

Currents

Newsletter of University Lutheran Church, September 2026



Welcome Fall!



Sunday, Aug. 23

10 am worship at Phoenix Park,
ULC hosts

Sunday, Aug. 30

Return to 10 am worship at ERC

Wednesday, Sept. 2

UWEC classes begin

5:30 pm worship at ERC, followed
by free meal

Sunday, Sept. 6

10 am worship, bring plants to ERC

6 pm Neighbor to Neighbor

Spanish worship & meal

Wednesday, Sept. 9

11 am-1 pm Blugold Organizations

Bash (BOB) on the campus mall



SUNDAY, SEPT 13

**10 AM WORSHIP
11:15 BRUNCH**

**POT LUCK
BRING SOME YUMMY FOOD
TO SHARE WITH STUDENTS!**

**UNIVERSITY
LUTHERAN**
at the Ecumenical Religious Center

110 GARFIELD
(BESIDE HIBBARD)

**UNIVERSITY
LUTHERAN**
at the Ecumenical Religious Center

110 Garfield Ave, Eau Claire, WI

(715) 834-8026

office@universitylutheran.org

Rev. Dr. Lori Ruge-Jones

Fall Semester Meals

Click [HERE](#) to access Signup Genius

Fall semester classes begin September 2, and University Lutheran will gracefully welcome returning and new students — and congregation members, too! — with a potluck on September 2. This kicks off a new semester of sharing food and fellowship on Wednesday nights, and everyone is invited!

Dinner follows the 5:30 pm worship service, with serving generally starting shortly after 6 pm. We expect around 20 people each week. We always make sure to have vegetarian options and accommodate other food sensitivities as needed.

Again this year the planning team has set a suggested menu for each week. For September the dinner themes will be:

- September 2 — potluck**
- September 9 — salad bar**
- September 16 — pasta bar**
- September 23 — sloppy joes**
- September 30 — baked potato bar**



In addition to signing up for the main dishes, there will be opportunities to sign up in Signup Genius to contribute salad dressings, cheese, butter, and other dinner necessities. Also, we will be celebrating birthdays on the first Wednesday of each month (so if you like to make cakes, this is your chance).

Our Wednesday night dinner tradition dates back decades and continues today with the help of volunteer cooks, servers, dishwashers, and other contributors. Watch the weekly announcements for a link to the SignUp Genius so you can be part of the fun!

Remember — potluck on September 2. Please bring a dish to pass and help our students start the semester well fed. If you have questions, please contact Wendy Kinderman (715-456-9649, wendykinderman@hotmail.com), Carol Rudd (715-456-1936 cjrudd52@gmail.com), or Kathy LeBrun (715-829-5516, kathy@amblues.com).

CONGREGATION

Grown in Grace

We need donations of
house plants!
Bring to church on Sept. 6
(BOB is Sept. 9)



As we welcome students back to campus,
we need some volunteers!

1. Houseplant donations! We're hoping for 150, and have about 100 committed so far. Bring them to church on Sunday, September 6. Please sign up so we can plan accordingly, thanks!
2. Set up for the BOB, Wednesday, September 9, 10 am. (Carry plants to campus)
3. Bring food to share for brunch on Sunday, September 13, after worship.



Congratulations, Seth!

Seth Roberts was a recipient of the 2026 Carr Groenewold Scholarship. Seth is pursuing Musical Performance in Piano and Theatre at UWEC, and is a cantor and pianist at ULC. Seth writes, "After college, I hope to hone my skills as an actor."

CAMPUS MINISTRY

New Staff at Newman Parish

We welcome five new staff members to the ERC!

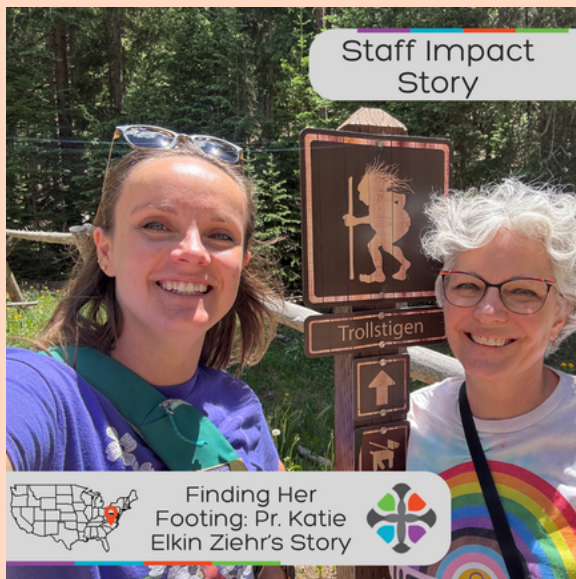
Father Michael Klos and Father Kyle Lang are priests serving Sacred Heart, St. Patrick's, and Newman, plus the Spanish language mass at St. Mary's.

Sean Coyle is the campus ministry director, working with Jaden, Micah, Kaylie and **Julia** (new) on the Focus Missionary team.

Cindy Estrada (administrative assistant) will be in the office Tues-Thurs mornings.

JoAnn Vruwink (parish education) and **Emmett McMorro** (liturgy) continue on staff.

Take a minute to say hello and welcome them if you're in the building!



Pastor Lori serves as a mentor for a first-call campus pastor.

She was mentioned in a recent article about Katie Elkin Ziehr's ministry. Click [HERE](#) to access the article.



Building Community Deepening Faith
Expanding Minds Inspiring Service



LEARN & GROW

“As we move from primary season into general election season, ULC’s Learn & Grow ministry would like to draw your attention to this opportunity. We hope you’ll check it out, and consider registering for the series. Watch our weekly announcements for additional L&G opportunities this fall.”



Faith & Civic Life Social Statement

Join synod staff and leaders as we take a closer look at the ELCA’s newest social statement, a tool to help us envision a just, generous, and robust civic life dedicated to the well-being of all people.

Six Sessions

1. Our Calling as Christians to Engage in Civic Life
2. Our Christian Understanding of Power
3. Faith-Based Advocacy and Politics
4. Relationship Between Church and Government
5. The First Amendment and Christian Nationalism
6. Hyperpartisan Polarization and Need for Constructive Engagement

+Dates:

Monday evenings @ 6:30 pm

Hosted on Zoom

September 14, 21, 28

October 5, 19, 26

**Please register by Sept. 12th*

+Register Here:

<https://mwswi.org/faith-and-civic-life>



Fall Arts Celebration Calling All Artists!

The 5th Annual Fall Arts Celebration (a collaboration of Eau Claire ELCA churches) will be held on Sunday, October 18! If you create art in any medium, we invite you to share your talents by displaying and/or selling your work. Start planning now—we'd love to showcase the creativity of our church community!

Contact Holli Jacobson at (608) 250-9122 with any questions or to sign up.

Please watch the announcements and the October newsletter for more information regarding the Fall Arts Celebration. It will be held at Trinity Lutheran Church, hosted by Immanuel Lutheran.



**Chippewa Valley
MULTICULTURAL
FESTIVAL**

SEPTEMBER 13, 2026
11:30 AM - 4:30 PM
at the Phoenix Park Pavilion

Discover, Learn, & Celebrate Together

FREE

Sponsored by:

-  **JONAH**
Imaging Our Neighbors
-  **WELCOMING NEW NEIGHBORS**
WNN
-  **EAU CLAIRE
COMMUNITY NEXUS**
-  **IMMANUEL
LUTHERAN CULTURAL CENTER**
-  **IMMANUEL
LUTHERAN CHURCH**
-  **world relief**
WISCONSIN
-  **Eau Claire
Community
Foundation**

Photo by Soul Shine Photography.

COMMUNITY



The Hike for the Homeless raised over \$40,000!



Our remaining two SERVING WEEKENDS of the year for Beacon House are
Sept 24-26 & Nov 19-21

Current supply needs: gift cards, bath towels, laundry detergent, baby wipes, new pillows, twin sheet sets, utensils, paper towels, cans of Lysol, baby bottles & teething rings, hair conditioner (all types)



THIRD ANNUAL

GATHERING OF THE WATERS POWWOW



SEPT. 19, 2026

11 A.M. - 6 P.M.

1 P.M. GRAND ENTRY

**SONNENTAG CENTER
EAU CLAIRE, WI**

HOST DRUM: CROSSROADS

INVITED DRUM: TOMAHAWK CIRCLE

HEAD VETERAN: DR. BRIAN JACKSON

HEAD FEMALE DANCER: RICHELLE REED

FEMALE DANCE SPECIALS: STRAP DRESS, JINGLE

HEAD MALE DANCER: SHANE MITCHELL

MALE DANCE SPECIALS: WOODLAND, TRADITIONAL

AZTEC DANCE EXHIBITION: KALPULLI YAOCENOXTLI

EMCEE: RONNIE PRESTON

ARENA DIRECTOR: SUGAR SHANE WEBSTER



**MAYO CLINIC
HEALTH SYSTEM**



University of Wisconsin
Eau Claire



VISIT
**EAU
CLAIRE**



JONAH UPDATES!

JONAH is currently selling ads for its 2026/2027 Yearbook. The JONAH yearbook is one of JONAH's largest fundraisers. Individual donors are welcome to contribute as well as businesses and organizations. Your name will be listed in the yearbook under "Yearbook Supporters". The suggested amount is \$30. If you are interested in making a donation, please contact Elecia Oleson: olesones98@gmail.com or 715-579-6712. The deadline for individual donors to support the yearbook is Sept. 1, 2026. However, anyone is welcome to contribute to JONAH at any time during the year.

The ULC JONAH Core Team is meeting Thursday, Aug. 6, at 4:00pm at the Coffee Grounds. Please join us if you're interested! We will be discussing ways to create a Care Team for ULC, how to apply for Thrivent Financial Grants to support Campus Ministry, and how to make connections with other congregation members and other local churches. If you have questions, please contact Elecia

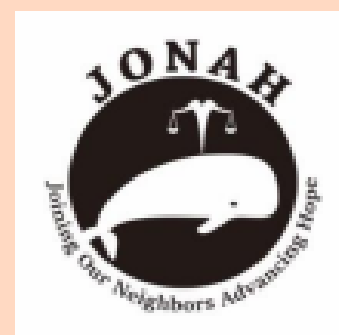
SAVE THE DATE(S)!

Sept. 13, 2026 at 11:30am–4:30pm FREE
Chippewa Valley Multicultural Festival at the Phoenix Park Pavillion

Oct. 4, 2026 at 3:00pm–5:00pm
JONAH's 19th Annual Event at the Brewing Projekt
Tickets: \$25 for one, \$40 for two

For other JONAH events, click [HERE](#).

For the JONAH Book Club schedule, click [HERE](#).





Northwest Synod of Wisconsin

Click [HERE](#) for the
Synod website:



Northwest Synod of Wisconsin
Lay School of Ministry

Lay Preacher course



Pastors Phil and Lori Ruge-Jones will lead a 5-session course to teach lay people the art of Biblical preaching. Open to all.

Cost: \$25 donation to Lay School + book
Register: rugejones@gmail.com

3rd Thursdays, Sept. - Jan.
7-8:30 pm Zoom

Neighbor to Neighbor/Vecino a Vecino

The Northwest Synod of Wisconsin supports an outreach ministry for our Latinx neighbors, providing health fairs, networking, ridesharing, a pop-up food pantry, and monthly worship services in Spanish. The ministry is coordinated by Deacon Lidixe Montoya. The next worship service is on September 6 at 6 pm at Immanuel Lutheran, followed by a meal.



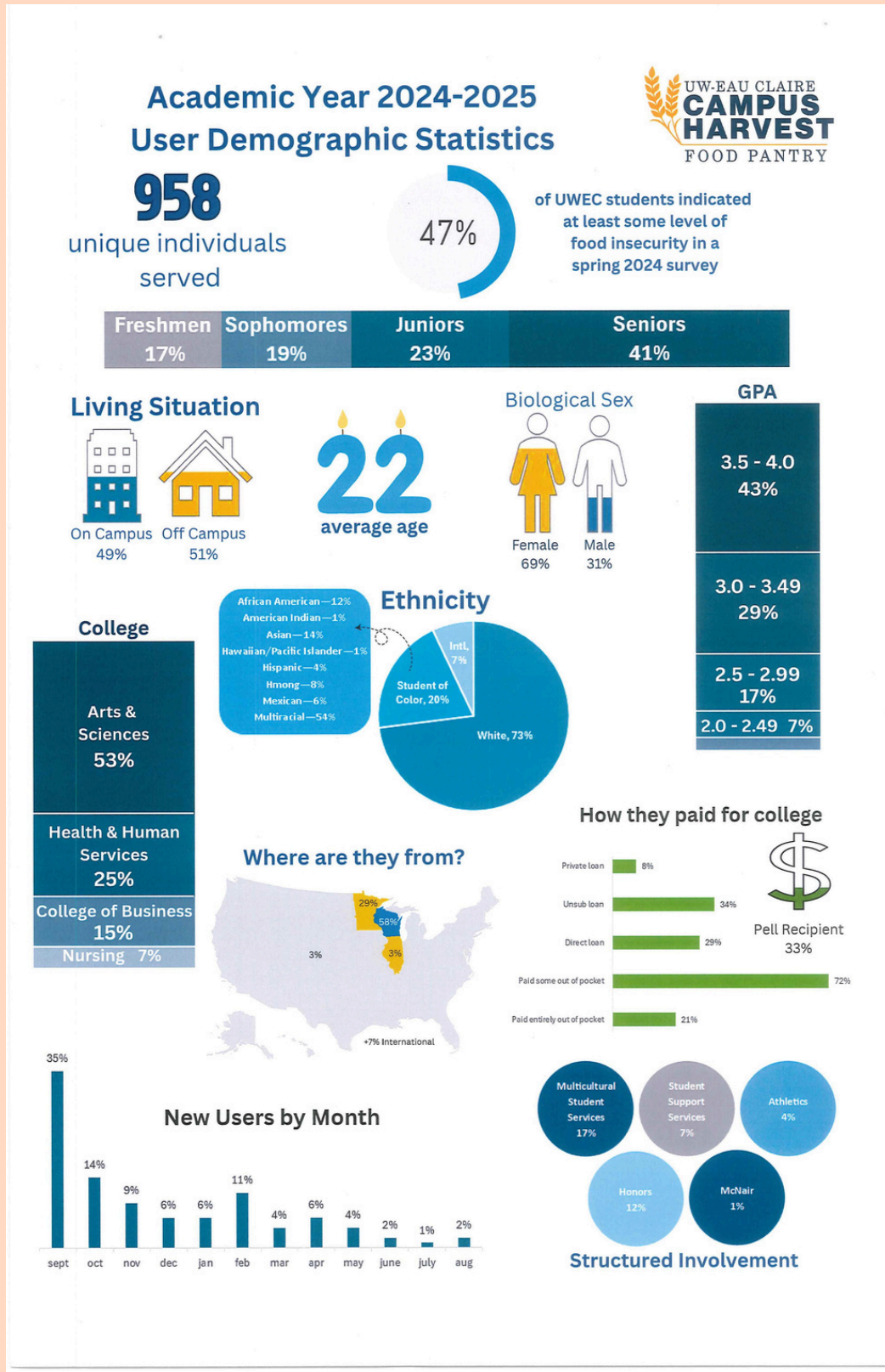
NORTHWEST SYNOD OF WISCONSIN
WOMEN OF THE ELCA

BIENNIAL CONVENTION

SEPTEMBER 26, 2026
8:30 am – 3:00 pm

BETHANY LUTHERAN CHURCH – RICE LAKE, WI

For more information and to register,
click [HERE](#)



Since September of 2014, Campus Harvest food pantry aids students that self-identify as in need of supplemental food assistance.

The pantry offers non-perishable and perishable food items (including frozen meats & fresh produce), period products, hygiene items, and miscellaneous cooking supplies.

Students are welcome to utilize the pantry once per week.

CAMPUS



The Riverside Science Center will be ready for classes starting fall semester 2027.



The former site of Zorn Arena, Kjer Theater, and Brewer Hall is shaping up nicely for greenspace at the campus entrance. (It's also hiding lots of underground infrastructure put in this summer for Hibbard Hall.)

UPCOMING EVENTS

Worship at ERC beginning August 30, 10 am
Wednesday Worship or Event & Meals at ERC, 5:30 pm, beginning September 2

August

Aug 23	10:00 AM	ULC hosts worship at Phoenix Park
Aug 30	10:00 AM	Sunday worship at ERC resumes

September

Sept 2		UWEC classes begin
Sept 2	5:30 PM	Wednesday worship, followed by meal
Sept 2	6:30 PM	Interfaith Prayer service at Fish House-Northern Room, Altoona (event center, not a restaurant)
Sept 6	6:00 PM	Neighbor to Neighbor worship @ Immanuel
Sept 9	11:00 am-1:00 pm	Blugold Organizations Bash (BOB) on campus mall
Sept 13	10:00 AM	Worship, followed by potluck brunch
Sept 13	11:30 am-4:30 pm	Chippewa Valley Multicultural Festival, Phoenix Park Pavilion
Sept 15	4:30 PM	ULC Council meeting
Sept 19	11:00 am-6:00 pm	Gathering of the Waters POWWOW, Sonnentag Center
Sept 24-26		Beacon House serving
Sept 26	8:30 am-3:00 pm	WELCA Biennial Convention

Here is a link to visit all campus-wide events: <https://calendar.uwec.edu/all/groups/Campus-wide>

See our [calendar](#) for more ministry and event information

ULC Ministry Contacts

Gracefully Welcome

Joyfully Serve, Wendy Kinderman

715-456-9649

wendykinderman@hotmail.com

Carol Rudd

715-456-1936

cjrudd52@gmail.com

Learn & Grow, Dr. Kate Hale Wilson, Chair

715-829-8620

kate_hale@me.com

Thankfully Worship, Pastor Lori Ruge-Jones

JONAH ULC Core Team, Elecia Oleson, Chair

715-579-6712

olesones98@gmail.com

ULC Staff Contacts

Rev. Dr. Lori Ruge-Jones, Pastor

715-834-8026

pastor@universitylutheran.org

Joanne Erickson, Parish Assistant

715-834-8026

office@universitylutheran.org

Andrea Gapko, Parish Administrator

608-886-3148

gapkoam@uwec.edu

Council Contacts

Cindy Rasmussen, Council President

715-271-0727

cindyjhr@gmail.com

Dr. Kate Hale Wilson, President-elect

715-829-8620

kate_hale@me.com

Wendy Kinderman, Council Secretary

715-456-9649

wendykinderman@hotmail.com

Sue Diel, Financial Secretary

715-210-8896

sjdiel720@yahoo.com

Dan Behnke

715-697-9543

danbehnke@gmail.com

Brad Bishop

715-651-3072

bradandsarabishop@gmail.com

Jill Granlund

715-523-1801

jtersteeg3@gmail.com

Elizabeth Packer

218-349-3793

ecpack304@gmail.com

Pastor Lori Ruge-Jones

715-834-8026

pastor@universitylutheran.org



Evangelical
Lutheran Church
in America

