

**Bergen Highlands
United Methodist
Church**

The People of the
United Methodist
Church

- Open Hearts
- Open Minds
- Open Doors

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HIGHLANDER

Volume 17 Issue 5

September/ October 2026



Dear Bergen Highlands Family,

I hope you have had a wonderful and restful summer. Summer is a special season when our routines change. We travel, spend more time with family and friends, take a break from our usual schedules, and sometimes simply slow down. I hope you have found time to rest, enjoy God's creation, and make good memories with the people you love.

But now, it is time to reset. As September comes, our calendars begin to fill up again. Children go back to school, work routines return, and church ministries continue to. For me, September is always a good reminder that we also need to reset our spiritual lives. After a long summer, it is time to come back to church, reconnect with one another, and build again the daily and weekly rhythms that help us grow in our relationship with God.

Jeremiah 6:16 says, "Stand at the crossroads, and look, and ask for the ancient paths, where the good way lies; and walk in it, and find rest for your souls." Sometimes resetting does not mean starting something completely new. It means returning to the good things that have helped us walk with God—prayer, Scripture, worship, fellowship, and serving others. These simple practices can help us find our way back when life becomes busy.

That is why I want to especially invite you to join us for Back to Church Sunday on September 13. If you have been away for the summer, this is a wonderful time to come back. If you have been here throughout the summer, invite someone to come with you! Let us fill our church with familiar faces, new faces, laughter, conversation, and the joy of being together again. Church is not the same when someone is missing.

Then, on the first Sunday of October, October 4, we will celebrate World Communion Sunday. On this special Sunday, Christians around the world gather around the same table and share the bread and cup. At Bergen Highlands, we are reminded that our church family is also made up of people with different backgrounds, experiences, cultures, and generations. Our diversity is not something that separates us. It is one of the ways we see God's beautiful work among us.

As we begin a new season, my prayer is that we will not simply return to our busy routines but will make room for God in the middle of them. May worship become our weekly rhythm again. May prayer become part of our daily lives. May God's Word continue to guide us. And may our church become a place where we encourage one another and grow together in faith.

Welcome back, Bergen Highlands family. Let us reset our hearts, reconnect with one another, and walk together into this new season with God.

With love in Christ,

Pastor Miso



How to be a disciple who makes disciples

By Laquaan Malachi

Discipleship is one of those “churchy” words that gets used often, but people struggle to define it. Making disciples is part of the mission of The United Methodist Church, but many people wonder what it looks like in practical terms.

To put it simply, discipleship is being a Christian, or more specifically, behaving like Jesus.

What does it look like to be like Jesus?

In my experience, it looks like being good to people and expecting nothing in return. In my personal life I like to say, “I take Jesus with me everywhere I go.” I don’t proselytize, but I make it a point to treat people well.

Discipleship isn’t limited to traditional avenues such as Bible study, small groups and weekly church programming. Discipleship looks like going out with your friends and listening to them as they share about their lives. It looks like watching your neighbors’ children from the window to make sure they get on the bus safely.

Discipleship is advocating for the rights, safety and welfare of those around you. Discipleship is showing up for people when they need you. The best discipleship is being a good neighbor.

Everything Jesus did was in community. He cared for others and loved freely. This has always been the blueprint for discipleship, because discipleship exists in community. It is not limited to Sunday mornings. It is your daily posture in the world. It is how we grow closer to God and our neighbors. This even happens in places where we might not expect it.

Therefore, go (Matthew 28:19)

Faith communities are as varied as the people who attend them. Non-traditional faith communities (you might have heard them called Fresh Expressions) often spring up in places that are seen as taboo by traditional structures. These faith spaces emerge to fill a particular role or niche in certain communities.

The most obvious example is campus ministry. Though the Wesley Foundation is associated with the church, they are very distinct faith communities apart from the whole. It was one of these communities that brought me back to God as a college student.

Good faith communities provide a place for connection and opportunities for service. They meet people where they are and don’t ask them to conform. People desire a place where they can feel whole and affirmed in their identity.

Non-traditional faith communities are typically shaped by their context, and this plays in their favor. They provide fresh perspectives on discipleship that can look wildly different from a traditional church.



Continues from pg. 2

Make room for everyone

Like Jesus, we should go where people spend their time. Do your best to be like Jesus wherever you are and go out of your way to be a good neighbor in the world. Whether in a non-traditional space or in the local church, you can be a disciple and make disciples by modeling the behavior of Jesus Christ. Practice radical welcome and constant invitation, in keeping with our understanding of prevenient grace.

Making room for all people and expressions goes a long way. I have a friend who hosts a queer and transgender game night in a church basement for local teens. This is a perfect example of collaboration between traditional churches and non-traditional ministry ideas.

When your church hosts events and is present in the local community, it gives you an opportunity to connect and show love to people that you may otherwise never meet. The most meaningful acts of discipleship I have participated in have been hyper-local with the neighbors surrounding the church. Each was an opportunity to show up for the community, which is the most basic and most meaningful means of discipleship. When people offer you a chance to support them, take the opportunity if you can.

Meet people where they are

During the pandemic, a group of mothers were afraid that their children were falling behind in school because of the lack of in-person learning. To remedy this, they created a pandemic school that followed safety protocols, which my congregation was happy to host in our building. We met these families in need, where they were, and nurtured a meaningful partnership.

This is the best kind of discipleship. The kind that deeply forms you and makes connections that could last a lifetime. So, host and attend the events, game nights and cookouts. Organize group hikes and garden days. Start a prayer group. Volunteer at the fall festival. Sponsor a family for Christmas.

Do all the things. Give yourself opportunities to meet people where they are, so that you might gather them in, as God has gathered us. That is discipleship.

Laqaan Malachi is a licensed local pastor in the Minnesota Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church. He has a passion for people and justice, and is also an author, poet and spoken word artist whose work often includes themes surrounding justice and/or mental health.



**This year's signup sheet
is up on the bulletin
board. Get your name on
the dates you want
before they're taken.**

Welcome back to the Sanctuary

Sept. 13 ~ 10:15am

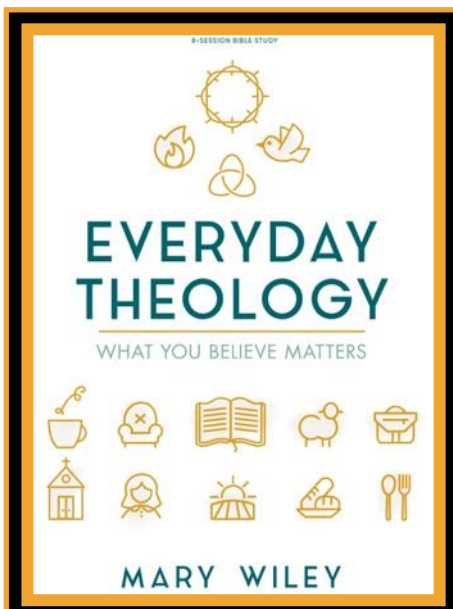
The Church family and friends BBQ
will follow after the worship service.
Bring a side dish or dessert to share!
Please let us know what you're bringing.



ADULT

Bible Study

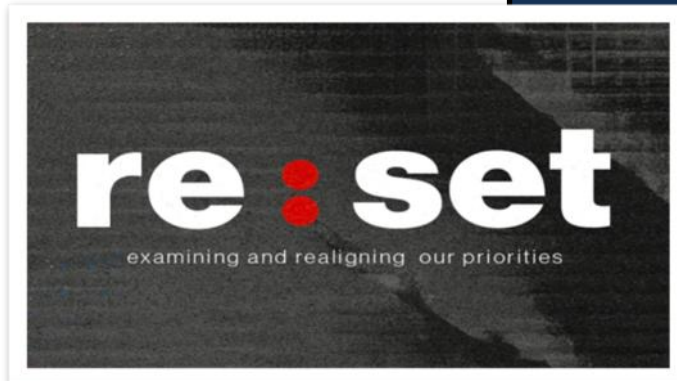
Monday 7 pm



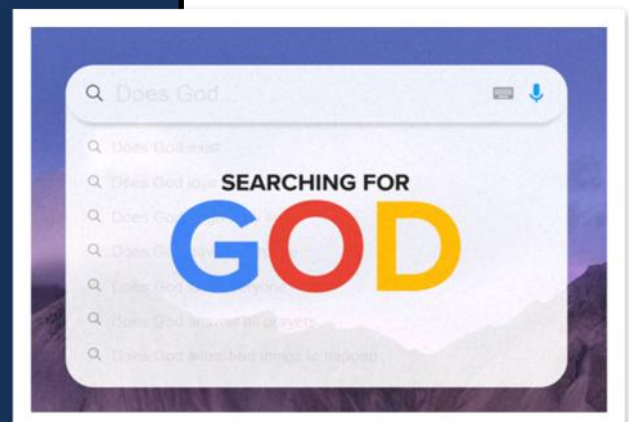
9/14	Scripture
9/21	God
9/28	Jesus
10/12	The Holy Spirit
10/19	Humanity
10/26	Salvation
11/2	The Church
11/9	The End Times

**A NEW
DAY FOR
BIBLE
STUDY!**

Sermon Series



9/13	Re:set your identity	Acts 9:1-31
9/20	Re:set your purpose	Esther 4:1-17
9/27	Re:set your heart	Nehemiah 1:1-2:8



10/4	World Communion Sunday: Guest speaker Rev. Noe Gabe Lopez
10/11	How do we know God is good? Mark 10:17-31
10/18	Laity Sunday: Lay speaker Dr. Ken Gabbert
10/25	Why does God allow bad things to happen? John 9:1-3
11/1	How do we know God's will? John 10:1-39
11/8	Does God love everyone? John 4:7-16

BLESSING



BACKPACKS

September 13

September 26

12 noon ~ 5pm

USR Day

Lions Park

Let's help spread the word about our church and what we offer to the community. Come, spend an hour or two, have some food and make new friends!



Hey, Kids!!!

October 25, 2026

Halloween at BHUMC

Wear your costumes to church to collect the treats the congregation will have for you!





World Communion Sunday

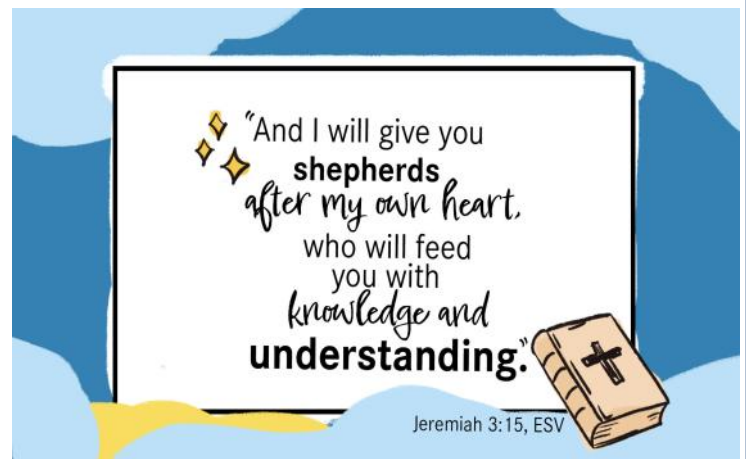
October 4th

Join us, as Christians all over the world celebrate Holy Communion together.

Pastor Appreciation: Grateful for Faithful Leadership

October gives us a special opportunity to thank **Pastor Miso** who teaches, encourages, prays and cares for our congregation. May we honor her faithful service, support her with our prayers and remind her that her ministry makes a meaningful difference in the lives of many.

Please take a moment and thank Pastor Miso for all her hard work for us!



A United Methodist Charge Conference is the official yearly business meeting and basic governing body of a local church. Led by the district superintendent or a designated elder, it brings church leaders together to handle legal and administrative duties, review past ministry, and set goals for up coming year.

The members of the ELT will meet at Grace UMC, Wyckoff on Nov. 14th at 10am for the worship service with the business meeting to follow at 11am.



:: What's Next on the Calendar? ::

September 7—Labor Day

September 10— Senior Gathering; Gentle Chair Yoga with Breathing Exercises. Don't forget to sign up!

September 13—Back to Sanctuary Sunday, 10:15am Worship Service. BBQ after the service, bring a dish to share.

September 13—Blessing of the Backpacks during the worship service.

September 26—USR Day; Lions Park, 12 noon until 5pm, Come when you can.

October 4—World Communion Sunday; 10:15 worship service. Luncheon after.

October 8—Senior Gathering; "Legal Documents Everyone Should Have". You can sign up anytime in October.

October 11—Pastor Appreciation Day, thank Pastor Miso for all her hard work!

October 29—Cooking for Missions; 2pm, church kitchen. We need cookies!!!

November 1—Daylight Savings Time ends-Turn your clocks **BACK** one hour.

November 14—Annual Church Charge Conference; 10am



Next Senior Gatherings

All sessions begin at 11am and include a free home cooked meal.

September – 10th

Our first session this year will be with an instructor from the Center for Mind Body Balance in Saddle River. She will teach us some chair yoga with breathing excises.

It's a great way to start off the year!



October – 8th



Amy S MacIsaac, Esq, an elder law attorney, will present a program on “Legal Documents Everyone Should Have”

Do you have the documents you need? Do they say what they should? Amy MacIsaac can help.

Missions: it's what we do

Six times a year BHUMC has pledged to help our sister church the United Methodist Church of Spring Valley with their feeding the low income and homeless. We prepare a dinner for about 75 people which includes an entrée, fruit, salad/roll if appropriate for the meal planned and a dessert.

If you can help with the meal, meet at the church on **October 29** at 2pm. If you can't help with the dinner perhaps you can make some of the cookies for dessert, every dozen counts! We only need 225 cookies.





A MIRACLE DINNER

Matthew 14:15–21 & John 6:1–14
is a Bible story about a special dinner.
Below is a poem about that story.

Complete the poem by filling in the blanks with the correct pairs of words.

then / men
true / you
late / ate
lunch / bunch

rest / quest
began / ran
faces / spaces
done / ton

Jesus was tired and went to find _____,
So away from the crowd he started his _____.
It came to an end before it _____,
The crowd followed Jesus; they walked and
they _____.
His boat pulled ashore and he looked at
their _____—five thousand men, plus families
filled all open _____.
And so Jesus spoke and he taught until _____.
The disciples told him it was time they
all _____.
Jesus said, “Yes, that is certainly _____,
and feeding this crowd is now up to _____.”
Feeding five thousand! It could not be _____!
What would they do? They’d need a
whole _____!
But then a young boy came and offered
his _____—five loaves and two fish to
feed this big _____.
Jesus gave thanks and blessed it and _____
it fed all the women, the children and _____!

Answers: rest, quest, began, ran, faces, spaces, late, ate, true, you, done,
ton, lunch, bunch, then, men

What colors will your path look like this fall?
Who or what will you meet?



ZION'S FALL PLANT SALE

2026 FUNDRAISER

Order now for Saturday, September 26th pickup.

MUMS: Available in 9 inch Pots (single plant) or 10 inch Patio Planter (2 plants)



9" POTTED MUMS (single plant)			
	PRICE	Quantity	Total \$
Yellow	\$9.00		
White	\$9.00		
Red	\$9.00		
Bronze	\$9.00		
Purple	\$9.00		
10" POTTED MUMS (two plant)			
Yellow	\$16.00		
White	\$16.00		
Red	\$16.00		
Bronze	\$16.00		
Purple	\$16.00		
9" KALE / CABBAGE PLANTS			
White	\$9.00		
Red	\$9.00		
10" POTS OF RED GRASS AND MILLET			
	\$13.00 each		
ORDER TOTAL:			

Please email or call in your ORDER FORMS BY
SEPTEMBER 20TH!

Call Church Office at : 201 327-0655, email your order to
office@zionsr.org or drop off at the church office

Name: _____

Email: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Total Quantity of plants ordered: _____

Total Amount of Order: \$ _____

Make checks payable to Zion Lutheran Church

Pick up address: Zion Lutheran Church

96 East Allendale Road, Saddle River NJ

Saturday morning from 9:00am to 11:00am

We will place plants in the back of your car...
no need to get out!

SEPTEMBER 11

— 25TH ANNIVERSARY —

REMEMBRANCE

HOSTED BY THE BOROUGH AND CHURCHES
OF UPPER SADDLE RIVER

SEPT 10
7:00PM

CONCERT FOR PEACE

*at Church of the
Presentation*

FEATURING

- Speaker Mike O'Brien, survivor
- Combined Music Ministries of
USR Churches
- Memorabilia Display

SEPT 11
9:00AM

EUCHARIST

ALL ARE WELCOME

*at Church of the
Presentation*

FEATURING

- Solemn reading of the names of
community members who died
- Tolling of the Bells
- Church open all day for reflection

SEPT 11
9:45AM

STORYTELLING & FELLOWSHIP RECEPTION

*at Church of the
Presentation*

FEATURING

Retired WCBS Radio Reporter Rich
Lamb speaks about reporting on
9/11 & his friendship with the
"Saint of 9/11" Fr. Mychal Judge

SEPT 11
1:00PM

GUIDED LABYRINTH WALK

*at Church of the
Presentation*

FEATURING

Led by Beth Lawrence, leader of
the Centering Prayer Ministry &
International Retreat Leader

SEPT 11
5:30PM

MEMORIAL SERVICE

*at
USR Fire Department*

FEATURING

- Borough Official Speakers
- USR School Choirs
- Solemn reading of the names of
community members who died

**FILM
SERIES:
DATES TBD**

- ★ THE SAINT OF 9/11
 - ★ COME FROM AWAY
 - ★ MAN WITH THE RED BANDANA
- Screenings at Church
of the Presentation**

**FOR MORE
INFORMATION:**

**CALL: 201-327-1313 OR VISIT:
CHURCHOFPRESENTATION.ORG**

UPPER SADDLE RIVER USR DAY

A DAY FOR
OUR
COMMUNITY!



2026

Great Food, Fun & Community!



SEPTEMBER 26, 2026

RAIN DATE: SEPTEMBER 27TH



12:00 PM - 5:00 PM



**LIONS PARK
UPPER SADDLE RIVER**

**A DAY FILLED WITH SOMETHING
FOR EVERYONE!**



**GREAT
FOOD**



DJ



RIDES



**RETAIL
VENDORS**



**COMMUNITY
ORGANIZATIONS**



**FUN FOR
ALL AGES!**

Hosted by:



In Partnership with:



**BOROUGH OF
UPPER SADDLE RIVER**
— EST. 1938 —



VENDORS NEEDED!

Interested in becoming a vendor?

CONTACT: CAESARINENOVELLO@GMAIL.COM

FOR A VENDOR APPLICATION FORM



Lord, Father of Light, from whom comes all good and perfect gifts. We are ever thankful for your love and presence in our lives and want to show our love in return by sharing our gifts with those of your children in need. Look upon us with mercy and grant us the health and courage we need to carry out our service to you and those in need. In Jesus' name. Amen



Isaiah 41:10

So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.

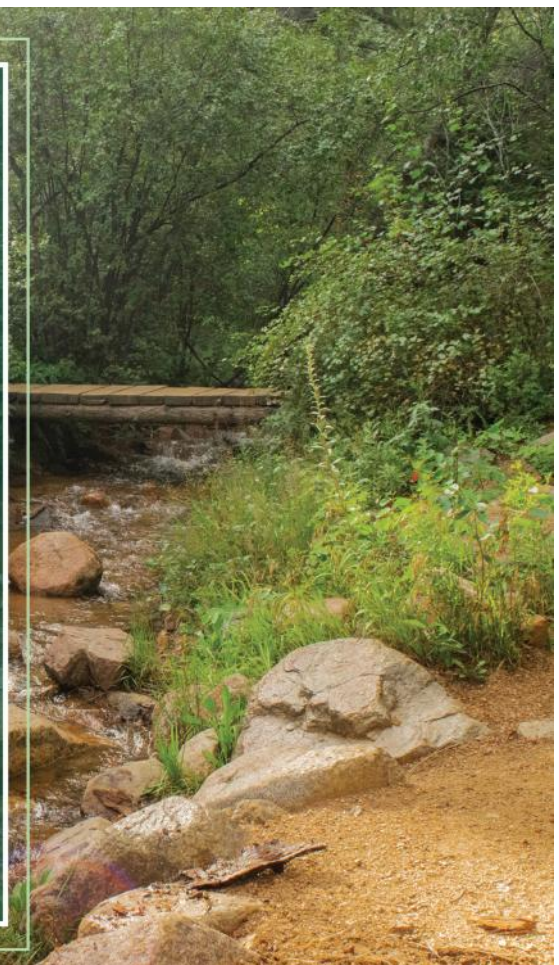
(NIV)

Keep those in need in our prayers.

Gracious Lord, we gather with
believers
across every nation and language,
united in your love.

Open our eyes
to the needs of our neighbors near and far.
Strengthen our hearts with compassion,
courage and hope. Make us instruments of
your peace in a world longing for healing.

*In Jesus' name,
Amen.*



**Bergen Highlands
United Methodist
Church**

**318 West Saddle River Rd
Upper Saddle River, NJ
07458**

**Church: 201-327-3960
Parsonage: 201-934-1618**

Join Us!



If you have a suggestion for the newsletter, send an email to:
bergenhighlandsumc@gmail.com

Important BHUMC Dates for 2026

Jan. 4—Epiphany Sunday

Jan. 22—Cooking for Missions

Feb. 8—Valentine Boxes for College Students

Feb. 12—Senior Gathering

Feb. 17—Pancake Supper, 6pm

Feb. 18—Ash Wednesday Service, 6:30pm.

Feb. 18-March 29—Spring CUMAC Food Drive

Feb. 19—Cooking for Missions

March 8—Daylight Savings Time begins

March 12—Senior Gathering

March 17—Soup Supper; 6pm

March 29—Palm Sunday Service

March 29—Easter Egg Hunt after service (ages 12 and under)

April 2—Holy Thursday Service; 7:00pm

April 5—Easter Sunday Service

April 9—Senior Gathering

April 16—Cooking for Missions

May 2—Best Stuff Sale; 9am-2pm

May 10—Mother's Day

May 14—Senior Gathering

May 17-19—Annual Conference

June 12—Strawberry Picking, 8:30am.

June 13—Strawberry Festival, Rain or Shine

June 14—Father's Day

June 18—Cooking for Missions

June 28—Summer Worship begins—New service hours 9:15am

July 9, 16, 23, 30—LEGO Club VBS, 5:30pm-7:30pm

Aug. 20—Cooking for Missions

Sept. 13—Back to Fall Service Hour; 10:15am and BBQ after church

Sept.—USR Day, noon-6p

Oct. 4—World Communion Sunday

Oct 8—Senior Gathering

Oct. 18-Nov. 22—Fall Food Drive

Oct. 29—Cooking for Missions

Nov. 12—Senior Gathering

Dec. 6—Hanging of the Greens

Dec. 6—Final day to order/pay for poinsettias

Dec. 6—Final Toy Drive drop off date

Dec. 10—Senior Gathering

Dec. 24—Candlelight Service, 5:30pm

Dec. 25—Christmas Day

- **Adult Bible Study**—Tuesdays beginning at 7:00; call for more info 201-327-3960
- **Adult Choir**—Before church service
- **Children's and Youth Choirs**—Thursday at 3:30pm
- **BHUMC Youth Group**—TBA
- **Executive Leadership Team**—as needed after church, Contact person—Pat Hiler or Pastor Miso Park 201-327-3960



Put these dates on YOUR calendar!

Dates and times can occasionally change, for more info call 201-327-3960, thanks.