

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



January 25, 2026

Reconciling in Christ Sunday

Flowers: To the Glory of God...

* from Sue Brugman

To the Glory of God & In Honor of...

* Messiah being a Reconciling in Christ community from Susy Swanson

Radio: To the Glory of God & In Loving Memory of...

* my mother & father, Elsie & Bill; my brother John & my husband Tim from Terry Keuscher

Livestream: To the Glory of God...

* from our Messiah family

These days, I'm aching for hope. I find myself asking family and friends, "Did anything good happen today?" because we're so used to sharing what's hard and frustrating. I know that many of you are overwhelmed with sorrow due to the political world, global violence, and injustice in our own country on top of just everyday struggles. I also feel the weight of it all and often ask myself, what could we possibly do to change the trajectory of it all? That's when I remember the incarnation.

I follow a faith podcast called Faith Adjacent where one of the hosts around December always talks about how Christmas is not their favorite Christian holiday and how Easter is the superior theological holiday, I guess it's hard to top the miracle of resurrection in their eyes. I'd choose neither. Part of me wishes that we had a holiday for every story of Jesus because the problem with putting the focus on Christmas and Easter is that we skip from the beginning to the end and we forget about how important the middle is. Yes, Christmas is the beginning of incarnation, but it's not what God does with incarnation. We do this in the Apostles' Creed too, when we say, 'I believe in Jesus Christ, the only son of God who was conceived by the holy spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.' No offense to the Apostles' Creed, but where'd everything in the middle go?!? What about when Jesus feeds the 5,000, what about when he eats with tax collectors, what about when he heals on the Sabbath, what about when he brings Lazareth back to life? What about everything that the incarnated God stands for?

The incarnation is what I'm called to remember, because it holds everything in between. It is Jesus born and Jesus crucified, but it is also the hope that meets people in the midst of their everyday lives. The incarnation proclaims through word and deed, I see your hurt, I know your struggles, I carry the weight of this messy and precarious world with you. I am in it, with you. That's the type of God that I need right now. I need a God who I can trust is in it with me. When I lament over the news, God is there. When I'm wondering how to respond to another national disaster, God is there. When I'm crying because my baby won't sleep, God is there. God is in it all because God came to be with us – human, alive, real, flesh.

So, where is the hope? If God can be here with us, the kingdom of God can be here with us. In the kingdom of God occurs everything that happens in the middle of Jesus' life: the feeding, healing, love-of-neighbor hope that transforms a world in darkness into one where God's light is among us. Because a light shines in the darkness and the darkness does not overcome it.

Yours in the incarnated Christ,
Pr. Molly

Annual Meeting - Sunday, February 8

Join us for Messiah's Annual Congregational Meeting on Sunday, February 8th, 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 will meet in the sanctuary after 10:30 am worship and there will be desserts & coffee in the atrium to grab before the meeting starts.

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 with vision for the year ahead!

Messiah Calendar

Monday, January 26

10:00 am OWLs Walk
5:30 pm 11-Step Centering Prayer
5:45 pm Handbell Rehearsal
7:00 pm AA

Tuesday, January 27

11:00 am Staff Meeting
11:00 am Centering Prayer
1:00 pm Knotty Knitters
4:30 pm Sunday School Teacher Meeting
5:30 pm Superior Handbells
6:30 pm Cub Scout Meeting
7:00 pm Male Chorus Rehearsal

Wednesday, January 28

1:30 pm Brookridge Worship
5:00 pm Senior Choir Rehearsal

Thursday, January 29

10:00 am Red Cross Blood Drive
10:30 am Koinonia Bible Study
12:00 pm Grief Group
1:30 pm Centering Prayer

Friday, January 30

9:00 am Senior Men's Bible Study

Saturday, January 31

5:00 pm worship

Sunday, February 1

8:00 am Senior Choir Rehearsal
8:30 am Worship-Traditional
9:30 am 2026 Budget Q&A
10:30 am Worship-Contemporary
11:30 am Annual Meeting & Potluck

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. Molly Hunter is on vacation February 2-10]

On-Call

Pr. Andrew Plocher: February 1-4, 8-11, 15-18, 22-25
Pr. Molly Hunter: February 12-14, 19-21, 26-28

Newsletter Deadline

The deadline for articles to be included in our March newsletter is **Monday, February 16, 2026.**

Messiah's Newsletter

January 25, 2026
Volume 108, Issue 2

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

Community Meal - February 4th

Our next community meal will be on Wednesday, February 4th at 6:00 pm in Magnuson Hall. The meal will be sloppy joes, chips, coleslaw, green beans & cookies. There will also be a vegan option available. Please join us for a warm meal on Wednesday, 2/4 at 6:00 pm. We look forward to it!

Sunday School

On Friday, February 20th there will be a Movie & Pizza night at Messiah. Sunday School students are invited to come at 5:00 pm in their Jammies with their stuffies and blankets to watch a movie, eat pizza and enjoy some time with their peers and teachers. Please sign up outside of the church office on the welcome table so that we know how many students to expect.

Thank you,

Pr. Molly

Hildegarde Johnson Music Scholarship - 2026

Applications will be accepted in February for anyone with interest in applying for the 2026 Hildegarde Johnson Music Scholarship. The applications will be available on the welcome table near the office. Please turn in completed applications to the church office by Sunday, February 22, 2026.

Hildegarde Johnson was a member of Messiah and was passionate about music. Members of the Hildegard Johnson Music Scholarship Team will evaluate the applications and inform recipients in March. Funds from this scholarship can be used for private music lessons, music camp, purchase of an instrument or music supplies, music books, or sheet music. Scholarship funds will be awarded to actively participating Messiah members who are in elementary, middle or high school. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the office.

Everyone's Sweetheart Loves JAM!

Jam makes everyone's Valentine's Day a little sweeter! It's especially delicious between layers of that heart-shaped pound cake you are planning to make for all of your sweethearts (partners, kids, grandkids, friends). The small jars are only \$3—a perfect sample size. And the large jars (\$6) are perfect when you know your favorite flavor! There is a convenient QR code located near the jam section for payment. Or simply use one of the available envelopes to pay. Questions? Contact Rebecca Ulland (rjulland@yahoo.com or 906-236-3722).

Messiah's Birthdays - February 2026

Sunday 1	Kathy Grisham, Steve Mattson
Monday 2	Bill Angeloff
Tuesday 3	Betty Brunton, Laurel Kniskern
Wednesday 4	No birthdays
Thursday 5	No birthdays
Friday 6	No birthdays
Saturday 7	No birthdays
Sunday 8	No birthdays
Monday 9	Everett Davis, Marion DeLarye, Sarah Stevens
Tuesday 10	Jocelyn Basse, Julia Crimmins, Aegis MacIvor-Andersen
Wednesday 11	Ken Bullock
Thursday 12	No birthdays
Friday 13	John Sarkela
Saturday 14	No birthdays
Sunday 15	Annabel Sander
Monday 16	Mary Beth Carstens, Jackie Gilbert
Tuesday 17	Diana Magnuson, Andrew Plocher
Wednesday 18	Betsy Cooper
Thursday 19	No birthdays
Friday 20	Lucas Theys
Saturday 21	No birthdays
Sunday 22	Lando Gummerus, Christine Thomas-Echelbarger
Monday 23	No birthdays
Tuesday 24	No birthdays
Wednesday 25	No birthdays
Thursday 26	Simon Claybaker
Friday 27	Sharon Farrell
Saturday 28	No birthdays

Happy Anniversary!

Happy Anniversary to the following couples in February:

Ken & Linda Bullock	February 6
Les & Debbie Rolig	February 14

New Noontime Grief Group

Thursdays at Noon in Room 202, Began on January 22

Grief is a journey that looks different for each of us—and it's not meant to be walked alone. This program began on Thursday, January 22, and is open to 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: February Gathering

Our next Confirmation gathering will be held on Saturday, February 21, from 9:00 am - 12:00 pm at Bethel Lutheran Church in Ishpeming. We're looking forward to a great morning together!

Thanks for staying engaged and growing in faith. See you in worship—and in Ishpeming on the 21st!

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 - February 25th

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.

Our next worship at Brookridge will be on Wednesday, February 25th at 1:30 pm. Please join us for this worship service if you are able.

UP Wild January Events

Friday, February 5th from 6:00 - 8:00 pm: Crafting in Community - Making Valentines for Room at the Inn. Bring a project, share a project, DIY makers space. Candles, twinkle lights & mellow music for a calming atmosphere. St Paul's Church at 201 E. Ridge. St. in Marquette.

Thursday, February 19th from 12:00 - 1:00 pm: Coffee in Community - Join us at Provisions Cafe, 401 S. Lakeshore Blvd in Marquette for a cup of coffee and some conversation.

Sunday, February 3:30pm: Wild Church Service - Join us for this service at Marquette Commons, 112 S 3rd St. in Marquette.

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. We have a Messiah friend who has purchased some used copies of this book and we have them in the office if you would like one, they are free.

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

Lectionary Readings - February 2026

February 1

First Reading
Gospel

4th Sunday after Epiphany

Micah 6:1-8
Matthew 5:1-12

February 8

First Reading
Gospel

5th Sunday after Epiphany

Isaiah 58:1-9a [9b-12]
Matthew 5:13-20

February 15

First Reading
Gospel

Transfiguration of Our Lord

Exodus 24:12-18
Matthew 17:1-9

February 22

First Reading
Gospel

First Sunday in Lent

Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7
Matthew 4:1-11

Quilting

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

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.

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!

Baby Care Kit Collection

Messiah's Rachel Circle will be collecting items in February for the Baby Care Kits that we assemble for Lutheran World Relief. The kits contain the following items in 12-24 month sizes:

- * PJs - long or short sleeves, without feet
- * Hoodies, jacket or sweatshirt with hood or include a baby cap
- * Pairs of socks

The above items are those most needed; we are also accepting:

- * Lightweight cotton t-shirts (no onsies)
- * Hand towels, dark colors
- * Ivory soap, bath size (8-9 oz), in original wrapping
- * Receiving blankets (could be crocheted or knitted with lightweight yarn up to 52" square)
- * Diaper pins or large safety pins

Monetary donations are welcomed as well & may be dropped off or mailed to the church office. Rachel Circle would like to thank you in advance for your help and your contributions. The collection bin is in the narthex.

Passages

In Celebration of:

* Kim & Barb Salmela's newest grandchild, Leon Shuikay Salmela Tam, born on January 5th. At birth he weighed 8 pounds, 8 ounces and was 21 inches long. Congratulations to all of you!

In Sympathy to:

* Jan Vickstrom & Lynda Trafton & Renee Messana upon the passing of Jan's husband and Lynda & Renee's father, Ken Vickstrom who passed away on Friday, January 9th. His visitation & funeral were held at Messiah on Friday, January 16th.

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.

Join us for Ash Wednesday Worship

Wednesday, February 18, 12:00 pm & 7:00 pm in the sanctuary

Come as you are. Bring your questions, your burdens, your hopes. Bring your whole self. There is a seat for you here. This Lent, let's listen for the good news together.

You Are Invited: Ash Wednesday & the Journey Through Lent

This Lent at Messiah, we begin with a simple yet profound truth: all are invited.

In a world that often draws lines and builds walls, the gospel does the opposite. It pulls up another chair, opens the door wider, and reminds us—again and again—that there is a place for every one of us at God's table.

On Ash Wednesday, we'll gather to mark the beginning of this holy season. With ashes on our foreheads and grace in our hearts, we'll remember who we are and whose we are: beloved, dust-born, and held by God. This is not a journey of shame or scarcity, but of invitation—into deeper connection, community, and love.

This year's theme, "Tell Me Something Good," (from A Sanctified Art) invites us to ground ourselves in the good news of the gospel. And the good news is this: no matter who you are, no matter where you've been, you are loved. You are welcomed. You are enough.



Lifelong Faith Formation

Giving thanks for the opportunity to come together for listening and learning, Lifelong Faith Formation has been working to Equip the Saints in the Northern Great Lakes Synod and beyond for six years.

Enjoy the diversity of opportunities to learn with others as we grow in faith and respond to God's daily call.

Spring classes include:

- Faith in a Digital Age: The Blessings and Burdens of AI
- Neighbors Across Faiths: Building Connections
- Reconciling our Faith with our Civic Life Responsibilities
- Troubling the Waters for Healing the Church
- Wondrous Encounters: Scripture for Lent

Go to nglsynod.org to register for these sessions

All classes will be held via Zoom

Contact Sister Noreen Stevens, if you have any questions about Lifelong Faith Formation: 651.815.1145 or nstevens@nglsynod.org

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

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Fortune Lake News for February

Made in God's Image Anti-racism Retreat - February 27-March 1

All are invited to attend our Made in God's Image Anti-racism Retreat at Fortune Lake Lutheran Camp! The retreat will take place at Fortune Lake on February 27 - March 1. There are a variety of housing options available.

This retreat is an opportunity to engage in intentional conversation around anti-racism. Our program will approach this complex topic through Bible Studies that will ground our work in Scripture, sessions pertaining to our own biases and how we exist within the structure of systemic racism, opportunities to listen to the experiences of others, and resources and discussion about what anti-racism work looks like in our own settings. We will also employ a small group cohort model throughout the weekend to encourage participants to process what they are learning.

Our theme, "Made in God's Image" intends to center the inherent belovedness of each person, not in spite of their intersecting identities, but in celebration of them.

This retreat is intended for all people, no matter their racial or ethnic identity, though Fortune Lake recognizes that white people most often have more work to do when it comes to walking alongside their siblings of color. Our hope is that all people will come away from this retreat feeling like they have a better understanding of their own biases.

For more information or to register for this retreat, go to:

www.fortunelake.org

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.

February Laundry Soap, Dish Soap, Bar Soap

March Shampoo (male/female), Feminine pads & tampons

Pr. Andrew's Substack

I've started sharing my writing on Substack, including reflections on Scripture, poems, blessings, and occasional longer-form pieces, along with written versions of some sermons. It's a way for me to share work that doesn't always fit neatly into Sunday morning, and to make it available to read on your own time.

If you'd like to follow along, you're welcome to do so. Consider it an optional extension of our shared life of faith during the week. You can find my Substack here: <https://pastorplocher.substack.com/>

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

Centering Prayer

"When we no longer know what to do,

We have come to our real work

And when we no longer know which way to go,

We have begun our real journey." --- **By Wendell Berry**

Wendell Berry is one of my go-to inspirational writers, along with Maya Angelou, Thich Nhat Hanh, Thomas Merton, Mary Oliver, Joan Chittister and Thomas Keating. These wonderful authors take me where I want to go before I begin to sit in silence.

2026 came in cold and hard. We had a terribly terrific winter storm where neighbors were without power, some for days. The waves ran high over the black rocks while, inland from the lake, many trees came down from the force of the wind, ice and snow. We were in the dark, quiet and alone for a period of time. And maybe that was a good thing, because we had just found out that the United States went into the capital of Venezuela to capture the President and his wife. It was a lot to take in.

This is when I am grateful for Centering Prayer that teaches me to sit, breathe, and let everything go, just for now. Give it space. The practice is not easy for me, especially when I sit by myself. Sometimes I only last 5 minutes. Yet, those 5 minutes help me to breathe through the day. To be present without fear or anxiety. Tomorrow I will sit again. Most days I sit for 20 minutes with a morning zoom group. On Mondays, I sit at Messiah in room 202 at 5:30 pm. I would love for you to join me.

--- Laura Petrie

Nancy Hamlin leads Centering Prayer on Tuesdays @ 11:00 am

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 February

February 1	2026 Budge Q&A between services in Magnuson Hall
February 4	Community Meal at 6:00 pm - main dish is sloppy joes
February 5	Grief Group at 12:00 pm
February 5	Building & Grounds Meeting at 5:00 pm
February 8	Annual Meeting following 10:30 worship in the sanctuary
February 9	Book Study at 12:00 pm & 7:00 pm
February 12	Grief Group at 12:00 pm; also on 2/19 & 2/26
February 18	Ash Wednesday

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.

Rachel Circle Thanks YOU!

Rachel Circle would like to thank everyone for their generous donations to the Northern Lights Child Advocacy Center in December. They were SO grateful to receive the fuel cards, blankets and snacks!

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!

Community Meal Cook Team

We are in need of one more cook team to make our community meal program a success. Have you ever considered doing this? Do you have questions regarding our community meals? If so, please do not hesitate to inquire in the office. You can cook with a friend or two or you and your spouse/partner could cook... the options are endless. Please consider participating in this ministry!

In Our Prayers

Please remember the following people in your prayers at this time: Those who seek help from our financial assistance program; Karen Sundeen; Jan Vickstrom and family upon the passing of her husband, Ken; Linda Ruohoniemi; Charlie Blake; Rick; Jan Brown; Sam Elder; Doug Morton; Jackie Greising; Al Ortlieb; 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 February 2026

February 1 – Begin with Truth

February invites honesty. Ask yourself: What is true about my life right now? Offer that truth to God without editing or fixing.

Pray: *God of truth, help me be honest with myself and with you. Hold what is real in me with mercy. Amen.*

February 2 – Ground Yourself

Place your feet flat on the floor. Notice your breath.

Say: *"I am here. God is with me."*

February 3 – Learn a Story

Read or listen to the story of a Black leader, artist, or elder.

Give thanks for their courage and the legacy they leave.

February 4 – Remember the Unnamed

Say a prayer for those whose contributions were never recorded, whose labor was taken, whose stories were silenced. Justice begins with remembering.

February 5 – Act with Intention

Support Black-owned work today—buy a book, share art, donate, amplify a voice.

Small acts build shared good.

February 6 – Rest Is Sacred

Honor the wisdom of rest, especially in a culture that glorifies exhaustion.

Take rest seriously today.

February 7 – Speak Life

Offer words that affirm dignity—to yourself or to someone else.

Let your language carry care.

February 8 – Watch for Courage

Notice acts of quiet courage around you. Name them.

Courage often looks ordinary.

February 9 – Listen Before Responding

In conversation today, practice listening without planning your reply.

Let understanding come first.

February 10 – Body Awareness

Notice how your body feels today—tired, strong, tense, calm.

Give thanks for how it carries you.

February 11 – Hope in Community

Reflect on a time you were supported by others. Hope grows when it's shared.

Pray: *God of connection, remind me that I am not meant to do this alone.*

Help me receive help as freely as I offer it. Amen.

February 12 – Name What Needs Healing

Write down one thing—in yourself or the world—that needs healing.

Hold it in prayer, not urgency.

February 13 – Love with Action

Do one thing today that puts love into motion: show up, speak out, give, or serve.

February 14 – Love Beyond Romance

Today, widen the meaning of love.

Honor friendship, solidarity, care, and commitment to the common good.

February 15 – Prepare Your Heart

Lent is near. Ask: *What am I carrying that feels heavy?*

You don't have to drop it yet—just notice it.

February 16 – Remember the Long Arc

Reflect on this truth: justice and transformation take time.

Ask God for patience and perseverance.

February 17 – The Day Before

On the eve of Ash Wednesday, slow down.

Pray: *God, help me enter this season with honesty and courage.*

February 18 – Ash Wednesday

Hear the words: *"You are dust, and to dust you shall return."*

This is not shame—it's truth and tenderness.

Let the ashes remind you: you are fragile, finite, and deeply loved.

Pray: *God of dust and breath, I remember that I am fragile and finite. Hold me in my limits and meet me with grace. Amen.*

February 19 – Sit with the Ashes

Resist the urge to rush past yesterday.

What did the ashes awaken in you—grief, clarity, resolve, relief?

February 20 – Choose One Practice

Lent isn't about doing everything.

Choose one simple practice—letting go, showing up, telling the truth.

February 21 – Make Space

Clear physical or emotional space today.

Say: *"I am making room for what matters."*

February 22 – First Sunday of Lent

Lent begins not with answers, but with trust.

Reflect: *What does it mean to walk with God through uncertainty?*

Pray: *God of the wilderness, walk with me when the path is unclear. Give me courage to keep going, one step at a time. Amen.*

February 23 – Stay with the Question

Don't resolve everything today.

Let one meaningful question accompany you through the week.

February 24 – Honest Prayer

Pray without polish.

God can hold your frustration, doubt, and hope all at once.

February 25 – Attend to Justice

Lent is personal and communal.

Notice one place where your life connects to others' suffering—and pray for wisdom to respond.

February 26 – Gentle Discipline

Choose one small act of faithfulness today.

Consistency matters more than intensity.

February 27 – Carry One Another

Check in on someone who might be struggling.

Say: *"You don't have to carry this alone."*

February 28 – End with Hope

Look back over the month. Despite the weight, where did you glimpse hope?

Thank God for that light—and trust it will grow.

Pray: *God of hope, thank you for every small sign of light this month. Help me trust that you are still at work, even now. Amen.*

Lake Superior Life Care & Hospice

Drop-in Grief Support: Marquette – February 25 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.

Caregiver Support Groups Marquette – February 11 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: February 18 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.

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.

(continued on page 21)

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 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

Dream Big: Apply for a 2026 Endowment Grant

Application window: January 1 – February 15, 2026

Have a bold idea to grow Messiah's mission? The Robert Malette Mission Endowment is launching its first-ever grant cycle—supporting creative, impactful projects in our congregation, community, synod, and the wider ELCA.

Grants of up to \$10,000 are available, depending on project scope and category.

Applications open January 1 and are due in hard copy to the church office by February 15. Materials will be available on messiahlutheranmqt.org and at the Welcome Table.

This is an exciting moment in Messiah's life. Through this endowment—and through your ideas, hopes, and proposals—we can extend our ministry in bold and meaningful ways.

Questions? Reach out to the church office or any member of the Endowment Committee (Judy Quirk, Ann Johnson, Maddie Dykema, Gail Edgar, Grant Soltwisch).

A Note About Maloos

Many of you knew Maloos, our unofficial church dog, who spent a lot of time in the office over the years. I wanted to share that on December 19, after nearly fifteen years of life and more than twelve years with our family, Maloos died.

Over the past year, she had been living with canine dementia and declining senses. While she was deeply loved and well cared for, the last month made it clear her world was becoming confusing and exhausting. Letting her go was an act of love, and also a real loss for us.

Maloos came to us in 2013 through a humane society. Before that, she had been a street dog in Tehran, eventually finding her way into a home and a community that became hers. Over the years, she offered quiet (and not so quiet) companionship to many of you who stopped by the office or sat down for a conversation.

Thank you for the kindness you showed her, the treats, the gentle pats, and the way you welcomed her as part of the fabric of church life. We're grateful for the years we shared with her, and for the small ways she helped make this place feel more like home.

— Pr. Andrew (and Anna and Theo)

February 2026 Worship Volunteers

Sunday, February 1 - 8:30 am

Assisting Minister 1 Dave Blomquist
 Reader 1 Louise Reichert
 Ushers 2 Bruce Robertson, Sam Elder
 Communion Assts. 3
 Greeters 2 Al and Gail Edgar

Sunday, February 1 - 10:30 am

Assisting Minister 1 Jeanne Groos
 Reader 1
 Ushers 2 Amy Diedrich,
 Communion Assts. 3
 Greeters 2
 Projection Technician 1

Saturday, February 7 - 5:00 pm

Assisting Minister 1 Chris Kotila
 Communion Asst 1 Barb Salmela

Sunday, February 8 - 8:30 am

Assisting Minister 1 Chris Harkness
 Reader 1 Fred Maynard
 Ushers 2 Cathy Seblonka,
 Communion Assts 4
 Greeters 2

Sunday, February 8 - 10:30 am

Assisting Minister 1
 Reader 1 Jeanne Groos
 Ushers 2 Fred and Jeanne Groos
 Communion Assts. 4 Gayle Van Osdol, Gayle Mack,
 Greeters 2 William Kaurala, Ellen Symons
 Projection Technician 1

Saturday, February 14 - 5:00 pm

Assisting Minister 1 Kathy Godec
 Communion Asst 1

Sunday, February 15 - 8:30 am

Assisting Minister 1 Brenda Blett
 Reader 1 Mary Lou Blomquist
 Ushers 2 Cathy Seblonka,
 Communion Assts. 3 Dave Blomquist,
 Greeters 2 Penny Streeter, Sherry Labbe

Sunday, February 15 - 10:30 am

Assisting Minister 1
 Reader 1
 Ushers 2 Jill Luoma, Amy Diedrich
 Communion Assts. 3
 Greeters 2 William Kaurala, Ellen Symons
 Projection Technician 1

Saturday, February 21 - 5:00 pm

Assisting Minister 1 Carol Bell
 Communion Asst 1

Sunday, February 22 - 8:30 am

Assisting Minister 1
 Reader 1 Brenda Blett
 Ushers 2 Joe and Chris Harkness
 Communion Assts 4
 Greeters 2

Sunday, February 22 - 10:30 am

Assisting Minister 1
 Reader 1
 Ushers 2
 Communion Assts. 4
 Greeters 2
 Projection Technician 1

Saturday, February 28 - 5:00 pm

Assisting Minister 1 Chris Kotila
 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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