

# Messiah

Evangelical Lutheran Church

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Answering God's call to love

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## Messiah ENewsletter for December 17, 2025

On the web... go to [messiahlutheranmqt.org](http://messiahlutheranmqt.org) for more information about our congregation and “like” us on Facebook to receive updates and information there.

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*Messiah Lutheran Church seeks to be a welcoming community for all people. This includes people of every race, ability, sexual orientation and gender identity, ethnic background, economic grouping, religious affiliation, and political persuasion.*

*We do this simply because God created all people in God's own image and Christ Jesus came so all people might have abundant and eternal life.*

*We may not always be as welcoming as we should be, but this is our intention—all are welcome!*

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### Help Needed –Soup Supper – December 20

We need volunteers to help with our soup supper on Saturday, December 20 following our 5:00 pm worship service. We need volunteers to bring bread and to help with cleaning up. Please let the church office know if you can help with any of this. Thanks!

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## Help Needed – Christmas Eve

We need volunteers to help at our Christmas Eve worship services. For the 4:00 pm service, we need two volunteers to serve as ushers and one more volunteer to serve as a communion assistant.

At our 7:30 pm service, we need one more volunteer to serve as an usher.

At our 10:00 pm service, we need two volunteers to serve as ushers and three volunteers to serve as communion assistants.

Please let the church office staff know if you can help. Thanks!

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## Upcoming Events – December

Dec 17	Organ Recital at 12:15 pm
Dec 17	Council at 6:30 pm
Dec 18	Centering Prayer at 1:30 pm
Dec 19	Senior Men's Bible Study at 9:00 am
Dec 19	Marquette Choral Society Carol Sing at St. Michael's Church at 5:00 pm
Dec 20	Longest Night Worship at 5:00 pm followed by Soup Supper
Dec 22	11-Step Centering Prayer at 5:30 pm
Dec 23	Centering Prayer at 11:00 am
Dec 24	Christmas Eve – Church Office Closes at 12:30 pm
Dec 24	Brookridge Worship at 1:30 pm
Dec 24	Christmas Eve Worship Services at 4:00 pm, 7:30 pm, and 10:00 pm
Dec 25	Christmas Day – Church Office Closed
Dec 26	Senior Men's Bible Study at 9:00 am
Dec 27	NO Saturday Worship
Dec 28	Worship at 8:30 am only; NO 10:30 am worship service
Dec 29	11-Step Centering Prayer at 5:30 pm
Dec 30	Centering Prayer at 11:00 am
Dec 31	New Year's Eve – Church Office Closes at 12:30 pm

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## Thanks for Mitten Box Donations

The donated items from the Mitten 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 earmuffs, 4 pairs of socks, and 2 pairs of slippers. Thank you for your general donations to help keep our neighbors warm!

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## Sunday School

A reminder that there will be no Sunday School on the 28th of December & the 4th of January. Sunday School resumes on the 11th of January. Parents look for a letter with the winter/spring schedule.

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## This Advent: Preparing Your Heart for Hope

This year we will explore how we work our way through fear and prepare our hearts for the hope of the gospels in this season leading up to Jesus' birth. Luke's Gospel begins the story of Jesus with this opening line: "In the time of Herod..." This detail may seem minor to modern readers; however, it reveals layers of information about the fearful world Jesus entered, one filled with rampant oppression, economic disparity, uncertainty, and instability. A world not so unlike our own. And yet, throughout the stories of Christ's birth, the whispers of angels deliver a surprising message: "Do not fear." In our own time, we might ask: is it even possible to be fearless in a fearful world? When Mary, Joseph, the shepherds, and the magi are each called into God's redemptive story, they do not deny their fears—they move through them. They ask questions, hold fast to courage, trust in good news, and say, "Here I am, Lord." When we find ourselves in fearful times, can we acknowledge our fears while also insisting on hope? We've crafted an Advent series that takes seriously the angels' message and trusts that Christ's birth truly is good news of great joy for all people. – Taken from "A Sanctified Art"

Mark your calendars for Advent events and be sure to grab a devotional from the welcome table outside of the church office.

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|--------------------|---|
| <b>December 17</b> | Organ Recital at 12:15 pm in the sanctuary              |
| <b>December 19</b> | Marquette Choral Society Carol Sing                     |
| <b>December 20</b> | Longest Night Service at 5:00 followed by a soup supper |
| <b>December 21</b> | <i>Fourth Sunday in Advent</i>                          |
| <b>December 24</b> | Christmas Eve Worship services-4:00, 7:30, and 10:00 pm |
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## Santa & All of His Helpers Love JAM!

Don't forget to stock up on JAM for the holidays! The small jars (\$3) are perfect stocking stuffers. Large jars (\$6) make perfect holiday gifts, especially paired with fresh bread, biscuits, you name it! There is a convenient QR code located near the jam section for payment. Or

simply use one of the available envelopes to pay. If you have questions, please contact Rebecca Ulland.

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### **Giving Back in December with LSS**

This Advent we will collect items for Lutheran Social Services. We are looking for hygiene items- especially travel sized - any hygiene item that can be used for those who dwell in homeless shelters. (soaps, shampoos, deodorants, combs, lotions, etc.) Look for the bin in the Narthex to donate.

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### **Endowment Committee News**

The Endowment committee has been meeting this past year to develop guidelines to administer the Robert Malette Endowment fund for sustaining growth and to create a method to distribute funds as grants to support the mission of Messiah. These documents including applications forms for grants have been reviewed by Messiah's Finance Committee and Messiah's legal support and they are being submitted to Council for approval. The regulations governing the endowment fund need to be presented to the entire congregation at two meetings before these documents can be voted on and adopted.

In anticipation of approval, applications for grant funding along with directions should be available by January 1, 2026. The completed applications will need to be returned by February 1, 2026 so that they can be reviewed and submitted to Council for action.

More information about the Endowment Fund & how to apply for project funding will be presented through Messiah's various communications & a Temple Talk. - - *Grant Soltwisch, a member of the Endowment Committee*

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### **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.

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### **Senior Men's Ministry**

Messiah's Senior Men's Bible Study has been meeting every Friday morning at 9:00 am in room #202. Please join them on Friday morning.

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## **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.

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## **A Daily Guide for December 2025**

### **December 1 – Begin in Hope**

Light a candle and say aloud: *“Even now, I believe light is coming.”*

Write one hope you carry into this month. Post it where you’ll see it daily.

### **December 2 – Make Space**

Declutter a drawer, shelf, or calendar slot. Let go of what’s no longer needed.

Pray: *“Make room in me for peace, joy, and presence.”*

### **December 3 – Fear Isn’t the End**

Write down one fear that’s been speaking loudly.

Now, below it, write what hope says back.

### **December 4 – Reach Out**

Text or call someone who feels far away. Let them know you’re thinking of them.

### **December 5 – Find the Warmth**

Wrap yourself in a blanket. Sip something hot.

Name three things that make you feel safe and held.

### **December 6 – Light in the Window**

Place a candle or light in your window tonight. Let it be a sign—for your neighbors, for yourself—that love is near.

### **December 7 – Pray While You Walk**

Take a short walk, even in the cold. Let each step be a prayer: “God, walk with me. Walk with us.”

### **December 8 – Feed Another**

Make a meal or snack for someone else. Drop it off, invite them in, or pack a lunch for someone who needs it.

### **December 9 – Choose Beauty**

Do one thing that makes your space or day more beautiful—light a candle, hang a string of lights, or display something meaningful.

### **December 10 – Remember the Lonely**

Write a card or letter to someone who might feel alone this season. Mail it today.

### **December 11 – Mid-Advent Check-In**

What has surprised you this month? What still feels tender?

Give thanks for both.

### **December 12 – Practice Hope**

Hope is a practice, not a feeling. Do something today that leans toward healing or change—even if you don't feel ready.

### **December 13 – Give a Gift, Just Because**

Wrap something simple and leave it for someone—homemade bread, an ornament, a poem, a pack of cocoa.

### **December 14 – Pray for the Children**

Lift up children in your life and community. Pray: *"God of gentleness, protect their joy and grow their dreams."*

### **December 15 – Take One Brave Step**

Do one small thing today that scares you a little but leads toward life: a hard conversation, a new habit, or an honest word.

### **December 16 – Let Go of Perfect**

Cross one thing off your to-do list without doing it. Let peace matter more than productivity today.

### **December 17 – Shelter and Solidarity**

Donate a warm item—socks, gloves, coat—or volunteer at a shelter.

Pray for those seeking safety this winter.

### **December 18 – Give Thanks for Ordinary Goodness**

Thank someone who shows up consistently: the custodian, the grocery clerk, the neighbor who always waves.

### **December 19 – Watch for Wonder**

Look for something today that catches you off guard—a child laughing, snow falling, the sky shifting. Wonder is everywhere.

### **December 20 – Be Someone's Warmth**

Bring warmth to someone else today—through your presence, your words, your help.

Say: *"Even now, love shows up."*

### **December 21 – Longest Night, Deepest Light**

On the solstice, light a candle in the dark and say:

*"The light is coming. I will not give up hope."*

### **December 22 – Listen Generously**

Have a conversation today where you mostly just listen. Make space for someone's story without needing to fix or respond.

### **December 23 – Deliver Joy**

Drop off cookies or treats for someone nearby—a neighbor, teacher, bus driver, or postal worker. Include a simple thank-you note.

### **December 24 – Christmas Eve: Love Breaks In**

Read Luke 2:1–20. Light a candle. Sit in stillness. Say:

*“Even now, Christ is born. Even now, good news lives.”*

### **December 25 – Christmas Day: Joy is Here**

Bundle up and step outside, even for five minutes.

Look around and whisper: “God is with us. Joy to the world.”

### **December 26 – Rest Well**

Give yourself permission to rest today. Breathe deeply. Be gentle with your body. Light a candle and do nothing.

### **December 27 – Remember Who Carried You**

Write down the names of three people or communities that supported you this year. Give thanks—and maybe reach out.

### **December 28 – Pay It Forward**

Buy coffee for a stranger, support a mutual aid fund, or offer a ride. Let your generosity ripple.

### **December 29 – Look Toward the New**

Begin asking: *What do I want to carry into the year ahead?*

Make a list of three values you want to live by in 2026.

### **December 30 – Make a Way**

Read Matthew 2:12 – *“They went home by another way.”*

What new way might God be opening in your life?

### **December 31 – End With Hope**

Light a candle one last time this year. Say:

*“Even now, even still, God is with us. And I will keep hoping.”*

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## **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

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## **Becoming A Mystic**

“A mystic is someone who skips over the intermediaries and goes straight to God; someone who experiences the divine as an intimate encounter, rather than an article of faith. A mystical experience may or may not be connected to established spiritual traditions. Mysticism is not about concepts—it’s about communion with ultimate reality.

When we make a pact with ourselves to show up for reality, just as it is, reality rewards us by revealing its hidden holiness.” from “Ordinary Mysticism” by Mirabai Starr.

In Centering Prayer, we learn to let go of our concepts of what life is about, who God is, who we are, and be still. Silence is God’s language and we attempt to receive what it is that God wishes for us to know.

You can practice centering prayer on your own, but it is greatly enhanced by practicing with others. “For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them.” Matthew 18:20

You are welcome to join us in person here on Tuesday mornings from 11-noon. Other opportunities to meditate with others: Meditate Marquette every Tuesday evening at Peter White Public Library from 6:00 - 7:00 pm. Or online at [www.meditationchapel.org](http://www.meditationchapel.org) via zoom.

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### **OWLs (Older, Wiser Lutherans)**

The OWLs meet on Monday morning at 10:00 am at the Dome. Afterwards they go to Provisions for coffee. They walk at different rates and welcome everyone to join them. If you’re not interested in walking, join us for coffee. If you have any questions, please contact Betsy Little or the church office.

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### **The New Free Store Donations**

The New Free Store is an inter-faith, non-profit group supporting people who express a need for free clothing, linens, hygiene & cleaning supplies. Anyone in need is welcome. Free things are offered as “in God’s economy three is always enough.” There is a collection bin in our narthex at Messiah for The New Free Store. They are currently collecting:

\***December** – *Laundry Soap, Dish Soap, Bar Soap*

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

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### **Worship News**

There will be only one service on the weekend of the 28th - the 8:30 service. No 5:00 or 10:30 service that weekend.

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## Devotions Link

<https://nglsynod.org/prayfaithfully/> is an on-line devotional reading service maintained by the Northern Great Lakes Synod and written by various pastors and laypersons.

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## Messiah Birthdays

Dec 17	David Tripp, Anne Weaver
Dec 18	Evan Busick, Sharon Fluette, David Johnson
Dec 19	Stella Rector
Dec 20	Jackson Boehlke
Dec 21	No birthdays
Dec 22	Carol Steinhaus
Dec 23	No birthdays
Dec 24	Lucy Dellangelo, Holly Sundman
Dec 25	Carol Stevens
Dec 26	Diane Adams
Dec 27	No birthdays
Dec 28	Michael Broadway, Larry Pagel
Dec 29	Abby LaForest, Aliina Maki-Warne, Tim Weir
Dec 30	Carol O'Neill
Dec 31	Jerry Cory, Beth Wendricks

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## In the Hospital

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

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## Your Prayer Requests at Messiah

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 morning 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 or Jen know. We will need to get permission before we include anyone's name in the worship prayers.

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## **In Our Prayers**

*Please remember the following people in your prayers at this time:* Darlene Martin and family upon the passing of her husband John; Linda Ruohoniemi; Charlie Blake; Rick; Jan Brown; Former and current CDC employees; Sam Elder; Ken and Jan Vickstrom; Doug Morton; Jackie Greising; Art 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

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## **Pastor on Call:**

Pastor Andrew is on call December 17-24

Pastor Molly is on vacation December 18-21

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## **Worship Volunteers**

### **Saturday, December 20 – 5:00 pm in atrium – Longest Night Service**

Usher: **Need a volunteer.**

Communion Assistants: Ron Tervo, Barb Salmela, Kathy Godec

Soup Supper following the worship service.

### **Sunday, December 21 -- 8:30 am in sanctuary, on 101.9 FM, Vimeo/Facebook**

Assisting Minister: Brenda Blett

Reader: David Echelbarger

Ushers: Cathy Seblonka and Anne Rydholm

Communion Assistants: Beth Krznarich, Marina Shinkarenko, Mike Coyne, Dave Blomquist

Greeters: Penny Streeter, Sherry Labbe

Nursery: Jamie Dodge

Refreshments: **Need a volunteer.**

### **Sunday, December 21 –10:30 am in sanctuary, on Vimeo/Facebook**

Assisting Minister: Mike Hill

Reader: Marina Shinkarenko  
Ushers: Amy Diedrich, Jill Luoma  
Communion Assistants: Sandy Lindberg, Gayle Mack, Mike and Joan Hill  
Greeters: Ellen Symons, Marina Shinkarenko  
Projection Technician: Lesley Williams

Nursery Jamie Dodge  
Flower Delivery: **Need a volunteer.**

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### **10:30 am Worship Volunteers**

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

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### **Radio Broadcast & Livestream Sponsorship**

We need 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@messiahlutheranmqt.org](mailto:office@messiahlutheranmqt.org). The cost of the Radio Broadcast or Livestream sponsorship is \$110.00 each.

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## **Announcements and Classified Ads**

### **Help Needed**

Louise Anderson needs occasional help with heavy lifting, climbing, and odd jobs; probably not more than ½ hour at a time. She will pay. If you are interested in helping, you can get Louise's contact information from the church office.

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### **Food Pantry-St. Vincent de Paul**

As most are aware, the government shutdown has affected the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program funding. This, in addition to the rising cost of food, has resulted in an increased demand on our pantry in Marquette.

Items most in demand, in our 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*

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### **St. Paul's Creative Aging Lunch and Learn – December 17**

St. Paul's Episcopal Church (201 E Ridge in Marquette) will host a "Creative Aging Lunch and Learn" on Wednesday, December 17 from 12:00 to 1:00 pm. The topic will be "Drivers Licenses: Senior Driving Presentation and How to Know When It Is Time to Stop Driving" presented by Trooper Tom Kinnunen.

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### **Holiday Brass Choir Concert – December 21**

The Holiday Brass Choir Concert will be held on Sunday, December 21 at 4:00 pm at the Marquette Regional History Center (145 W Spring St.) The concert is open to the public and admission is free.

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### **Little Brothers Friends of the Elderly – Holiday Sponsorships**

Share the gift of joy and friendship this holiday season.

As the snow begins to fall and families gather around warm meals, many of our elderly neighbors face the holidays alone. But with your help, we can change that.

At Little Brothers – Friends of the Elderly, we believe no one should feel forgotten, especially during the holidays. With the help of our compassionate volunteers, we deliver more than just food – we deliver, love, laughter, and connection.

Each meal is lovingly prepared, decorated with handmade crafts and cards, topped with a fresh flower, and delivered by a volunteer who brings warmth and companionship to the

doorstep. For those who can join us in person, we offer transportation to our festive meal site at The Marquette Elks Lodge where hugs and heartfelt conversations are always served.

Your sponsorship helps ensure that no Marquette County senior spends the holidays alone. It's not just a meal, it's a moment of joy, a reminder that someone cares.

#### Holiday Sponsorship Opportunities

Option 2: Christmas Elderly Meal \$25 each

Option 3: Christmas Food Box \$40 each

Option 4: Christmas Gifts \$35 each

#### Payment Methods

\*Check payable to LBFE 131 W Washington St. Ste C., Marquette, MI 49855. Memo: MQT Holidays.

\*Credit card online: [lbfemichigan.org](http://lbfemichigan.org) \*DONATE\* Comment/note: MQT Holidays

Questions? Contact Danielle Berg 906 273-2575

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### **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.

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### **Financial Help for Cancer Patients**

If you or someone you know is going through any financial hardships while going through cancer treatment, please do not hesitate to contact Dave Poirier of Cancer Care of Marquette County (CCMC). 906-362-9226 / [poirph@msn.com](mailto:poirph@msn.com) or Barb Salmela.

There are no income guidelines. Assistance can be for travel expenses, insurance co-pay, medical bills & medications related to cancer care. This organization is all volunteer based. Money to support is from fundraising, grants and donations. This organization is a 501c3 group so donations are tax deductible. But I cannot emphasize enough....to CALL if you need help.

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## **Lake Superior Life Care & Hospice**

[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 begins January 8th

Lake Superior Life Care & Hospice, 914 W. Baraga, Marquette

Time: 1:00 - 3:00 pm

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](mailto: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.

Date & Time: Wednesdays, January 14th - February 4th, 10:30–11:30 am

Location: Virtual via Zoom

Cost: 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](mailto:Outreach@LakeSuperiorHospice.org).

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## **Do you have an announcement?**

Send announcements & ads to Kathy Godec ([kathy@messiahlutheranmqt.org](mailto:kathy@messiahlutheranmqt.org)). Send concert or performance information, yard sale announcements, party invitations, requests for babysitters, yard maintenance, rooms for rent and items for sale. E-newsletter deadline is 12:00 pm on Tuesdays.

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## **Messiah Contact Information**

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

Phone: 906-225-1119

Fax: 906-225-5025

Email: [office@messiahlutheranmqt.org](mailto:office@messiahlutheranmqt.org)

Website: <https://www.messiahlutheranmqt.org/>

## **Pastoral Staff**

Senior Pastor - Andrew Plocher

Associate Pastor - Molly Hunter

## **Office Staff**

Parish Administrator - Jennifer Dodge

Administrative Assistant – Kathy Godec

Parish Accountant - Mike Hill

Financial Secretary – Anne Rydholm

## **Music Staff**

Director of Music – Sara Parks

Bell Choir Director - Judy Quirk

Organist/Pianist - Kathy Strazzinski & Jon Banitt

Pianist – Jacob Schmeltzer