

THE PORTLIGHT

A newsletter for members and friends of Portland Avenue United Methodist Church



August 2026

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It's time for a BBQ!

Join us Sunday, August 16 for outdoor worship at 10am followed by a BBQ lunch!

Bring your favorite lawn chair & invite your friends and neighbors! This is a fun way to gather and celebrate summer together!

We hope to see you there!



Our Mission

"To grow followers of Jesus who change the world."

Our Vision

"To be a safe harbor along life's journey."

The **PORT**
A safe harbor along life's journey.

Pastor's Message

Hello Portland Avenue UMC,

It is good to be back! I first want to thank you all for giving me the time to explore this opportunity. I had a wonderful and productive time on the Wesley Pilgrimage, and it was great to be able to spend some time on vacation with my family, retracing a trip that I took 26 years ago through Scotland and England.

I am very thankful for all who stepped up and kept things running in my absence. First and foremost, I want to thank Lori for keeping the office going and organizing worship every Sunday. I know there were a few challenges with air conditioning and the general heat forcing our drummers inside, but people were flexible and it seemed like a great July here at The Port.

Thank you to all who showed up on July 5 and participated in the service project. I am thankful that Jean Carlos was able to visit on July 12, and thank you all for your warm welcome and your support of the ministry of Neon at the University of Minnesota. If you missed the talk or want to learn more about the ministry, check it out at www.neontogogether.org. It was great to have Sheltered Reality join us July 19, even though it was somewhat of a challenge moving inside. Great to see so many from the congregation participate, I look forward to doing my part next year. Finally, thank you to Lynn for delivering a great message the final Sunday of July.

With all of that, I am now happy to be back and to get us back into the rhythm of our look at Genesis and Exodus, and our more "typical" worship services. Starting August 2, we will be picking up with a look at Jacob, before moving on to Joseph and other stories from Genesis and Exodus that we know well. Included in that will be our Outdoor Worship service on August 16. Hopefully it won't be **too** hot or smoky as we gather to worship and fire up the grill.

I want to spend the rest of my article briefly sharing about the Pilgrimage that I just completed. There is no way I can share everything in such a short writeup, but I do want to touch on some of the highlights. There were a total of 36 participants this year from all over the country and in a variety of roles within the UMC. Included in that group were three members of UMC media who documented the trip and the sites that we visited with the plan to put together several videos and other media options. When those are completed I will share it with all of you. The rest of the group was a mixture of pastors, professors, lay leaders, denominational leaders, and spouses. What was consistent throughout the group, regardless of their role, was a love of the UMC, a love of John and Charles Wesley, a desire to learn, and a desire to figure out how the Wesleys and Methodism are still relevant to us and the world today.

Based on all of these measures, the Pilgrimage was a great success. For me personally, more than anything, it strengthened my commitment to the UMC, to the theology and work of John Wesley, and really affirmed to me that I am in the right place. As I have said before, I am relatively new to the UMC, having moved from a Baptist denomination. I thought I knew a lot about John and Charles Wesley, but this Pilgrimage really opened up a lot to me about who they were and what they stood for in their faith. There is something that is really unlocked when you move from reading about someone to actually walking in their footsteps, seeing the places they lived and worked, and seeing the buildings and pulpits that they stood in, almost 300 years ago.

The Pilgrimage was based in a city called Salisbury, which is about 1.5 hours from London, is the home of a very famous (and beautiful) Cathedral, and is about 15 minutes away from Stonehenge. We stayed at a Seminary in the town, we were well taken care of, and we had many times of teaching, worship, and fellowship. *(Continued on next page.)*

Pastor's Message Continued

Every day, either at Salisbury or on the road, we had a time of morning worship with communion, and an evening service of prayer and singing. While we were based in Salisbury, we visited via bus four different locations that were critical to the life of John and Charles Wesley.

First, we visited Epworth. Samuel Wesley, the father of John and Charles, was an Anglican Priest at Epworth for 40 years. He and Susanna had 19 children, 10 of whom survived to adulthood, including John and Charles. Epworth is where the Wesley brothers were born and grew up under the guidance of their parents and their siblings. We had a chance to see their childhood home – which had replaced the one that burned down when John was 5 years old. We also saw the church that Samuel served at, his grave, and a few other Wesley-related sites.

Second, we went to Oxford, the famous University town in England. This is where both John and Charles studied, and John served as a Fellow (Professor) for many years before leaving to expand his ministry. We saw the colleges that they attended and where John taught, as well as the first Methodist church in the town, and some of the other locations associated with the brothers. It was at Oxford that the first “Holiness Clubs” were formed by John, which would later lay the foundation for the establishment of the Methodist Church.

Third, we went to Bristol, a port town on the western coast of England. During the life of John, Bristol was the second largest city in the country, and was the gateway to America. This is the city where Methodism really started to take off, through field preaching and the building of the “New Room” to host the Methodist groups and later the Methodist church. We were able to tour this building, the

attached museum, the home where Charles Wesley raised his family, as well as some other sites. Finally, we went to London. This is where John spent the later portion of his life. We were able to visit his home, the church that he started (which is still in operation and also contains the Methodist Museum), the grave of his mother Susanna, and the location of John’s famous Aldersgate Experience, where his heart was strangely warmed through an encounter with the Holy Spirit.

Overall, an incredible experience for me. And, I will say, if you are ever interested in learning more about the Wesleys and Methodism, the Pilgrimage is open to everyone. I highly recommend it.

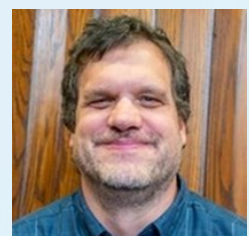
I am planning on sharing more about this trip over the next couple of months. I am planning on at least three different sessions – the locations we visited, what Methodism was about, and finally how it applies to us today. I hope you are able to join these sessions, they will be on the evening of the SupPORT dinners in September-November, as well as on Sunday mornings before worship (dates tbd).

What I have written here is only scratching the surface of this trip and what it might mean for me and this church going forward. Once again, thank you to everyone who stepped up to make this possible for me and my family, I appreciate it more than I can say.

But now I am back, re-energized and excited to see what the Lord has in store for The Port. I look forward to sharing that in the weeks and months ahead.

Blessings to you all,

Pastor Steve



Mission Outreach & Sheltered Reality Recap

School Supplies Drive for Valley View Elementary School

It's that time of the summer to start thinking about the new school year. For our August Mission Outreach project, we are collecting school supplies for Valley View Elementary School. The items requested are listed below. If you would like to contribute, please bring the items to church and put them in the shopping cart in the narthex. Thank you for your continued support of Valley View Elementary School.

Mission Outreach Coordinators – Pam Rose and Nancy Hagerty



SCHOOL SUPPLY ITEMS NEEDED:

Backpack

Pencils - pre-sharpened #2 (24-pack)

Clorox Wipes

Composition Notebook - Wide Ruled

Pink Erasers (NOT pencil toppers)

Corded Earbuds and Headphones

Crayola Classic Colors Markers, washable,
(need both 8 & 10-count boxes)

Plastic 3-prong folder (any color & sturdy)

Crayola Colored Pencils (need both 12 & 24-count)

Plastic two-pocket folders - blue, green, purple, red and yellow

Crayola Crayons (24 pack)

Play Dough - regular size

Expo Dry erase markers - black, (both thick and fine tip)

Glue Sticks—small & 1.27 oz.

Highlighters - pink, yellow, green & blue pack

Scissors 5-inch FISKARS

Highlighters - Thick, any color

Spiral "Art" Notebook - no lines

Spiral Notebooks - wide ruled

Markers, thick or thin, (8-count)

Supply box, (8"x 5")

Paper Towels

Water Bottle

Pencils - 12 pack (Yellow ONLY). No Rose Art Brand.

Ziploc bags - any size

Sheltered Reality Worship Service Recap

We had a great time with the drumming group Sheltered Reality (SR) on Sunday, 7/19. They shared some inspiring messages with us about how they have made a difference in the lives of the people they've encountered during their shows. We were grateful to have them and we look forward to another visit soon! Thank you to all who came and joined us!



In the photos below, members of SR were helping a few of our PORT members learn their drumming sequences. PORT members shown left to right were: Daniel Drey, Rod Anderson (with our pianist Marianne Reininger to his right), Kate Hagerty, Tim Madsen, and Lynn Livingston. SR's youngest members, Liam and Jax, are 6 years old and they're sitting at their own drum sets on each end of the group. Bo is sitting at a drum set toward the middle, and he's 12 years old.



August Schedule for Sunday Volunteers

	Aug. 2	Aug. 9	Aug. 16 Outdoors	Aug. 23	Aug. 30
Welcomers	Merlin & Linda Gilbertson	Steve & Kathy Soucy	N/A	Heather Anderson Bill Baker	Steve & Kathy Soucy
Ushers	Wayne Andersen Sharon Beckler Kathy Soucy	Bruce Benson Don Anderson Laurette Lawson	Bruce Benson	Trent Olson Scott Swenson Kathy Soucy	Bruce Benson Scott Swenson Mike Moreland
Reader	Pam Rose	Neil Anderson	Melinda Matton	Susan Armstrong	Gary Stockert
Sound	Eric R-M	Tim Madsen	Eric R-M	Tim Madsen	Eric R-M
Media	Nancy Hagerty	Tim Madsen	N/A	Barb Andrus	Nancy Hagerty
Livestream	Tim Hagerty	Paddy	N/A	Clint Andrus	Paddy
Closer	Wayne Andersen	Don Anderson	Scott Swenson	Clint Andrus	Scott Swenson
Counters	Merlin Gilbertson Pam Rose	Merlin Gilbertson Pam Rose	Merlin Gilbertson Steve Soucy	Merlin Gilbertson Steve Soucy	Trent Olson Wayne Andersen
Communion Stewards	Daniel & Tracy Baker				

Godspeed, Friends!

It's with heavy hearts that we must say goodbye to members **Daniel & Tracy, and Dorothy Baker** as they move to Eau Claire, WI, their hometown. They've all found new jobs and will be settling into their new digs this month. Bakers, we thank you for your years of service and we wish you all the best in your new adventures! We will miss you!

Birthday Blessings to our August Friends!

01 - Darlene Solheim	18 - Chrissy Wells
02 - Isabelle Swenson	25 - Joe Matton
13 - Becky Rice	25 - Luke Rice
16 - Mike Moreland	25 - Terry Wells
17 - Winston Nuessle	26 - Lynn Livingston
18 - Scott Rice	

If you have a birthday during the month of August but your name isn't on our list, please notify the office so we can update our records for next year.



Landscaping Update

Exciting NEWS!! WE HAVE A LANDSCAPING CREW!

We are in the process of forming a LANDSCAPING CREW at PAUMC to help with maintaining the gardens and plantings around the exterior of the building as well as the interior courtyard.

An email was recently sent to our members asking if anybody was interested in being a part of the Crew. We received several responses so we have a nice group to get us started. In addition, Melinda Matton (Gardener Extraordinaire) said she would be interested in helping me head up our project! Melinda is also willing to FUND part of it.... under ONE Condition!! We get some professional assistance with starting fresh and cleaning up what is currently growing around the building. I agreed that starting with a "Clean Fresh Slate", to include clean-up, repair, planting & removal, and paring down the size of some of the beds would be an awesome beginning and will be much easier to maintain in the years ahead!

Melinda and I met down at church one evening and walked the exterior, took pictures and reached out to several local Landscape Companies to get a few bids. The bids will be broken down by sections around the building, and we asked for input from the "professionals" for the best approach with the least amount of maintenance.

The areas that are EXCLUDED from the initial bids are listed below, and will be addressed once we've tackled the MAIN AREAS on the parking lot side of the building -

1. The Interior Memorial Garden - Courtyard (which members will continue to maintain) and we will be discussing some new ideas for that area.

2. The short retaining wall on the south side (outside along the Fellowship Hall) that likely just needs to be taken out and then plant grass up to the building.

3. The plantings around the SIGN on the Portland SIDE. We have some thoughts, but they are not included in bids.

4. Trimming of the 4 trees by the North Entrance – 2 by the doors and 2 in the Island. We are getting bids to trim up and open the canopy over the door and walkway. Those will be looked at in a few months, when tree trimming is safer for the trees.

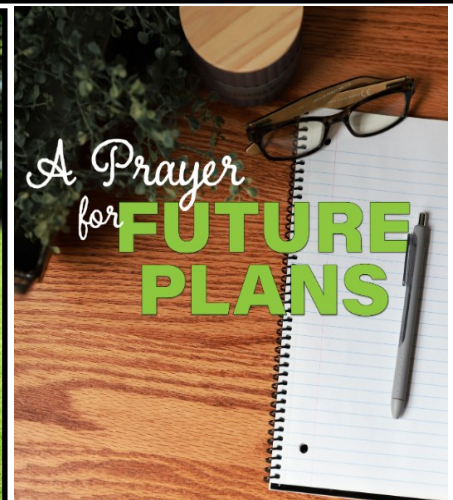
We will need to check with the Trustees' about a functioning Sprinkler System and confirm it works, locate sprinkler heads, and know how to access water for new plantings. Hopefully this will lighten the load for them as well.

WE ARE EXCITED ABOUT THE GROUP OF PEOPLE WHO HAVE VOLUNTEERED TO HELP REFRESH TO LOOK OF PAUMC, AND IN THE END HAVE A LOWER MAINTENANCE LANDSCAPING PLAN. WE ARE ALSO GRATEFUL TO MELINDA MATTON FOR HER GENEROUS OFFER TO FUND A PORTION OF THIS PROJECT.

We ask everyone to hang tight while we are getting bids. Once we've reviewed the bids and have figured out a starting point, we will gather the "Landscape Crew" and make a proposal.

STAY TUNED!! AND PLEASE CONTACT KATHY SWENSON WITH ANY QUESTIONS or to join the Landscaping Crew!

Kathy – 612 209 4559, swenkath@gmail.com



TUNE IN FOR SUNDAY WORSHIP ONLINE @ 10:00 AM:

<https://www.youtube.com/c/PortlandAvenueUnitedMethodistChurch>

AUGUST

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						
2 10:00am Worship/Communion 11:00 am Coffee Fellowship	3 6:30pm Church Council (Zoom)	4 NO Bazaar Wkshop	5	6	7	8
9 10:00 am Worship 11:00 am Coffee Fellowship	10	11 6:00pm Trustees Mtg. NO Bazaar Wkshop	12	13 <i>September Newsletter Deadline</i>	14	15
16 Outdoor Worship & BBQ 10:00am Worship 11:00am BBQ Lunch	17	18 6:30pm Bazaar Wkshop	19	20	21	22
23 10:00 am Worship 11:00 am Coffee Fellowship 30 10:00 am Worship 11:00 am Coffee Fellowship	24 6:30pm Worship Mtg. (Wesley Room) 31	25 6:30pm Bazaar Wkshop	26	27	28	29

Could you serve on Sunday mornings? Please ask any volunteer or contact the church office.

Portland Avenue United Methodist Church
8000 Portland Ave S, Bloomington, MN 55420



GIVE+
Electronic Giving Options



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DATED MATERIAL
PLEASE EXPEDITE



Join us for in-person and livestreaming worship on Sundays at 10:00am.
Sunday School classes for Kindergarten through 8th grade are on the 2nd and 4th Sundays.

Staff

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Greg Jurek (Custodian)

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