psalm 86:1-10, 16-17
- Romans 6:1b-11
- Matthew 10:24-39

June 28:

- Genesis 22:1-14
- Psalm 13
- Romans 6:12-23
- Matthew 10:40-42

From our Mailbox

Volunteer Opportunity: Ride Across Wisconsin Rest Stop – July 11, 2026

Our church will be serving as a rest stop utilizing Olsen Park for Ride Across Wisconsin (RAW) on Saturday, July 11, 2026, and volunteers are needed to help welcome and support the cyclists passing through. This rest stop plays an important role in keeping riders **fueled, encouraged, and energized** throughout their journey. Volunteers assist with handing out snacks and water, cheering riders on, and creating a warm, positive atmosphere for everyone who stops by. It's a fun, high-energy way to serve our wider community, and even a short shift makes a meaningful impact.

Individuals, families, and groups are all welcome to participate. If you are unable to join in person an option would be to provide baked goods for the riders.

If you're interested or would like more details about timing and roles, please reach out. We'd love to have you be part of this special day of service and hospitality. If you're interested or would like more details, please contact Heather at **(262) 210-0162** or **heather@wisconsinbikefed.org**.

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Ruby's Pantry Pop-Up Pantry
Location: Mondovi County Shop
360 South Eau Claire St. Mondovi, WI
Held every 3rd Thursday of the month
Time: 4:30 PM – 5:30 PM
$30 Cash Donation
All are welcome to attend!

Ruby's Pantry is a community food pop-up pantry where guests receive an abundance of food for a small donation. This ministry helps individuals and families stretch their grocery budget while serving our community with dignity and care.

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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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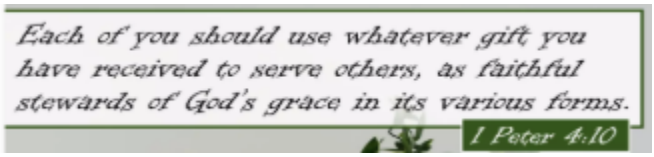
Opportunities to Serve



Feel free to sign up for a single week or a full month. Expectations of opportunities have been developed. The expectations are placed near the area to be served.

2026	JUNE	July	August
Communion Set-up	6/7 **Kim** 6/14 6/21 **Kim** 6/28	7/5 7/12 7/19 7/26	8/2 8/9 8/16 8/23 8/31
Communion Server	6/7 **Kim** 6/14 6/21 **Kim** 6/28	7/5 7/12 7/19 7/26	8/2 8/9 8/16 8/23 8/31
Usher	6/7 6/14 6/21 6/28	7/5 7/12 7/19 7/26	8/2 8/9 8/16 8/23 8/31
Reader	6/7 6/14 6/21 6/28 **Teresa**	7/5 7/12 7/19 7/26	8/2 8/9 8/16 8/23 8/31
Church Cleaning	6/7-6/28 **Sharon**	7/5 7/12 7/19 7/26	8/2 8/9 8/16 8/23 8/31
Serve refreshments	6/7 6/14 6/21 6/28 **Teresa**	7/5 7/12 7/19 7/26	8/2 8/9 8/16 8/23 8/31

June 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3 6:30 Praise Team	4	5	6
7 9:00 am Worship 10:00am Coffee & Fellowship *PASTOR: Dave Sands	8	9	10 6:30 Praise Team	11	12	13
14 9:00 am Worship in the park 10:00am Coffee & Fellowship *PASTOR/Leader: Jeremiah Segerstrom	15	16	17 6:30 Praise Team	18	19	20
21 9:00 am Worship in the park 10:00am Coffee & Fellowship *PASTOR: Dave Sands	22	23	24 6:30 Praise Team	25	26	27
28 9:00 am Praise Team Worship Service in Church 10:00am Coffee, Fellowship 6:30pm Praise Team leads worship at CVCTF *PASTOR/Leader: Marty Johnson	29	30	1	2	3	4

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/