

DECORAH FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
September 2026



The Tower

Welcome to September!

I heard the voice of Jesus say,
“Come unto Me and rest;
Lay down, O weary one, lay down
Thy head upon My breast.”

I came to Jesus as I was,
Weary, worn, and sad;
I found in him a resting-place,
And he has made me glad.

- I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say, v.1

Welcome to my favorite time of the year;
the months that end in -ber. The year has
passed so quickly. In mid-August, the
pastors of the Iowa Annual Conference had
their professional interviews.

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This is when we meet individually with our District Superintendents (DS) and talk about what has been going on and look forward a little bit to help with decisions about moving pastors around. (He has no plans on moving me and has stated that he prefers long term appointments, just FYI.) We must fill out a questionnaire that also helps guide this conversation. One of the questions asked is about how we practice spiritual and self-care. They ask us to list specific practices. One question our DS had was in response to my answer to this question. He asked what I meant by “going off grid” in my response.

I heard the voice of Jesus say,
“Behold, I freely give
The living water; thirsty one,
Stoop down, and drink, and live.”
I came to Jesus, and I drank
Of that life-giving stream;
My thirst was quenched, my soul revived,
And now I live in him.

- I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say, v.2

I explained that what I meant was just that. Going out into nature, or even just my yard to sit under the big tree with no phone, no internet, no social media, nothing that would distract me or interrupt a silent, recharging moment with God. It is in the grass, the prairies, the woods, ponds, rivers and lakes that I feel most connected to the divine. These moments offer me an uninterrupted time to sit and have a talk with God, as well as to refill my cup and recharge my battery. Fresh air, the smell of the trees, the grass, and the flowers, mingling with the sounds of all of creation-- this is where I find myself in the company of all that restores me. What reconnects you? Where do you find that peace or moments to communicate with God? Is it in art? Is it in nature? Is it simply turning off all of the devices and interruptions and just sitting in silence?

Whatever it is, wherever it is, find time this fall to take the time to “go off grid” and sit with Jesus. Bring your whole self. Bring all of what you are feeling and going through, and know that no matter what feelings the conversation includes - anger, joy, anxiety, hope, etc., God is right next to you through it all, saying “Come, rest a while with me.”

I heard the voice of Jesus say,
“I am this dark world’s Light;
Look unto me, your morn shall rise,
And all your day be bright.”
I looked to Jesus, and I found
In him my Star, my Sun;
And in that Light of life I’ll walk,
Till trav’ling days are done.

- I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say, v.3

Rev. Cat Stokes

Helping Postville

Checks for donations to the Postville Food Pantry can be sent to:

**Box 1129
Postville, IA 52162**



from the music corner

Church choir will resume our regular season starting the first week of September.

Rehearsals are Wednesdays at 7:30pm, and on Sundays we have a warm-up rehearsal at 8:30am.

We welcome new singers!

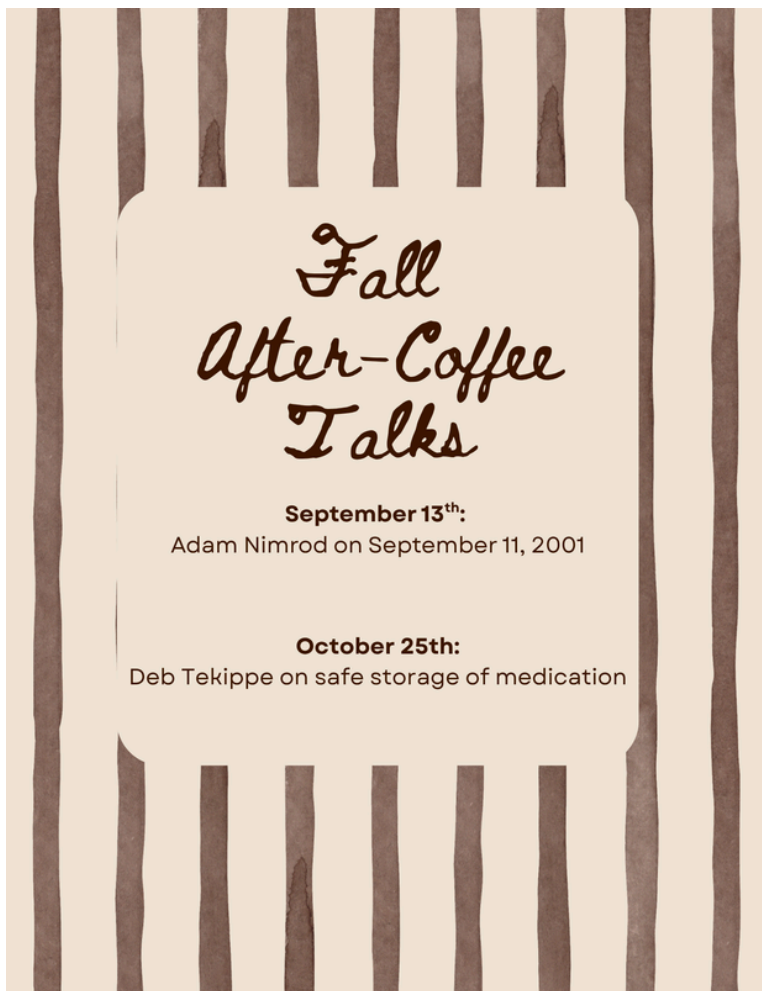
We will have two Luther student musicians helping with piano accompaniment this year:

Hugh Spann and Connor Sandman. We look forward to the year ahead very much!

Thanks to September Front Office Volunteers!

Cerrisa will be taking a vacation from **Monday, September 14th - through Thursday, September 17th**. Thanks very much to those staffing the front office while I'm away.

FRONT OFFICE SCHEDULE SEPTEMBER 14 TH - SEPTEMBER 17 TH	
MONDAY 9/14 9 A.M. - 1 P.M.	STAFFED BY: LYN WHITE
TUESDAY 9/15 9 A.M. - 1 P.M.	STAFFED BY: VIRGINIA LEIDAHL
WEDNESDAY 9/16 9 A.M. - 11 A.M.	STAFFED BY: LINDA WATSON
THURSDAY 9/17 9 A.M. - 1 P.M.	STAFFED BY: SONDY CARVER
FRIDAY 9/18	CLOSED
Cerrisa will return to normal hours on Monday, September 21 st . Thank you!	



A Note From Sally Stromseth

Thank you for the prayers and kind words of support concerning my brother-in-law's lung transplant surgery. He's doing very well and gaining strength for which we are all thankful.

With a grateful heart,
Sally Stromseth

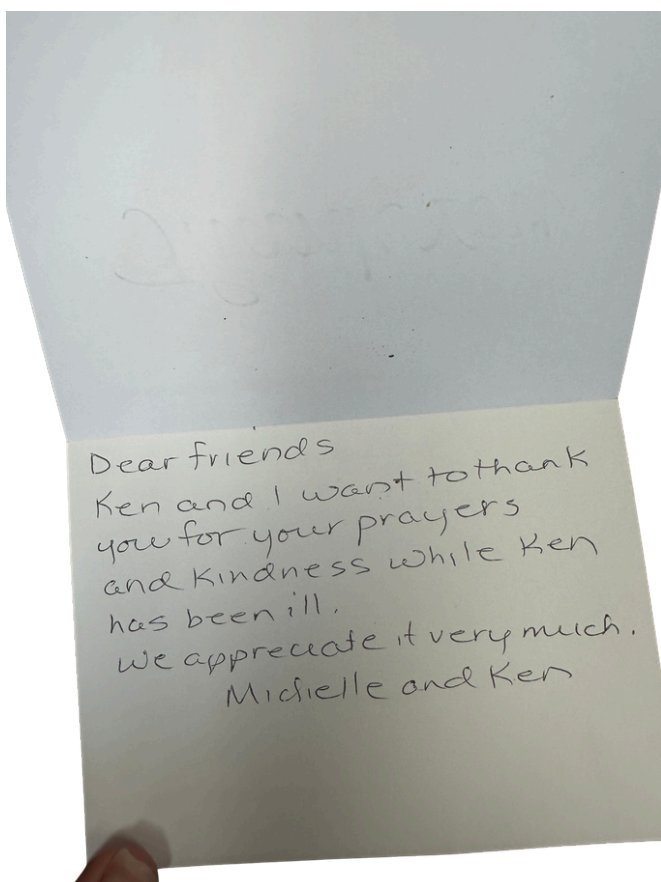
Pastor Cat's Upcoming Vacation:

Pastor Cat will be on vacation from **October 12th - 25th**. Information about pastoral care in her absence will be forthcoming.

A Thank You



Michelle & Ken Amdahl would like to thank everyone for their prayers & kindness while Ken was ill in August. A card from them is hanging on the front office door.



UW FAITH HAPPENINGS

From Syd:

UW Faith Meeting

Wed., Sept. 2nd
12:15 Executive Meeting
1 p.m. Group meeting

Hostesses: Deb Tekeppe & Lyn White

Program: Candace has asked Patience

Duhnke to share a presentation on wellness including chair yoga & more. Join us if you'd like to learn more.

Mat weaving on Sept. 2nd & 16th from 10 a.m. - noon. Join us to help make a difference for someone in need!

Quilters will meet **each Tuesday morning at 8.** See Sweet Young or Candace if you have any concerns.

Peanut Butter Backpack Event

Join us **Sun., Sept. 13th** to help us raise resources for our local Backpack Program. We will have a bake sale featuring peanut butter treats, & more. Details will be forthcoming closer to the event date.

FOOD PANTRY UPDATE



Thanks for all of the donations brought in for the Congregational Campaign.

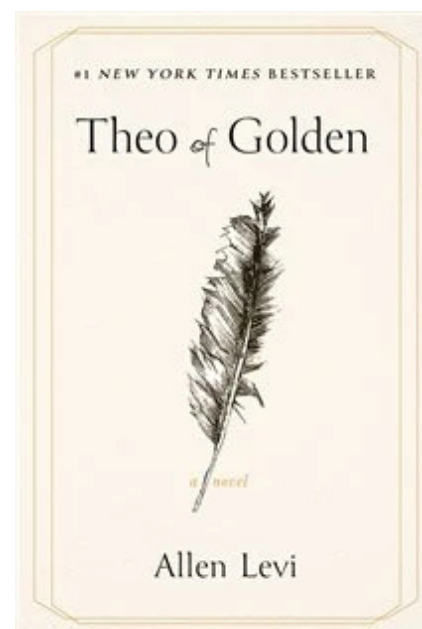
The Pantry has had a busy summer and has been providing assistance to some new clients and helping out the Postville Pantry following the Agri Star fire.

Keep the afternoon of **Sunday, October 18th** open on your calendar for our 5th Annual Food Walk!

Watch for more details in the October Tower.

Thanks very much for all that you provide!





BOOK CLUB

From Jane:

For the month of September the book club will be reading *Theo of Golden* by Allen Levi. We will be meeting at **1:30pm on Thursday September 17th** at Linda Watson's home at 817 Ravine St.

If you would like to join the group please contact Jane Hardy at **563-382-5316** or email **jhardy3333@aol.com**.

Birthdays

4th: Pamela Ransom & Kath Zierath

9th: Joshua Vsetecka

16th: Herb Hageman

18th: Ellie Van Fleet

20th: Karen Gipp & Jim Thompson

21st: Jane Vande Berg

22nd: Wayne Wasta

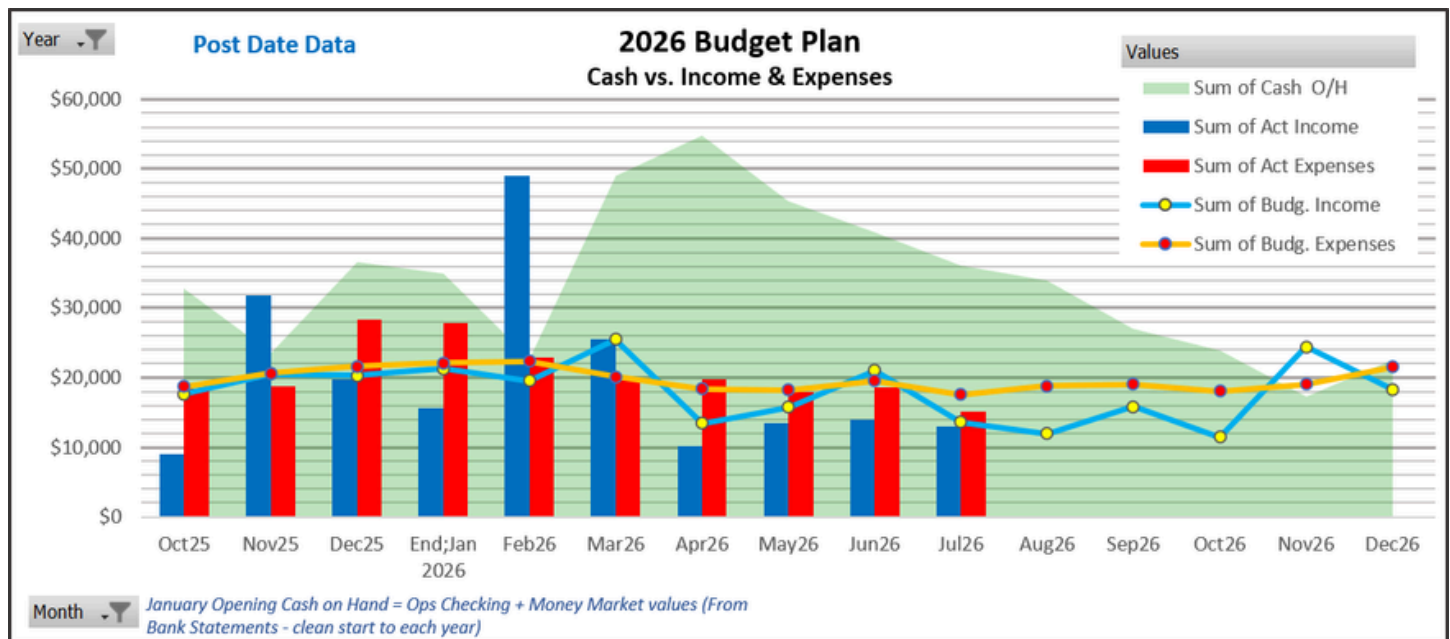
24th: Brenda Headington

29th: Deb Tekippe



TREASURER'S *corner*

Our September reporting will only include "booked" transactions...we still have income from this Sunday and some employee payroll to account for over the weekend.



As you can see from the above chart, income once again lags expenses (for now), yet it has beaten our forecast. Expenses pretty much have landed on our forecast thus far.

Here are the basic stats:

- Income (currently) is \$14.2K on a plan of \$11.9K
- Expenses (currently) are \$18.1K on a plan of \$18.8K
- Our working cash-on-hand (as of 8/29/26)
 - Checking = \$8.0K
 - Mmkt = \$20.2K (no moves this month)
- Benevolent activity is also naturally lower this time of year:
 - Income = \$1.2K (a bit more than half going to Sister Parish...Nordic Fest proceeds)
 - Payouts = Right now I have \$420 queued up for Food Pantry coupon program, but we may receive a few more \$\$ this Sunday, so I won't make that payout until next Monday.

Please let me know if you have any questions regarding our financial status.

Peace and Blessings,

Steve Rarick, Treasurer - Decorah 1st UMC
(847) 830-9891 mobile

UPCOMING EVENTS

Peer to Peer Support Group for individuals who have lost loved ones to suicide:

This free & open group meets the 2nd
Thu. of each month from
5-6:30 p.m.

Counseling Associates
(806 Commerce Drive)

Grief Support Group:

This free & open group meets the
2nd Mon. of the month at 5:30
p.m.

*Boardroom at The Highlands
(607 Highland Dr.)*

US Faith Meeting

Wed., Sept. 2nd
12:15 Executive Meeting
1 p.m. Group meeting

Community Meal

Thu., Sept. 3rd, 5 p.m. - 6:15 p.m.

*Decorah Lutheran Church
(309 Winnebago St.)*

After Coffee Speaker:

Sun., Sept. 13th: Adam Nimrod
Topic: September 11th

UWF Peanut Butter Event

Sun., Sept. 13th

More details to come

Burr Oak Lutheran Church WELCA Bazaar & Raffle

Wed., Sept. 16th, 7 p.m.

(2358 360th St., Decorah)

Service & Luncheon in Honor of Irma Johnson:

Fri., Sept. 25th, Vistation at 10 a.m.,
services at 11 a.m., luncheon to
follow

Pride Parade

Sat., Oct. 10th

More details to come

Charge Conference

Sun., Oct. 18th at 6 p.m.

*(W. Union United Methodist,
301 Hansen Blvd., West Union)*

Decorah Food Pantry 5th Annual Food Walk

Sun., October 18th
More details to come

After Coffee Speaker:

Sun., Oct. 25th: Deb Tekippe
Topic: Safe Storage of Medication

Quilting:

Each Tuesday Morning at 9 a.m.

Mat Weaving:

Wed., Sept. 2nd & 16th

Thank you to our September liturgists & coffee servers

Flower Chair: TBD



COFFEE SERVERS

September 6th

Allie & David Scott & Family

September 13th

UWF Peanut Butter Bake

September 20th

Virginia Leidahl & Nancy Ruen

September 27th

Sally & Don Stromseth

LITURGISTS

September 6th

Mark Landas

September 13th

Linda Watson

September 20th

Deborah Bishop

September 27th

Nancy Ruen



HONORING IRMA JOHNSON

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 25TH



FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 25TH

SERVICE & LUNCHEON

Visitation at 10 am,
Service at 11 am,
with a lunch following in the Fellowship Hall

Fall Book Study:

The Book of Joy

LASTING HAPPINESS IN A CHANGING WORLD

by Dalai Lama & Archbishop Desmond Tutu

*Meetings: After coffee on Sundays
from September 20th - October 11th*

