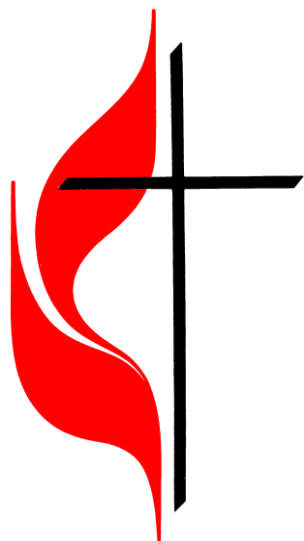




*Love God by loving others.
Serve God by serving others.*

The Westby United Methodist Church
welcomes **everyone** with open arms and open
hearts as indicated in Romans 15:7 (NIV):

*Accept one another, then, just as Christ
accepted you, in order to bring praise to God.*



Westby United
Methodist Church
October 2026

IN THIS ISSUE

Upon Our Lord's Sermon on the Mount, X

by Pastor Paul Lee

In Matthew 7:1–12, Jesus talks about the things that can get in the way of a faithful life. He also shows us how to get past them.

The first problem is judging other people. Wesley says that Jesus' words, "Do not judge," do not mean we must pretend wrong is right. It means we must not think or speak about others without love. We judge when we blame people who did nothing wrong. We judge when we make someone's mistake sound bigger than it is. We also judge when we decide too quickly, before we know the whole story. Wesley says even good Christians fall into this habit very easily.

So Jesus tells us to look at ourselves first. Before we take the speck of sawdust out of someone else's eye, we need to take the plank out of our own. For Wesley, the plank is anything in our hearts that is not yet right with God, like pride or selfishness. And if someone really has done wrong, we should follow Matthew 18. We go and talk to that person alone, face to face. We do not talk about them behind their back.

The second warning is about holy things. Jesus says, "Do not give dogs what is sacred; do not throw your pearls to pigs." Wesley sees this as wise, practical advice. Some people openly laugh at God. Pushing deep spiritual truths on them will only make them mock more. But Wesley adds a careful word. We should be very slow to put anyone in this group. And we should still be kind to them and keep praying for them.

Then Jesus gives the answer to every problem, and the answer is prayer. "Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you." Wesley reminds us that we cannot fix our hearts by our own strength. We need to keep coming to God. Parents on earth are not perfect, but they still give good gifts to their children. Our Father in heaven will give even more to those who ask him.

Last of all comes the Golden Rule. "In everything, do to others what you would have them do to you." Wesley says this rule is simple enough for anyone to understand. Just ask yourself how you want to be treated. Then treat others the same way. Do you want people to judge you quickly or talk about your faults behind your back? Then do not do that to them.

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Wesley also says we cannot live this rule by trying harder on the outside. It comes from a heart that loves God. When God's love fills our hearts, we begin to love our neighbors too. Then the Golden Rule becomes a natural part of everyday life.

~ Pastor Paul

Pastor Paul's Schedule:

Westby UMC Office Hours:

- Thursdays (9:00-12:00)
- Anytime by appointment

Contact Information:

Direct Office Phone: 608-638-7627

Cell Phone: 262-393-8416

Email:

pastor@virouqawestbyumc.org

Pastor Paul will be attending a Leadership event on Sept. 29-Oct. 1

Pastor Paul will be on vacation Oct. 12-18, and he will attend the Provisional Elder Seminar on Oct. 19-20

October Birthdays

October 10 – Sunwoo Lee

October 29 – Sua Lee



October Anniversaries

October 1 – Kelly & Jill Bjornstad

October 3 – Richard & Imgard Allen

October 8 – Verna Drake & Dan Schreiter



Sunday School News

In October, the Sunday school lesson topic will be “All Stars” and discuss how God uses ordinary people, who trust him and follow him, to do amazing things through them. We will have an outing to the Kickapoo Orchard on Oct. 18. We'll take a tour of the orchard and experience their corn/sunflower maze.

Thursday Morning Prayer Group

Prayer is more powerful when we pray together. Please join our Prayer group on Thursday, October 1st at 9:00 AM. Come and help us to use the power of prayer as we pray for others and our church.



Mission of the Month – Operation Christmas Child

It is time once again to start collecting donations for Operation Christmas Child (Shoebox Gifts). The Sunday School children pack shoeboxes full gifts for children who might not otherwise have anything to open on Christmas morning. The boxes usually contain not only small, fun toys, but also school supplies, personal-care items and hand-written greetings from our Sunday School children. Adults can help by donating some of the items for the boxes, money to purchase items or money to cover the shipping fees for each box. Some items that are not allowed are: candy, toothpaste, gum, used or damaged items, scary or war-related items such as toy guns, knives, or military figures; chocolate or food, seeds, fruit rolls or other fruit snacks, drink mixes (powdered or liquid), liquids or lotions, medications or vitamins, breakable items such as snow globes or glass containers, or anything in aerosol cans.

Please bring items to the church or make checks payable to the Westby UMC with OCC on the memo line by Nov. 1st. The Sunday school class will be shopping for items on Nov. 8th and then packing the boxes on Nov. 15th. Thank you in advance for participating in this fun project.

October Online Studies – It's Harvest Time!

Here in rural Wisconsin, we are no strangers to the harvest. Our area farmers are busy on their equipment bringing in the summer's crops before the cold and snow of winter arrives. But there is another harvest that is ready. It's a spiritual harvest and the work is up to you and me!



In Matthew 9, Jesus compares spreading the good news to the harvest. Just as he sent out his disciples to bring in the harvest, today he is calling us to head out into the fields. During the month of October, we will explore the concept of being the harvesters, God's heart for the lost, and the work that lies before us. Together, we will shift our perspective from one of seeing obstacles to one of seeing a plentiful harvest that needs our focused intercession. Sharing Jesus does not have to feel intimidating. Come along with us as we learn and grow to be workers bringing in the Lord's harvest. The Lord of the Harvest is calling... will you answer the call?

Our October online studies begin on Thursday, October 1st. You are welcome to join us at any time. All are welcome to participate.

The Harvest Is Ready (6 days) – starts October 1st

- Link for Bible App on mobile device: <https://bible.com/reading-plans/55450/together/82147591/invitation?token=UGeAsQa6uzC-NLglKOz7gQ&source=share>
- Link for Bible App on computer: <https://www.bible.com/reading-plans/55450-the-harvest-is-ready>

A Great Harvest (8 days) – starts October 7th

- Link for Bible App on mobile device: https://bible.com/reading-plans/55410/together/82147621/invitation?token=jWl88HXNhOdBBIn_fwUN0w&source=share
- Link for Bible App on computer: <https://www.bible.com/reading-plans/55410-a-great-harvest>

Difference Makers Harvest (7 days) – starts October 15th

- Link for Bible App on mobile device: <https://bible.com/reading-plans/16820/together/82147640/invitation?token=lzRQFei5rJiwCkQKTb8TJg&source=share>
- Link for Bible App on computer: <https://www.bible.com/reading-plans/16820-difference-makers-harvest>

Praying for the Harvest (7 days) – starts October 22nd

- Link for Bible App on mobile device: <https://bible.com/reading-plans/72125/together/82147653/invitation?token=3R3P-DWmTHijbKETnKjypQ&source=share>
- Link for Bible App on computer: <https://www.bible.com/reading-plans/72125-praying-for-the-harvest>



Fall Turkey Bazaar – Oct. 24

On Saturday, Oct. 24, 2026, the Retreat Methodist Church will have their annual Fall Turkey Bazaar, which included a turkey dinner, bake sale, craft sale and raffle. The bazaar will be from 4:00-7:00 PM in the Retreat Church fellowship hall. The meal includes turkey, dressing, mashed potatoes, carrots, coleslaw, homemade rolls & homemade pie. The price is \$15 per meal, with a maximum cost of \$50 for parents with minor children.

Pastor Appreciation – Oct. 25

We will have a Pastor Appreciation time during fellowship on Sunday, Oct. 25. There will be a sign-up sheet in the narthex on Sunday, Oct. 11th to bring food for this event.



Charge Conference – Oct. 25

Our churches' Charge Conference will be on Sunday, Oct. 25 at 6:00 PM. This year Viroqua UMC will be hosting this meeting. Before the meeting, there will be a potluck, starting at 5:00 PM. Please bring a dish to share if you are able. Please have all Charge Conference forms submitted by Sunday, Oct. 11.

Westby United Methodist Church – Board Meeting † September 9, 2026

Present: Verna Drake, Julie Fargen, Jane Gaskell, Tim Gaskell and Linda Weilnau

Opening: Tim Gaskell opened with prayer.

Approval of Minutes: The minutes of the August board meeting were emailed to the board members and published in the September newsletter, so they could be reviewed prior to the meeting. Verna Drake and Jane Gaskell motioned to approve the minutes. Motion passed.

Treasurer's Report: Verna Drake provided the financial reports for August and Year-to-Date. These reports were emailed to the board members prior to the meeting.

- Annual Budget / Pastoral Compensation - On July 1, Pastor Paul began his salary for his new position. Viroqua UMC has not provided updated amounts to reflect this cost increase. Without the updated salary information from Viroqua UMC, we are not able to finalize the annual budget.

Jane Gaskell and Julie Fargen motioned to approve the treasurer's report. Motion passed.

Old Business:

- † Hail Damage Church repairs – update (FEMA application – decision not to pursue) – Kickapoo Roofing has been paid in full. The HVAC bill has been partially paid. There is an electrician coming to finish hooking up the new HVAC system. The new awning bill has been paid in full.
- † New Website live September 1 – We were able to have the new website live on September 1st.
- † Safe Sanctuary Policy - adults, discussion before resubmission – Vulnerable adults were already included in sections of this policy. We discussed how we would include adult situations in the training. Verna Drake and Julie Fargen motioned that we accept the policy as written and submit it to the insurance company. Motion passed.
- † Vision Discussion – It was mentioned that we think about ways to develop closer relationships with the Sunday School families.

New Business:

- † Amara Rose Support Group (previous email discussion & approval) – Verna Drake and Jane Gaskell met with a representative from the Amara Rose Support Group. The group has been given a key to the back door and submitted the Building Use Policy. They will meet on the 1st and 3rd

Tuesday of the month and begin in October. It was suggested that in lieu of a regular payment, perhaps they could make a donation to offset the heating expenses. They will be using the building from 5:00-8:00 PM for their group meetings.

- ✝ Social event – movie, brunch, outing – We will discuss this with others during fellowship on Sunday, Sept. 13, to find out what others would like to do.
- ✝ Charge Conference – date, planning – Charge Conference will be on Sunday, Oct. 25 at 6:00 PM at Viroqua UMC. The Charge Conference documents are now available on the People Portal website. These forms need to be completed by Sunday, Oct. 11.
- ✝ Cemetery Update – Verna Drake reported that the people doing the mowing didn't weed around the gravestones this year. Previously, they did weed around the stones.

Business from Board Committees:

- ✝ **Trustees** – The new HVAC system was installed on the east side of the fellowship hall. It was supposed to be placed where the old one is. It was decided to leave the old one where it is instead of having it removed. If it is removed, we would need to repair a large square section of the siding on that wall. It was suggested to have the yard rolled next spring or have it aerated because it is very uneven.
- ✝ **SPRC** – This committee is working with the Viroqua UMC committee to determine pastoral compensation.
- ✝ **Worship** – No report.
- ✝ **Youth & Sunday School** – SS begins September 27 – We will have 4 teachers this year. The teachers met to determine a curriculum to purchase and the teaching schedule for October. A text message was sent to the Sunday School families about arranging a time in October to go to an orchard and corn/sunflower maze.
- ✝ **Missions** – No report.

Pastor's Report: The WUMF new ministry grant application has been started. Pastor Paul will apply for this grant for young parents / contemporary music service to purchase the program that Jane and I used for the Annual Conference music.

- Pastor Paul's Schedule – Sept. 29-Oct 1: School for leadership
 - Oct. 12-18 – Vacation – Cavan Fang will preach on Oct. 18
 - Oct. 19-20 – Provisional Elder Seminar

Verna Drake motioned to adjourn. Meeting adjourned.

Minutes submitted by Linda Weilnau

October 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 9:00 AM – Prayer Group 11:30 AM – Senior Meal Site 12:30 PM – Strength Training Class	2 Pastor Paul's Sabbath Day	3
4 9:00 AM – Worship Service (Communion) 10:00 AM – Fellowship & Sunday School	5 11:30 AM – Senior Meal Site	6 11:30 AM – Senior Meal Site 12:30 PM – Strength Training Class	7 11:30 AM – Senior Meal Site	8 11:30 AM – Senior Meal Site 12:30 PM – Strength Training Class	9 Pastor Paul's Sabbath Day	10
11 9:00 AM – Worship Service 10:00 AM – Fellowship & Sunday School	12 11:30 AM – Senior Meal Site	13 11:30 AM – Senior Meal Site 12:30 PM – Strength Training Class	14 11:30 AM – Senior Meal Site 6:00 PM – Church Board Meeting	15 11:30 AM – Senior Meal Site 12:30 PM – Strength Training Class	16 Pastor Paul's Sabbath Day	17
18 9:00 AM – Worship Service 10:00 AM – Fellowship & Sunday School 11:00 AM – Sunday School Orchard Trip	19 11:30 AM – Senior Meal Site	20 11:30 AM – Senior Meal Site 12:30 PM – Strength Training Class	21 11:30 AM – Senior Meal Site	22 11:30 AM – Senior Meal Site 12:30 PM – Strength Training Class	23 Pastor Paul's Sabbath Day	24 4:00-7:00 PM – Retreat Methodist Church Fall Turkey Bazaar (Bake & Craft Sale)
25 9:00 AM – Worship Service 10:00 AM – Pastor Appreciation & Sunday School 6:00 PM – Charge Conference @ Viroqua UMC	26 11:30 AM – Senior Meal Site	27 11:30 AM – Senior Meal Site 12:30 PM – Strength Training Class	28 11:30 AM – Senior Meal Site	29 11:30 AM – Senior Meal Site 12:30 PM – Strength Training Class	30 Pastor Paul's Sabbath Day	31 <i>Happy Halloween!</i>

**** Remember to join us at 3:20 PM each day for being unified in prayer to pray for our church and how we can reach and serve others, while serving God ...**

God, give us courage to dream Your dreams for our church. Please open our minds and hearts and ears so we can hear Your voice to know what Your purpose is for our church. We pray in Christ's name, Amen.

God is able to do much more than we ask or think, through His power working in us. ~ Ephesians 3:20 (NLV)