

*Our calling is to reach all people
with the life-changing power of
God's Love and Grace available to
all through Jesus Christ, our Lord.*

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 2022

IN THIS ISSUE

Do Not Conform, but Be Transformed

by Pastor Erika Martinez-Flores

*Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the
renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's
will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.*

Romans 12:2

The Protestant Reformation that happened 5 centuries ago and continues to be a reference for the church of Jesus Christ today, and not only that: it is also a reference for modern nations. The Reformation brought to light foundations for the church and society as the fruit of the Word of God, which was clearly preached and expounded.

The Reformation was a movement that brought the church back to its essence and mission, an idea that had been totally perverted and deformed. The church refocused on its mission to be the light of the world and salt of the earth, to uphold truth and doctrine, and to repeat the pattern of the early church. The Reformation also transformed cultures, civilizations, and governments through the living out of the truth and the preaching of the Word.

Now, what is the relevance of the Reformation today? We are in a period of history where we, as a church, must review what we think and believe, what is our mission and our essence.

Let's start by specifying what the Protestant Reformation was all about. His central point was in the faith that came from understanding the preaching of the Word of God. With the Reformation, the need to go to the Scripture itself to understand the different doctrines that affected their lives, was understood. Hence, the leaders of the Reformation understood that education was an essential and important element in the growth of Christianity and in the personal and spiritual growth of each person. Thus, the Reformation was not only a theological revolution since the social impact experienced by that generation was very profound.

But today's church doesn't have such a big impact on modern societies. It is common to hear that the only thing the church must do is preach the gospel. But what gospel are we preaching? The one in which the only mission of the church is to prepare people to continue preaching and add people to the 'select group' of Christianity? or the

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gospel that transforms the entire existence of those who hear it? That, gospel leaves out the mandate of the Lord to be salt and light on earth.

We must return to the full gospel. The agenda of being salt and light is not optional. We still have time to stand up as a church and fight for values, not because the mission of the church is values in themselves, but because we are a column and bulwark of the truth, which produces changes at all levels of society. That truth will make people who are not believers begin to see the glory of God in us.

God's agenda is not just the conversion of people; God's agenda is his glory, which is reflected in the church, in us, in our lives. His will is that his glory be carried into the world, even to those who are not to be converted. We need to understand that preaching the gospel is nothing other than being the light of the world and the salt of the earth.



May God be with all of you,
Pastor Erika Martinez-Flores

Pastor Erika's Schedule:

Thursday at Westby UMC – 10:00 AM - 1:00 PM
 • 3rd Thursday of the month (11:30 AM - 1:00 PM)
 Sunday morning before worship – 8:30 AM – 8:50 AM

Contact Information:

Cell Phone: 919-478-3584
 Direct Office Phone: 608-638-7627
 Parsonage Phone: 608-637-7614
 Email: pastor-vw@driftlessministry.org

October Birthdays

Oct. 25 – Raven Oney-Siam



October Anniversaries

Oct. 1 – Kelly & Jill Bjornstad
 Oct. 3 – Richard & Imgard Allen
 Oct. 8 – Verna Drake & Dan Schreiter

Sunday School Begins!

Get Ready, Get Set, Go! Time to go back to Sunday School! Inviting all children to come and join us for Sunday School, starting on Sunday, October 2nd at 10:00 AM, following the worship service which begins at 9:00 AM.

We'll have snacks and time to talk during the church fellowship time, followed by our Sunday school time. We will end at 11:00 AM. Please contact Jane Gaskell (608-606-0317) for more information.



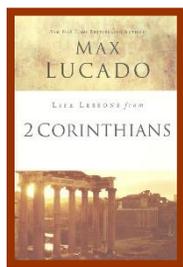
Sunday School is a time for:

**BIBLE POINTS & VERSES | OBJECT LESSONS
 SERVING OTHERS | MISSIONS | GAMES | CRAFTS MUSIC | WORSHIP**

Remember to join us at 3:20 PM each day for being unified in prayer to pray for our church ...

“God, Give us the courage to dream big dreams. Please open our minds and hearts so we can have new breakthroughs to Your new possibilities. Amen.”

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



Growing in Faith Study Group

Starting in October, the meeting days for the Growing in Faith Study Group will be the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of the month. We continue our study of 2 Corinthians, using Max Lucado's "Life Lessons from 2 Corinthians" study book. The study sessions begin at 6:00 PM. Anyone is welcomed to come and join the discussion, even if you don't have the book. Just read the scriptures prior to the study time and then come and join the conversation!

- Lesson 8 (2 Corinthians 9:1-15) on Wednesday, September 14th
- Lesson 9 (2 Corinthians 10:1-18) on Wednesday, September 28th

Thursday Morning Prayer Group

Please and help us flex our "prayer muscles" by coming to our monthly Prayer Group on Thursday, October 6th at 10:00 AM for a time of fellowship with our Lord through prayer. Prayer is a powerful resource, so it's important that we prayer together to combine our prayer strengths.

There is a prayer request box in the narthex for prayer requests.

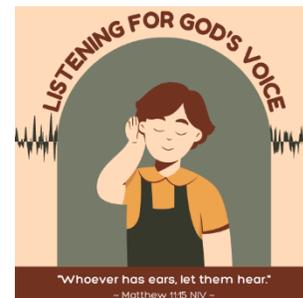


Thursday Morning Bible Study

Come and join us on Thursday, October 27th at 9:30 AM for our monthly Thursday Morning Bible Study group. We will continue our study of the book of Psalm, led by Pastor Erika. Come for a time of learning, good discussion and fellowship.

October Online Studies – Listen to God's Voice

In your busy life, do you hear God talking to you daily or weekly? Are you listening for God's voice each day? In our daily lives, sometimes we get distracted and forget to listen for God speaking to us. Sometimes it's difficult to hear Him amidst the commotion we have going on in our lives. This month, we're going to try and figure out what may be keeping us from hearing God's voice. Then we'll determine how to quiet our lives so we can hear what God has to say to us and discern that it is God talking to us.



We invite you to join us this month as we explore several studies to help us "Listen to God's Voice". The first study will begin on Sunday, October 2nd. Please use the links below to join each of the studies.

- Hearing the Voice of God – 7 days (Oct. 2-11)
 - <https://bible.com/p/53687335/3af1473c64f8b272c524399aff539b5f>
- Whisper: How to Hear the Voice of God by Mark Batterson – 5 days (Oct. 12-16)
 - <https://bible.com/p/53687380/5aa91d87607e1403e0feea133010c48d>
- God Conversations: 7 Days to Hearing God's Voice – 7 days (Oct. 17-23)
 - <https://bible.com/p/53687402/090ec23829074e7a71904d2891d3d8e1>
- Listen for God's Voice – 5 days (Oct. 24-28)
 - <https://bible.com/p/53687448/75d03d73481b89ee0207867d7834820c>

These online studies can be accessed through the Bible App or [bible.com](https://www.bible.com) website, which are free resources. In addition to wonderful devotional/reading plans, they provide a verse of the day, and you will be able to read the Bible in a wide variety of versions. The Bible App is available in your app store on your mobile device, or accessible online at www.bible.com.



Mission of the Month – Operation Christmas Child

Though it seems early to start thinking about Christmas, it is time once again to start collecting donations for Operation Christmas Child (Shoebbox Gifts). The Sunday School will be meeting in person this fall, and one of their favorite activities is to pack shoeboxes full of 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 handwritten 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 \$10.00 it costs to ship 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.

Bring items to the church or make checks payable to the Westby UM Church with OCC on the memo line. Thank you in advance for participating in this fun project.

Senior Strength Training Classes – Begins Oct. 18th

One of our church goals for this year was to possibly have an exercise class for Seniors since there isn't one available in Westby anymore. Verna Drake has volunteered to lead this exercise group. The Senior Strength Training exercise class will focus on strength training and most of the activities are done sitting in a chair. This class is open to everyone, of all ages. Bring your friends and come for a time of doing good things for your body and enjoying fellowship with others.



This class will be held twice a week for 45 minutes, on Tuesday and Thursday from 12:45-1:30 PM and will begin on Tuesday, Oct. 18th. We will be taking freewill donations to help cover the heating expenses.

This class begins right after the Senior Meals, so come for lunch and then stay for the strength training!



Fall Turkey Bazaar – Oct. 22nd at Retreat UMC

It's an annual tradition! The Retreat United Methodist Church will be hosting its annual Fall Turkey Bazaar on Saturday, October 22nd from 4 to 7:30 p.m. at the Retreat UMC Fellowship Hall (E3426 County Road N, De Soto). This year, the classic turkey dinner has returned! The church will be serving up generous helpings of turkey, dressing, mashed potatoes, carrots, coleslaw, homemade rolls, and homemade pie! The cost of the dinner is \$15.00 per meal with a maximum out-of-pocket cost of \$40.00 for parents with minor children. Carry-outs will be available and can be ordered in advance by calling (608) 648-3435 during the event.

In addition to the delicious dinner, the church will also be hosting a baked goods and craft sale featuring a large variety of items that you can use to treat yourself, your family, and friends! Another can't-miss feature of the bazaar is the raffle featuring a beautiful quilt, a variety of power tools, handmade items, gift baskets, and more! Raffle tickets are only \$2 each (or get 3 tickets for \$5) and can be purchased during the dinner or in advance from members of the church.

We welcome you all to this year's Fall Turkey Bazaar! Be sure to invite your family and friends and head up to Retreat for a delicious meal, wonderful fellowship, and great fun!



Automatic Door Opener Dedication – Oct. 23rd

The construction for installing the automatic door opener for the west entrance begins the beginning of October, weather permitting. If the project goes well, we hope to have a Door Dedication on Sunday, Oct. 23rd. We want to take this time to honor the memorial gifts which were given towards this project and everyone else who contributed towards the automatic door opener.

The current plan is to have the dedication after worship, followed by a brunch during our fellowship time. If these plans have to change, we will make announcements during church and send out emails about the changes.

Community Hour of Prayer – Oct. 24th

The past few years, we have held a Community Hour of Prayer in the fall. We have decided to continue this activity this year as part of our church's spiritual and outreach goals. Please join us on Monday, October 24th between 6:00-7:00 PM. In case of rain, this activity will be held on Monday, Nov. 7th. We will meet at the sidewalks on the corner of East State and Main street in Westby, near Fellesskap Square. Come and help us pray for unity, our community, our schools and our neighbors. Come for 5 minutes or the entire hour. Everyone is welcome and encouraged to come and lift our prayers as one body, one community in Christ. There will be hot chocolate available during the hour of prayer to help keep you warm.



Before we begin praying, we're going to share a meal together at church. Please meet at the church at 5:00 PM for a simple meal, possibly soup and sandwiches, and then come and join others while we lift up prayers to our Lord. We are stronger when we pray together!



Pastor Appreciation Breakfast – Oct. 30th

October is Pastor Appreciation month. Please take a few minutes to find a way to say "Thank You" to Pastor Erika for all that she does for us as individuals and for our church body. It is a blessing to have Pastor Erika in our lives.

We want to give Pastor Erika a special thank you, so we're going to have a Pastor Appreciation Breakfast before our worship service on Sunday, October 30th. The breakfast will be from 8:00-8:45 AM so everyone will have time to prepare for the worship service. There will be a variety of breakfast casseroles, fruit, baked goodies and beverages available. Come help us say "Thank You" to Pastor Erika!

Westby United Methodist Church – Special Board Meeting ☩ September 11, 2022

Present: Tim Gaskell, Jane Gaskell, Ardith Hoff, Verna Drake, Jean Shore, Tom Sharratt, Sharon Sharratt, Ann Shaw, Lois Gerling, Donna Perkins and Linda Weilnau

A special board meeting was held Sunday, Sept. 11, 2022, after worship to discuss a bid for the automatic door opener project. With the help of Ardith Hoff, the church received a bid (\$5,350) from Fronk Construction to install the automatic door opener and increase the concrete pad for the entrance to the west door.

We have over \$4,000 in the fund for this project and more donations are anticipated. Ardith said that this company can begin working on this project this fall and potentially have it done before the end of October 2022.

Jane Gaskell and Jean Shore motioned to proceed with the proposed bid from Fronk Construction for the automatic door opener project and hire this company for the job. Motion passed.

Ardith Hoff said she would send a letter to Fronk Construction and include a partial payment check from the church for \$2,500 as requested by Fronk Construction.

Westby United Methodist Church – Board Meeting † September 21, 2022

Present: Pastor Erika Martinez-Flores, Ardith Hoff, Jean Shore, Jane Gaskell, Julie Fargen, Verna Drake and Linda Weilnau

Opening: Pastor Erika opened with prayer.

Approval of Minutes: The minutes of the July board meeting were emailed to the board and published in the August newsletter, so they could be reviewed prior to the meeting. The August board meeting was cancelled. Ardith Hoff and Jean Shore motioned to approve the minutes. Motion passed.

Treasurer's Report: Verna Drake provided the financial reports, which included the report for the month of August, Year-to-Date report, special accounts, and the credit card statement. These reports were emailed to the board prior to the meeting. The electric bill has increased greatly, so it was decided to turn off the furnace fans which were being run daily to help with this expense. Apportionments weren't paid in August because doing so would have left a negative balance. It was decided to discuss the criteria used for determining when we pay Apportionments. In the past, we have paid 10% of the Tithe income for the month if we have a positive balance. The Youth checking account hasn't had any activity in about 3 years, so the bank said we either need to close this account or start making periodic deposits and withdrawals. Ardith Hoff and Jean Shore motioned to close the Youth checking account and transfer this money to the Sunday School account since this is still youth related. Motion passed.

Ardith Hoff and Jane Gaskell motioned to approve the treasurer's report. Motion passed.

Old Business:

- † Review COVID Policy – It was decided to continue with the policy of masks being optional.
- † Automatic Door Opener – Update – Weather permitting, the construction for this project will begin the beginning of October. We can use the same door. Someone asked if we need a new handle for the door. Ardith found out that we can use the existing door handle. The door opener button will be placed on the building, south of the door.
- † Membership List – Are we finished with the review? -We need to finish reviewing the list. Adey Oliver needs to be added as a member. We will work on finalizing the reviewing on Sunday, Sept. 25th after worship.
- † Snow Plowing – Verna Drake hasn't heard anything from Janzen's regarding renewing our agreement for them to do the snow plowing for the church. Verna is going to contact them to see if they can do the snow removal for us this winter.
- † Mowing – Connor will continue to mow the church lawn, but he isn't able to do it during the week due to attending school.

New Business:

- † Annual Budget – Verna Drake provided a graph of the Income and Expenses by month from Sept. 2021 to Aug. 2022 and also a listing of what was budgeted for each area last year. February and March had higher expenses due to interior building repairs, rising utility costs and snow removal. Our utility usage has stayed about the same as other years, but due to the rising costs in utilities it was decided to set aside \$208 per month for budgeting for utility expenses and make this a line item in our accounts. We will finalize the budget for 2023 at the October board meeting.
- † Community Hour of Prayer (Was Nov. 8 last year) – It was decided to have this event on Monday, Oct. 24th, with a rain date of Monday, Nov. 7th. It will be from 6:00-7:00 PM. We will invite Cornerstone Christian Academy to this event. Jane Gaskell will work with the Sunday school class to have them sing during this time. We will also serve hot chocolate during this hour of prayer. It was decided to have a meal at church prior to the event. We'll serve a simple meal of possibly soup, crackers and cheese.

- ✚ Annual Conference Topic Related to the Driftless Ministry Group (Disaffiliation) – At the Annual Conference, one of the topics was about being inclusive and working towards this. Some Churches are considering leaving the United Methodist Church and joining a Global Methodist Church, due to views regarding LGBTQ pastors and LGBTQ marriages. Pastor Erika highlighted some the details about the disaffiliation process. To help us be more informed about this topic, there will be an informational meeting with someone from the Conference. This person will work to answer our questions and provide more details. We'll have this meeting with Viroqua UMC. To help prepare everyone for this discussion, we will be sending out some information that Pastor Jorge gathered and a link to a website which has more information.
- ✚ Change Board Meeting to 1st Wednesday of the Month? – Sometimes it seems challenging to plan for future events with the board meeting the 3rd Wednesday of the month. It was decided to change the board meetings to the 2nd Wednesday of the month. The Growing in Faith Study Group will change its meeting time to the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of the month. These changes will start in October.
- ✚ Pastor Erika – Time Off in October (Oct. 5-7 for Conference & 8-17 for Vacation) - Pastor Erika will be attending School for Ministry on Oct. 5-7 and then take vacation time on Oct. 8-17. Ardith Hoff volunteered to give the message on Oct. 9th and Verna Drake will give the message on Oct. 16th.
- ✚ Christmas Decoration Workshop – The Christmas Wreath Decoration workshop went well last year, so since Verna Drake still has supplies available, there will be another Christmas Decoration Workshop this year. It will be held on Monday, Nov. 21st, time to be determined.
- ✚ Exercise Class – One of our church goals was to possibly have an exercise class for seniors at our church. Since COVID, one of the churches in town has not restarted their class. Verna Drake volunteered to lead this class. It will be held on Tuesday and Thursday from 12:45-1:30 PM. The class, Senior Strength Training, will start on Oct. 18th. We will take free will donations to help cover the heating costs.

Business from Board Committees:

- ✚ **Trustees** – Tom is working on changing some of the ballasts for the lights because they don't work with the newer fluorescent light tubes.
- ✚ **SPRC** - Topic of pastoral compensation will be discussed during the closed session.
- ✚ **Worship** – Pastor Erika wants us to start thinking about a joint Thanksgiving service with Viroqua UMC in November. Possible dates are Nov. 6th or Nov. 20th. The joint Thanksgiving service was held in Viroqua last year, so it will be Westby's turn to host this year. This discussion will be finalized at the October meeting.
- ✚ **Education** – Sunday school begins on Oct. 2nd. Jane has sent out invitations to all of the families.
- ✚ **Lay Leadership** – Ardith Hoff has been coordinating with the contractor for the automatic door opener project. We hope to be able to have a door dedication for the automatic door on Oct. 23rd.
- ✚ **Missions** - Operation Christmas Child will be the mission of the month for October since boxes need to be shipped out in November.

Pastor's Report: Pastor Erika will be done with the Sunday messages about Ephesians soon. She plans on having stewardship as a topic before the end of the year.

Pastor Appreciation – October is Pastor Appreciation month. It was decided to have a Pastor Appreciation Breakfast to honor Pastor Erika on Sunday, Oct. 30th before church, 8:00-8:45 AM.

Pastor Erika said a prayer for closing.

Jean Shore motioned to adjourn. Meeting was adjourned.

Minutes submitted by Linda Weilnau

LITTLE HEROES FROM THE BIBLE

Young in their age, but not in their willingness to be used by God. Sometimes we think that God only uses great leaders and those who are mature in faith, but God can use anyone who has a humble and obedient heart. This is the case of these boys and girls. Despite their young age, they were great heroes in biblical history for God's will to be done. Throughout this year we will be meeting some of these great little heroes.

This is just an aid to encourage you, dear parents, to take time out and sit down with your children and share exciting family Bible stories. Do not forget at the beginning and at the end of each time, to pray to put yourself and your family in God's hands through prayer.

TIMOTHY, THE BRAVE PREACHER

Acts 16.1-5; 17.1-10

Timothy was a young member of the Lystra congregation. His father was Greek, and his mother was Jewish. His mother was called Eunice, and his grandmother, Loida. They taught Timothy about God since he was little.

When Paul visited Lystra on his second missionary journey, he realized that Timothy truly loved the brothers and always wanted to help them. That is why Paul invited Timothy to go with him on his journey. Over time, Paul trained Timothy to be a good teacher and preacher of God's good news.

The holy spirit guided Paul and Timothy wherever they went. One night Paul had a vision. He saw a man who told him to go to Macedonia to help them. So Paul, Timothy, Silas, and Luke went there to preach and form congregations.

Timothy traveled with Paul to Thessalonica, a city in Greece. To get there, they had to walk a long way and then travel by boat. When they finally arrived, they helped many people learn about Jesus. But some people got really angry and tried to hurt them. Therefore, Paul and Timothy had to go to preach in other places.

A few months later, Paul asked Timothy to return to Thessalonica. He wanted to know how the brothers were doing. But as in Thessalonica some people had treated the Christians very badly. Timothy had to be very brave to go back there! What did Timothy do? He agreed to go, because he was worried about the brothers. And when he came back, he brought Paul good news. The Thessalonian brothers continued to serve God!

For many years, Timothy served God alongside Paul. That is why Paul once wrote about Timothy: "I am going to send Timothy to help the brothers. There is no one like him. He loves Jesus and he loves the people too."



TIMOTHY, THE BRAVE PREACHER

Scripture: Acts 16.1-5

Age: around 17 years old

Address: Listra

Parents: son of Eunice, grandson of Loida

Funny facts:

- his name means "honoring God"
- he used to get sick to his stomach

Interesting facts:

- Paul wrote him two letters to encourage him and congratulate him on his work.
- Timothy grew up in a home that loved God

October 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2 ☩9:00 AM –Worship Service (Communion) 10:00 AM – Fellowship & Sunday School	3 11:30 AM – Senior Meal Site	4 11:30 AM – Senior Meal Site	5 11:30 AM – Senior Meal Site 6:00 PM – Study Group	6 10:00 AM - Prayer Group 11:30 AM – Senior Meal Site	7 Pastor Erika’s Sabbath Day	8
9 ☩9:00 AM – Worship Service 10:00 AM – Fellowship & Sunday School	10 11:30 AM – Senior Meal Site	11 11:30 AM – Senior Meal Site	12 11:30 AM – Senior Meal Site 6:00 PM – Church Board Meeting	13 11:30 AM – Senior Meal Site	14 Pastor Erika’s Sabbath Day	15
16 ☩9:00 AM – Worship Service 10:00 AM – Fellowship & Sunday School	17 11:30 AM – Senior Meal Site	18 11:30 AM – Senior Meal Site 12:45 PM – Strength Training Class	19 11:30 AM – Senior Meal Site 6:00 PM – Study Group	20 11:30 AM – Senior Meal Site 12:45 PM – Strength Training Class	21 Pastor Erika’s Sabbath Day	22 4:00-7:30 PM – Fall Turkey Bazaar @ Retreat UMC
23 ☩9:00 AM – Worship Service 10:00 AM – Sunday School & Door Dedication with a Brunch	24 11:30 AM – Senior Meal Site 5:00 PM – Soup Supper 6:00 PM – Community Hour of Prayer	25 11:30 AM – Senior Meal Site 12:45 PM – Strength Training Class	26 11:30 AM – Senior Meal Site	27 9:30 AM - Morning Bible Study Group 11:30 AM – Senior Meal Site 12:45 PM – Strength Training Class	28 Pastor Erika’s Sabbath Day	29
30 8:00 AM – Pastor Appreciation Breakfast ☩9:00 AM – Worship Service 10:00 AM – Fellowship & Sunday School	31 Happy Halloween!					

