



News From
The Center



Isaiah 40:31 (NRSV) - but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength.

They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary; they will walk and not be faint.

Dear Beloved in Christ,

Grace and peace to you in the peace and love of our Tri-une God. My name is Pastor Mitch Richards, and I am so excited and grateful to be your new pastor! I will be serving a half-time appointment, with my time divided between Ash Creek and Richland Center United Methodist Churches starting July 1, 2026.

A little bit about me: I come from Waunakee, Wisconsin (just north of Madison) and grew up going to the Lodi United Methodist Church. The Lodi church has been my home all of my life. But; no matter where I've roamed, God has always guided me to a United Methodist Church that has been a "home" for me; a refuge, a place to experience the love of Christ and neighbor lived out in community, on earth as it is in heaven. I grew up playing the piano and organ in church and look forward to sharing those gifts with you from time to time. As our good God gives us all gifts, I believe these gifts come from God and I try to share them with others and give back whenever I can. I am a son, a brother, a grandson, a nephew, a musician, a pastor, and a child of God.

My calling to ordained ministry has been awhile in the making, though I didn't know it until later. When I was about 17 or 18, people in my home church mentioned that they thought I had a calling to ministry. I laughed and thought they were crazy! Well, here I am 8 years later by God's grace. The best way I can describe it is: God kept tugging until I finally said "Here I Am, Lord!"

I am a 2nd-year seminary student at the University of Dubuque Theological Seminary. I drive to Dubuque and back on Mondays to attend classes there, and the rest of the week I do my schooling online. I very much enjoy attending classes there and especially my wonderful classmates, many of whom are United Methodist pastors serving in the Iowa and Illinois conferences. I will be a full-time seminary student as I serve you, and I will do my best to juggle my student and pastor hats.

I come to you after serving as a chaplain in a 6-month internship at UW Health University Hospital in Madison. As a chaplain in a trauma hospital, I saw many people in many different situations. I saw people in very traumatic situations, some with faith, and some with no faith. I was able to pray with people and be a supportive presence and compassionate witness to them in whatever they were facing. I learned that God is at work in ways I cannot even imagine and that the best thing I can do is humbly open my heart to receive what God is giving me in loving my neighbors. In this way, I feel my call is to be like Barnabas in Acts, an "encourager" of others.

Continue on page 2...

Pastor Mitch's Message *Continued from page 1*....

This will be my first appointment to a local church. Though I've preached, given the sacraments to people and visited with them, I've never done these things as a pastor of a church. Though I'm a pastor, I'm a human first, just like all of you. Something that I've learned in life is that humans will inevitably make mistakes. It is a part of the life that we live. This being said, I want to share with you that I will make mistakes, and in those moments, I ask for your compassion and forgiveness.

When I was serving as a chaplain, I was finishing up a visit with a patient. As we finished praying, she recited the verse above from Isaiah. It lifted me. I felt as if I could feel myself "soaring on eagle's wings" like Isaiah vividly describes. You may have heard that the Wisconsin UMC's theme for 2026 is "practicing hope." How appropriate for this year and especially for this time of transition we find ourselves in. Beloved, I believe with all of my heart that God is active in your churches and that God wants the best for us, for the whole creation to flourish. Let us continue to practice hope in the Lord who is our strength and our breath as we begin this journey together.

I look forward with joy to getting to know all of you and serving among you.

In the Hope we have in Christ,
Pastor Mitch Richards



Food For Thought

Freedom

Each one of us is born most free
And we alone can choose
To do what God would have us do,
To use what God would use.

Or, we are also free to seek
The proud and selfish way —
A life where other gods come first
To reign and hold full sway.

But when we follow where Christ leads,
We find that freedom's place
Is really in God's Will for us,
And we have chosen GRACE!

—Peggy Ferrell, *Prayers and Poems*

Still Worth More Than You Know

A speaker opened his seminar by holding up a \$20 bill and asking a crowd of 200 people, "Who would like this?" Nearly every hand went up.

"I'll give it to one of you," he said. "But first..." He crumpled the bill tightly in his fist. "Who still wants it?"

Hands remained in the air.

He dropped it to the floor and ground it under his shoe. Then he picked up the wrinkled, dirty bill. "How about now?"

The hands rose again.

"My friends," he said, "you've just learned an important lesson. No matter what I did to the money, it never lost its value. It was still worth \$20." Life can feel the same way. We are dropped, crumpled and ground down by our choices and by circumstances beyond our control. At times, we may even feel worthless. But our value does not change.

In God's eyes, you are never less than priceless. Clean or dirty, wrinkled or whole, you remain precious to Him. As Isaiah 43:4 says in the NIV, "*You are precious and honored in my sight, and because I love you.*"

Mission Focus: Food Pantry



RICHLAND CENTER FOOD PANTRY

Missions' Committee has again chosen the local Food Pantry as its JULY Mission focus. The last Sunday, July 26, 2026, offering for missions will support the Food Pantry. Also, the committee requests that you make a special effort to ***bring food donations every Sunday in July, if possible.***

Canned fruit and tuna/chicken, box dinners, peanut butter/jelly, canned vegetables/beans, rice and pasta are especially appreciated as they have a long shelf life. Food collection bins will be located in the east entryway and in the narthex.

Missions' Committee wishes to thank the congregation for their faithful support of our mission efforts, in the community, state, nation, and the world.



By asking you to support RC-UMC Missions' Projects, we also ask that you first consider your support of the general fund, which is what keeps our church doors open. Then please prayerfully consider your support of this month's Mission Focus. Thank you.

2026 Special Sundays and School Supplies

MONTHLY MISSION FOCUS FOR 2026

Special Sundays in Italics

July	Food Pantry School Supplies
August	Memorial Ministry Wish List School supplies continued
September	Operation Christmas Child Shoe boxes through Samaritans Purse Heifer Project
October	Harvest Auction: TBD Christmas Child Shoe boxes continued <i>World Communion Sunday</i> <i>October 4th 1045</i>
November	Local DAV -Veterans - TBD <i>UM Student Day</i> <i>November 30th #1055</i>
December	Salvation Army

PLEASE: NEW ITEMS ONLY



RC-UMC Mission's Committee has decided to help the area schools with school supplies this year as part of our mission project for July and August. We will be sending the school supplies to the Richland Center Elementary School, the Richland Center Intermediate School and St. Mary's. Please help give to those children who cannot afford to purchase the needed supplies. **We sent 6 boxes last year!**

Below is a specific list of supplies needed for all grades.

- spiral notebooks (wide lined)
- pencils #2 (no mechanical pencils)
- crayons – 24 count only
- colored pencils
- dry erase markers
- regular markers
- glue sticks or Elmer's glue
- folders
- ruler
- scissors – blunt end
- large eraser
- Kleenex – large box
- pencil box or pouch
- hand sanitizer

Quite a few of our teachers end up buying school items for the children that cannot afford them. Hardships arise from all sorts of things: no job or very little money coming in, perhaps quite a few school age children for one family to buy for. Whatever the reason, Richland Center schools face the same shortage problems. Let's help out if you can and purchase some school supplies. The teachers will be very grateful that you did.

Please bring your donations and place in the tub by the fireplace in the Narthex.

Deadline to get the school supplies to the church is August 30th



Kwik Trip Gift Cards
gifts and supports
Missions Ministry!
See Nancy McCauley.



We have plenty of cards for sale!

Camping Info – Pine Lake

Mother Daughter Weekend

Celebrate the one-of-a-kind bond between mothers and daughters with a weekend full of laughter, love, and lasting memories! Set in a beautiful, peaceful setting, this retreat invites you to connect more deeply through shared worship, creative crafts, and meaningful time together.

Surrounded by other moms and daughters, you'll build new friendships, strengthen old ones, and enjoy a joyful escape that's all about togetherness.

Family Camp

July 10-12 (Fri-Sun) Leaders: Angie Dahl & Stacey Sinkula Families

Pine Lake

W8301 County Road M

Westfield, WI 53964

608.296.2720



Wild: Middle School Backpacking

One backpack. One tent. One unforgettable adventure. Get ready to unplug, gear up, and dive into a week of wild exploration! Campers will pack their essentials into provided frame backpacks, sleep under the stars in supplied tents, and set off on a journey across our 440-acre wilderness. Along the way, they'll master survival skills, learn how to build a successful campsite, and grow in confidence, independence, and faith.

With every hike, every challenge, and every moment shared with friends, campers will discover just how capable—and adventurous—they really are.

August 2-7 (Sun-Fri) Grades 6-9



Circuit: Game Makers

Ever wonder how robots move, think, and respond to the world around them? Step into the exciting universe of STEAM and become the engineer, artist, and coder behind the action! Campers will team up with Sphero robots to tackle hands-on challenges that blend science, technology, engineering, art, and math into one unforgettable week.

From designing obstacle courses and programming movement patterns to exploring light and sound, through robotics, every activity sparks creativity and problem-solving. It's all about learning by doing—and discovering how imagination and innovation can bring technology to life!

July 19-24 (Sun-Fri) Grades 6-9

Summer's Last Blast

Say goodbye to summer in the best way possible—one last unforgettable week at Pine Lake!

Join us for a high-energy, joy-filled celebration where faith and fun collide. This week is packed with everything campers love: Bible study, boating, swimming, worship, and a whole lot of laughter. With an extra dose of playful activities and time to connect, it's the perfect way to wrap up the season and head into fall.

Let's make this final week the highlight of your summer!

August 9-12 (Sun-Wed) Grades 2-4 : August 9-14 (Sun-Fri) Grades 4-6

August 9-14 (Sun-Fri) Grade 6-9 : August 9-14 (Sun-Fri) Grade 9-12

Memorial Ministry Corner



July Memorial Ministry & Membership Corner



Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted."

Matthew 5:4

In Memory of Karen D. Keehn

June 22, 1961 – May 21, 2026

Karen's Sister, Connie Tracy, is a Professing Member (PM) of Our Church.

Complete obituary can be found at the Pratt Funeral and Cremation Service, Richland Center, WI,
website at <https://tinyurl.com/bdea998x>.

Visitation and Services were held at the Pratt Memorial Chapel on Tuesday, May 26, 2026, with
burial in the Basswood Cemetery, Muscoda, WI.

Cards of Condolence may be sent to Karen's Sister, Brother-in-Law, and Family at the following:

Dennis & Connie Tracy

345 West Walnut Street

Muscoda, WI 53573

Update For Our 2026 RC-UMC Directory

Terry L. & Helen Mar (Schell) Adams

105 David Street

Blue River, WI 53518

608.537.2683 (Landline)

Congratulations, RC-UMC 2026 Scholarship Recipients!

With pleasure, Memorial Ministry announces your 2026 scholarship recipients. Please review the individual profiles (next page) for our three recipients: (1) Katherine R. Hall, (2) Teige W. Perkins, & (3) Talena M. Sprecher. Each recipient will receive a \$500.00 scholarship sent directly to his/her respective college of choice for fall/spring 2026/2027 college expenses.

"May He grant your heart's desires and make all your plans succeed."

- - Psalm 20:4 (New Living Translation/NLT)

Memorial Ministry Corner *continued from page 6*



- 0 Name: Katherine Ruth Hall
- 0 College: James Madison University, Harrisonburg, VA
- 0 Major: Communication Sciences & Disorders
- 0 Minor: Spanish
- 0 2026 Fall Year: Junior
- 0 Parent: Jennifer Hall

- ◆ Name: Teige William Perkins
- ◆ College: UW-Whitewater, Whitewater, WI
- ◆ Major: Business Administration
- ◆ Minor: General Business Emphasis
- ◆ 2026 Fall Year: Junior
- ◆ Parents: Brian & Stephanie Perkins



- Name: Talena Mae Sprecher
- College: Western Illinois University, Macomb, IL
- Major: Business Administration-Marketing
- Minor: N/A
- 2026 Fall Year: Senior
- Parent: Melissa Sprecher

In addition to **church member/friend honor gifts**, our church scholarship is also funded through generous memorial/honor gifts from **Kathy Bastian, Donna Bower, Ralph & Donna Czerepinski, Mark & Connie Dunn, Fuzz & Nancy McCauley, Paul & Louise Murphey, Brian & Stephanie Perkins, Dr. Tom & Kathy Richardson, Russ & Barb Shannon, & Cheryl M. Stanley**; and in memory of **Marilyn Joan Anderson; Harvey W. Bastian; Wayne Braithwaite; Jerry Cooper; Bernard (Bernie) & Alberta Chellevoid-Couey; Marilyn Rose Creasey; Nancy Edwards; Hilda Heidenreich; Eloise Herbeck; Dean, Kirk, & Roger Jewell; James & Lucille Johnston; Ralph & Helen Monteith; Ruth Moser; Ileen Shannon; Eleanor Strang; Julia "Jane" Taylor; Delight (Dee) B. Totten; and Sarah Jane (Taylor) Wehner.**

Our Church In The News

CHURCH COUNCIL MINUTES

May 18, 2026

In attendance: Russ Shannon, Paul Murphey, Barb Shannon, Diane Cox, Howard Nelson, Pastor Grace Cho, Dave Foley, Kathy Bastian.

An opening prayer was given by Russ.

Minutes from the April meeting were corrected. The 170th Anniversary was at Ash Creek, not Willow Valley. The stairs and sidewalk were repaired on the south side of the building, not the north side. Paul motioned and Howard seconded to approve the minutes as corrected. All approved.

Joys: Russ's 2nd granddaughter, Julianna, graduated Saturday. Dave's oldest grandson graduated from Stevens Point on Sunday. Dave and Jennifer then drove to Buffalo Grove, IL for their youngest granddaughter's confirmation at the UMC there.

Old Business:

Outreach and Involvement of Congregation – Russ said that Bonnie Richardson is interested in getting a committee together to increase community outreach and involvement.

Sermons on the website – There isn't a header for a sermon but there is space on the website. Russ said he would talk with Paul Knower about the camera. There are only 9 pictures on the website but there are events noted.

New Business:

Pastoral change – Russ and Dave will meet with Amanda Stein, District Superintendent on Friday, May 22nd, to find out who the new pastor will be for RC-UMC and Ash Creek. Willow Valley will have a separate pastor. The Conference will appoint someone here. The new appointee is not up for discussion or input from either church. Pastor Grace has been re-assigned to another 3-point appointment in southeast Wisconsin. Her last day of preaching here will be May 31st. Our new pastor will be half-time, with that time split between RC-UMC and Ash Creek. There are specifics that need to be determined, such as financial arrangements, time arrangements and office use.

Committee Reports:

Missions – Kathy reported that the Pie and Ice Cream Social will be on June 24th. Chris and John Storer will again, very generously, donate the hamburger. Terry and Barb Nimocks have also generously volunteered to supply the divided paper plates. The sign-up sheets to work and donate pies are in the Narthex. The July Mission Focus is the Food Pantry. School supplies will start to be collected in July and completed in August. The Dignity Kits deadline is May 24th. Diane will take them to the Annual Conference.

Trustees – Howard reported that the new parsonage air conditioner was installed. The bid for power washing the vinyl siding and staining the 2 decks was \$650.

The church: 4 church shrubs will be pruned by Diane Walsh. She also put down grass seed and fertilizer by the new steps. The new cement steps have been replaced, completed by Randall Brown. New eve troughs will be installed by Caleb Harris. He will also check and replace air vents to keep the squirrels out. The balcony drywall was repaired and painted by T. Stadler.

Continued on page 9...

Our Church In The News *continued from page 8*

Ed Manning is mowing the grounds. The roof is leaking above the classroom. Darrell Pulvermacher will make repairs. They will be looking for someone to repair the ceiling tile. Water is leaking in the basement window well by the south end of the stage. Jim Weber is working with Tri State Basement. Our custodian Desiree has been asked to call Howard to report any problems she identifies when working. Dave Foley fixed the entry door from squeaking. Dave also hung the large picture, that was brought over from Peace Church, on the basement wall.

Education – Barb reported that the Sunday School kids gave out flowers for May Day. They donated 7 Dignity Kits. The last day of Sunday School will be May 24th. Stephanie Perkins will take the little ones during services through the summer. We will have about 8 kids in Confirmation Classes that include students grades 7 – 12.

Pastor Report – July 1st is her new appointment date. She will be at the Annual Church Conference in Madison on Sunday, June 7th. Her moving date will be Saturday, June 13th. May 31st will be her last Sunday here. We will have Communion on May 31st.

Pastor Grace gave the closing prayer.

Respectfully Submitted,
Diane Cox

Minutes were approved at the June meeting.

Our Awesome God

When our lives are focused on God, awe and wonder lead us to worship, filling our inner being with a fullness we may never have thought possible. Awe prepares the way for God's transforming power within us. This transformation of our inner attitudes takes place as awe leads us into wonder, admiration, reverence, surrender and obedience before God.

—James Houston, *The Transforming Power of Prayer*

Church Financial Report

Newsletter Financial Info. 2026						Attendance: Worship: May 24 43 May 31 55 June 07 35 June 14 43 Sunday school May 24 4
	<u>Feb.</u>	<u>Mar.</u>	<u>Apr.</u>	<u>May</u>	<u>YTD</u>	
Envelope offerings	\$ 12,280	\$ 7,990	\$ 9,925	\$ 7,215	\$ 51,120	
Other income	44	282	468	169	1,330	
Total deposits	\$ 12,324	\$ 8,272	\$ 10,393	\$ 7,384	\$ 52,450	
Total expenses	10,240	13,278	10,479	9,684	54,684	
Excess/(Deficit)	\$ 2,084	\$ (5,006)	\$ (86)	\$ (2,300)	\$ (2,234)	

Celebrations and More



July Birthdays

Ellie Otto	7/5	Becky Tracy
Marlene Curtis	7/5	Mark McCollum
Louise Murphey	7/9	Brandon McCollum
Kevin Steinmetz	7/10	Terry Nimocks
Al Baker	7/12	Zach Brewer
Olivia Gochenaur	7/13	Edward Borton
Karen Parker	7/17	Emmett Drone
Kathy Schweinefus	7/17	Allen Kaszubski

July Anniversaries

7/18	Paul & Louise Murphey	7/9
7/19	Ron & Rosie Steinmetz	7/9
7/20	Gary & Corrina Mott	7/12
7/25	Russ & Barb Shannon	7/12
7/26	Allen & Terri Kaszubski	7/22
7/27	Randy & Bonnie Richardson	7/24
7/29	Lester & Nancy Studnicka	7/24
7/29	John & Chris Storer	7/25
	David & Marge Brock	7/28
	Jacob Storer & Victor Igual	7/28
	Paul & Rosanne Knowler	7/29



SHELL — A scallop shell, often shown pointing downward with three drops of water falling from it, is a Christian symbol of baptism and the washing away of sin. The three drops of water represent the Trinity: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

From the earliest centuries of the church, the shell was connected with baptism because it could be used to pour water over a person's head. In a time when many baptisms took place in rivers, lakes or outdoor settings, a simple shell served as a natural vessel, reminding believers that God uses humble, ordinary things to accomplish sacred purposes.

Today, the scallop shell continues to appear in baptismal fonts, church art and Christian design. It quietly proclaims the message of baptism: washed by grace, claimed by God and welcomed into the family of faith.



?? Bible Quiz ??

Jesus said that his followers are the "light of the world" (Matthew 5:14). It wouldn't do much good to hide a light under a bushel, he said. It should be put on a lamp-stand to give light in the house. Then Jesus said, "Let your light shine before others, that they may see ..."



Choose the ending of Jesus' sentence:

- A. their way and not stumble.
- B. how good and faithful you are as my servants.
- C. your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.
- D. in their darkness.

Answer: C (Matthew 5:16, NIV)

Special Dates for July 2026

Canada Day, *July 1*

Independence Day, *July 4*





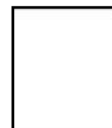
July Ministry Roster 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Please welcome Pastor Mitch Richards to our church on July 7th. His first Sunday preaching. We will be wearing our name tags once again.			1	2 Seeker's Bible Study: 10:00 a.m. - Library	3 The office is closed	4 
5 AC-UMC 9:00 a.m. RC-UMC: 10:30 a.m.	6 Trustees Mtg: 10:00 a.m. - Library Please note different time and date	7 Mission's Mtg; 2:30 p.m. Library	8	9 Seeker's Bible Study: 10:00 a.m. - Library Lunch Bunch: 11:30 a.m. at RC Taco (former Dairy Queen)	10 The office is closed RAREA: 10:00 a.m. - Library	11
12 AC-UMC" 9:00 a.m. RC-UMC: 10:30 a.m.	13	14	15 PEO Rummage sale set up	16 PEO Rummage sale set up Seeker's Bible Study: 10:00 a.m. - Library	17 The office is closed PEO Rummage sale: 8:00 - 4:00 p.m.	18 PEO Rummage sale: 8:00 - ?
19 AC-UMC 9:00 a.m. RC-UMC: 10:30 a.m.	20 Ad Council Mtg: 4:00 p.m. - Library	21	22 Newsletter Deadline: Noon 	23 Seeker's Bible Study: 10:00 a.m. - Library	24 The office is closed	25
26 AC-UMC 9:00 a.m. RC-UMC: 10:30 a.m.	27	28	29	30 Seeker's Bible Study: 10:00 a.m. - Library	31 The office is closed	

Richland Center United Methodist Church
400 East Seminary Street
Richland Center, WI 53581

A Community of Faith

Richland Center UMC welcomes you



**Our Worship Service
will now start at 10:30
a.m.**



RC-UMC Mission Statement

The mission of the RC-UMC, as a community of faith, is to share the Gospel and to make disciples for Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

We bring this mission to life by:

- Being an active and inclusive Christian presence in our community.
- Providing a safe and inviting place of prayer, worship, learning, sharing, and fellowship.
- Offering opportunities and experiences for personal growth and for supporting others in Christ.
- Engaging with the world beyond our walls to embody the Gospel through acts of hospitality, compassion, generosity, and service.



Richland Center United Methodist Church

Sunday Worship 10:30 a.m.

Pastor: Mitch Richards

Pastor's Cell Phone: 608-561-3050

Pastor's Email: mitchrichards64@gmail.com

Richland Center Church Office

RC-UMC Hours: Monday through Thursday
12:00 – 4:00 p.m.

Richland Center Office: (608) 647-3203

Richland Center email: trinityumc@mwt.net

Website: www.rc.umc.org OR

<https://rc-umc.org>

Administrative Assistant: Joan Wheeler
Treasurer/Financial Secretary: Monica Eernisse
Custodian: Desiree Beik