

THE *Celebration!* CONNECTION!!

JANUARY
2026



Manger on the Mantel
December 21st, 2025

In this issue...

1. From the Pastor
2. Reminders/Notices
3. Upcoming Events
4. Groups/Activities
5. Committed Groups
6. Birthdays and Anniversaries
7. Daily Devotionals
8. Monthly Calendar
9. Sunday Helpers
10. Prayers for the Community
11. Kids Corner

From the Pastor...

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

There was once a man who got up every morning, and the first thing he did was read the obituary column to find out who had died. Well, on this particular morning, he read that column, and the newspaper by mistake had put his name in the column and reported that he was dead.

He was not only shaken, he was pretty irritated. He called the editor of the newspaper and gave him "what for." Finally, the editor said, "I'll tell you what we'll do. In the morning, we'll put your name in the birth column and give you a brand-new beginning."

There really is something exciting about new beginnings. It's exciting to start a new year because you know it is a new beginning. There's something exciting about starting a new job because you know it is a new beginning. There's something exciting about moving into a new home because you know it could be a new beginning. There's something exciting about a new day because you know with it comes a new beginning.

New beginnings require three simple, but different, “looks.” First of all, it requires a look back to see where you've been; and then a look around to see where you are; then, finally, a look ahead to see where you need to go.

Now you can't really get to where you need to go until you know where you are. But you really cannot know where you are until you know where you've been.

Mickey Mantel was going to Yogi Berra's apartment one afternoon and he got lost. He stopped at a pay phone and called Yogi and said, "Yogi, I'm trying to find your apartment, where is it?" Yogi said, "Where are you now?" He said, "I'm at the corner of 5th and Main." Yogi said, "Well, just keep coming in this direction," and hung up.

Your memory is a very powerful tool. Your memory is capable of containing 100 bits of information, or 500 times the information contained in a complete set of encyclopedias (...for those of you who actually *remember* what an Encyclopedia is!) Your brain has 100 billion neurons, and 100 trillion connections for those memories, 46 ounces of memories in all, and that's if you're average.

There is a reason why God has given us this magnificent tool called a memory. This way we can remember what God has done yesterday, we can trust in what God is doing today, and what God will do tomorrow.

Always remember that God is always present in your life; you just may not always be aware of it. Like Jesus said in Matthew 28:20b, *Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.*

It would be a great exercise for all of us to take the time to sit down and just reflect on the past, and to see God's presence in our life, and God's protection of our life; and see the reminders that come to us on a daily basis that the God that has worked in our past is the God that continues to work in our present, and will work in our future.

Think about a man by the name of Ed. Almost every Friday evening, without fail, when the sun was going down, Ed would go to the beach to his favorite pier,² carrying a bucket of shrimp.

He would walk out to the end of the pier as the sun was going down, and stand there with his bucket of shrimp, and he would begin to throw the shrimp in the water. Before long dozens of sea gulls would surround him; their wings fluttering and flapping wildly. Ed would stand there tossing out shrimp to those hungry birds. If you were standing next to him you would hear him say, with a smile under his breath, "Thank you, thank you." After the bucket was empty Ed would just stand there, deep in thought, watching the sun going down behind the horizon.

You might think Ed was a weirdo, a few bricks short of a load, a sandwich short of a picnic, that his elevator never went to the top floor, feeding all those sea gulls with a bucket of shrimp.

But what you probably would not have known is that this man's name was Eddie Rickenbacker. Now Eddie Rickenbacker (born and raised in Columbus, Ohio, btw) was a Medal of Honor recipient and the greatest flying ace on the allies side during World War I. In 1942, he was asked by the Secretary of War to be a non-military observer flying across the Pacific on various missions. In October of 1942, the B-17D he was flying in went down.

Miraculously, all the men survived; crawled out of their plane and climbed into a life raft.

Captain Rickenbacker and his crew floated for 24 days on the rough waters of the Pacific.

They fought the sun, they fought sharks, and most of all they fought hunger. On the eighth day all of their food ran out; all their water was gone; they were hundreds of miles from land, and no one knew where they were. They needed a miracle.

That afternoon they had a simple devotional service, and prayed for a miracle. Then they tried then to go to sleep. Eddie leaned back and pulled his military cap over his nose. All of a sudden he felt something land on the top of his cap.

It was a sea gull! Captain Rickenbacker would later describe how he sat perfectly still until the flash of his hand and a squawk of the gull, he managed to grab it and wring its neck. He tore the feathers off, and he and his crew made a meal of that sea gull. He then used the intestines for bait. With those intestines they caught fish which gave them food and more bait, and the cycle began. With that simple survival technique they were able to survive until they were found and rescued.

Eddie Rickenbacker lived many years after that ordeal, but he never forgot the sacrifice of that first sea gull. He never forgot how God provided that bird in his greatest hour of need, and he never stopped saying, "Thank you." That's why almost every Friday night he would walk out to the end of that pier with a bucket full of shrimp and a heart full of gratitude.


We ought to do the same thing that Captain Rickenbacker did. In 2026, look back and see God's presence in your life, and rejoice in God's protection of your life. Know that the God who worked yesterday, is surely working today, and will work tomorrow for you, your family, and this congregation.

See you in church!

Pastor Fogle



REMINDERS, NOTICES, AND COMMENTS!!




*A new year at
church means
new chances to
laugh, learn,
and love
together.*




Friends + Worship = Fun!



Bring someone
special on
January 18th



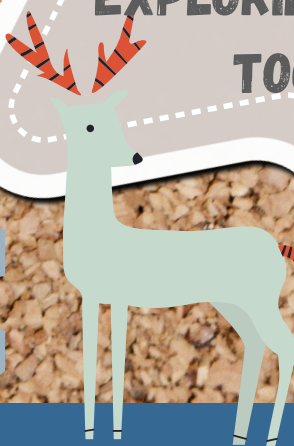
Please join us for our
Annual Meeting on
January 25th,
immediately after
worship



OFFICE
CLOSED
JANUARY 1ST
AND 2ND



**ADULT BIBLE STUDY
WILL RESUME ON
JANUARY 7TH. JOIN US
AS WE CONTINUE
EXPLORING GOD'S WORD
TOGETHER!**



CHRISTMAS DÉCOR TAKEDOWN

After Service on January 4th

As we joyfully reflect on the Christmas season, it's time to come together once more to help take down our Christmas decorations. Join us on Sunday, January 4th after service, as we work together to carefully pack away the trees, lights, and decorations that made our church feel so special during the holidays.

This is a wonderful opportunity for fellowship and teamwork, and many hands make light work! Whether you can stay for a few minutes or the whole time, your help will be greatly appreciated.

Thank you to everyone who helped decorate and to all who will assist with the takedown as we prepare our space for the season ahead.

January
Sunday School Theme:
The Lost Sheep



We are excited to announce that Sunday School returns on **January 11th**! Our children will begin a new journey through the Book of Luke, starting with the comforting story of The Lost Sheep. This lesson helps children understand God's deep love and care for each person.

Crafty Connections

Join us for Crafty Connections-a time of fellowship and creativity! We meet on the 2nd Monday of the month **January 12th at 7pm** and again Wednesday, **January 28th at 10:00am**. Bring along whatever craft project you're currently working on-we'd love to see your creations, share ideas, and enjoy one another's company.

WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY

Now Let Us Pray

Praying with our bodies

Underneath the city of Rome, there are miles of catacombs. Early Christians were buried and sometimes held funeral banquets here. The tomb of Priscilla, a wealthy woman of faith, is adorned with frescoes depicting both her life and stories from the Bible. The central image is of her risen self-body and soul-with her arms raised in prayer. Along the wall, three men in the fiery furnace (See Daniel 3) are depicted, posing in the same way with arms raised in prayer. This same posture of prayer is embodied by many presiding ministers at the Eucharistic table.

As Christians, we look to scripture as the central story of our faith. We can also look to Scripture as a guide for praying—even if we carry some baggage or heavy questions around prayer. For example: Am I doing it “right?” Do I pray enough? Is prayer always with words? We’ll explore such questions, as well as ways that the Bible can help us to pray with our bodies and with the body of Earth.



The Women's Bible Study group will meet on **Wednesday, January 21st at 1:00 pm**. All women are invited to attend even if you just want to listen to the conversation.

.....
* * * * *
* Sixteen containers of
* cookies were packed and
* delivered to cookie-
* deprived members of the
* congregation.
* * * * *

GENERAL MEETING

As part of our commitment to engage in ministry and action, and promote healing and wholeness in the church, the society and the world, the Women of the ELCA at Celebration is supporting the following ministries: Days for Girls, Samaritas, and the Food Bank with monetary donations.

Officers were elected for the coming year(s): Laureen Preston was reelected president and Linda Bierbaum was elected secretary each for a two-year term Georgia Hartsell (vice-president) and Charlene Tennant (treasurer) will continue to serve this coming year.

The W/ELCA planning committee meets the second Monday of each month at 10:00 am. Anyone is welcome to attend. We would love to hear your ideas and opinions.

We are again collecting empty pill bottles for Matthew 25 Ministries. Only prescription pill bottles are needed. They need to be cleaned out and the label removed. (Goo Gone might help with that) Place your donations in the big pill bottle container under the mailboxes.




HELP FEED THE HUNGRY

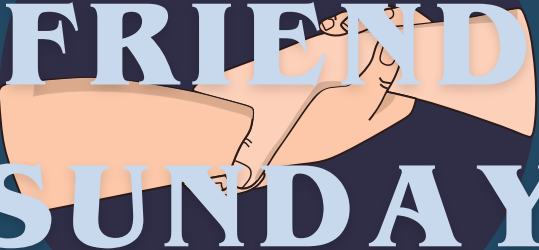


As part of our ongoing commitment to caring for neighbors in need, we continue to collect non-perishable food for the First United Methodist Food Pantry. We are asking everyone to bring in at least one non-perishable food item to donate. Think of items like canned vegetables and fruit, pasta, rice, peanut butter, cereal, soups, canned proteins like tuna and chicken, and other shelf-stable goods. Every can, box, and jar add up to a powerful expression of love and compassion.

You can drop off your donations in the designated bins across from the office anytime. **January 11th** is the next Bring One Sunday. Let's come together as a congregation to bless others with the gift of food. Your small act of generosity can make a big difference in someone's life. If you would like to make a monetary donation, please make your checks out to "First United Methodist food pantry." If you have questions, contact Greg or Gloria Tapper 734-427-1142.



BRING A FRIEND SUNDAY



ON SUNDAY, JANUARY 18TH, WE INVITE YOU TO BRING A FRIEND, COWORKER, NEIGHBOR—ANYONE—TO CHURCH WITH YOU. IT'S A SIMPLE WAY TO SHARE GOD'S LOVE AND THE JOY OF OUR CHURCH FAMILY. SOMETIMES, ALL IT TAKES IS AN INVITATION. LET'S OPEN OUR HEARTS AND OUR DOORS—SOMEONE MAY BE WAITING TO BE ASKED.



Live Streaming **WORSHIP SERVICES**

You can sponsor a Sunday livestream service in memory of a loved one, in celebration of a special occasion, or simply to support the ministry, for only \$15. Your sponsorship helps us reach shut-ins, those who are ill, traveling, or anyone who cannot attend in person. Each sponsorship will be acknowledged in the bulletin and the newsletters. Sign up on the church Communication Board or contact the office.

January 4th	Steve and Andrea Kolhoff
January 11th	Marge Ross
January 18th	The Lair Family
January 25th	The Hardy Family

Altar Flowers

Would you like to sponsor a vase on the altar?

For \$25, you can dedicate a vase in memory of a loved one, in celebration of a special occasion, or simply to honor someone meaningful in your life. Your sponsorship helps beautify our worship space and adds a personal touch to our services. Sign up on the Communication Board or call the office.

January 4th : Vase 1 - Tim and Debbie Hoepner- Ciro Truskowski's Birthday

Vase 2 - Available for Sponsorship

January 11th : Vase 1 - The Evancho Family- Ashley's Birthday

Vase 2 - Available for Sponsorship

January 18th : Vase 1 - Carole Hakala -In memory of Vi Hakala

Vase 2 - Ed Klosterhaus -In memory of Ruth

January 25th : Vase 1 - The Reid Family -In memory of Bob Reid

Vase 2 - Available for Sponsorship

January Anniversaries!

18th Judy and Gary Naumoff

25th Nathan and Emily (Jung) Hoste



THIS MONTH'S ROTATING MEMBER PRAYERS:

January 4th

Kim and Ron Shollack

Gary and Irene Shreeve

Ray and Barbara Smith

Devonna and Craig Essenmacher

January 11th

Jessica and Charlie Snowden/Payne

Cindy and Phil Sweier

Cliff and Maureen Switzer

Lee and Laura Szczembara

January 18th

Lily Szczembara

Luke Szczembara

Greg and Gloria Tapper

Terry and Glenda Tarr

January 25

Janice and Michael Taylor

Charlene Tennant

Teri Thomas

Eric and Joan Thompson

January Birthdays!

3rd **Ciro Troncoso**

6th **Steve Hartsell**

9th **Ashley Evancho**

11th **Logan Svihra**

11th **Levi Svihra**

12th **Sandy Reidenbaugh**

12th **Charlene Tennant**

13th **Emily Yandura**

14th **Barbara Smith**

16th **Eric Thompson**

24th **Sandy Albert**

25th **Susan Hardy**

28th **Laura Szczembara**

NEW MEMBERS

Donna Polzin

Joseph Polzin



January Daily Devotionals

Thursday, January 1st

Name of Jesus
Numbers 6:22-27
Psalm 8
Galatians 4:4-7 or Philippians 2:5-11
Luke 2:15-21

Friday, January 2nd

Jan 2 Psalm 72
Genesis 12:1-7
Hebrews 11:1-12

Saturday, January 3rd

Psalm 72
Genesis 28:10-22
Hebrews 11:13-22

Sunday, January 4th

Psalm 72
Exodus 3:1-5
Hebrews 11:23-31

Monday, January 5th

Psalm 72
Joshuah 1:1-9
Hebrews 11:32—12:2

Tuesday, January 6th

Epiphany of Our Lord
Isaiah 60:1-6
Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14
Ephesians 3:1-12
Matthew 2:1-12

Wednesday, January 7th

Psalm 72
1 Kings 10:1-13
Ephesians 3:14-21

Thursday, January 8th

Psalm 72
1 Kings 10:14-25
Ephesians 4:7, 11-16

Friday, January 9th

Psalm 72
Micah 5:2-9
Luke 13:31-35

Saturday, January 10th

Psalm 29
1 Samuel 3:1-9
Acts 9:1-9

Sunday, January 11th

Baptism of Our Lord
Psalm 29
1 Samuel 3:10—4:1a
Acts 9:10-19a

Monday, January 12th

Psalm 29
1 Samuel 7:3-17
Acts 9:19b-31

Tuesday, January 13th

Isaiah 42:1-9
Psalm 29
Acts 10:34-43
Matthew 3:13-17

Wednesday, January 14th

Psalm 89:5-37
Genesis 35:1-15
Acts 10:44-48

Thursday, January 15th

Psalm 89:5-37
Jeremiah 1:4-10
Acts 8:4-13

Friday, January 16th

Psalm 89:5-37
Isaiah 51:1-16
Matthew 12:15-21

Saturday, January 17th

Psalm 40:1-11
Isaiah 22:15-25
Galatians 1:6-12

Sunday, January 18th

Second Sunday after Epiphany
Psalm 40:1-11
Genesis 27:30-38
Acts 1:1-5

Monday, January 19th

Psalm 40:1-11
1 Kings 19:19-21
Luke 5:1-11

Tuesday, January 20th

Isaiah 49:1-7
Psalm 40:1-11
1 Corinthians 1:1-9
John 1:29-42

Wednesday, January 21st

Psalm 40:6-17
Exodus 12:1-13, 21-28
Acts 8:26-40

Thursday, January 22nd

Psalm 40:6-17
Isaiah 53:1-12
Hebrews 10:1-4

Friday, January 23rd

Psalm 40:6-17
Isaiah 48:12-21
Matthew 9:14-17

Saturday, January 24th

Psalm 27:1-6
1 Samuel 1:1-20
Galatians 1:11-24

Sunday, January 25th

Third Sunday after Epiphany
Psalm 27:1-6
1 Samuel 9:27—10:8
Galatians 2:1-10

Monday, January 25th

Psalm 27:1-6
1 Samuel 15:34—16:13
Luke 5:27-32

Tuesday, January 26th

Isaiah 9:1-4
Psalm 27:1, 4-9
1 Corinthians 1:10-18
Matthew 4:12-23

Wednesday, January 27th

Psalm 27:7-14
Judges 6:11-24
Ephesians 5:6-14

Thursday, January 28th

Psalm 27:7-14
Judges 7:12-22
Philippians 2:12-18

Friday, January 29th

Psalm 27:7-14
Genesis 49:1-2, 8-13, 21-26
Luke 1:67-79

Saturday, January 30th

Psalm 15
Deuteronomy 16:18-20
1 Peter 3:8-12

Sunday, January 31st

Fourth Sunday after Epiphany
Psalm 15
Deuteronomy 24:17—25:4
1 Timothy 5:17-24

JANUARY 2026

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
4 CHRISTMAS DECOR TAKEDOWN AFTER SERVICE 10AM WORSHIP 11:10AM KIDS ZONE 11:15AM FELLOWSHIP HOUR	5 5:00PM AA MEETING 5:30PM MARTIAL ARTS	6 6:45PM SCOUTS	7 6:45PM CUB SCOUTS 7:00PM ADULT BIBLE STUDY (ZOOM)	1 OFFICE CLOSED	2 OFFICE CLOSED	3 8:30AM MEN'S MINISTRY 11:00AM RENTAL-KING FAMILY
11 BRING ONE SUNDAY 10AM WORSHIP 11:10AM KIDS ZONE 11:15AM FELLOWSHIP HOUR	12 10:00AM W/ELCA MEETING 5:00PM AA MEETING 5:30PM MARTIAL ARTS 7:00PM CRAFTY CONNECTION 7:00PM PROPERTY MEETING	13 4:00PM COUNCIL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 6:45PM SCOUTS	14 6:45PM CUB SCOUTS 7:00PM ADULT BIBLE STUDY (ZOOM)	15 9:30AM QUILTERS 6:00PM BELL CHIOR 7:00PM VOCAL CHIOR	16	17 8:30AM MEN'S MINISTRY 9:00AM EAGLE SCOUT BUILD
18 BRING A FRIEND 10AM WORSHIP 11:10AM KIDS ZONE 11:15AM FELLOWSHIP HOUR	19 5:00PM AA MEETING 5:30PM MARTIAL ARTS	20 6:30PM COUNCIL 6:45PM SCOUTS	21 1:00PM WOMANS BIBLE 6:45PM CUB SCOUTS 7:00PM ADULT BIBLE STUDY (ZOOM)	22 9:30AM QUILTERS 6:00PM BELL CHIOR 7:00PM VOCAL CHIOR	23	24 4:00PM HSOJ
25 ANNUAL MEETING (AFTER WORSHIP) 10AM WORSHIP 11:10AM KIDS ZONE 11:15AM FELLOWSHIP HOUR	25 5:00PM AA MEETING 5:30PM MARTIAL ARTS 7:00PM T6695 COMMITTEE MEETING	27 6:45PM SCOUTS	28 10:00AM CRAFTY CONNECTIONS 6:45PM CUB SCOUTS 7:00PM ADULT BIBLE STUDY (ZOOM)	29 9:30AM QUILTERS 6:00PM BELL CHIOR 7:00PM VOCAL CHIOR	30	31 8:30AM MEN'S MINISTRY

JANUARY SUNDAY SERVANTS

	January 4th	January 11th	January 18th	January 25th
Assisting Ministers	Robert Clisch	Jane Alder	George Evalt	Heather Fogle
Communion Assistants	Rick Reed	Stew Isael	Laureen Preston	Cindy Sweier
Ushers	Georgia Hartsell Larry Hartsell	Cindy Sweier Carol Gregg	Mike Bierbaum Charlie Lair	Cliff Sweitzer Rick Reed
Greeter	Catherine Holt	Jodi Reed	Chris and Bruno Wommer	Charlene Tennant
Acolytes	Bruno Wommer	Rowan Hardy	Belle Gray	Charleigh Truskowski
Flagon Bearers	Chris Wommer	Susan Hardy	Kristine Wommer	Robert Clisch
Altar Guild 13	Laureen Preston, Katie Frank, Janet Clisch	Heather Fogle, Carole Hakala, Luan Purcell	Georgia Hartsell Gregg Tapper Gloria Tapper	Marge Ross, Sally Evalt Jodi Reed

PRAYING FOR OUR COMMUNITY

If you would like someone on the prayer list, please fill out a connection card and place their name on prayer sheets located in the Welcoming Area. After two weeks, names will be either taken off or put on the continuous listed prayers, but not read aloud in church. Members will have a written reminder of who to pray for in the weekly newsletter.

Ongoing prayers for members that are ill/homebound:

Grace Bryngelson; Jon and Karen Call; Julia Gardner; Kathy Groff; Carole Knapp; Eva Miner; Carol Noonan; Mark Roffi; Gladys Seeger

New prayers for People who are ill or homebound:

Kathy Groff
Nancy Jones
Wes Jones
Jessica Noyes
Randy Willis
Kevin Kraushaar
Dee Wheeler
Theo Printz
Suzie Jasek

Prayers for families and friends with special needs: Elizabeth Reed, Kamira F., Mary Gregg

People impacted by lack of food and medication
People affected by persecution and conflict
People and their families who are struggling with mental illness or addictions

Those who are serving our country especially:

Ian Bramigk (Army), Trevor Danielson (Coast Guard), Calvin Heim (Air Force), Ryan Loyd (Air Force), Tyler Miller (Army)



Please note: Prayer list started anew on Advent Sunday, November 30, 2025. Please update using connection cards or updating the prayer list in the church lobby



LET IT SNOW



WINTER

KINDERGARTEN WORD SEARCH



S	F	S	N	O	W
K	J	P	V	R	H
I	M	I	C	E	B
C	O	L	D	X	O
Y	A	U	E	J	O
Q	Z	C	O	A	T



BOOT



COAT



SNOW



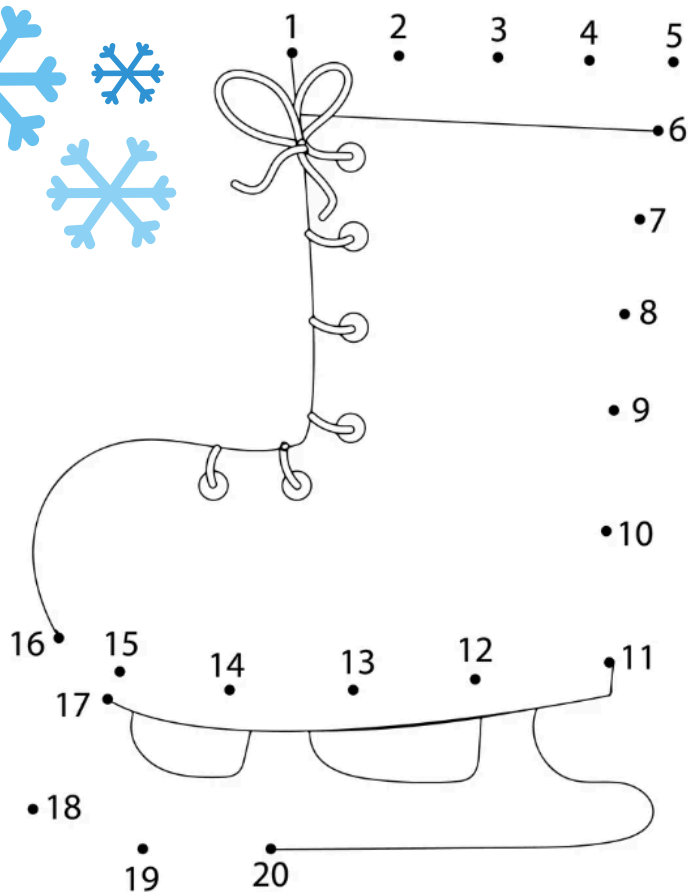
COLD



SKI



ICE



Celebration Lutheran Church
39375 Joy Road,
Westland, MI 48185



39375 Joy Road,
Westland, MI 48185
734-582-4112