



New Hope Lutheran Visitor

August 2026

Chris Strohm, Pastor

(608) 523-4239 office@newhopelutheran.info



Join Pastor Chris Thursday August 6th

"Coffee with the Pastor"

from 8:30am to 9:30 am in
Blanchardville at "Bistro on Main".
This coffee hour, usually on the 1st
Thursday of every month, is meant to
be a time of informal fellowship —
anyone who wants to stop by for
coffee & conversation is welcome .



The Pecatonica Food Pantry is open these dates in August:

Saturday, 8/1 9-10:30am

Wednesday, 8/12 6-7pm

Saturday, 8/15 9-10:30am

At the Blanchardville Church site



Mission Mondays

The Mission Room is open Mondays from
9-11 am and 6-8 p.m.

Mission opportunities are set up in Mission Central along
with instructions on what needs to be done. People are
encouraged to stop by when it works for them, to help with
various missions. Feel free to come whenever and as often
as you'd like to be a part of "God's Work/Our Hands". Please
continue to bring in your clean plastic grocery bags which
will be made into mats for the homeless.



Summertime is flying by and it's time to think about getting
ready to **assemble school kits**. We have been so generous
in the past we are going to shoot for 200 kits. It's fantastic
that this seems like a reasonable goal! Supplies needed are:

- 70 sheet notebooks (no loose-leaf paper)
- 30 cm ruler
- Pencil Sharpener
- Blunt Scissors
- UNSHARPENED #2 pencils
- Black or Blue ballpoint pens (no gel ink)
- Box of crayons 16 or 24 count
- 2 1/2" eraser

There will be bins at each site for drop off. Assembly date is
Sunday, September 6th at Hollandale. Thanks for your
consideration!



Hello Everyone,

As you might remember I attended the Rostered Ministers Gathering last month. This gathering happens every three years and it is where pastors, Bishops, deacons, chaplains, anyone who is ordained can come together for worship, learning and fellowship. It is a time where I can reconnect with friends and classmates from around the country and we can catch up what each other is doing in ministry. The best part is this is something that I get to do with my wife. I enjoyed my time there. Thank you for allowing me to do this as part of my continuing education.

This year's theme was "Woven Together" and to help us remember this they had a pastor from New York weaving on her loom on the side of the stage every time we came together in general session. I heard a lot of great speakers from one who gave us this great image of creation. He spoke of the "ruach" of God, the Hebrew word for spirit, breath, wind, hovering over the sea of chaos. When God spoke it wasn't a loud command, as I often envisage, but instead was a whisper, "Light", softly spoken with the follow up, "good." He said this softly into the mic. Imagine that whisper of God still echoing throughout creation. Reaching your ears. Telling you that you are good.

The pastor who was weaving showed us what was created during the gathering with all the different threads that we were invited to bring and contribute to this cloth. She left it with pieces of string hanging off of it as a reminder that it wasn't finished yet just like God is not finished with us yet. We were also reminded that despite the lies we tell ourselves, especially when we are depressed, mad at, or just don't feel good about ourselves, when we are rejected by our peers or neighbors, when we feel unwanted, that we are not mistakes. You are not a mistake. You are woven together with many perfect, unique parts into the one and only perfectly unique person that you are. One of a kind, uniquely created in the image of the One who calls you beloved.

Our Presiding Bishop, Bishop Curry, talked about God's grace and forgiveness. Giving us the example of a time when he attended a church camp and one of the crafts was to weave a potholder. You start out with this plastic loom and begin to weave the yarn between all the pegs around the edges. Inevitably at some point you mess up and end up with a knot or a hole and are not sure what to do with it. Then one of the counselors comes over and takes the time to patiently help you undo everything until you get to the spot where the mistake is and then helps you fix it so you can continue until your potholder is done. That is what grace looks like. That is how God's forgiveness works. God doesn't discard us just because we made a mistake but instead takes the time to patiently help us recover from that mistake and walks with us continually, patiently, extending us grace every time we mess up. *(continued on the next page)*

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People of New Hope, we are woven together, through love, through grace, through faith, through worship and community. We are connected to each other and to the world through the love of God that is shown to us through Jesus. You each are perfect unique threads in the masterpiece that is God's creation. Enjoy the rest of your summer knowing that the love of God goes with you.

God's Peace,

Pastor Chris



Confirmation-age students and Parents

Please plan to attend a meeting with Pastor Chris to discuss plans for the coming year's confirmation classes. It's scheduled for Wednesday, August 19th at 7pm at the Blanchardville site. Talk to Pastor Chris with questions.

Worship Assistants

**Sunday Worship 8:30 in Blanchardville and
10:30 in Hollandale
August 2026**

August 2

Greeters/Ushers: (B) Ron & Ellen Syse (H) Jackie Chambers
Communion: (B) Tina Steiner (H) Flora Griffiths
Readers: (B) Ben Meyer (H)

August 9

Greeters/Ushers: (B) Ron & Ellen Syse (H)
Communion: (B) Dan & Marlys Hittesdorf (H) Whitford Holey
Readers: (B) Paul Saether (H)

August 16 (Baptism @B)

Greeters/Ushers: (B) Ron & Ellen Syse (H)
Communion: (B) Tina Steiner (H) Whitford Holey
Readers: (B) Marlys Hittesdorf (H)

August 23

Greeters/Ushers: (B) Ron & Ellen Syse (H) Jackie Chambers
Communion: (B) Tina Steiner (H) Kaye Gilbertson
Readers: (B) Jayne Kurschner (H)

August 30

Greeters/Ushers: (B) Ron & Ellen Syse (H)
Communion: (B) Tina Steiner (H) Bryan Lisser
Readers: (B) Jeff Saether (H)

Musicians: Becky Johnson, Cinda Hittesdorf, Marlys Hittesdorf, Carmen Danz, Andy Whitford-Holey

Altar Committees: (B) Becky Kesler (H) Jean Christen



New Hope Needs Your Help!

We need volunteers for these positions:

- Council Vice President
- Board of Ed member

Please talk to Pastor Chris or Gary Whitford Holey if you're interested or have questions.



Weekly Bible Study
with Pastor Chris every
Tuesday from 8-9 am at
River Bend Café in
Blanchardville. The Bible
Study focuses on the
upcoming readings for
Sunday. This is open to
everyone.

Sunday, August 2, 2026 (bible study Tuesday, July 28) Isaiah 55:1-5 Psalm 145:8-9, 14-21 Romans 9:1-5 Matthew 14:13-21	Sunday, August 23, 2026 (bible study Tuesday, August 18) Isaiah 51:1-6 Psalm 138 Romans 12:1-8 Matthew 16:13-20
Sunday, August 9, 2026 (bible study Tuesday, August 4) 1 Kings 19:9-18 Psalm 85:8-13 Romans 10:5-15 Matthew 14:22-33	Sunday, August 30, 2026 (bible study Tuesday, August 25) Jeremiah 15:15-21 Psalm 26:1-8 Romans 12:9-21 Matthew 16:21-28
Sunday, August 16, 2026 (bible study Tuesday, August 11) Isaiah 56:1, 6-8 Psalm 67 Romans 11:1-2a, 29-32 Matthew 15:[10-20] 21-28	



We remember our members & friends, the sick and the homebound, those recovering or grieving, especially Steve Zimmerman, Jan & Tiger Slater, Alex Emberson, Ruth Vamstad, Lynette Stansfield, Sue Anderson, Rick Fredrickson, Roger Strohm (Pastor Chris's Dad), Lisa Hartz (daughter of Elaine & Marv Engelke), Bev Lien, Dave Hermanson, Roger Kittleson, Donna Arneson, Lyle Klosterman, Mary Carr, Doris Hermanson, Carl and Patty Schneider, Richard & Peggy Gilbertson, Carole Zweifel.

SAVE THE DATE

God's Work. Our Hands

Sunday, September 6 – Hollandale

10am Worship

God's work.
Our hands.



***The Annual Fall Bazaar and Auction
is scheduled for
Wednesday, October 14.
Stay tuned for details!***



Great things are happening as I write this. We are getting ready for VBS and decorations are appearing. Posters are up, a train is being assembled, there are railcars and tracks in the sanctuary. The building is being transformed in front of my eyes. Exciting!! Julie Saether has done an amazing job leading this endeavor and it is fun to see her vision come alive. This doesn't happen without volunteers. There are people decorating, people teaching, leading music, helping with lunch, helping the students as they learn about God's love for them through different Bible stories. By the time you read this it will all be over. The kids will have gone home from an amazing and fun day. The decorations will have been taken down. But the lessons learned, the relationships formed, the connections made will continue.

All of this does not happen without you. Your offering, the support you give New Hope is what allows us to bring the Word of God to these children in such a fun way. Your offering goes far beyond what happens this year at VBS. The seeds that are planted will come to fruition in ways we cannot imagine. It all starts with you and the many ways in which you support New Hope. Thank you for everything you do to support the mission of New Hope.

God's Peace be with You,

Pastor Chris

We're transitioning to new email addresses:

pastor@newhopelutheran.info
office@newhopelutheran.info
treasurer@newhopelutheran.info (Becky)
finance@newhopelutheran.info (Tina)

Make sure to update your default addresses or contacts. Contact the office if you have questions.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES REPORT 7/13/26**Submitted by:** Jay Massey

New Hope Luth. Ch. Tr. Meeting held on July 13th. 2026 at 5:00 pm.

All in Attend: were Pastor Chris Strohm, Dan Hittesdorf, Neal Klassey and Jay Massey.

Minutes of Discussion.

New Hope would like to thank everyone for helping out on Spring Cleaning this past Spring.

N.H. Projects for the Church that the Trustees are working on are the Scheduling of Tuck Pointing of the Bl Church Building, Sealing and Strip Painting of the Parking Lot, along with taking down Trees at the Parsonage. The Scheduling of these projects is being done to get onto Contractors' schedule for these projects.

We have tabled the discussion of Bills to be paid, at our next July 27th. Council Meeting.

We also talked about the Air Conditioning and Spit Unit systems for the Buildings and the Thermostats that run them. We also talked about Dehumidification of the buildings that these Units do.

FINANCIAL REPORT June 2026**Submitted by:** Becky Johnson

God's glorious abundance allows us to continue providing ministries like Sunday worship, Mission Monday, Outdoor Servies and Praying for those in our local and greater communities. Our recent resources for continuing these ministries include:

- June's income of \$12975.76 and expenses of \$15,590.91– a need of \$2,615.15
- YTD Income of \$102,045.75 and expenses of \$101,999.38 – a surplus of \$46.37

CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING**Submitted by:** Michele Kittleson

Gary Whitford Holey called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. Present were Jeff Saether, Julie Saether, Dan Hittesdorf, Jay Massey, Robin Gilbertson, Kayla Barnes, Pastor Chris Strohm, Becky Johnson, Michele Kittleson and Lisa Toay (via zoom.)

Devotions: Pastor Chris led us in devotions from the book "Quiet an Anxious Mind."

Secretary Report: Julie corrected the secretary minutes: Vacation Bible School should read August 1 not the 5th and Julie contacted (not will contact) the Woodford Bank for a debit card. Jeff moved to accept the corrected minutes from May 26. Dan seconded. Carried.

Treasurer Report: Becky gave the treasurer's report. Thus far she has been able to keep accounts current including Portico. Also 2 of the 3 loans for capital improvements have come in.

Board Reports: None from Board of Ed; Jeff said Deacons are doing okay and Jay reported for the Trustees.

(council meeting minutes continued)

Pastor Report: Pastor Chris reported on his attendance at the Rostered Ministers Conference in Indianapolis. Also that he is looking forward to the Vacation Bible Camp this coming Saturday.

Correspondence: Gary read a thank you note from Diane Hendrickson for the scholarships for last year and the coming school year. He also read a request letter from the Pecatonica Boosters as to whether the congregation would like to purchase an ad for the coming school year. Jeff moved that we purchase an advertisement on the Sports Calendar at a cost of \$75.00. Dan seconded and the motion carried.

Transfers, New Members, Visitors: There were no transfers, new members or visitors.

New Business:

God's Work, Our Hands Sunday: Pastor explained that we will need to move the God's Work, Our Hands day to September 6 as the collection locations and dates have been changed. Monroe will no longer be a collection site. Platteville and Madison will be the new sites on September 11 and 12. September 6 we will have one service at the Hollandale Legion (Municipal) Building at 10:00 a.m. with assembly of the school kits to follow. Pastor will also do Back Pack blessings on this day.

Articles for Newsletter Each Council Member is asked to write an article for the monthly newsletter on Why You Are a Council Member. Jeff volunteered to submit an article for the September newsletter; Julie - October; Gary - November; Becky - December and Robin - January.

Pastor said that Michele Lien is looking to step down from Office Administrator. There are a couple of projects that she would like to see completed before she leaves. One being a source for publishing the Newsletter as Publisher will be discontinued.

Old Business:

Council Vacancies: Pastor said he had someone approach him who is interested in the open Board of Ed position.

Strategic Planning Approval:

Gary had sent an email with an outline of how to do Strategic Planning. Would need a small working group with a chairperson to do an informal assessment of members and the community. Jeff volunteered to work on a questionnaire for the next meeting. Kayla said Chat GPT has suggestions on a questionnaire.

Any Other Old Business:

Julie asked if there is a Mutual Ministry Team. Yes, one was established in 2023.

Information:

Suggested Changes to the New Hope Constitution to align with ELCA Constitution will be on the August agenda. Andy Whitford Holey is working on this and is close to completion.

Bible Study continues Tuesdays from 8 - 9 a.m. at the River Bend Cafe.

Weekly bulletin items need to be in the office on Tuesday.

New emails to start using now: pastor@newhopelutheran.info, office@newhopelutheran.info

Becky said that Tina's and her emails are not functional as yet.

Dates to Remember:

VBS Saturday August 1

Newsletter deadline August 13

Baptism at Blanchardville Site August 16

Rally Day, School Kit Assembly (God's Work, Our Hands) Sunday, September 6 at Hollandale

Fall Supper, Bazaar and Auction will be Wednesday, October 14

Next Meeting:

Monday, August 24 at Blanchardville

Pastor Chris moved to adjourn, Dan seconded. Closed with the Lord's Prayer

AUGUST

Birthdays & Anniversaries

Bonnie	Keyes	August 3
Jeffrey	Kurschner	August 3
Arlo	Ley	August 5
Duane	Kundert	August 7
Brylie	Olson	August 8
Paul	Saether	August 13
Jerry	Kesler	August 13
Cassandra	Willard	August 14
Lauren	Becker	August 16
John	Simonson	August 17
Rhonda	Kirch	August 19
Harvey	O'Connor	August 21
Alex	Domine	August 22
Ryan	Kleppe	August 23
Kathy	Kolden-Doyle	August 25
Andy	Bethke	August 26
Wade	Wyse	August 26
Audrey	Hughes	August 27
Sawyer	Kundert	August 30
Michael	Henderson	August 30
Brock	Erickson	August 31
Troy	Ruegsegger	August 31
Ronald	Strommen	August 31

	Norton	08/13/1966
Merlin "Butch" & Beth		
Richard & Sue	Retrum	08/25/1972
David & Kandi	Lockard	08/18/1979
James & Jane	Parkinson	08/08/1982
Franklin & Margie	Barnes	08/04/1984
Rodney & Jayne	Kurschner	08/17/1985
Steve & Stephanie	Zimmerman	08/25/1985
Jerry & Rebecca	Kesler	08/27/1988
John & Amy	Thronson	08/13/1994
Aaron & Kate	Garthwaite	08/09/2008
Chelsea & Brad	Burkeland	08/13/2011
Chris & Rhia	Strohm	08/17/2013
Gary & Andrew	Whitford-Holey	08/23/2015



Please submit information to be included in the
September Visitor to the church office by
Thursday, August 13.

The birthday and anniversary lists are run from a report showing active members. If we've missed a birthday, or anniversary, please contact the office at office@newhopelutheran.info or 608-523-4239.