

MESSIAH EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH MESSENGER

WWW.MESSIAHLUTHERANMQT.ORG

Worship Services

Saturday 5:00 pm

Sunday 8:30 am

(with Nursery)

Sunday 10:30 am

(with Nursery)

8:30 am broadcast on 101.9 fm & livestream on facebook at
www.facebook.com/messiahlutheranmqt

10:30 am livestream on Facebook

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Member of the Northern Great Lakes Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America



December 21, 2025

4th Sunday of Advent

Flowers: **To the Glory of God & In Loving Memory of...**

* Bill Maki

Radio: **To the Glory of God...**

* from Barb Bergstrom

Livestream: **To the Glory of God...**

* from our Messiah family

Siblings in Christ,

As we step into a new year, many of us are holding mixed feelings. There is something about January that invites reflection — a fresh calendar, the sense of a new beginning. And yet we carry forward everything that has shaped us. The joys and struggles of the past year do not vanish overnight. The world remains complicated, and many of us are still finding our way through exhaustion, questions, and change.

But even amid all that, something quiet and powerful is true: God is still here. Still calling us into life. Still meeting us with mercy.

One of the gifts of our Lutheran tradition is its honesty. We do not need to pretend everything is fine in order to speak of hope. We trust that God meets us in the realness of our lives — not just in mountaintop moments, but in daily routines, daily griefs, and daily grace. Luther wrote that baptism is not a one-time event but a daily dying and rising. Each day is a chance to begin again, not because we are ready or worthy, but because God is.

This is the kind of hope we carry into the year ahead. Not a shallow optimism, but a rooted, resilient hope that believes God is not done with us and not done with this world.

During the season of Epiphany, we remember that Christ's light entered the world in a time of uncertainty and unrest. It did not erase the darkness but shone within it. That light still shines — in acts of justice, in moments of compassion, in the daily work of community. And we are called to reflect that light in whatever ways we can.

At Messiah, I see that light in you. I see it in the ways you love and serve, ask good questions, show up for one another, and extend welcome in a world that often withholds it. I hope you will join us for Reconciling in Christ Sunday on January 25, when we'll celebrate our calling as an affirming and inclusive congregation, one that strives to embody the wide welcome of God.

And I also invite you to be part of our Annual Meeting on Sunday, February 1, as we reflect on the year behind us and look with hope and intention toward what lies ahead. These moments of gathering are part of what sustains us — a reminder that we are not alone, that this journey of faith is shared.

Whatever this new year holds for you, may you know that you are loved, that you belong, and that God is walking with you.

In Christ,
Pr. Andrew

Give a Gift That Makes a Difference

Tired of wracking your brain to think of a gift for the person who doesn't need anything? Check out the table near the office, pick up a *Good Gifts* catalog and honor someone with a gift in their name. You can make a lasting difference in the life of someone who really does need something - and model Christian charity for your children and grandchildren.

NEW this year! - you can help fund the Community Assistance Fund and honor someone at the same time. Look for the letters and the red & green envelopes on the table.

Northern Great Lakes Synod Christmas Service

The Northern Great Lakes Synod Christmas service will air on TV6 and Fox at the following times:

| | |
|---------------------------------------|----------------|
| December 24th - 4:00 pm on TV6 | 6:00 pm on Fox |
| December 25th - 6:00 & 9:00 am on TV6 | 5:30 pm on Fox |

The service will also be available through January on TV6 Plus. Pastor Andrew and Dave Blomquist will participate in the service.

Sunday School

Sunday School resumes on January 11th and ends this year on Sunday, May 17th. We won't have Sunday School on Easter - April 5th. This Winter/Spring we are planning on a Y Night for kids and parents from 5:00-7:00 on a Friday night at the end of January (Date to follow). On February 27th we will have a movie night in Messiah's atrium. Stay tuned for more info on both events. Our teachers are excited for the coming season and looking forward to being with your children again in the new year!

Mitten/Hat Box

The donated items from the Mitten Tree Box were brought to The Harbor House, The Free Store and Room at the Inn. We had 56 hats, 17 pairs of mittens, 9 pairs of gloves, 7 scarves, 3 pairs of ear muffs, 4 pairs of socks and 2 pairs of slippers. Thank you for your generous donations to help keep our neighbors warm.

Messiah Calendar

Monday, December 22

10:00 am OWLs Walk
5:30 pm 11-Step Centering Prayer
7:00 pm AA

Tuesday, December 23

11:00 am Staff Meeting
11:00 am Centering Prayer
5:30 pm Superior Handbells

Wednesday, December 24

12:30 pm Church office **closes**
1:30 pm Brookridge Worship
4:00 pm Christmas Eve Worship
7:30 pm Christmas Eve Worship
10:00 pm Christmas Eve Worship

Thursday, December 25

Merry Christmas!

Friday, December 26

9:00 am Senior Men's Bible Study

Saturday, December 27

No 5pm worship today

Sunday, December 28-one service

8:30 am Worship-Traditional

Community Meal - February 4th

We do not hold a community meal in January. Our next community meal will be on Wednesday, February 4th at 6:00 pm

Annual Meeting & Potluck – Sunday, February 1

Join us for Messiah's Annual Congregational Meeting on Sunday, February 1st, following the 10:30 am worship service. This important gathering is a time to reflect on where we've been, look ahead to where we're going, and celebrate all the ways God is at work in our congregation.

We'll begin with a potluck lunch! The church will provide chicken, and we invite you to bring something to share (based on the first letter of your last name):

- A–K: Side dish or casserole
- L–S: Salad
- T–Z: Dessert

During the meeting, we will: elect and install new Council & Committee members, approve the 2026 budget, receive an update from the Endowment Committee and vote on proposed by-law changes (available on the church website and at the Welcome Table), and celebrate this past year – including the incredible visit from our Tanzanian companions.

The written Annual Report for 2025 will be available in late January. Your presence matters—we hope you'll come hungry for food, fellowship, and vision for the year ahead!

In The Hospital

Please inform the church office when you are hospitalized. Pr. Andrew Plocher & Pr. Molly Hunter would like to visit you when you are there. If you are unable to notify Messiah, please ask a family member to do so.

[Pr. Andrew Plocher is on vacation [Jan 1- 9 & 16-19]

[Pr. Molly Hunter is on vacation [January 21-25]

On-Call

Pr. Andrew Plocher: January 11-14, 20-28
Pr. Molly Hunter: January 1-10, 15-19, 29-31

Newsletter Deadline

The deadline for articles to be included in our February newsletter is **Monday, January 19, 2026.**

Messiah's Newsletter

December 21, 2025
Volume 108, Issue 1

Articles for
Weekly Announcements
are due by 6:00 pm
each Wednesday

Bell Choir

Thank you for all the great comments about the bell choir this month. We appreciate your compliments.

Several people have wondered how to become members and we would welcome more ringers. Can we use you - yes. We have bells for 4 octaves but usually only have people to use 3 octaves. There are bigger brass bells that have seen very little use. There is also a bell tree that someone can ring with mallets. Though it helps, you do not need to know how to read music because your part can be marked.

January 5th or 12th is an excellent time to join as we are beginning to learn music for lent & Easter. Rehearsals are from 5:45 to 6:45 pm on Mondays. Please come and see if this choir is a good fit for you.

- - - Judy Quirk, *Bell Choir Director*

Messiah's Birthdays

January 2026

| | |
|--------------|---|
| Thursday 1 | No birthdays |
| Friday 2 | Daphne Evans |
| Saturday 3 | Laurel Reece |
| Sunday 4 | No birthdays |
| Monday 5 | Pam Forsberg |
| Tuesday 6 | Kathy Godec, Luke Rector |
| Wednesday 7 | No birthdays |
| Thursday 8 | Anne Engman |
| Friday 9 | No birthdays |
| Saturday 10 | Dave Blomquist, Sherry Johnson, Luke Stevens, Danielle VanDreel, Tom Wagner |
| Sunday 11 | No birthdays |
| Monday 12 | No birthdays |
| Tuesday 13 | Bob Cambensy, Kaitlin Sellers |
| Wednesday 14 | No birthdays |
| Thursday 15 | Hal Martin, Anne Rydholm |
| Friday 16 | Bev Evans |
| Saturday 17 | Inga Banitt |
| Sunday 18 | Valerie Jewett |
| Monday 19 | Lucy Contois, Mae Desonia |
| Tuesday 20 | Tanner Delpier, Gayle Van Osdol |
| Wednesday 21 | No birthdays |
| Thursday 22 | Amy Froiland, Minna Salmela |
| Friday 23 | No birthdays |
| Saturday 24 | No birthdays |
| Sunday 25 | No birthdays |
| Monday 26 | Rose Collins, Rich Matthews |
| Tuesday 27 | Terri Bocklund, Amie Evans |

| | |
|--------------|--|
| Wednesday 28 | Nina Nelson, Scott Vanlerberghe |
| Thursday 29 | No birthdays |
| Friday 30 | Janice Bolster, Ruth Hill, Lesley Williams |
| Saturday 31 | Jeanne Sekely |

Happy Anniversary!

Happy Anniversary to the following couples in January:

| | |
|-----------------------------|------------|
| Angie & Candace LeDuc | January 1 |
| Sally McQueen & her husband | January 2 |
| Justin & Anna Wild | January 2 |
| Craig & Shirley Teed | January 6 |
| Ron & Jane Brow | January 21 |

New Noontime Grief Group

Thursdays at Noon in Room 202, Beginning January 22

Grief is a journey that looks different for each of us—and it's not meant to be walked alone. Beginning Thursday, January 22, Messiah will offer a Noon-time Grief Group for anyone navigating the loss of a loved one, whether recent or long ago.

This weekly gathering will meet Thursdays at 12:00 pm in Room #202. We'll create a gentle, confidential space to share stories, reflect on the complexities of loss, and support one another through conversation, prayer, and quiet presence. There's no pressure to speak—just come as you are, with whatever you're carrying.

Brown bag lunches are welcome, so feel free to bring something to eat as we meet.

You are welcome whether you're part of the Messiah community or not. This group is open to all, including those who may not consider themselves "church people," but who are seeking a place of compassion and understanding.

Grief doesn't follow a schedule—but sometimes, setting aside time in our week can help us begin to heal. If you or someone you know could benefit from a circle of care and companionship, we hope you'll join us.

For more information or to let us know you're coming (though drop-ins are always welcome), please contact Pr. Andrew.

Confirmation Update: January Gathering & Reminders

Our next Confirmation gathering will be held on Saturday, January 17, from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm at Immanuel Lutheran Church in Negaunee. We're looking forward to a great morning together!

A quick reminder for students:

- Aim to attend at least six of the eight Saturday gatherings.
- Complete worship notes regularly — forms are on the Welcome Table.
- Help with worship twice during the program year — contact the church office to get on the schedule.

Thanks for staying engaged and growing in faith. See you in worship — and in Negaunee on the 17th!

Bowls for a Cause

Turned Wooden Bowls are available for a donation to the community assistance fund. They are located next to the homemade jams in the narthex. All bowls are homemade and are finished with a food safe finish. If you have questions about the bowls they can be directed to Paul Carstens at pcarsten@alumni.nmu.edu.

Devotions Link

www.prayfaithfully.org is an on-line devotional reading service maintained by the Northern Great Lakes Synod and written by various pastors and laypersons.

Wanted - Nursery Staff

Messiah is in need of another staff person or two for our nursery. This is a paid position. Any person interested needs to be 18 years of age or older. Please inquire in the office if this is something you might be interested in. Thank you!

Brookridge Worship - 12/24 at 1:30 pm

Messiah has a worship service on the 4th Wednesday of each month at 1:30 pm. This is a change from our two services per month schedule. We need more pianists to accompany the worship, as some of the regulars are no longer able to do this. Please contact Kathy Godec in the office if you are willing to help.

This new schedule started in the month of December and our December worship at Brookridge is on December 24th at 1:30 pm. You are invited to join the worship & visit with our members who reside at Brookridge and other residents who attend.

Lectionary Readings - January 2026

January 4

First Reading
Gospel

Second Sunday of Christmas

Jeremiah 31:7-14
John 1:[1-9] 10-18

January 11

First Reading
Gospel

Baptism of Our Lord

Isaiah 42:1-9
Matthew 3:13-17

January 18

First Reading
Gospel

Second Sunday after Epiphany

Isaiah 49:1-7
John 1:29-42

January 25

First Reading
Gospel

Third Sunday after Epiphany

Isaiah 9:1-4
Matthew 4:12-23

Quilting

If you would like to work with Messiah's quilting group, please contact the office.

UP Wild January Events

Thursday, January 15th from 12:00-1:00 pm: Coffee in Community

We will begin a new year with new discussions at a new location! An invitation to get to know each other more over a cuppa! We will share how we find our spirituality. Open to newcomers to ask questions. Provisions Cafe, 401 S. Lakeshore Blvd, Marquette

Sunday, January 25th at 3:30pm: Wild Church Service

Come for an afternoon of fellowship. Experience a Wild Church Service & socialize with others. Meeting at the Marquette Commons (112 S. 3rd St.). This is an indoor space with a gas fireplace located in the heart of downtown with an outdoor area for our wander & ponder.

Senior Men's Ministry

Messiah's Senior Men's Ministry is meeting every Friday at 9:00 am in room #202. We meet for about an hour. Please join us on Fridays!

Giving Tuesday Updates

Messiah has once again shown our extreme generosity and taking the message of the Gospel seriously this year. On December 2 – our 7th Giving Tuesday event, 58 took time to people took the time to come in person and 24 others called or mailed donations. We are now at \$29,150 and some funds are still coming in! This is a record!

Here are some statistics as of December 10. The final totals will be available in the annual report.

1. First Giving Tuesday Event – 2017. We raised \$27,057.37, with \$10,000 coming from a Thrivent Grant.
2. Since that time, we have AVERAGED \$34,600 per year in funds distributed.
3. We have taken an AVERAGE of 350 interview appointments per year since 2017, including interviews being taken over the phone during COVID.
4. This year – 2025 we have had 387 interview appointments and distributed \$54,543.22 – with 20 more days in the year left!

This ministry has become an important part of the safety net in our area. A huge THANK YOU to all who contributed, donated prizes, volunteered and prayed for this effort. --- Mary Lou Blomquist

Winners of Drawings: Quilt – Louise Anderson; Basket/trivets – Kathy Strazzinski; Wooden bowl/platter – Marina Shinkarenko; French roast coffee beans – Inga Banitt; Messiah sweatshirts – Tom Froiland, Amy Froiland, and Ernie Johnson. Congratulations to all of you! And many thanks for your donation to our community assistance fund that helps folks throughout the year! A special thanks to all of you who helped make Giving Tuesday at Messiah a success. In addition to all of those who made a financial contribution, there were many people who donated their time yesterday to help with providing food, rearranging furniture, greeting guests, processing credit cards, providing the prizes for the drawings and paying attention to the details.

Passages

In Celebration of:

- * new members Michael & Jeanne Sekely. Welcome Michael & Jeanne!
- * Marigold Hunter's baptism on November 29th. Parents are Ethan & Molly Hunter.
- * Brooklyn Rydholm's baptism on December 7th. Parents are Grant Rydholm & Asheli Pfaffle.

In Sympathy to:

- * Kathy Osier & family upon the loss of her husband, Tom, who passed away on November 23, 2025. His funeral service will be held in the spring of 2026.
- * Darlene Martin & family upon the passing of her husband, John on December 15th.

OWLs (Older, Wiser Lutherans)

Every Monday at 10:00 am the OWLs walk at the Dome. After their walk, they go to Provisions for coffee. They walk at different rates and all are welcome. If you're not interested in walking, join them for coffee. Questions? Please contact Betsy or the church office.

OWLs January Events

Marquette Regional History Center - The OWLs (older wiser Lutherans) are going to the Marquette Regional History Center on January 14 at 1:00 pm. Join us no matter what your age. Bring a friend if you'd like. Mad About Maps is the current special exhibit and features U.P. maps. \$8.00 per person if you are not a member of the Center. Please sign up at Messiah's welcome table so we have an idea of how many will be attending. Questions? Ask Betsy L. or the church office.

Dinner at Red Lobster - The annual OWLs dinner at Red Lobster is scheduled for Sunday, January 18th at 3:00 pm. This is a pay your own way gathering of the OWLs. This is an early notification so you can plan ahead. There will be a sign up sheet in early January because we need to confirm numbers a week in advance, by January 11th.

Book Study: When Bad Things Happen to Good People

Monday, February 9 at 12:00 pm or 7:00 pm

Why do good people suffer? Where is God when life hurts?

Join us for a one-session book study on Harold Kushner's classic, When Bad Things Happen to Good People. This thoughtful, faith-filled book has guided millions through grief, loss, and life's hardest questions—and it still speaks powerfully today.

We'll meet on Monday, February 9, with two identical sessions offered at 12:00 pm & 7:00 pm. Come to the time that works best for you.

Because this is a classic text, we won't have copies for sale—but we encourage you to check out a copy from the public library (available in print or ebook) or consider purchasing a used copy online.

Whether it's your first time reading it or a return to a trusted favorite, all are welcome.

Worship News

There will be only one service on the weekend of December 28th - the 8:30 service. No 5:30 or 10:30 service that weekend.

**To view our calendar,
updated daily, please go to
messiahlutheranmqt.org**

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Endowment Committee News

The document governing the Robert Malette Mission Endowment Fund has been reviewed and approved by the church council. This document is available on Messiah's website. In anticipation that the congregation will adopt this revised document, applications for grant funding are also available on line and at the church office.

The deadline for submission is extended for this first round to grants to February 15, 2026. If you have questions about the fund or the application, talk to a committee member (Judy Quirk, Ann Johnson, Maddie Dykema, Gail Edgar, Grant Soltwisch) or a pastor.

Food Pantry-St. Vincent de Paul

With the rising cost of food, St. Vincent de Paul can use our help. There has been an increased demand on their food pantry in Marquette.

Items most in demand in their pantry include:

| | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Canned pasta sauce | Large cans of baked beans |
| Spaghetti noodles or elbow macaroni | Canned pasta |
| Various cans of soup | Saltine crackers |
| Canned fruit | Cereal |
| Canned vegetables | Canned tuna |
| Canned chicken | |

Monetary donations are also greatly appreciated. These donations allow us to purchase USDA or donated items from Feeding America West Michigan at a much-reduced cost compared to the grocery store. To donate funds for St. Vincent's food pantry, simply mail or drop off a check (please write "SVDP Food Pantry" on the memo line) to:

SVDP Food Pantry, 2119 Presque Isle Ave., Marquette, MI 49855

What is Centering Prayer?

Centering prayer is a form of silent prayer that emphasizes resting in God's presence through silence and a sacred word. It involves finding a quiet space, sitting comfortably, and focusing on a chosen word to help maintain stillness and let go of thoughts. The goal is to cultivate a deeper relationship with God through stillness and receptivity. Several members of Messiah lead groups that practice this form of prayer throughout the week as a piece of their faith life. -- Pr. Molly Hunter

What I Know & Centering Prayer

Consciousness can be defined as our ability to know, the experience of knowing. The subject knowing the object. When we look at objects and name them, we think we know them. We think we know this person or that person because we have a name or a memory of them. We think we know all kinds of things because we remember them. Our ability to know is of the conditioned sort--knowing about, rather than knowing directly.

Buddhist practice is to abide in pure mindfulness in which there is what we call insight knowing, or direct knowledge. It is a knowledge that isn't based on perception, an idea, a position, or a doctrine, and this knowledge can only be possible through mindfulness. What we mean by mindfulness is the ability to not attach to any object, either in the material realm or the mental realm. When there is no attachment, the mind is in its pure state of awareness, intelligence, and clarity. That is mindfulness. The mind is pure and receptive, sensitive to the existing conditions. It is no longer a conditioned mind that just reacts to pleasure and pain, praise and blame, happiness and suffering. That which observes and investigates is what we call a reflective mind. The human mind is a reflective mind.

We ask questions: Who am I? Why was I born? What is life all about? What happens when I die? Is there meaning or purpose to life? But because we tend to think that other people know and we don't, we often seek the answers from others, rather than opening the mind and watching through patient alertness for truth to be revealed. Through mindfulness and awareness, revelation is possible. This revelation of truth or ultimate reality, is what the religious experience really amounts to. When we bind ourselves to the divine, and engage our whole being in that bond, we allow this revelation of truth, which we call insight--profound and true insight--into the nature of things. Revelation is ineffable as well. Words are not quite capable of expressing it. That is why revelations can be very different. How they are stated, how they are produced through speech, can be infinitely variable.

So a Buddhist's revelations sound very Buddhist and a Christian's revelations sound very Christian. There's nothing wrong with that. But we need to recognize the limitation of the convention of language. We need to understand that language is not ultimately true or ultimately real; it is the attempt to communicate this ineffable reality to others.

Today we have an opportunity to work toward a common truth among all religions; we can all begin to help each other. It's no longer a time when converting people or trying to compete with each other seems to be of any use or value. Rather than attempt to convert others, religion presents the opportunity to awaken to our true nature, to true freedom to love and compassion. It's a way of living in full sensitivity, with full receptivity, so we can take delight in and open ourselves to the mystery and wonder of the universe for the rest of our lives. --- *The Mind and the Way* by AjahnSumedho

Centering Prayer is the God-oriented way of meditation/mindfulness. We meet on Tuesdays from 11:00 am-12:00 pm. We meditate for 20 minutes together & then read and share from spiritual literature. Other opportunities to practice meditation together are here at Messiah with Laura Petrie, or online at www.meditationchapel.org via zoom, or with <https://www.minnesotacontemplativeoutreach.org/> via zoom or at Peter White Public Library with MeditateMarquette on Tuesday evenings from 6:00 pm-7:00 pm in the Heritage room.

Knotty Knitters

The Knotty Knitters will continue to meet at Messiah on the 2nd & 4th Tuesday of each month. The knitters typically meet in Magnuson Hall but occasionally meet in the atrium. They do join one another for lunch at Vangos prior to coming to Messiah. Please contact Shelly Johnson for more information.

Upcoming Events in January & February

| | |
|------------|--|
| January 4 | Sunday School does not meet |
| January 11 | Sunday School resumes |
| January 19 | Church office closed in observance of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day |
| January 25 | Reconciling In Christ Sunday |
| January 28 | Brookridge Worship at 1:30 pm |
| February 1 | Annual Meeting following 10:30 worship; potluck lunch, see list on page 5 for what dish to bring |

Radio Broadcast & Livestream Sponsorship

We are in need of sponsors for weekly/ongoing radio broadcasts & livestream. If this is something you would like to support, please contact the office & share what you would like written for your sponsorship; it can be in honor or in memory of a loved one.

You can reach us by phone at 225-1119 or email at office@messiahlutheran-mqt.org. The cost of the Radio Broadcast or Livestream sponsorship is \$110.00 each.

The New Free Store Donations

The New Free Store is in need of the items listed below. There is a collection bin in our narthex at Messiah for The New Free Store.

January Dental Floss, Toothpaste, Toothbrushes (adult & child size)

February Laundry Soap, Dish Soap, Bar Soap

No cash or checkbook? No problem

You can donate through Venmo
or on our website at:
messiahlutheranmqt.org/give

If you wish to designate your donation to a specific fund, please be sure to do so. Any undesignated donations automatically go to our general fund which supports the entirety of our ministry.

Thank you for your generosity!

Messiah Evangelical
Lutheran Church
[@messiahlutheranmqt](https://www.messiahlutheranmqt.org)



venmo

Medication Help Available

If you have questions or concerns regarding your medications, you can contact retired pharmacist, Barb Salmela. Contact the office to get her number. All inquiries are confidential. She can help find discounts for medication, ways to possibly obtain them for free, or suggest less expensive alternatives.

Subscribe to Messiah's ENewsletter

Messiah publishes an electronic newsletter every Wednesday which is sent to subscribers via email. Receiving the ENews is a good way to stay abreast of church news and activities. If you are interested in subscribing, contact Kathy at Messiah's office. And, you can access the ENews through Messiah's website.

10:30 am Worship Volunteers

We are in need of more volunteers for our 10:30 worship service. Specifically ushers and communion assistants. If either of these roles interest you or if you have questions about it; please visit Jen or Kathy in the office and they will let you know what is involved. Thank you!

Quilting Needs

The Quilters are in need of sheets for the quilts they make. The sheets need to be clean (no stains), colored (not white), cotton or cotton blend (no micro-fiber). It is ok if elastic bands on fitted sheets are stretched or cut. The cost of sheets at the thrift stores has really gone up. We would appreciate any donations. Thank you!

In Our Prayers

Please remember the following people in your prayers at this time: Darlene Martin & family upon the loss of her husband, John; Linda Ruohoniemi; Charlie Blake; Rick; Jan Brown; former and current CDC employees; Sam Elder; Ken & Jan Vickstrom; Doug Morton; Jackie Greising; Al Ortlieb; Christine and Jason; Darlene Dreisbach; Ruth Koehler; Sherrie Wagner; Betsy; Carrie Oslund; John Collins; Myra; Katie; John Kiltinen; Mary Ruman; Jeremy; Sally Olson; Carol Bell; Dorothy; Karen; Rose Collins; Don Hillegas; Grant; Kai Dolan; Samantha; Ted; Bruce Lindberg; Grace Chien; Jamie; Donna; Brian; Ben; Evelyn; Akira Carlson; Karen Eldevick; Grace; Shannon; Marshall Lovan; Peter; Shawn; Mae Desonia; Lisa Douros; Tina; Wayne Hanmer; Judy Donckers; Sierra; Charlene Avery

You may call the office if you would like a person listed in the prayers. Please obtain permission from the person to list his/her name. We also appreciate updates as to how people listed are progressing. Thank you!

A Daily Guide for January 2026

January 1 – Begin Gently

Start the year not with pressure, but with grace. Say aloud:
"I am already enough. I am already loved. And I am growing."

January 2 – Set One True Intention

Rather than a long list of resolutions, write down one guiding value for this year—something like compassion, joy, justice, or rest.

January 3 – Breathe On Purpose

Take five deep breaths today. No agenda. No goal. Just presence.
Let each breath be a prayer.

January 4 – Choose Kindness

Say something kind to yourself. Then say something kind to someone else.
Let both be acts of resistance and hope.

January 5 – Step Outside

Even for five minutes—step into the world. Look around.
Let your body remind you that you're alive, and God is near.

January 6 – Epiphany: Follow the Light

Read Matthew 2:1–12. Light a candle and pray:
"God of light, help me go where love leads—even when it's a new way."

January 7 – Try Again

Is there something you've already dropped or delayed this year? Try again today. Start over, kindly.

January 8 – Do One Brave Thing

Send the email. Make the call. Say the truth.
It doesn't have to be perfect. Just brave.

January 9 – Affirm What's Good

Name three things you like about yourself—your strengths, quirks, or growth. They are not accidents. They are gifts.

January 10 – Make Room

Clear out one drawer, bag, shelf, or mental distraction. Let go of what you no longer need.

January 11 – Start Small

What's one small practice that would bless your body, your spirit, or your relationships this week? Begin with just that.

January 12 – Listen Differently

Talk less today. Listen more—especially to someone younger, older, or different from you.

January 13 – Share a Meal

Eat with someone if you can. If not, eat with intention and say:
"Thank you for this gift. May it nourish more than just me."

January 14 – Forgive a Little

Release one resentment today—big or small. Whisper: *"This doesn't need to rule me anymore."*

January 15 – Ask for What You Need

Whether it's help, rest, clarity, or encouragement—ask. It's okay to need things.

January 16 – Stretch

Move your body gently and thank it for all it's carried. Stewardship includes our bones and muscles too.

January 17 – Speak Up

If something's bothering you—or if something's beautiful—say it. Don't silence your voice.

January 18 – Pray with Action

Do something concrete today in response to a concern: donate, volunteer, advocate, or reach out.

January 19 – Martin Luther King Jr. Day

Read or listen to one of Dr. King's speeches or sermons. Reflect: *Where am I being called to join the work of justice today?*
Pray: *"God of justice and mercy, let my courage rise. Let my love take shape."*

January 20 – Celebrate Progress

Look back at something you've grown in over the past year.
It doesn't have to be big. Growth is slow and sacred.

January 21 – Try Silence

Set a timer for 5–10 minutes. Sit in silence. Let God speak without words.

January 22 – Care for the Earth

Do one thing today to reduce waste or show kindness to creation. Even small acts help.

January 23 – Say Thank You

Write or speak a specific thank-you to someone who has made your life better—this month or years ago.

January 24 – Prepare to Celebrate

Reflect: *What does it mean for the church to be a place of radical welcome?*
What stories of inclusion shaped your faith?

January 25 – Reconciling in Christ Sunday

Celebrate God's full welcome of all people—of every orientation, gender, race, and background.
Say aloud: *"There is room for all of us. Thanks be to God."*
Reach out to someone who might need that reminder today.

January 26 – Rest on Purpose

Schedule rest into your week. You are more than your tasks. You are loved—even in stillness.

January 27 – Let Joy Be Enough

Do something just because it brings you joy. Not to earn it. Not to share it. Just because.

January 28 – Reflect with Honesty

What's been hard this month? What's brought you hope? Name both without judgment.

January 29 – Write a Blessing

Write a short blessing for yourself or someone else: *"May you be held. May you grow. May you know you are not alone."*

January 30 – Share the Light

Do one generous thing today: a donation, a compliment, a favor, or simply being present with someone.

January 31 – Close with Gratitude

Light a candle and say: *"Thank you, God, for every step this month—strong or shaky. Let me walk forward in love."*

Lake Superior Life Care & Hospice

Drop-in Grief Support: Marquette – January 28 at 4:00 pm Grief doesn't follow a schedule - and neither do we. Our drop-in grief support group offers a safe, welcoming space for anyone navigating the loss of a loved one. Join us to share, listen, or simply be among others who understand. No registration required. Come as you are when you need it most. Takes place on the 4th Wednesday of every month. No registration or affiliation to our hospice is required. 914 W. Baraga Ave. Marquette.

Caregiver Support Groups Marquette – January 14 from 2:00 – 3:00 pm Are you feeling isolated or burned out as a caregiver? Do you experience frustration or guilt and need a safe place to process? Join us for opportunities to share your feelings, develop friendships, receive emotional support, and to learn about available community resources. Lake Superior Life Care & Hospice Office, 914 W. Baraga Ave.

Telephone Based Caregiver Support Group: January 21 from 2:00 – 3:00 pm Are you feeling isolated or burned out as a caregiver? Do you experience frustration or guilt and need a safe place to process? Join us for our new phone-based support group. For family, friends, and other caregivers who are caring for a person with a chronic illness or disability. This group is a great opportunity for caregivers who are unable to leave the person they are caring for. Please call Jamie Barbieri at 906.225.7760.

Find Your Balance — and Keep It!

Informational Presentation: "A Matter of Balance"

Worried about falls or avoiding activities because of balance concerns? A Matter of Balance is an award-winning program that helps older adults reduce fall risk and stay active through practical strategies and gentle exercises.

Registration is open and required for this program.

Class runs from January 8 - February 26 at Lake Superior Life Care & Hospice, 914 W. Baraga, Mqt from 1:00 - 3:00 pm each week on Thursdays.

Who should attend:

- Anyone concerned about falls and are 60+
- Those wanting to improve balance, flexibility, and strength
- Individuals who have fallen or limited activities due to fear of falling

Take control and keep moving safely!

Call Jamie at 906.225.7760 or email at Outreach@Lakesuperiorhospice.org

Mindful Aging - Aging U.P. Learning Series. Shifting attitudes and perspectives as they relate to getting older. Have you ever walked into a room and forgotten why you are there? You're not alone! Join us for a 4-part Virtual Zoom workshop series that explores the everyday "Senior moments" we all experience. We'll guide you through understanding how our brains work, what sets us up for forgetfulness, and — most importantly — practical strategies to strengthen memory and cognitive connections. Walk away with tips you won't forget and plan to turn those senior moments into senior momentum! Registration is open but limited.

This class will meet on Wednesdays, January 14th - February 4th, 10:30–11:30 am virtually over Zoom. The cost is FREE & open to the community.

Note: Participants must have a device with internet connection & an email address to attend. Register now by calling Jamie Barbieri at 906.225.7760 or Outreach@LakeSuperiorHospice.org.

Grief Support Series

Loss of a loved one can look different for everyone. We will be exploring feelings, support, and tools to help guide you on your grief journey. Please join us to learn and share about the tender moments of grief.

This is a 4-part series **every other Thursday** starting January 8th – February 19th. They meet at Lake Superior Life Care & Hospice, 914 W. Baraga, Mqt from 10:30 – 11:30 am. This is open to the public – No affiliation to our hospice is required, but registration is required. Please call our office to let us know if you will be attending. 906.225.7760 or email at: Grief@LakeSuperiorhospice.org

Hildegarde Johnson Music Scholarships - February

In February, you can pick up a scholarship form for our Hildegarde Johnson Music Scholarship. Fill it out and return it to the church office by Sunday, February 22nd. Shortly after this deadline; scholarship recipients will be notified what they have been awarded for the coming year.

January 2026 Worship Volunteers

Saturday, January 3 - 5:00 pm

Assisting Minister 1 Carol Bell
Communion Asst 1 Barb Salmela

Sunday, January 4 - 8:30 am

Assisting Minister 1
Reader 1 Al Edgar
Ushers 2 Bruce Robertson, Sam Elder
Communion Assts. 4 Beth Krznarich
Greeters 2 Al and Gail Edgar

Sunday, January 4 - 10:30 am

Assisting Minister 1
Reader 1 Josh MacIvor-Andersen
Ushers 2 Amy Diedrich,
Communion Assts. 4
Greeters 2 Ellen Symons,
Projection Technician 1

Saturday, January 10 - 5:00 pm

Assisting Minister 1 Carol Steinhaus
Communion Asst 1 Barb Salmela

Sunday, January 11 – 8 :30 am

Assisting Minister 1 Grant Soltwisch
Reader 1 Fred Maynard
Ushers 2 Cathy Seblonka,
Communion Assts 3
Greeters 2 Chris Harkness, Marina Shinkarenko

Sunday, January 11- 10:30 am

Assisting Minister 1
Reader 1 Nancy Hamlin
Ushers 2
Communion Assts. 3
Greeters 2
Projection Technician 1

Saturday, January 17 - 5:00 pm

Assisting Minister 1 Carol Bell
Communion Asst 1

Sunday, January 18 - 8:30 am

Assisting Minister 1 Brenda Blett
Reader 1 Louise Reichert
Ushers 2 Joe & Chris Harkness
Communion Assts. 4 Beth Krznarich,
Greeters 2 Penny Streeter, Sherry Labbe

Sunday, January 18 - 10:30 am

Assisting Minister 1
Reader 1
Ushers 2 Amy Diedrich,
Communion Assts. 4 Gayle Mack,
Greeters 2 Ellen Symons,
Projection Technician 1 Abby LaForest

Saturday, January 24 - 5:00 pm

Assisting Minister 1 Chris Kotila
Communion Asst 1 Barb Salmela

Sunday, January 25 - 8:30 am

Assisting Minister 1 Mary Lou Blomquist
Reader 1 Brenda Blett
Ushers 2 Cathy Seblonka,
Communion Assts 3
Greeters 2

Sunday, January 25 - 10:30 am

Assisting Minister 1
Reader 1
Ushers 2
Communion Assts. 3
Greeters 2
Projection Technician 1

Saturday, January 31 - 5:00 pm

Assisting Minister 1 Carol Bell
Communion Asst 1

Messiah's Church Staff:

Pastoral Staff:

Senior Pastor.....Andrew Plocher
Associate Pastor.....Molly Hunter

Support Staff:

Parish Administrator.....Jennifer Dodge
Administrative Assistant ..Kathy Codec
Parish Accountant.....Mike Hill
Financial Secretary.....Anne Rydholm

Music Staff:

Music/Choir Director.....Sara Parks
Organist/Pianist.....Kathy Strazzinski
Bell Choir Director.....Judy Quirk
Pianist.....Jocelyn Basse

Messiah Lutheran Church
305 W. Magnetic Street
Marquette, MI 49855

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