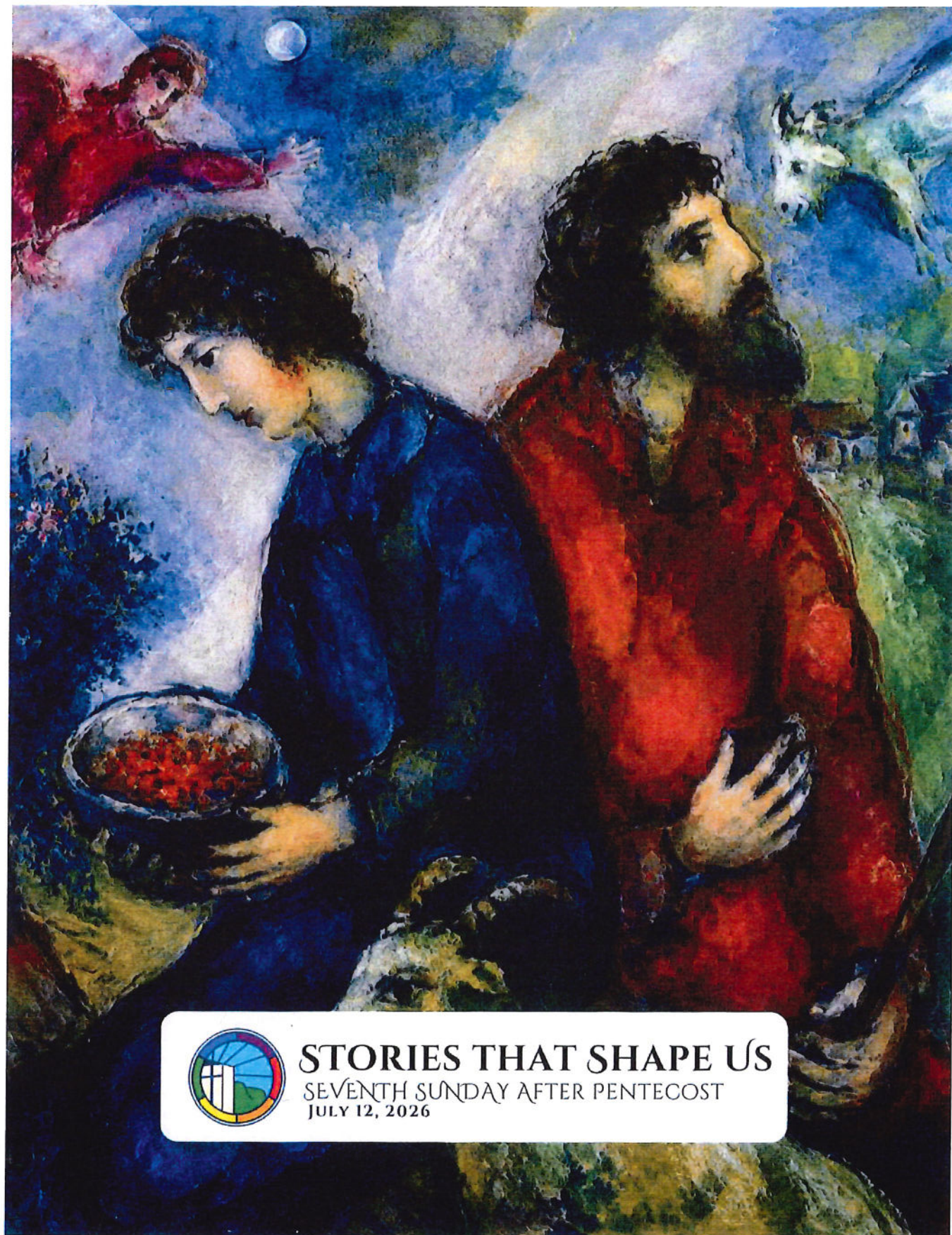




STORIES THAT SHAPE US
SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
JULY 12, 2026

Welcome! At First Congregational United Church of Christ, our mission is to live by faith, embody love, proclaim hope, and seek justice. If you are worshipping with us for the first time, we hope that you will find God's presence among us. When the Friendship Folder is passed during the announcements, please sign it, and then pass it back toward the center aisle.

All are welcome. Jesus calls us to welcome all into God's family. Children are not only welcome—they belong here. Activity bags are available next to the Sanctuary's doors, and a space near the front of the Sanctuary allows children to engage more closely in worship. Our staffed nursery (downstairs) is also available; all childcare workers have undergone background checks. Children in Pre-K through Grade 3 will go to Summer JAM, and older children will remain in worship. A restroom for families and all bodies is next to the Chapel.

Livestreaming this Sunday. As we continue installing our new sound system, worship will be held in the Community Room this Sunday, July 12th. Because we will be worshipping in this temporary location, we are testing the use of new technology, and we cannot definitively offer it this week.

We appreciate your understanding and patience as we make these exciting improvements to our worship space. We look forward to worshipping with you in person at 10:00 a.m.

Please ask an usher if you need assistance, a large-print or sensory-friendly bulletin, or directions—we are glad to help.

Serving in Worship Today

Leading Worship & Preaching.....	Laura Wright
Pianist	Nancy Allen
Reading Scripture.....	Tom Stolpa
Head Usher	Shelby Webb
Ushers	Tom Nyre, Emma Ledbetter
Greeter	Patty Leach, Gladys McLenahan
Nursery	Zali Stanton

An asterisk (*) in the order of service indicates all who are able may stand.

Gathering

in the presence of God

Gathering Music

"I Want Jesus to Walk With Me"

Nancy Allen, Piano

arr. Hayes

Welcome and Announcements

Thank you for joining us today. Please pass the Friendship Folder, fill out the information you wish to share, and note those worshipping near you so you can greet them by name.

Prelude Music

"Blest Be the Tie That Binds"

Nancy Allen, Piano

arr. Shackley

*Call to Worship

One: Before we drew our first breaths, we inherited stories.

Many: **We carry both blessings and burdens from those who came before.**

One: We carry stories of laughter and love, courage and compassion,
as well as stories of mistakes and forgiveness.

Many: **The stories of our families shape our lives in ways seen and unseen.**

One: From generation to generation, God is faithful.

Many: **Come, let us worship the God whose love is our greatest inheritance.**

The musical score is written for piano in 4/4 time, featuring a treble and bass staff. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The tempo/mood marking is *mf*. The lyrics are: "We are standing on holy ground, And know that there are an-gels all a-round. Let us praise Je-sus now; We are stand-ing in God's pres-ence on ho-ly ground." The score includes various musical notations such as chords, single notes, and rests.

A Moment for Silence

Take this moment of silence to become still and attentive to God.

*Hymn 84 (All join in singing the hymn.)

"O God, Our Help in Ages Past"

ST. ANNE

*Sharing the Peace

One: The peace of Christ be with you.

Many: And also with you.

Share Christ's peace with one another with a wave or a bow and words such as:

"Peace be with you. / And also with you."

Listening

for the Still-speaking God

The Word for Children

Children will join the minister in the center aisle as they walk forward for the Word for Children. Kids from Pre-K through Grade 3 will go to Summer JAM. Older kids will remain in worship

Acclamation (Sung by all.)

SPIRITUAL

All:



1. This lit - tle light of mine I'm gon-na let it shine,
This lit - tle light of mine
I'm gon-na let it shine; This lit - tle light of mine
I'm gon-na let it shine. Let it shine,
let it shine, let it shine.

The First Lesson

Genesis 25:19-34

Tom Stolpa

The Psalter

Psalm 119:105-112 (*Reading is based on The Common English Bible.*)

One: Your word is a lamp before my feet

Many: **and a light for my journey.**

One: I have sworn, and I fully mean it:

Many: **I will keep your righteous rules.**

One: I have been suffering so much—

Many: **LORD, make me live again according to your promise.**

One: Please, LORD, accept my spontaneous gifts of praise.

Many: **Teach me your rules!**

One: Though my life is constantly in danger,

Many: **I won't forget your instruction.**

One: Though my life is constantly in danger,

Many: **I won't forget your instruction.**

One: Though the wicked have set a trap for me,

Many: **I won't stray from your precepts.**

One: Your laws are my possession forever
because they are my heart's joy.

Many: **I have decided to keep your statutes forever, every last one.**

The Gospel

Matthew 13:1-9

Sermon

"Birthright. The Stories We Inherit."

Rev. Dr. Laura Wright

Responding

with the voice of hope

*Hymn 723 (*All join in singing the hymn.*)

"For the Fruit of All Creation"

AR HYD Y NOS

The Community Invited into Prayer

Prayers of the People

Leader: God, in your love,

All: hear our prayer.

The Prayer of Jesus (*Said by all. Pray using the language for God that is most meaningful to you.*)

Our (Father / Mother / Creator) who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come.
Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.

∞ Thanksgiving

for the gifts of God

Stories of Generosity

Music at the Offertory

"Jesus Loves Me (based on *Clair de Lune*)"

Nancy Allen, Piano
arr. Bock

***As the Gifts Are Presented: Sing to the tune of OLD 100TH (Hymn 34).**

(All who are able are invited to stand and sing.)

Praise God from whom all blessings flow.
Praise God, all creatures high and low.
Praise God, for all that love has done,
Creator, Christ, and Spirit, One!



Prayer of Thanksgiving

∞ Going

to be messengers of good news

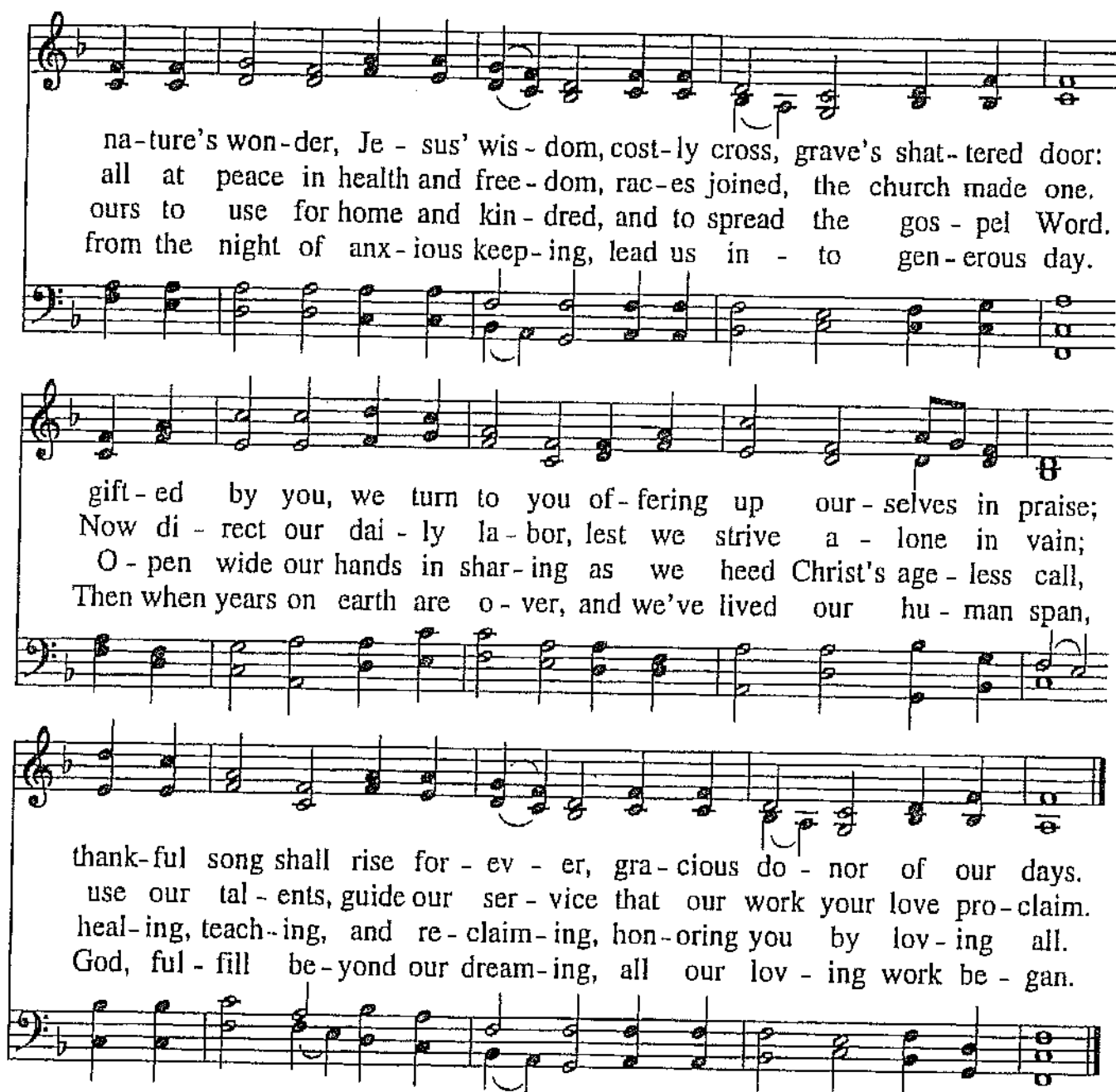
***Hymn** (*All join in singing the hymn.*)

"God, Whose Giving Knows No Ending"

BEACH SPRING

Musical notation for the hymn, featuring a treble and bass staff with a key signature of one flat and a 3/4 time signature. The melody is written in the treble staff, and the bass line is in the bass staff.

1. God, whose giv-ing knows no end-ing, from your rich and end-less store,
2. Skills and time are ours for serv-ing, that your will on earth be done:
3. Trea-sure, too, you have en-trust-ed, gain through powers your grace con-ferred;
4. Lend your joy to all our giv-ing, let it light our pil-grim way;



na-ture's won-der, Je - sus' wis - dom, cost-ly cross, grave's shat-tered door:
 all at peace in health and free-dom, rac-es joined, the church made one,
 ours to use for home and kin-dred, and to spread the gos - pel Word.
 from the night of anx-ious keep-ing, lead us in - to gen-erous day.

gift-ed by you, we turn to you of-fering up our-selves in praise;
 Now di-rect our dai-ly la-bor, lest we strive a-lone in vain;
 O - pen wide our hands in shar-ing as we heed Christ's age-less call,
 Then when years on earth are o-ver, and we've lived our hu-man span,

thank-ful song shall rise for-ev-er, gra-cious do-nor of our days.
 use our tal-ents, guide our ser-vice that our work your love pro-claim.
 heal-ing, teach-ing, and re-claim-ing, hon-oring you by lov-ing all.
 God, ful-fill be-yond our dream-ing, all our lov-ing work be-gan.

*The Blessing

Postlude Music

"All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name"

Nancy Allen, Piano
 arr. Berry

Acknowledgements: Hymns and music reprinted and streamed with permission under OneLicense.net #A-728014.

*Flowers today are given in memory of
Ray Wetterlin by Dorothy Wetterlin.*

Announcements:

This Week in Our Church:

Sunday, July 12

Seventh Sunday after Pentecost

10:00 am Worship
10:00 am Nursery
10:20 am Summer JAM (J)
11:00 pm Hot Dog Days Fundraiser

Monday, July 13

4:30 pm Monday Meals (Trinity Lutheran)

Tuesday, July 14

5:00 pm Creation Care Meeting (Zoom)
7:15 pm Christian Education Meeting (Zoom)

Wednesday, July 15

Wallpaper Replacement (CR)

11:30 pm Visitation Meeting (L)

Thursday, July 16

Wallpaper Replacement (CR)

Friday, July 17

Office Closed

Wallpaper Replacement (CR)

Sunday, July 19

Eighth Sunday after Pentecost

10:00 am Worship
10:00 am Nursery
10:20 am Summer JAM (J)
11:15 pm WISE Committee Meeting (L)

CALENDAR KEY

C = Chapel, CR = Community Room, J = JAM Rooms, K = Kitchen,

L = Lounge, N = Narthex, P = Pastor's Office, S = Sanctuary

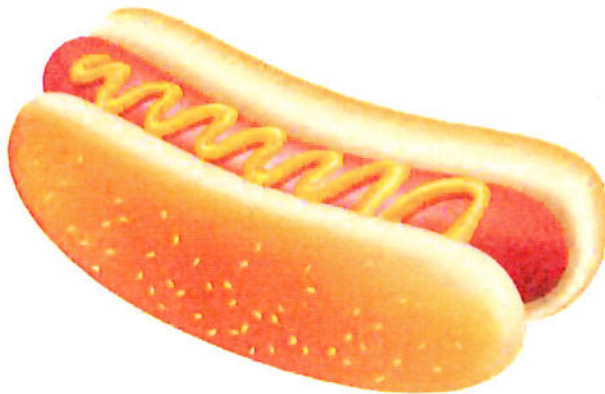
Stay Cool



UCC MISSION TRIP

HOT DOG Fundraiser

This Sunday,
June 12,
2026



11:00
to
3:00 PM



\$5 PER PERSON

PRICE INCLUDES HOT DOG, DRINKS AND COOKIES

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

How Your Support Makes a Difference:

Every hotdog purchased contributes to sending one of our
Highschoolers on a mission trip.

Let's Eat, Connect, and Make a Difference!
2503 Main St., La Crosse WI



ROOF & SOLAR PANEL UPDATE

No doubt you've noticed there's been a lot of work happening both inside our building and on the roof! We're currently awaiting the final inspection of the new roof, which will allow us to move forward with the installation of the solar panels.

The torrential rains in April and early July revealed a few areas where the roof membrane had not been properly sealed. As a result, water entered the Community Room during the first storm and, more recently, leaked through the roof over the men's restroom into the narthex. In both cases, the roofing company responded immediately, accepted responsibility, and is completing the necessary repairs.

Repairs and updates to the Community Room are now underway. Because an exact match for the existing wallpaper could not be found, the Church Council approved replacing the wallpaper throughout the entire room. Removal of the existing wallpaper is scheduled for mid-July, with installation of the new wallpaper to follow shortly thereafter.

As with most construction projects, there have been a few unexpected challenges along the way. We appreciate your patience and understanding as we continue working to keep these projects moving forward.

We are always happy to hear your questions, comments, or concerns.

Construction Management Team

Beth Moore • John Storlie • Rick Waniger • Bill Ohm



**PROJECT
HOMELESS
CONNECT**



COLLECTION BIN

Twice each year La Crosse conducts a count of individuals experiencing housing insecurity. In conjunction with this effort, our community is coming together to support our unhoused neighbors through Project Homeless Connect.

Items Needed

- Toothbrush Holders/Caps
- Body Wash
- 2-in-1 Shampoo/Conditioner
- Personal Wipes
- Chapstick
- Sunscreen
- Aloe
- Bug Spray

**THURSDAY
JULY 23RD**

**10:30 AM
TO
2:30 PM**

**YOU CAN ALSO SUPPORT THIS EVENT BY
DONATING HYGIENE SUPPLIES.
A COLLECTION BIN IS AVAILABLE
IN THE NARTHEX.**



Fellowship Hosts For 2026-2027



SEPTEMBER 2026 -
BUILDING & GROUNDS

OCTOBER 2026 -
WISE COMMITTEE

NOVEMBER 2026 -
SERVICE & WORSHIP

DECEMBER 2026 -
VISITATION



MARCH 2027 -
MEMBERSHIP

JANUARY 2027 -
FINANCE

APRIL 2027 -
CREATION CARE

FEBRUARY 2027 -
CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

MAY 2027 -
MISSIONS & SOCIAL
JUSTICE

Worship doesn't end with the benediction!
Come and enjoy fellowship every Sunday
after worship.

