

The Shepherd's Word
710 Ethan Allen Drive
Howards Grove, WI 53083

The Shepherd's Word
Our Shepherd UCC
710 Ethan Allen Drive
920-565-3376

July 2026
Pastor Nathan Athorp
Howards Grove, WI 53083
ourshepherducc.com

Send newsletter articles to: OurShepherdNewsletter@gmail.com

Pastor's Cell Number: 920-946-3585

Pastor's e-mail: nathorp70@gmail.com



Our congregation is fully LGBTQ+ Open and Affirming. While some members of our congregation may hold different views, we as a community hold that being LGBTQ+ is fully compatible with being a Christian and is not sinful. LGBTQ+ people are welcome to participate fully in our community and sacraments and take on leadership positions within our community.

Prayer Concerns...

Please keep those who are shut-in or ill in your prayers

Jim Milbrath - 421 Jefferson Circle

Howards Grove, WI 53083

Jane Kesting – 909 Ethan Allen Dr

Howards Grove, WI 53083

Fritz & Jackie Grunewald - 749 Audubon

Howards Grove, WI 53083

Roy Gadicke – 403 South Wisconsin Drive

Howards Grove, WI 53083

Sunday	Monday	Tue	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
July 2026 At this time, we are recording worship and posting it to both our YouTube Channel and our Facebook page after our worship service has concluded.	Pantry Item: Snack Items		1	2	3	4 Independence Day
5 9:00 a.m. Worship/Sacraments Greeters: Dave & April Mair Family	6	7 <i>Meal Prep for Salvation Army@ 12:00</i>	8 <i>Coffee Break 9:00 a.m.</i>	9	10	11
12 9:00 a.m. Joint Worship (RCCC) With mission project and fellowship time Book Study following worship 6:30 Consistory/potluck Greeters: Stowers Family	13	14	15	16	17	18
19 9:00 a.m. Worship Raiseright Orders Due Newsletter Articles Due Greeters: Carol Mae Milbrath and Carla Hemb	20	21 <i>Meal Prep for Salvation Army@ 12:00</i>	22 <i>Coffee Break 9:00 a.m.</i>	23	24	25
26 9:00 a.m. Worship Greeters: Lightle Family	27 Vacation	28 Bible	29 School	30 9:00 -	31 12 noon	August 2, 9:00 VBS Presentation During worship



Newsletter via E-mail?

Simply let Pastor Nathan or Shari know if you would like to receive our newsletter via e-mail instead of having it sent in the mail.

Vanco Giving

Currently about 30% of our giving flows in via Vanco. As you make your travel plans maybe you would like to consider utilizing Vanco for your giving practices. See Pastor Nathan for details.



Coffee Break
Our Shepherd UCC
710 Ethan Allen Drive

2nd and 4th Wednesday of Each Month
9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.
Howards Grove

Our Shepherd will be hosting a Coffee Break on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of each month. Please join us for a time of open conversation along with a cup of coffee and, perhaps, a cookie or two.

Bring your ideas, friends and neighbors! ALL ARE WELCOME!!!

Praiseworthy Practice



Please watch the July bulletins for Praiseworthy practices

Summer Worship - May - August

Worship service time 9:00 a.m.

Worship Livestream update

We have changed our worship videoing process. We have found the Facebook Livestream option to be too unstable. At this time, we are recording worship and posting it to both our YouTube Channel and our Facebook page after our worship service has concluded.



Consistory

Rich Van Wyk – President
Lloyd Athorp
Lee Henschel
Carol Mae Milbrath
Stephanie Wallace
Alicia Thede

Pastoral Relations

Nicole Twohig – Sec.
Carol Mae Milbrath
Ann VanWyk
Sandy Vollbrecht

Officers

Mandi Grube –
Treasurer
Carla Hemb –
Church Secretary
and
Financial Secretary

The Falls Food Pantry serves the needs of Howards Grove, Kohler, Sheboygan Falls and Waldo. All donations are very much appreciated.

As you do your grocery shopping, consider purchasing a couple extra items for our food pantry donation



God's Blessings on your Birthday - July

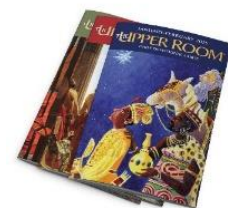
2 Nicole Twohig	8 Roy Gadicke
9 Judy Walkenhorst	9 Fritz Grunewald
13 Nora Ver Straate	13 Theo Ver Straate
14 Mike Mair	17 Brayden Wallace
24 Amanda Eisentraut	26 Todd Breher
26 Sarah Barber	30 Rodney Wallace
31 Steve Oxtoby	

There are Birthday Cards located in the rack in church.

Consider giving a monetary donation to the Scholarship Fund in honor of someone's birthday.

Your contribution will be applied to your annual giving.

"The Upper Room" devotional for July/August is located in the Literature Rack



Rural Church Fellowship Upcoming Events - A high school and adult Mission Trip is planned for the Appalachia area from July 11 to July 18. Pastor Nicole Herda from St. Peters U.C.C. is leading this trip. If you wish to participate or get more information you can contact her at pastornicoleherda@gmail.com.

Consistory Meeting –May 10, 2026

* Sacraments will be July 5

There was no scheduled meeting for the month of June

Next Meeting: July 12@ 6:30 Potluck for consistory and spouses

Check the board in the front hall for a complete Consistory Report



YOGA

Yoga will resume in September. Consider joining us for the next session. For more information contact Renae at 920-565-2785.

Dates to Remember in July

Sunday, July 5	9:00 Worship/Sacraments
Sunday, July 12	9:00 Joint worship service @ Our Shepherd UCC
Sunday, June 19, 26	9:00 Worship Service
Sunday, July 12	Following worship - Book Study
Tuesday, July 7, 21	12:00 Meal prep for Salvation Army
Wednesday, July 8, 22	9-11:00 a.m. Coffee Break
Sunday, July 19	Raiseright Order & Newsletter Articles Due
Sunday, July 12	6:30 consistory Meeting with potluck, spouses welcome
July 27 – 31	9:00 – 12:00 VBS
Sunday, August 2	9:00 VBS presentation for worship service

Congratulations Graduates

*Congratulations to Victoria Eisentraut on your graduation from Howards Grove High School

*Dana Rouse graduated from UW La Crosse with a master's degree in School Psychology. She will be continuing her education to become a School Psychologist. Dana has just accepted a position as the School Psychologist in the Reedsville school district.



Meals for Salvation Army

We are in need of gift cards from Walmart, Piggly Wiggly and Aldi

Anyone who is interested in helping to prepare these meals is welcome.

We meet at church, every other Tuesday, at 12:00, to prepare the meals.

A huge thank you to everyone who has helped by contributing food or gift cards to make these meals possible; your support is greatly appreciated.

WE ARE IN NEED OF BANQUET SIZE FOIL PANS

July 7 - Cheesy Beef and Rice Casserole

Items needed: 6 onions 8 cans cream of mushroom soup
2 each of Red, Yellow, Orange and Peppers 1-32 oz sour cream
1 bunch Parsley 12 Cup shredded cheese 4 heads Cabbage

Dessert for 40

July, 21 - Creamy Chicken Rice Soup with a Sub Sandwich

Items needed: 4# carrots, 1 bunch of celery 4 large onions
2 quarts whipping cream 6 loaves french bread
6 packages of assorted sliced cheeses 6 slicing tomatoes
2 heads lettuce 1 quart mayo 1 1/2 # shaved ham
1 1/2 # shaved turkey or chicken, 1# shaved Roast Beef or Salami
1 large Red onion

Dessert for 40

Thank you to everyone that has donated time, money for food, or anything else to help make these meals happen.

The Salvation Army volunteers look forward to serving our meals. Anyone can offer to prepare a meal to donate at any time by contacting Carryejo Cony at 920-694-1271 or going to their website: <http://centralusa.salvationarmy.org/sheboygan/el-vo>

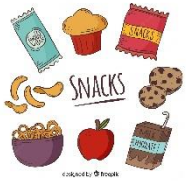
SEE WHAT THE CONFERENCE IS DOING:

The latest WI Conference newsletter can be found here:

<https://myemail.constantcontact.com/Wisconsin-Conference-this-Week.html?soid=1102675987700&aid=PA8X-oijfWE>



If you see a new face at the keyboard, please welcome **Piper Vetting**. She will be helping out with music this summer.



Church School News

Items for the Food Pantry: July - Snack Items

Donations may be placed in the basket, located in the church entryway

Beverage Tabs for the Ronald McDonald House

Birthday Bags - The sign-up sheet for birthday bags is in the binder. Help brighten birthdays for those facing food challenges at this time. To complete a bag, you would donate: a cake mix, a small bottle of oil, frosting, and candles. Eggs are provided by the food pantry. There are large Ziplock bags located in the office for the cake supplies.



Deep Blue

B: Be with God **L:** Love God & neighbor **U:** Understand yourself as a child of God **E:** Explore the Bible

Church school is offered to children age 3 to confirmation. Confirmation students are support for our younger members. The program runs from 8:30 to 9:45
Church school will resume in the fall.



Children's Room

Please consider taking a Sunday to cover the children's room. There is a sign-up sheet in the binder. This room is for children that can independently be with another adult up to first grade. When an adult is available, the room is covered from after children's time until the end of the service.



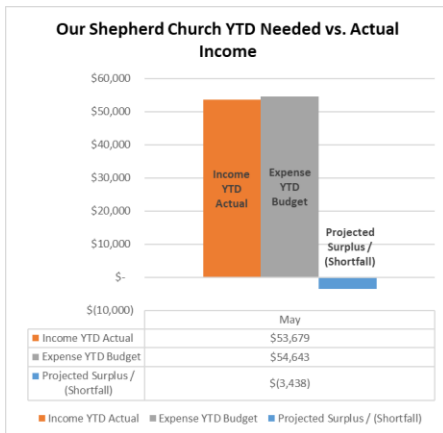
VBS 2026

**July 27th to July 31st
and Sunday August 2nd.**

Please share this opportunity with family and friends!!

Forms are available NOW.

Mission project: Collecting new adult socks for the Sheboygan warming center. Watch for an opportunity to supply food for the snack time in the weekly binder.



Here you will find the financial update for May 2026

Rural Church Collaborative Committee Representatives are:

Immanuel – Pastor Sean Cornell, Rodney Thieleke, Kristy Pahl

St. John's – Diane Weiland, Ross Bender, Kathy Aulik

Bethel – Pastor Diane Cayemberg, Dennis Roethel, Lisa Grubisic

Our Shepherd – Pastor Nathan Athorp, Jaimie Simon, Shari Ver Straate

Outdoor worship will be @ Our Shepherd on July 12 @ 9:00 a.m. Our mission project will be a themed food pantry event.

Immanuel will be hosting German guests for worship and a cookout on **October 18.**

Our next meeting will be @ St. John's on Wednesday, **August 5, 2026 @ 6:00 p.m.**

For our Joint Service mission project, on July 12, we will be collecting kids lunch items.

Kids are home for the summer and not receiving school lunches.

As our mission project for the outdoor service on July 12th, we would like to collect items that would be appropriate for kids' summer lunches.

Some items could be, but are not limited to :

Canned SpaghettiOs, Mini Ravioli, etc.

Boxed mac-&-cheese

Canned chicken and stars, cartoon character, etc. soups

Peanut butter

Canned fruit, fruit cups, applesauce, etc.



VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

OPPORTUNITIES:

It would be great if we could line up 4 or 5 individuals who would be willing to commit to operating our camera during worship one Sunday per week. It is really pretty simple, we will gladly offer training and it would strengthen our congregation if more know how this is done.



Raiseright Program

Members can order gift cards in church through Shari every 3rd Sunday or order online. E-cards and Reloadables are available for some of the cards, they are labeled on the Raiseright Order Form with and “E” or “R”. Physical cards would be available when church order is placed.

To order online, go to <http://www.Raiseright.com/enroll>

Set up your account and enter our enrollment code: 92164F3732736 to have your purchase apply to Our Shepherd UCC.



We earned \$64.75 for the month of June.

Many different cards are available for purchase. If you don't see the one you're looking for, please ask Shari to special order.

Thank you for your Support!

Church Recycling

One of the ways in which Our Shepherd cares for creation is through our multiple recycling/reusing efforts.

Can tabs – Ronald McDonald House

Egg cartons - to be used for food pantries

Plastic bottle caps

Prescription bottles – to be reused for veterinary medication

Used American flags, ready for disposal

Plastic bags - to be used to make benches

All items MUST be clean, dry and empty. Please leave items in the church office.

Plastic bags can be placed in the container in the choir room. Thank you.

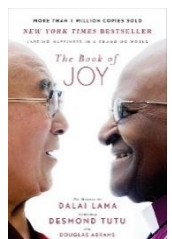
Some of these items are being saved for other church communities that are doing their part for God's creation. If you are collecting any items, please let us know.

To date our continued collection of plastic has saved 1,186 pounds from being put in landfills. Your efforts to be stewards of the earth are commendable.



Book Study

We will meet Sunday, July 12, following our joint worship service, to complete 'The Book of Joy'. Come join us as the Dalai Lama and Desmond Tutu have a conversation on what might help us navigate our lives in a more joyful manner.



Please join us for:
The 16th Annual
"FAITH IN THE FALL"
Music Festival
Sunday, September 27, 2026
10:00 - 2:00 p.m.
OUR SHEPHERD UCC, Howards
Grove
Free Admission - Fun for the
Whole Family



MUSIC GROUPS ALL DAY, 50/50 RAFFLE TO SUPPORT THE
SHEBOYGAN COUNTY FOOD BANK, BASKET RAFFLES, CHILDREN'S
ACTIVITIES & GAME AREA

MENU: PULLED PORK & TURKEY SANDWICHES, HOT DOGS,
WALKING TACOS, DELICIOUS HOMEMADE MAC & CHEESE,
POTATO SALAD, BEANS AND TORTES



MUSIC SCHEDULE

10:00 LETTERS TO THE KING BAND

Led by Rachel Pope and Tirzah Schmickle, Letters to the King is a rising band that seeks to share the truth and love of Christ through original songs.

11:15 PRAISEWORTHY

Praiseworthy is the praise music team from Our Shepherd, Howards Grove. The team loves worshipping God together and singing familiar contemporary and praise Christian music. They look forward to sharing their music with you at Faith in the Fall because He is worthy of all our praise.

12:15 TO BE DETERMINED

1: 15 KING'S CONQUEST

King's Conquest is an award winning Christian band based in central Wisconsin, with a mission to shine the light of Jesus through a blend of pop/rock and contemporary music styles. The band consists of three members who are siblings: Noah on vocals and keyboards, Ella on violin and vocals and Ezra on drums and vocals. For more information: KINGSCONQUESTMUSIC.COM





America 250 Wordsearch

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america250.gov

July 4, 2026, the United States will celebrate its 250th anniversary,

marking a quarter-millennium since the signing of the Declaration of Independence.

Significance

The 250th anniversary, also called the Semi quincentennial, commemorates the adoption of the Declaration of Independence in 1776, a pivotal moment in U.S. history that established the nation's independence from Britain and laid the foundation for American democracy and civic values. This milestone is an opportunity to reflect on the nation's past, honor contributions of all Americans, and envision the future.

America's Time Capsule:

Buried on July 4, 2026, in Philadelphia, this capsule contains contributions from all 50 states, federal institutions, and America250 programs, including letters, artifacts, and digitized historical materials, to be opened in 2276.

PASTOR'S PONDERINGS

This July we are finding ourselves facing the 250th birthday of our country! That in and of itself is quite an accomplishment! That milestone got me thinking about Our Shepherd's birthday. If you consider our official date of incorporation as our birthday, that date is September 9th 1987. I am assuming we have a history that is older than that, but we have to pick an official date somehow and that date would be when the government officially recognized our existence. If we go off that date, this September we would be 39 years old. As congregations go, we are pretty young. If you go to Old South Church in Boston, their history goes back to 1669. That is over 100 years older than the country! Compared to Old South Church, we are just an infant!



Regardless of our ultimate age, a birthday or an anniversary is always a good opportunity to take stock of where we are at and where we would like to be. If we think about our congregation, Our Shepherd, and we think about the past 39 years, almost 4 decades, where are we at? How are we doing? We are young enough for many of you to remember first-hand the beginning of the congregation. (No one at Old South Church can tell a first-hand story from 1669!) I suspect some of you had visions and dreams of where your new congregation was going as a community. Have you seen those dreams become reality or have they been replaced with something else? To be clear, sometimes it is perfectly appropriate for dreams to change over the decades. I am sure those who started Old South Church in 1669 had different dreams than the current congregation does. The world we were living in during 1987 is different from our world today. The church that would have met the needs of 1987 perhaps is inappropriately equipped for the needs of 2026. If we were the church of 1987, I am not sure how many current needs we would be meeting.

The other question that bears pondering is if we look ahead towards our 50th anniversary in 11 years, what are your hopes and dreams for us then? We probably have a greater chance of success if indeed we actively work towards those dreams. We would also be wise to acknowledge that our world is more than likely going to continue to change. With that in mind, our goals will need to continue to be flexible. What do we realistically see our community possibly looking like and how can we strive to make that our reality? I would love to hear your thoughts.

-In Christ's Love, *Pastor Nathan*



Dear Family,

At “Snowball Mountain Challenge VBS”, your students will enjoy an interactive, energizing, Bible-based good time as they find their strength in God. They will become Challengers and discover how with God, they can do all things.

After a high-energy Opening Assembly time, the Challengers make their way to several stations to learn more about the story. At the interactive Bible lessons the Lift Lesson will be revealed to equip your Challengers for an active life with God. Your Challengers will also discover our Mountain Motto (Bible memory verse), which will remain with them in their faith, long after VBS.

The students will expand on what they’ve discovered by making their own art projects at the Craft Station, singing new songs at the Music Station, exploring the wonders of God’s creation at the Science Station, playing games at the Recreation Station, and enjoying tasty treats at the Snack Station. Along the way, Challengers will hear about our mission project as they respond to God’s call for action!

Join us as we discover how to find our strength in God at **Our Shepherd UCC, Howards Grove on July 27th through July 31st from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm. daily.** You can also join us for the **9:00 am service on August 2nd** to celebrate our weekly adventure at “Snowball Mountain Challenge.” Ages 3 to 103 are invited to be part of the fun. To help defray cost there is a **\$15 per child commitment fee. Please make checks payable to Our Shepherd Sunday School.**

To register or find out more information about this VBS opportunity contact the church office at 920-565-3376, or contact Renae Wunsch at rkwunsch711@gmail.com

PLEASE register by July 11th to allow the staff adequate time to prepare for all the Challengers. Send forms and commitment fee to Renae Wunsch at 711 S. Wis. Dr. Howards Grove, Wi 53083

Sincerely,

Your Snowball Mountain VBS Team

Mission Project: Collecting Adult socks for the warming center.

*“I can do all things through him who strengthens me.”
(Philippians 4:13)*

Student Registration Form

Student's Name _____

Parent/Family/Guardian Name _____

Address _____

E-mail Address _____

Phone Numbers: Home _____ Cell _____ Work _____

Date of birth _____ Age _____ Last school grade completed _____

Home Church (if any) _____

Friends of your child at this church _____

Special Needs/Allergies/Medical Information/Other: _____

Emergency Contacts

Name _____ Phone _____

Name _____ Phone _____

Name(s) of person(s) who may pick up this child from VBS _____

Photo Release: _____ Church/VBS has my permission to use my child's photograph publicly in VBS materials. I understand the images may be used in print publications, online publications, presentations, websites, and social media. I also understand that no royalty, fee or other compensation shall become payable to me by reason of such use.

Parent/Guardian's signature: _____ Date _____

----- (for church use only) -----

Assigned Group: _____

Are family members helping with VBS? _____ If yes, where? _____
