

MESSIAH EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

MESSENGER

WWW.MESSIAHLUTHERANMQT.ORG

Worship Services

Saturday 5:00 PM

Sunday 8:45 AM

(with Nursery)

This service is broadcast
on Sunny 101.9 FM

Sunday 10:30 AM

(with Nursery)

305 West Magnetic Marquette, MI 49855 Tel: (906) 225-1119 Fax: 225-5025

www.messiahlutheranmqt.org E-mail: office@messiahlutheranmqt.org

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



January 2, 2022

Second Sunday of Christmas

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

* from Bill Maki

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

* from Messiah

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

* from Messiah

From Pastor Molly

January Greetings,

When I was in college, I used to work late nights at the welcome desk and walk home through the quiet campus on dark and frigid winter nights in rural northeastern Iowa. Now, many of you know, I am not one for the cold, but there was always something spectacular about these late night walks on clear cold nights. I would look up at the sky and there was nothing like it, the sheer amount of twinkling stars on a clear night was miraculously beautiful and filled with God's creative power. I was thinking about those skies this week as I was contemplating the coming of Epiphany.

Epiphany is the day that we celebrate the wise men following the star to find Jesus and just that act is amazing. It fills me with questions like, how did they know which star? What within them called them to follow? How did they know not to tell Herod of their journey? I am just in awe of their purpose and their sureness of their mission.

When I think about looking up at a clear night sky, there are so many beautiful stars and bright planets. It can be overwhelming to take it all in. If I was one of the wise people, how on earth would I know which star to follow? How would I know which one was the right path?

With the coming of the new year, there is always this pull to make resolutions and to choose what path the new year will hold. I personally love that there is this built-in social opportunity to make new commitments and plans,

but I think it can also be overwhelming to choose what path, or which star, we will follow in the coming year. What will be our priorities? What will be our hopes and dreams?

I think back to the wise people. Their hope was simply to see the Christ child. What a delightfully simple goal! But what does it mean to see the Christ child? Messiah's devotional booklet for Advent compared seeing the Christ child as coming "close to home" and I think that is a good way to describe it. In an ideal world, home should be a place where we feel wholly loved, accepted, cared for, and cherished. It should be a place of hope, joy, forgiveness, and peace.

When we think about what our priorities, goals, hopes, dreams, and which star we choose to follow in the coming year, let them be centered in bringing us closer to home, closer to the Christ child, one so new and full of promise, the little one who will become what it truly means to follow the way to our true home.

Yours in Christ,

Pastor Molly

The Lutheran Course

Join us beginning January 12th at 6:30 pm and each Wednesday evening thereafter in room 202 for the Lutheran Course. Are you a lifelong Lutheran? Are you relatively new to Lutheranism? All are welcome! Pastor Andrew and Pastor Molly will be teaching a 7-week course in-person on the basics of what Lutherans believe and how we live out our faith. For questions contact Pastor Andrew or Pastor Molly. Please let us know if you are coming by emailing Pastor Molly at molly@messiahlutheranmqt.org

New to Messiah?

Are you relatively new to Messiah? Know someone who is? On Sunday January 23rd between the 8:30 am and 10:30 am worship services, we'll be having a brief gathering where folks can learn more about our beloved community. We will gather from 9:45 am – 10:15 am in the Atrium. We hope you can make it! If you can't and are interested in learning more, just let the church office know and one of our pastors will reach out to you.

Your Prayer Requests

At every Saturday & Sunday worship service, we ask people to fill out a welcome card that is found in the bulletin. The card asks people to put their prayer requests on the back, and these requests are prayed for every Tuesday afternoon at Messiah's staff meeting. If you wish to have your name or a loved one's name read during worship, please call the office or let the pastors, Jen, or Inga know. We will need to get permission before we include anyone's name in the worship prayers.

Messiah Calendar

Monday, January 3

9:00 am Men's Bible Study
7:00 pm AA
12:00 pm Days for Girls
7:00 pm Bell Choir

Tuesday, January 4

12:00 pm QiGong (zoom)
1:00 pm Knotty Knitters
1:30 pm Staff Meeting
6:00 pm Cub Scouts

Wednesday, January 5

5:00 pm Senior Choir Rehearsal
7:00 pm Boy Scouts

Thursday, January 6

9:00 am Quilting
10:30 am Koinonia Bible Study
4:00 pm Asylum Task Force
5:00 pm Building & Grounds

Friday, January 7

Nothing Scheduled

Saturday, January 8

5:00 pm Worship

Sunday, January 9

8:00 am Senior Choir Rehearsal
8:30 am Worship
10:30 am Worship

In The Hospital

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

On Call

Pr. Andrew Plocher: Jan 4-5, 9-12, 16-19, 23-26, 30-31
Pr. Molly Eversoll: Jan 1-3, 5-8, 13-15, 20-22, 27-29
Pr. Andrew will be on vacation 12/27-1/3

Newsletter Deadline

The deadline for articles to be included in our February newsletter is Monday January 24, 2022.

Messiah's Newsletter

January 2, 2022
Volume 104, Issue 1

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

Special Events for January

January 12 The Luthern Course led by both pastors, 6:30 pm each Wednesday
January 20 Council meeting at 6:30 pm
January 23 Interested in becoming a member of Messiah? Join us at 9:45 am in the atrium for more information
January 30 Annual meeting in the sanctuary following 10:30 am worship

Lifelong Faith Formation

The Synod will again host a plethora of intriguing courses throughout the winter semester. These courses are free and begin in January. Registration closes on January 7th at 5:00 pm. You can register on the Synod's website at nglsyond.org/lifelong-faith-formation/ Classes for the Winter semester include: Introduction to Biblical Hebrew, The Samuel Series: Prayer and the Spiritual Life, The Big Picture Bible Discussion, Ezekiel Bible Study, Anishinababe Culture, and Dialogue with the Islamic Resource Group. All classes will be on Zoom. If you need assistance with Zoom or registering please contact the Synod office.

Virtual Worship

Messiah's 8:30 am worship will be broadcast on the radio at Sunny 101.9 FM. Both of our Sunday morning services (8:30 & 10:30 am) can be found online at the following sites:

Vimeo - vimeo.com/messiahlutheranmqt
Facebook - www.facebook.com/messiahlutheranmqt

Rachel Circle Thanks YOU!

Messiah's Rachel Circle would like to thank you for your donations to help the clients at Great Lakes Recovery Center. Our collection box for them was very FULL! You are all so generous. We also had some Walmart gift cards donated for the children. Thank to everyone for your generosity.

- - Rachel Circle

Livestream Sponsorship

We have another weekly sponsorship item for you to consider. Along with sponsoring the Altar Flowers or the Radio Broadcast, we have added Livestream. If you would like to sponsor our Livestream on any given Sunday, contact the office at 225-1119 or office@messiahlutheranmqt.org. The cost of the Livestream sponsorship is \$110.

Similar to Altar Flowers & Radio Broadcast, you can sponsor the Livestream in Memory or in Honor of a loved one.

Messiah's Birthdays

January 2022

Saturday 1	No birthdays
Sunday 2	Daphne Evans
Monday 3	No birthdays
Tuesday 4	No birthdays
Wednesday 5	Pam Forsberg, Kevin McGrath, Kristine Tollefson
Thursday 6	Kathy Godec
Friday 7	No birthdays
Saturday 8	Anne Engman
Sunday 9	No birthdays
Monday 10	Dave Blomquist, Sherry Johnson, Tom Wagner, Luke Stevens
Tuesday 11	Kathy Soltwisch
Wednesday 12	Krystina Ostermeyer
Thursday 13	Marie Sarkela, Bob Cambensy, Kaitlin Sellers, William Beauchaine
Friday 14	No birthdays
Saturday 15	H. Virginia Olson, Hal Martin, Anne Rydholm
Sunday 16	Bev Evans
Monday 17	Janice Anderson, Inga Banitt
Tuesday 18	Valerie Jewett
Wednesday 19	Mae Desonia, Bill Maki, Lucy Contois
Thursday 20	Gayle Van Osdol
Friday 21	No birthdays
Saturday 22	Amy Froiland
Sunday 23	No birthdays
Monday 24	No birthdays
Tuesday 25	Mary Leslie
Wednesday 26	Nancy Russell, Rose Collins, Rich Matthews
Thursday 27	Amie Evans, Marie Voskuhl

Friday 28	Scott Vanlerberghe, Nina Nelson
Saturday 29	No birthdays
Sunday 30	Ruth Hill, Lesley Williams
Monday 31	Madeline Malnor

Passages

In Sympathy to:

- * Scott Krah & family upon the passing of his wife Jill on December 6, 2021.
- * Laurel Kniskern upon the passing of her husband Jon on Sunday, December 19th. Funeral arrangements will be announced at a later date.

In Celebration of:

- * our new member Lynda Trafton who has returned to Messiah! She is the daughter of Ken & Jan Vickstrom. She was raised in our church as a child and has returned to Marquette, seasonally.
- * the birth of Niilo who is the son of Kira & Kyle December. He is the grandchild of Dave & Jill Luoma. Niilo's mom, Kira is doing well. Their family resides in Madison, WI.

The Pastor's Book Study Returns in March!

For many of us during this pandemic, life has shrunk to the size of the room we're in. We have had to learn how to build a beautiful life inside new limitations. We have had to learn how to find hope and courage and beauty by setting aside the promises of self-help gurus and Instagram influencers and making peace with our beautiful, terrible finitude.

Join us as we read Kate Bowler's book called No Cure for Being Human (and Other Truths I Need to Hear) that asks the question, How do we move forward when there is no going back? It's a memoir for all of us who understand we are more limited than we may have realized. Those of us who are trapped by fragile bodies, commitments, dependents, geography, money, and circumstances.

If you are interested in joining us, feel free to get started on the book. Copies will be available in the church office mid-January. The book study will be held at 7:00 pm on Wednesdays during Lent (immediately following the evening worship service). A schedule for the readings/discussion will be available in February. Each gathering will be 30 minutes.

In Our Prayers

Please remember the following people in your prayers at this time: The family of Ray Hausenhauer who passed away; John Collins; Laurel Kniskern & family upon the passing of her husband Jon; Marjorie Vidlund & family upon the passing of her son Bob; Linda & Dan; Tom McNabb; Barry Johnson; Ruth Almén; Heather, Mike & family; the Williamson family; Linda; Alli Elsenbroek; Jeff; Virginia Bell; Carl; Ken; Cheryl, Kai, Gavin, Claire; David Shaver; Tobe Anderson; Ken Smith; William; Chuck; Daniel and Marcos; Ceil Aikala; Mary Leslie; Carol Steinhaus; Richard Toyra; Shawn; Owen, Becky & Joe; Ed Puska, Mae Desonia; Lisa Douros; Ann Lahti; Grace Wurster; Marjorie Vidlund; Chris Heiskanen; Jamie Baril; Johnnie; Tina & her roommate; Matthew Williamson; Jim Shirtz; Wayne Hanmer; Judy Donckers; Karen Johnson; Michael Orhanen; Kristina Asta; Alison Cory; Sierra; Sandy; Charlene Avery

You may call the church office if you would like a person listed in the prayers. Please obtain permission from the person to list his/her name. In order to keep the list up to date and manageable in size, we will remove names from time to time. We also appreciate updates as to how people listed are progressing. Thank you!

Sister City “Clean the Closets” Event - January 15

Marquette has had a Sister City relationship with Higashiomi, Japan, for over 40 years; and with Kajaani, Finland, for over 20 years. During that time, a lot of gifts have been exchanged between the cities and individuals who have visited. It's time to clean out the closets!

On Saturday, January 15, items will be made available to the community for personal or public use. These are gifts and mementos that have been donated by past delegates and are of high quality. They will not be priced, but donations to the Marquette Area Sister City Partnership will be accepted and appreciated. In addition, a small group of original art work will be available for purchase with proceeds going to the Sister Cities Guest Artist fund.

The event will take place in the lower level of the Peter White Library from 1:00 - 4:00 pm on January 15th. Everyone is welcome!

Mary Lou Blomquist, Marquette Area Sister Partnership Board, Chair

Subscribe to Messiah's ENewsletter

Messiah publishes an electronic newsletter every Wednesday which is sent to subscribers via email and is also posted on Messiah's website www.messiahlutheranmqt.org. Receiving the ENews is a good way to stay abreast of church news and activities. If you are interested in subscribing, contact Jen at jen@messiahlutheranmqt.org. And if you would rather not subscribe, you can access the ENews through Messiah's website. Click on “News” at the top of the homepage, then click on “ENewsletter.” Then you'll be able to click on links for the most recent E-newsletters.

Sunday School

Messiah's Sunday School teachers and students are looking toward 2022! But first we will recap our year. Ten first through fifth grade students and 10 preschool and kindergarten students attended Sunday School overall in 2021. On average, four students attended each class, or eight students total, on any given week. We had two amazing full time Sunday School teachers as well as one part time teacher and two substitute teachers. I am so grateful for everyone who contributed to Sunday School this year! Thank you for all you have done.

I also led two successful craft Sundays where the students and I considered what we were thankful for in our Thanksgiving crafts and shared our gifts to Jesus for His birthday for our Christmas crafts. Craft Sundays are a fun break from lessons where all students are invited to come together! We are thankful for the ability to hold craft Sundays to help us celebrate holidays.

I anticipate another successful semester in 2022. We will resume on January 9, the Sunday after the school holiday break ends, to allow our teachers time off for the holidays. Then we will meet every Sunday until spring break, when we will not meet at least one of the two Sundays, either April 3 or April 10. Then, Easter is April 17, so we will not meet to allow teachers and students to spend the worship service with their families in lieu of lessons. Finally, I expect our final lesson to be held on May 22, the Sunday before Memorial Day weekend, but that is subject to change. Our policy of no food in the Sunday School rooms will continue in the new year to abide by the council's current stage of Covid-19 rules.

As always, if you would like to sign a child up for Sunday School or would like to volunteer, please email me at miss.grace.gronowski@gmail.com and I will be happy to answer! Here's to another great semester.

- - - Grace Gronowski, Sunday School Coordinator

Thank You for Your Generosity on Giving Tuesday!

On November 30th Messiah celebrated Giving Tuesday by raising funds for our Community Assistance Fund. Through your incredible generosity we raised over \$26,000. That's \$5,000 more than last year! Thank you, thank you, thank you!

These funds will help our congregation continue to support those in need in our community, going above and beyond what many social service agencies can do. It is due to your generous giving that we are able to do this and touch the lives of hundreds of our neighbors.

A special thanks to Thrivent Financial for paying for our meals that day and for the volunteers who helped out!

Council Highlights - December 2021

1. The Personnel Committee met and recommended a 6% COLA for all staff. This will be inserted into the 2022 Budget for approval by the congregation.
2. Council approved Lynda Trafton for membership via letter of transfer.
3. Reminder--the Annual Congregational meeting is scheduled for Sunday, January 30.

Respectfully submitted, *Erik Bergh, President*

Volunteer Training for Room at the Inn - Jan. 4th

Are you interested in helping out at Room at the Inn? While we are no longer hosting overnight guests, there are still many ways that you can be involved. You're invited to a training at St. Michael's Roman Catholic Church (401 W Kaye Ave) on January 4th from 6:00 -7:00 pm. Trainings will be offered the first Tuesday of every month at St. Michaels. For more information about volunteering, visit the Room at the Inn website: roomattheinn.org/volunteer

Annual Meeting - January 30

"Save the date!" Our Annual Meeting will be held on Sunday January 30th, immediately following the 10:30 am worship service. Printed annual reports will be available on the Welcome Table (just outside the church office) beginning the weekend of January 22nd-23rd. The agenda for the meeting will include receiving the annual report, election of council and committee members, and the approval of the 2022 budget.

2021 Statements

How does the time fly by so fast? We're wrapping up yet another year and your Annual Giving Statements will be sent out by the end of January. Thank you for your gifts, pledges, and patience during this year of transition with Covid, both joys and sorrows in our world, and personal lives, along with a new church management system. Please call the office to leave a message or contact me by email with any of your donation questions or concerns. Messiah.NancyH@gmail.com

Mitten Box Collection!

Thank you to everyone who donated to the Mitten Tree! This year we collected 186 hats, 30 pairs of mittens and gloves, 9 pairs of socks and 6 scarves and cowls. They were donated to Great Lakes Recovery, Harbor House, The New Free Store and St. Vincent's.

We will leave the donated yarn out for those who would like to keep knitting for charities.

Lectionary Readings - January 2022

January 2 -- Second Sunday of Christmas

Reading.....Jeremiah 31:7-14

Gospel.....John 1:[1-9] 10-18

January 9 -- Baptism of Our Lord

Reading.....Isaiah 43:1-7

Gospel.....Luke 3:15-17, 21-22

January 16 -- Second Sunday after Epiphany

Reading.....Isaiah 62:1-5

Gospel.....John 2:1-11

January 23 -- Third Sunday after Epiphany

Reading.....Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10

Gospel.....Luke 4:14-21

January 30 -- Fourth Sunday after Epiphany

Reading.....Jeremiah 1:4-10

Gospel.....Luke 4:21-30

Quilting Donations

The Messiah Quilters are accepting: Clean, gently used cotton sheets
New cotton fabric

They can no longer use: - blankets

- bed pads/mattress pads
- tablecloths
- bedspreads
- microfiber sheets
- t-shirt type sheet (jersey sheets)
- comforters

We appreciate your support & all of your past donations. Thank you!

**To view our calendar,
updated daily, please go to
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Saturday Evening Worship

Beginning on January 8th, our 5:00 pm worship service will be making a transition. We will gather in the Atrium instead of the sanctuary and the service will have a slightly different feel, as there will be no musician. Kathy Strazzinski has retired from being the accompanist for this service, so we are taking the opportunity to try something new and return to the original design of this worship service. We invite you to join us during this time of transition. If you have questions or feedback regarding this change, please talk with Pr. Andrew.

Confirmation - February 12

Our first Confirmation retreat in October was a wonderful time of fellowship! We learned about each other, one another's gifts, and about being part of the Body of Christ.

We are looking forward to our next retreat which is planned for February 12, 2022 (please note the date change!)

We will again be having our retreat at church, in Magnuson hall, from 10-4. Lunch, snacks and drinks will be provided.

Please feel free to direct any questions to either of the pastors.

Have You Pledged for 2022 Yet?

This is the time of the year that many of us stop, count our blessings, and give thanks to God. We give thanks to God for each and every one of you who participate in the life of Messiah, and that you consider supporting our community in your financial giving. Thank you if you are one of the individuals/families who has already made a pledge! If you haven't completed a "Plan for Giving" card yet, we invite you to please consider doing so. No matter the amount, a pledge/plan for giving card helps us plan for our ministry in 2022 and to be the best stewards possible of the resources entrusted to us. Plan for Giving cards can be found on the Welcome Table and in the office. You can also fill out a pledge form online! Just go to: <https://www.messiahlutheranmqt.org/give> If you have questions regarding your pledge, please contact our Financial Secretary, Nancy Hoover, in the church office. Thank you! -- *Messiah's Stewardship Team*

U.P. Wild Church

U.P. Wild Church Delta County invites you to Nature Prayers by the bonfire. This event is scheduled for January 23rd at 3:00 pm. It will be located at Hillcrest Inn & Motel, 10154 US Hwy 2 in Rapid River. Please join us!

Playgroup

Playgroups offer caregivers and children the opportunity to learn and form friendships together. Messiah will be introducing a weekly playgroup beginning in February.

While children will have the opportunity to participate in storytime, songs, and play, caregivers will have the opportunity to watch them develop social skills. Caregivers will also have the opportunity to develop friendships with one another. We will meet in Messiah's nursery and atrium from 10:00 -11:30 on Thursdays.

Children ages 0-5 are welcome to attend with their caregivers, whether that be a parent or grandparent.

Jen Elsenbroek looks forward to meeting you. Feel free to contact her with any questions at 906-202-2657.

OWLS (Older, Wiser Lutherans)

With the colder weather, the OWLS are now walking at the Dome on Mondays at 10:00 am. Masks are required. The Dome is open for walking; however, the schedule may fluctuate based on NMU's schedule. Please join us. Any walking speed or distance is just fine. We feel it's important to get out, get some exercise, and most importantly, to visit with others especially during this isolating time. If you have any questions, feel free to call Louise at 906-250-3990. All are welcome, and we hope to see you soon!

Medication Help Available

If you have questions &/or concerns regarding your medications, you can contact retired pharmacist, Barb Salmela. Call the office to get Barb's phone number. All inquiries are confidential. She can help find discounts for medication, ways to possibly obtain them for free, or suggest less expensive alternatives. Also, if you need assistance signing up for Medicare, please call Barb for an appointment. She would be happy to help you through this process.

The New Free Store Donations

The New Free Store is an inter-faith, non-profit group supporting people in the greater Marquette area who express a need for free clothing, linen, hygiene & cleaning supplies. Over 850 families are now registered to shop for free & that number continues to grow. When doing your weekly shopping, please remember the items noted below in the coming months. Thank you for your support! Feel free to leave these items in **The New Free Store** 'drop-box' in Messiah's narthex.

***January** - Toothbrushes (child & adult), toothpaste, dental floss, denture cleaner

***February** - Hand Sanitizer, toilet paper (4 or 6 rolls/pack)

Thank You from Inga

Dear Messiah family,

Thank you for your cards and well wishes as I end my time in Messiah's church office. Reading all of your notes brings back good memories of working together on committees, serving food at our many church functions (pre-pandemic!), or sharing a laugh or two in the church office. Truly the best parts of this job were getting to know many of you better and working with such a great staff.

Fortunately my husband Jon and I have no plans to leave Marquette or Messiah so we don't have to say good-bye. I'm looking forward to taking part in different ministries at church, working more on my music, spending as much time as possible with our extended families, and even some travel when pandemic restrictions are lifted. I'm thankful to have the luxury of more time and flexibility to take on new projects—and also just to rest and take some time to see what God has in store for the next several years.

Thank you for all the kindness and encouragement you've shown to me during these past six years. What a time it has been—so many staff changes and programming/worship changes and let's not forget a global pandemic. There have been (and continue to be) many challenges for our congregation, but I've also seen God at work through our pastors, congregational leaders, and church members as we've risen to meet those challenges. You've encouraged each other, prayed for each other, and continually reminded each other of what God has done for us through Jesus. I thank God for all of you and for the community of faith that we share. - - - Inga

2022 ELCA Youth Gathering Update

Every three years, 30,000 high school youth & their adult leaders from across the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America gather for a week of faith formation known as the ELCA Youth Gathering. Through days spent in interactive learning, worship, Bible study, service and fellowship, young people grow in faith and are challenged & inspired to live their faith in their daily lives. The ELCA Youth Gathering is an amazing experience for high school youth and adult leaders to experience the boundless love of God.

Congregations from the Northern Great Lakes Synod are already planning for the 2022 Gathering, which will take place July 24-28, 2022 in Minneapolis, MN. Registration is open through May 22, 2022, although registration prices increase on February 22.

Reconciling in Christ Sunday - January 30th

As a Reconciling in Christ (RIC) congregation, Messiah Lutheran Church will observe Reconciling Sunday in our worship on Sunday January 30th. This is an opportunity to celebrate what it means to live a theology of reconciliation and lift up what being a Reconciling in Christ congregation means to us.

RIC is a program of ReconcilingWorks: Lutherans for Full Participation, begun in 1983 as a way for Lutheran communities of faith to answer the inclusive call of the Gospel by welcoming people of all sexual orientations and gender identities. Currently, there are over 930 Lutheran settings on the RIC roster, including congregations, campus ministries, synods of the ELCA and Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, camps, colleges, and other independent organizations. Additional information about the RIC program, including a complete listing of RIC settings and resources for personal and congregational use, are available on-line at the website www.reconcilingworks.org.

A Note from Glenda

I was asked to write about an experience we have had since arriving here in Michigan, and this is what I would like to share with you. Upon arrival in the United States, what we felt more than anything was that God loves us. We had been in a border shelter at Eagle Pass, Texas without hope and without knowing what we were going to do. We didn't have anywhere to go. After my sons and I had been there for two weeks, we met a woman who helped us and gave us the phone number of another woman who was a Mennonite pastor. She in turn helped us with bus tickets and she picked us up and brought us to the "House of Martha and Mary", which is what they call the place for people who don't have anyone to take them in. God never abandoned us and only He knew what had been prepared for us. Later, another pastor, Pastor John, put us in contact with Pastor Molly and Pastor Andrew, who agreed to accept us and support us.

I was afraid to come to Michigan but God had prepared everything, and I give thanks to God that we have been able to come here. I pray that God will bless the pastors and all of the people in this church because we have been treated like family. We are very grateful for all of you. Thank you all for caring about us and worrying about us and supporting us. I pray that God will bless all of you with a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

From Bishop Finegan

"For in hope we were saved.

Now hope that is seen is not hope.

For who hopes for what is seen?

But if we hope for what we do not see,

we wait for it with patience." ~Romans 8: 24-25

Dear Northern Great Lakes Synod,

You have no doubt noticed the increasing darkness. The kids go to school in the dark, and soon, the school day will end as it began, in darkness. The hours of light are getting shorter and shorter, and people are grateful for lingering twilight.

How ironic that the most hopeful season of the church year begins as the darkness increases. In the weeks to come, we light candles on the Advent wreath, and it's not a moment too soon. These lights of hope stand against the growing darkness. And every week, as we add the flame of another candle, the light will increase and shine brighter even as the darkness comes sooner and lasts longer.

In this season of Hope, and as this year of Hope 2021 comes to its end, I share with you some things that I do see that give me hope:

1. Our congregations continue to find new creative ways to do ministry.

As I read through your newsletters, whether online or hard copy, I am impressed and encouraged by your continued efforts. Sure, some things have paused. Yes, some priorities have been re-evaluated and energies placed in new directions. Yet, this is all good as we continue to be church together and church for the sake of the world. I am grateful to the Spirit that is at work among and through us as the work of Christ continues.

2. We have wonderful pastoral leaders!

In the past few years, we have welcomed many new pastors and they bring new energy, perspective, and ideas. And our seasoned pastors and Licensed Lay Ministers have provided stability and the blessing of trusted relationships that keep congregational partnerships in motion and help reduce anxiety. And congregations in pastoral transition have been patient and involved, waiting for God's timing with hope.

3. We have renewed joy in being together again...safely.

As pandemic restrictions have eased, Pastor Jim and I are once again happy to gather with you for worship. I do not mind wearing a mask if it means we can sing together and gather in the same space. I love hearing the voices of others raised in song and prayer. It has felt like salve on a wound to share the peace, sing alto to someone's soprano, and hear combined voices pray the Lord's prayer together in the rhythm and cadence of voices in unison. While I truly believe that some sense of community can be achieved and appreciated through Zoom, YouTube, and Facebook live, the joy and value of the community gathered in person is also true and real.

4. Our synod is newly connected through Lifelong Faith Formation, Pastoral Leader Check-Ins, and various Zoom meetings.

While I have missed being able to add lunch and snacks to in person Synod meetings, in many ways we are more connected as a synod than we have ever been. Teachers and students from the Copper Country to Marinette, from Ironwood to Sault Ste. Marie gather in virtual classrooms and discussion groups. We are church together in a whole new way, gathering to discuss and wrestle with conversations about issues of race, scriptural interpretation, and to consider and plan various ministry efforts.

5. God is at work!

In all our efforts, in all our re-evaluations, in all the changes and future uncertainty, the Spirit of the living Christ is gathering, inspiring, supporting, and guiding. We are discovering again what it means to be church, what the purpose of the Body of Christ is in this world, and who we are in mission together. I see a new hunger for deeper spirituality and for meaningful connectedness to God and each other. I see ministry efforts taking on a life of their own. I see details and pieces falling together. I see a willingness to experiment, to try new things, to jump even when the landing is unclear.

There is much to be hopeful for because of what we can see even as we continue to hope for that which is still becoming. As Advent candles are lit, as the glow from the manger bed grows brighter, as we strain to hear the songs of angels, remember that you are not alone. In hopeful anticipation of Christmas and a blessed New Year, I believe it is not too soon to share the following verse from "It Came upon the Midnight Clear" that speaks anew to our present circumstances:

*And you, beneath life's crushing load,
whose forms are bending low,
who toil along the climbing way
with painful steps and slow:
look now, for glad and golden hours
come swiftly on the wing;
Oh, rest beside the weary road
and hear the angels sing!*

Yours in Christ, Bishop Katherine Finegan

Thank you from Queen City Dance

To All at Messiah Lutheran Church,

All the members of Queen City Adult Ballet would like to thank you for giving us another opportunity to do what we love. We hope you enjoyed the performances and that they moved you during this holiday season.

We relish these opportunities to serve you all in this way!

Until we meet again, *Queen City Dance, Deborah*

Fortune Lake News

Senior Day – January 10, 2022

Come and join us for a day of wonderful conversation, delicious food, and great fun. Senior Day is a wonderful way to reconnect with old friends and make a few new ones along the way. We gather in the Dining Hall from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm and enjoy a delightful day at Fortune Lake, including a devotion, program, lunch and fellowship. A \$10.00 donation per participant is requested. *RSVP by January 7th, please call 906 214-2267.*

Winter Wonderland Retreat - January 14-16

The days are short and the air is cold. Why not join us at Fortune Lake for a winter getaway? Our Winter Wonderland Retreat will be held January 14-16, 2022 (with optional extension through Monday, January 17 for an additional fee). The event is open to everyone: families, youth groups, and individuals. Come and enjoy a hot sauna, snowshoeing, cross country skiing, and all sorts of winter fun. The weekend will include opportunities to hear Scripture and reflect, enjoy quality time with family and friends, and play in the winter wonderland of Fortune Lake. Go to the Fortune Lake website for housing and pricing information. *Online registration is open through January 7, 2022.*

Disconnect to Reconnect: Junior/Senior High Retreat - February 4-5

Technology is everywhere these days. There's just no way around it. Fortune Lake invites youth currently in grades 7-12 to take a break from screens and join us at camp for an unplugged retreat.

This one night retreat will be held February 4-5 and will feature Bible studies, games, and camp style activities designed to encourage attendees to disconnect from their electronics and reconnect with the people around them.

Adult chaperones are encouraged to attend. This helps build relationships with your youth outside of your church walls. Please contact the office to begin the registration process and select lodging options: 906 214-2267.

The cost is \$60 per person and includes lodging, programming, and meals. For more information, check out the Fortune Lake website. Registration deadline is *January 28, 2022 by 5:00 p.m. CST.*

Nurturing Wholeness: Young Adult Retreat - February 11-13

For Young Adults (Ages 18-26, must be HS graduate)

In a world that pulls you in what feels like a million different directions, why not take some time to care for yourself? Fortune Lake's Nurturing Wholeness Retreat is open to young adults ages 18-26 and aims to do just that: allow time to recharge, center yourself, and provide opportunities for growth and learning in the realms of self-care, emotional development, community, and spirituality.

We maintain that every person is already whole, but by expanding that mindset, we are able to meet our greatest potential. Sessions offered include but are not limited to yoga, meditation, and journaling practices, cooking,

communication skills, and much more. There will also be lots of time to get to know people and play in the north woods winter!

Come and connect with other young adults while connecting with what is important to you on your journey.

The cost is \$140 per person and includes lodging, programming, and meals. For more information, check out the Fortune Lake website.

Registration deadline is *January 31, 2022 by 10:00 p.m. CST.*

Wanted: Fortune Lake Summer Staff 2022

Summer Staff 2022 applications are now LIVE! We're seeking enthusiastic, creative young leaders who are looking for the experience of a lifetime. To learn more about the variety of positions available and to complete an application, go to the Fortune Lake website.

Zoom Qi Gong for Health & Wellness

** It's often an effort to keep moving as we age. Our health tosses in so many road-blocks, increasingly.*

** It was so much easier in our youth: Hop up and go and the body responded.*

** It does keep our mind active to continually adjust to circumstances and find our way through.*

** Wherever you are in this journey, wishing you blessings.*

Zoom Qi Gong is held on Tuesdays from 12:00 - 1:00 pm. It is lead by Diana Magnuson (906-362-9386 or magnusondiana@gmail.com)

Each class member applies their own range of motion to the qigong exercises, standing or chair. We use body structure for balance, stress and pain relief in daily life; walking, turning, lifting, reaching, sitting. The gentle movements can also be used with prayer disciplines, using breathing as an essential component. Members turn off video and mute while I lead. It's a welcome anonymity -no competition, rest as you wish. In the beginning and at the end, we review together. Instead of a fee, we invite you to make a contribution to Messiah Lutheran Church's food bank at any time as a sign of thanksgiving.

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.

January 2022 Worship Volunteers

Saturday January 1 - 5 pm

Ushers- Chris Kotila
Assisting Minister- Kathy Godec

Sunday January 2 - 8:30 am

Ushers- Sam Elder, Bruce Robertson
Reader- Kathy Soltwisch
Communion Assistant- Dave Blomquist
Greeters-
Assisting Minister- Dave Blomquist

Sunday January 2 - 10:30 am

Ushers- Kurt Mensching, Grace Gronowski
Reader- Nancy Raisanen
Communion Assistant- Sandy Lindberg
Greeters- Linda Carlson, Ruth Robb
Assisting Minister- Susan Shaver

Saturday January 8 - 5 pm

Ushers- Ron Tervo, Jan Julian
Assisting Minister- Chris Kotila

Sunday January 9 - 8:30 am

Ushers- Barb Avery, Cathy Seblonka
Reader- Brenda Blett
Greeters- Joan Tasson, Jan Vickstrom
Assisting Minister- Larry Pagel

Sunday January 9 - 10:30 am

Ushers- Liz Beyne
Reader- Mike Hill
Greeters- Milt and Boli Soderberg
Assisting Minister-

Saturday January 15 - 5 pm

Ushers-
Assisting Minister- Karen Kimar-Johnson

Sunday January 16 - 8:30 am

Ushers- Ray Jarvis, Linda Berry
Reader- Emily Coyne
Greeters-
Assisting Minister- Mary Lou Blomquist

Sunday January 16 - 10:30 am

Ushers-
Reader-
Greeters-
Assisting Minister-

Saturday January 22 - 5 pm

Ushers- Chris Kotila, Clare Sauer
Assisting Minister- Chris Kotila

Sunday January 23 - 8:30 am

Ushers- David Dill, Cathy Seblonka
Reader- Fred Maynard
Greeters- Penny Streeter, Sherry Labbe
Assisting Minister- Al Edgar

Sunday January 23 - 10:30 am

Ushers-
Reader-
Greeters- Liz Beyne
Assisting Minister-

Saturday January 29 - 5 pm

Ushers-
Assisting Minister- Kathy Godec

Sunday January 30 - 8:30 am

Ushers- Mike and Emily Coyne
Reader- Terry Langenberg
Greeters-
Assisting Minister- Kathy Maynard

Sunday January 30 - 10:30 am

Ushers-
Reader-
Greeters-
Assisting Minister-

Messiah's Church Staff:

Pastoral Staff:

Senior Pastor.....Andrew Plocher
Associate Pastor.....Molly Eversoll

Support Staff:

Parish Administrator.....Jennifer Dodge
Administrative Assistant.....Inga Banitt
Custodian.....Kevin McGrath
Parish Accountant.....Mike Hill
Financial Secretary.....Nancy Hoover

Music Staff:

Music Director.....Dave Dagenais
Organist/Pianist.....Kathy Strazzinski
Pianist.....Lynne Lancy
Bell Choir Director.....Judy Quirk

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

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