

Care Team Ministry **NEWSLETTER**

July 2026

**United in faith, freedom, and love—
welcome to your July Care Team update!**

As summer truly warms up, we naturally look forward to outdoor gatherings, joyful laughter under bright blue skies, and the exciting 4th of July festivities. This month is especially special as we celebrate a historic milestone—**America's Semiquincentennial birthday!**

Beyond fireworks and picnics, July also marks **Social Wellness Month**. This is a wonderful moment to pause and cherish the value of gathering together in meaningful fellowship. True independence is a wonderful gift from God, and at the same time, our faith gently invites us to be part of a loving, interdependent community.

As Psalm 33:12 reminds us, "**Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord, the people whom he has chosen as his heritage.**"

In this issue, you'll find—

- ★ Fun summer event on **July 11th!**
- ★ A snapshot of Catholic Charities of Madison's key programs!
- ★ Brief recap of America after 250 years.
- ★ How to benefit from Social Wellness Month.
- ★ 21 conversation starters for visits, *plus* info on accessing our Care Team website!
- ★ Two book recommendations!

**SAVE THE
DATE!**
September 22
St Thomas Aquinas
Catholic Church
ANNUAL RETREAT

"How very good and pleasant
it is when kindred live
together in unity!"
— Psalm 133:1 (NRSV)

**Having difficulty finding
a website link?**

You'll notice some red, underlined words in this newsletter. Click or tap them to go directly to the website or event signup page.

With deepest gratitude

Thank you for the many ways you show up—bringing companionship, presence, and joy to your Care Partners and to those around you.

-THE 8TH ANNUAL-

MADISON GOSPEL 5K, 10K RUN/WALK & HEALTH FAIR

Saturday July 11, 2026



PENN PARK: 2101 FISHER ST

**REGISTER
HERE**



**CODE:
MG5K50FF**



Our Mission

The mission of Catholic Charities is to demonstrate Christ's love and justice by caring in faith for the human family. We do this by delivering programs across the 11 counties of the Diocese of Madison in the areas of poverty, homelessness, disability, aging, addiction, immigration, and food insecurity.



Key Programs



5 Door Recovery

A residential, medically monitored treatment program for adults living with substance use disorder, addressing recovery, mental health, and trauma together.



Catholic Multicultural Center

A community hub on Madison's south side offering immigration legal services, English classes, employment training, and food programs to our neighbors, including immigrants and refugees.



Adult Day Center

A daytime program in Madison for aging adults, adults with memory loss, and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Guests receive personal care, activities, and connection in one welcoming space.



Community Connections

A weekday program in Janesville where adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities build skills, friendships, and connections across Rock County.



The Beacon Day Shelter

Dane County's primary daytime shelter and resource center for adults experiencing homelessness, providing showers, laundry, meals, and partner services to hundreds of guests each day in downtown Madison.



Community Living

Three assisted-living homes in the Montello, WI area supporting adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities to live as independently as possible.



Building Bridges

School-based mental health support for Dane County students in 4K through 9th grade, working alongside their families to stabilize crises and sustain well-being.



Parish Social Ministries

Parish-based volunteer teams caring for homebound older adults, helping distribute food through Mobile Food Pantries, and accompanying mothers (and fathers) through pregnancy and early parenthood.

MANY YEARS OF GRACES & GOOD NEIGHBORS

Celebrating America's 250th

This July, we're celebrating a truly special milestone – 250 years since the signing of the Declaration of Independence. As part of the Care Team family, we come together to honor this historic event with a heartfelt mix of pride and gratitude. It's a wonderful moment to reflect on God's abundant goodness that has blessed our communities over these remarkable 250 years.

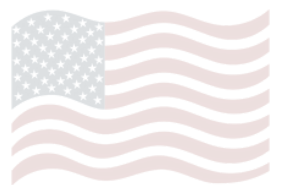
Over these past 250 years, generations of neighbors have come together to work hard under the Lord's guidance, supporting, protecting, and uplifting one another. The strength of our local parishes and volunteer networks truly shows that we shine brightest when we embrace our shared calling to care for our neighbors.

Our regular social visits are a profound, living reflection of Christ's neighborly love. When you sit on a porch, share a glass of lemonade, or listen to a Care Partner's stories, you actively preserve the fabric of community that has sustained our country for generations. Let us return to the cornerstone verse of our July celebration:

"How very good and pleasant it is when kindred live together in unity!"

— Psalm 133:1 (NRSV)

We are truly blessed to have such an amazing community in America after 250 years, built on a sacred legacy of neighborly love.



SOCIAL WELLNESS MONTH



Blessed Connections & Bright Smiles

July gently welcomes **Social Wellness Month**, offering a wonderful chance to find meaningful ways to nurture yourself, your family, and our cherished Care Partners.

What is Social Wellness?

- Social wellness is about connecting with others, building support networks, and forming meaningful relationships with family, friends, and communities.
- It depends on habits like trust, respect, open communication, and spending quality time together.

Why It Matters to Our Care Partners and Us

- Based on data from the [American Psychological Association](#) (APA), about 30% of Americans feel chronic loneliness.
- For older adults, this number can be even higher as friends pass away or physical limitations make travel harder.
- Lack of meaningful connections can harm health, while staying socially active boosts self-esteem, cognitive resilience, physical health, and longevity.

FAQ ABOUT SOCIAL WELLNESS

Q: Is social wellness about the number of friends a person has?

A: Absolutely not! Remember, quality always beats quantity. Developing just one or two deep, trusting personal connections can bring incredible emotional and psychological health rewards. It's all about meaningful relationships that truly matter.

Q: How do Care Team visits directly support a Care Partner's social wellness?

A: Your visits bring a refreshing change to your usual routines. They offer Care Partners a safe space to share thoughts, share new jokes, recall memories, and maintain a vital link to their wider faith community.

Q: What are some small ways our Care Partners can practice social wellness if they are isolated or have limited social interaction?

A: Reconnecting with old friends by phone, writing letters to distant relatives, or getting to know neighbors and staff through activities or a friendly wave are simple, low-effort ways to build closer bonds.





CARE PARTNER CONVERSATION STARTERS

14 *patriotic and summer-themed questions*

1. What do you remember 4th of July celebrations being like when you were a child or young adult?
2. Did your family or neighborhood ever host a backyard block party or a big summer picnic? What kind of food did you look forward to the most?
3. Have you ever taken part in or watched a local 4th of July parade?
4. Do you remember finding a perfect spot on a blanket or lawn chair to watch evening fireworks? Where was your favorite spot?
5. How did your home parish or local community typically observe patriotic holidays when you were younger?
6. Did you ever participate in a summer parish mission, a vacation Bible school, or a youth faith camp when you were younger?
7. Did your family take any special road trips during the peak summer months?
8. Do you remember any unique summer traditions in your community, such as a priest blessing the local fields, gardens, or community crops during the growing season?
9. What was your favorite way to cool off on an intensely hot July afternoon before modern air conditioning? (Sipping lemonade, sitting under a shade tree, etc.)
10. Are there any particular patriotic or summer hymns (like "*America the Beautiful*" or "*Holy God, We Praise Thy Name*") that always stir your heart?
11. Did you or your relatives ever serve in the military, and do you have any specific memories of base celebrations or homecomings around July?
12. What kind of summer treats did you make or buy when the gardens were fully thriving—like fresh sliced watermelon or homemade ice cream?
13. Did you ever attend or help organize a big family reunion during the warm summer months? What is the largest family gathering you can remember?
14. How did the fast-paced energy of early summer change for you as you grew older? What do you appreciate most about a quiet summer day now?

CARE PARTNER CONVERSATION STARTERS

*Seven questions related to Social
Wellness.*



1. Think back to your closest friend from childhood or young adulthood. What kind of mischief or fun did you two get into together?
2. In your experience, what is the secret ingredient to making a friendship last for decades?
3. How do you feel our connection to God helps us form deeper, more respectful relationships with the neighbors in our lives?
4. Saint Teresa of Calcutta spoke deeply about the poverty of loneliness. How can we, as a parish community, do a better job of making sure no one feels forgotten?
5. Who was a person in your life who always knew exactly how to listen to you without judgment whenever you needed to talk?
6. Scripture tells us that where two or three are gathered in His name, Christ is there. Have you ever felt a sudden, clear sense of God's presence just from sharing a simple conversation with a friend?
7. What is something small that a visitor or even a stranger does that instantly makes you feel loved, respected, and valued?

HOW TO FIND OUR CARE TEAM MINISTRY PAGE ONLINE

If you ever want to visit our webpage to look up resources, news, or see our updates, you can safely find it by following these three simple steps:

STEP 1: OPEN THE MAIN WEBSITE

First, open your internet browser and type in our main website address:

catholiccharitiesofmadison.org.

(Note: If you're reading this on a computer, tablet, or smartphone, click or tap the red (usually blue) bold words above, and your device will automatically open the webpage.)

STEP 2: FIND YOUR PROGRAM OPTIONS (DEPENDING ON YOUR DEVICE)

Once the main homepage opens, what you look for next depends on your screen type.

- If you are using a Desktop or laptop computer, look near the top of your screen for a section labeled "*Get Help.*" Move your mouse arrow over those words.
- If you are using a Smartphone or tablet, look for a drop-down menu labeled "*I need help with...*" Tap that box with your finger to open up your options.

STEP 3: LOOK FOR AGING & MEMORY CARE

Under those menus, you will see a heading that says "*Aging & Memory Care.*"

Although this title isn't a clickable button, it indicates you're in the right area.

STEP 4: SELECT CARE TEAM MINISTRY

Right under that aging section, look for the words "*Care Team Ministry.*" Click or tap on the words to quickly and safely go to our dedicated page!

A HELPFUL SHORTCUT:

Type or click this direct link to save time and go straight there without navigating menus: catholiccharitiesofmadison.org/care-teams.



BOOK NOOK



**"STRENGTH IN SIMPLICITY:
THE BUSY CATHOLIC'S
GUIDE TO GROWING
CLOSER TO GOD" BY
BISHOP EMMANUEL DE
GIBERGUES**

The theme:

A spiritual, reflective classic.

Why it fits:

A short and accessible spiritual primer that reminds us that loving God and our neighbors doesn't have to be complicated.

It's an encouraging, gentle guide for maintaining a peaceful, prayerful life amidst summer activities.

Suggestions on where to locate it:

- You can rent or purchase the audiobook or 'listening' version on [Audible](#).
- You may also choose to purchase a physical or digital copy through [Amazon](#).
- Additionally, other platforms and your local library might have this book available!

**"LIVING INTO
COMMUNITY:
CULTIVATING
PRACTICES THAT
SUSTAIN US" BY
CHRISTINE D. POHL**

The theme:

Thoughtful, warm, and inspiring.

Why it fits: This book explores four specific Christian practices that hold communities together:

- gratitude,
- making and keeping promises,
- truth-telling,
- and hospitality.

It reads like a beautiful tribute to what your Care Teams do every single week.

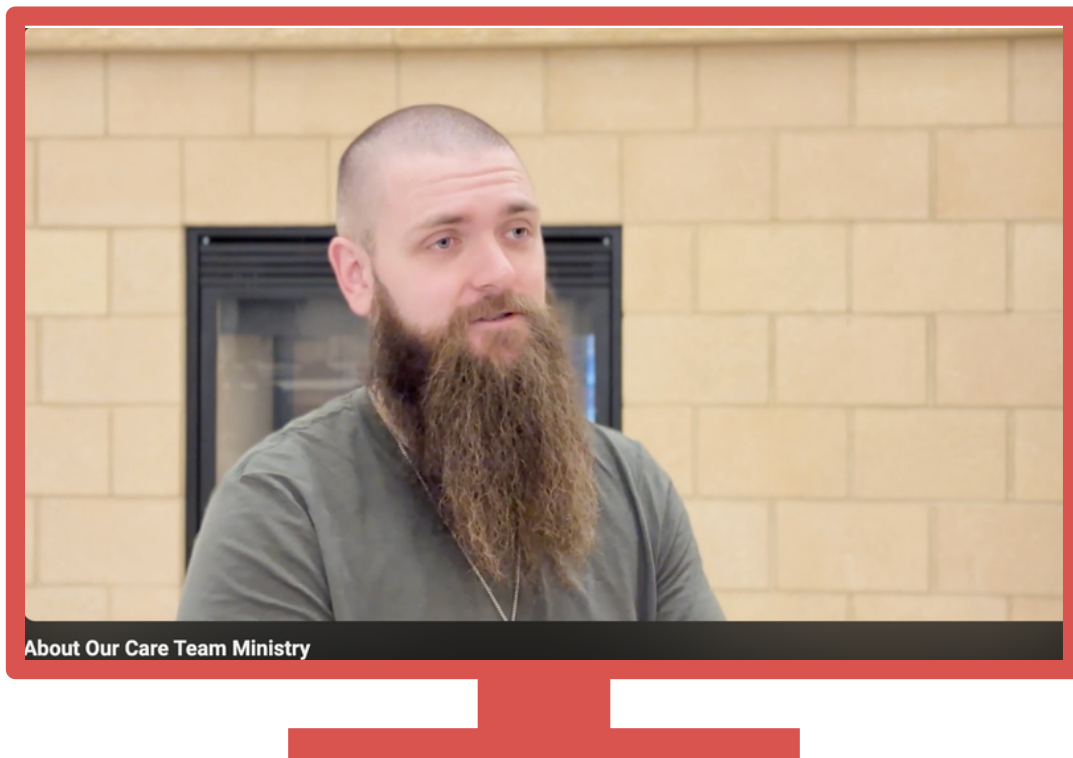
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SHINING A LIGHT ON CARE TEAM

Just like a warm summer breeze, a simple 'hello' can bring instant joy and a smile to someone's day...

We invite and ask you to please share our amazing Care Team video! It's a wonderful resource for showcasing our ministry at your parish and can really inspire others to join our efforts. If you're curious about how to get involved, just let us know — we're happy to help you get started!



**CLICK
HERE**