

FEBRUARY, 2024

THE MESSENGER

*Claimed by Christ, Gathered for Worship,
Sent to Serve*



Bless now, O God, the journey that all your people make, the path through noise and silence, the way of give and take. The trail is found in desert and winds the mountain round, then leads beside still waters, the road where faith is found—ELW #326

Perhaps the metaphor has been played out, but Lent has often been described as a journey to the cross. Still, I like the imagery. A journey is more than a trip or vacation or excursion. The word conjures a deeper meaning, a sense of profundity around an experience with ups and downs, complications and challenges, surprises and epiphanies. The term communicates that some insight was gained along the way and that learning has an enduring effect.

Our Lenten journey begins on February 14th with Ash Wednesday, where we embark with our own mortality as the starting point. We only live once! We are fragile, vulnerable, and are limited creatures of dust. Who will we become knowing that? Our sojourn concludes at the cross and the events of Holy Week. What is discovered about ourselves, our world, and God along the path getting there?

For our midweek Lenten gatherings beginning February 28th (NOT the 21st!), we will enter into the stories of our ancestors of the faith and the realities of people and creatures now who journeyed following the call of God, or to find safety, or because instinct beckons them to. This is part of our grant funded Congregational Renewal project around immigration and migration. Lent sets a perfect stage for us to explore how the journey from one place to another is in our nature. Our intergenerational time around food, sharing, story, activity, and devotion, will reconnect us with our own migratory instinct, but also help us understand the journey of others who seek refuge in new lands and places.

As the Lenten journey gets underway, may your sojourn be blessed as you find faith along your road!

Pastor Jeff

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Worship Schedule

Sunday, February 4 Fifth Sunday after Epiphany

First Lesson: Isaiah 40:21-31
Psalm 147:1-11, 20
Second Lesson: 1 Corinthians 9:16-23
Holy Gospel: Mark 1:29-39

Sunday, February 11 Transfiguration of Our Lord

First Lesson: 2 Kings 2:1-12
Psalm 50:1-6
Second Lesson: 2 Corinthians 4:3-6
Holy Gospel: Mark 9:2-9

Wednesday, February 14 Ash Wednesday

First Lesson: Joel 2:1-2, 12-17
Psalm 51:1-17
Second Lesson: 2 Corinthians 5:20-6:10
Holy Gospel: Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

Sunday, February 18 First Sunday in Lent

First Lesson: Genesis 9:8-17
Psalm 25:1-10
Second Lesson: 1 Peter 3:18-22
Holy Gospel: Mark 1:9-15

Sunday, February 25 Second Sunday in Lent

First Lesson: Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16
Psalm 22:23-31
Second Lesson: Romans 4:13-25
Holy Gospel: Mark 8:31-38



Joyful Voices Rehearsals:

Tuesday, February 6 and Tuesday,
February 20 @ 6:15 p.m.
These dates may change.



Worship Matters: Time after Epiphany / Lent

The Time after Epiphany is the season that bridges Christ's birth and passion. This year over six Sundays we give thanks for Christ's revelation to the world and consider what this means for the mission of the church.

The season culminates with the **Transfiguration of our Lord** on **February 11**, and we are given a glimpse of realities that are beyond our comprehension (the intersection of the divine and human). It is what our texts have been pointing to throughout these weeks after Epiphany where we have been invited to be transformed by the light and life of Christ and to respond with our witness and a fuller sharing of our lives. Transfiguration reminds us that Jesus is the Son of God, and it calls us to not just wonder and delight in that presence, but to "listen" and respond. On this last Sunday before Lent, a celebration of light and life, we sing our "Alleluias" for the final time until Easter.

Dazzling

A Blessing for Transfiguration Sunday by Jan Richardson

Believe me, I know how tempting it is to remain inside this blessing,
to linger where everything is dazzling and clear.
We could build walls around this blessing, put a roof over it.
We could bring in a table, chairs, have the most amazing meals.
We could make a home. We could stay.
But this blessing is built for leaving.
This blessing is made for coming down the mountain.
This blessing wants to be in motion,
to travel with you as you return to level ground.
It will seem strange how quiet this blessing becomes when it returns to earth.
It is not shy. It is not afraid.
It simply knows how to bide its time,
to watch and wait, to discern and pray
until the moment comes when it will reveal everything it knows,
when it will shine forth with all that it has seen,
when it will dazzle with the unforgettable light
you have carried all this way.

On **February 14, Ash Wednesday**, the season of Lent begins and our journey with Jesus continues as his life further unfolds. Lent calls us to "return to God" and we are invited to take up the Lenten disciplines of renewal (prayer, almsgiving, and fasting). Join us Sundays and Wednesdays as we are challenged to open our hearts, "deny ourselves, take up our cross. . ." and follow Jesus' path to Jerusalem.

Lent at Concordia



ASH WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY
14TH AT 7 PM

INTERGENERATIONAL MEAL,
WORSHIP, AND ACTIVITY
6PM

FEBRUARY 28, MARCH 6, 13, 20

The Arrowhead American Guild of Organists

2024 LENTEN ORGAN RECITALS

02/21

DULUTH: VELDA GRAHAM BELL
FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

**GRAND RAPIDS: JAN BILDEN,
DARCY REICH & FRIENDS**
ST. ANDREW LUTHERAN CHURCH

02/28

DULUTH: BRIAN KAPP
CATHEDRAL OF OUR LADY OF THE ROSARY

03/06

DULUTH: THOMAS HAMILTON
ST. SCHOLASTICA MONASTERY,
COLLEGE OF ST. SCHOLASTICA

03/13

**DULUTH: BARBARA ERICKSON
& DAVID TRYGGESTAD**
GLORIA DEI LUTHERAN CHURCH

03/20


**CLOQUET: VICKI ANDERSON
& REBECCA HANSON**
ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH

**TWO HARBORS: ROSEMARY GUINEY
& DAVID TRYGGESTAD**
HOLY SPIRIT CATHOLIC CHURCH

ALL WEDNESDAY CONCERTS BEGIN AT 12:15
AND LAST APPROXIMATELY 30 MINUTES.

ADMISSION IS FREE BUT DONATIONS ARE
GRATEFULLY ACCEPTED. PROCEEDS OF ALL
DONATIONS TO BENEFIT THE ARROWHEAD
AGO SCHOLARSHIP FUND.





Renewal Grant

Book Group

***Exploring Immigration and
Migration!***

That grant we received provides an opportunity to gather as a book group. If you would like to be a part of it, contact Pastor Jeff!



CONCORDIA FINANCIALS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

DECEMBER, 2023 FINANCIAL REPORT

<u>DECEMBER, 2023</u>	<u>ACTUAL</u>	<u>BUDGETED</u>	<u>YEAR TO DATE</u>
INCOME	\$17,983.01	\$12,141.67	\$162,810.15
EXPENSES	\$13,793.57	\$13,595.27	\$156,662.56
NET	\$4,189.44	(\$1,453.61)	\$6,147.59

Bridges To Christ will be meeting on Monday, February 5th at 6:45 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. Please bring food for CHUM. All women are welcome to join us for fellowship & dessert!

Bridges To Christ would like to thank everyone who donated winter garb! Twenty-three hats, 7 pairs of gloves/mittens, and 1 scarf were given to CHUM & The Center for Changing Lives.

Quilters will meet on Thursday, February 8 at 9:30 a.m.

Thinking Valentines Gifts? Equal Exchange Coffee and Chocolate Bars are available for your loved ones. Bridges to Christ has a variety of coffee (ground-now \$9 each) and chocolate bars (\$4 each) available for sale while supplies last.

Northland Peace Not Walls (NPNW)—Seeking a Just Solution for Palestine/Israel, formerly Twin Ports Peace Not Walls, is a group open to all who want to work to end Israel’s occupation of the Palestinians and foster just conditions for creating a peaceful and a just co-existence between the people of Israel and the Palestinian people. We emphasize Awareness Raising, Advocacy, and Accompaniment.

- Gaza in Context – This is a presentation entitled “Historical Context for Gaza” that Jim and Judy Bailey videotaped in November. Its purpose is to provide some historical background to the horrific events on October 7th and what is happening there now. Please take time to watch the video and share it with others. The video has been helpful to people in framing the conversation about the unfolding violence in Israel and Gaza. Please go to this link: https://youtu.be/9KY_mA4Jd4A

Concordia Giving Tree: Thank you for your holiday season generosity! Because of your generous donations, we were able to deliver a complete truck load to Stowe including the following:

\$200 - SuperOne Gift Cards

64 - Christmas Gifts (40 Giving Tree Tags and 24 toys purchased with money donations)

3 - fleece blankets

24 - hats

25 - mittens/gloves

12 - socks

4 - snow pants

1 - winter coat

4 - pairs of gently used boots

1 - large box of gently used clothes

The following is a thank you note we received from the staff of Stowe:

Dear Lynn, Bill, and Concordia Lutheran Church Friends,

Once again it is time to thank our loyal friends that support the Giving Tree for Stowe School. This year comments from Stowe teachers will be shared with you:

- The Giving Tree is such a special opportunity. The number of families that have been helped, the amount of joy that it has put into our school community, and the real impact that it has made is truly incalculable.

- I have had multiple families express how grateful they are for the Giving Tree. One family told me, "if it wasn't for the Giving Tree, my children would not have anything to open on Christmas morning". They were so thankful to be able to receive the support.

- I have had a family request clothing for their three children. The mom was so thankful for these items.

- I had a mom call me, crying over how excited they were to see their daughter open a brand new doll for the holidays. She said that without the Giving Tree, their daughter would have never been able to receive a brand new doll which she has wanted for years.

- As a mom, making sure that my own kids have a good Christmas was always a worry. I know many of our families struggle to make this happen. Your generosity lessens the worries about Christmas for parents and kids. Thank you for your kindness.

Words do not begin to describe the positive feelings that the Giving Tree generates. Parents, grandparents, kids and staff are lighthearted and full of hope because of wonderful people like you. Thanks!

Let the Prayer Chain members join with you in your prayers and supplications. They are just a phone call away. All prayers are confidential and names or details are not needed. God is aware of all circumstances and waits to hear from you.

Please contact Reba Almquist at 525-6968.

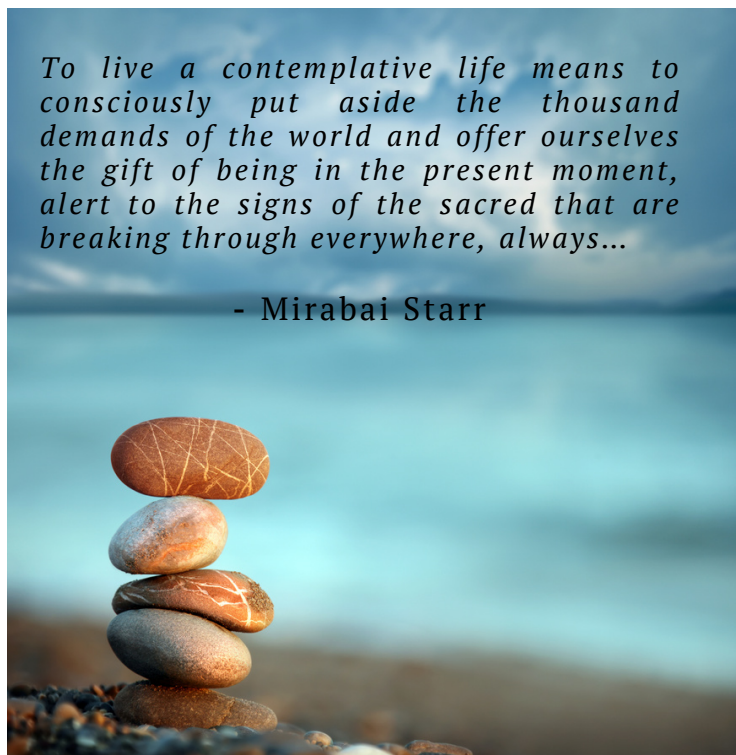
For hospital or other visitations, please contact the office at 728-4229.

Remember in Your Prayers

Please remember the following people who have been hospitalized, under a doctor's care, those recuperating, struggling, or those grieving since our last newsletter: The family of Irja Pederson, Tom Nelson, Wesley, and Max, Wayne Kari, the people of Ukraine and the Holy Land, Roger Erickson, Tim Bell, Gary Williams, migrant families, Phillip Hedges, Carrie Birdseye-Erickson, Jamie Desemone, Anne Holecek, the families of victims, survivors, and communities where mass shootings have occurred, Patti Pearson, and those persecuted for their sexual or gender identity.

To live a contemplative life means to consciously put aside the thousand demands of the world and offer ourselves the gift of being in the present moment, alert to the signs of the sacred that are breaking through everywhere, always...

- Mirabai Starr



Matters of Record

† Irja O. Kari Pederson
May 3, 1924- January 14, 2024

Prayer and Visitation Ministry

Please remember those in our congregation who are in nursing homes or are homebound. Please pray for them and consider stopping by for a visit. Prayer and visitation is an important ministry of the congregation.

Heritage Haven: Warren Roberts

A reminder that, on account of privacy, hospitals and nursing homes will NOT contact the Church to share that you have been admitted unless you or a family member tell them or the hospital chaplains to do so. Protecting privacy is also a way we care for our friends who may or may not wish for others to know of their illness or condition. If you hear that someone is sick or hospitalized, do not tell others unless you have been given permission by them to do so. **If you wish to be visited by the Pastor or placed on the prayer list, contact the Church office.** If you have a conversation with someone who is ill, hospitalized, or has come to be in a short or long term care facility, ask them if they want the congregation and Pastor to know what is happening before you pass the word along. Do not assume that because you know, that the individual wants everyone else to, as well. Honoring the privacy of our neighbors, as well as expressing our own desire for the church or pastor to know of our condition, helps to prevent troublesome situations and helps us support one another!

February Birthdays

- 2 Lynn Mass
- 3 Richard Voltzke
- 9 Iris Goodman
- 12 Debbie Roach
- 14 George Sauter
- 15 Greg Grunwald
- 17 Matthew Bohn
- 19 Sylvie Long
- 21 Jean Voltzke
- 25 Gloria Isaacson
- 27 Lydia Davis



If your birthday isn't listed or has the wrong date, please let the office know.



Flower and Sanctuary Candle Sign-up

A nice way to remember a loved one or celebrate a special occasion is to have altar flowers or the sanctuary candle on Sunday morning. The sign-up sheet is in the Narthex for both. Cost for flowers is \$22 and the candle is \$8. Contact the office with any questions.

Please note that when you have altar flowers for worship, you may take them home following worship. The glass vases must stay at church, however.



Equal Exchange Coffee Donations

Equal Exchange coffee donations needed for church coffee supply. Coffee funds are running low. Donation envelopes are available in the narthex information rack. Place an envelope with any donation amount in the offering plate with note "Equal Exchange coffee fund."





Food Shelf Down in Donations

We thankfully made it through 2023—it was a roller coaster year for services, and one that taught us all that many large-scale issues are beyond our control but affect us in huge ways. Climate change, international conflicts, inflation, threats of a recession, and so many other things all hung above our heads, and it showed.

In 2023, the Food Shelf served 15,789 individuals (duplicated, meaning people are visiting multiple times and getting counted each time they receive food)—that is an increase of only 90 people—BUT we saw a large increase in demand from those 60+ years of age.

In 2023, the Food Shelf distributed 533,152 pounds of food, which is great, but still 39,197 pounds less than in 2022. We are learning every day how to manage with less, and continue to give our clients what they need.

The biggest hit the Food Shelf took in 2023 was in the number of pounds donated: our community donated 460,351 pounds of food--that is almost 50,000 pounds less than last year!

So many of us dug deep this past year to provide for those that need it, and I hate to ask you to dig deeper in 2024, but it truly takes a community to make us successful. Many thanks go to the thousands of individuals, congregations, businesses, foundations, and others for stretching their funds a little further to help the Food Shelf. Without your extra jars, cans, boxes, and fresh produce, we would not have been able to serve those in our community that faced even greater struggles.

The need for food continues in 2024!

The Food Shelf will continue to see the need for basic food services grow in 2024, and thanks to community support, we will be able to respond.

Please continue to donate food and money so we can keep the Northland fed.

The most needed food items are:

- Coffee
- Canned Chili
- Canned Beef Stew
- Canned Pork and Beans
- Canned Baked Beans
- Spaghettios
- Canned Ravioli
- Canned Fruit
- Canned Vegetables
- Ramen Noodles
- Canned Soups
- Canned Chunky Soups
- Spam
- Canned Tuna / Chicken
- Peanut Butter
- Macaroni and Cheese
- Cereal
- Rice
- Boxed Potatoes
- Canned Tomato Products





...In God's Great Northwoods!

UPCOMING EVENTS MORE INFORMATION (800) 331-5148 www.vlmcamps.org

REGISTER NOW FOR SUMMER CAMP

Registration for both Camp Hiawatha and Vermilion is open for Summer 2024! Register now to take advantage of our Early Bird Discount!

APPLY FOR SUMMER STAFF

A summer at camp can prove to be the hardest job you will ever have, but also one of the most rewarding experiences you will ever have. Apply today!

SPRING QUILTING RETREAT, MARCH 7-10

Spring is a beautiful time of the year to be in God's great Northwoods, and VLM's Quilting Retreat offers a chance to tackle some of your big projects.



VOYAGEURS LUTHERAN MINISTRY ANNUAL MEETING

 **Saturday, February 10th 2024**

 **11:00 AM** a light lunch will follow the meeting

 **Messiah Lutheran Church**
8590 Enterprise Dr S, Mountain Iron, MN 55768




www.vlmcamps.org



Duluth-area artists and entrepreneurs showcase the future of black history and innovation at the fourth annual Northland BIPOC Business Showcase in the Depot's Great Hall. Visitors are invited to peruse more than 30 booths featuring goods from businesses owned by people of color from the region. There will also be live music and activities for kids.

Saturday, February 10, 1-5 p.m.
Free

Pastor: Rev. Jeffery Davis
Organist: Unfilled at this time
Cantor: Jennifer Dums
Joyful Voices Pianist: Patti Martenson
Sunday School Teachers: Rachelle Anderson,
Bryan Anderson, Bridget Bohn, and Marcia
DeMeo-Morse.
Office Duties: Carmen Norlien
Custodial Duties: David Haavik
Treasurer: Mark Morse

Church Council Members

Rachelle Anderson
Bridget Bohn, President
Trevor Christensen, Vice-President
Ashley Hoppe
Makenzie Morse
Mark Morse, Treasurer
Dan Norlien

Committees

Building & Grounds: Trevor Christensen
Social Justice: Pastor Jeff

Stewardship: Pastor Jeff
Worship & Music: Bryan Anderson, Lynne
Erickson, and Patti Martenson

Ministries

Altar Guild: Reba Almquist
Bridges To Christ: Ann Edwards
Caring Ministry: Jane Wedin
Quilters: Karin Cummings

Contact information

Email: duluthconcordia@gmail.com
Phone Number: (218)728-4229
Website: www.duluthconcordia.org
Facebook: Concordia Lutheran Church of
Duluth
Address: 2501 Woodland Avenue
Duluth, MN 55803

Office Hours: Please call first, as circumstances
vary from week to week.

CHUM

Open

Conference and Synod Assemblies

Open

Lutheran Campus Ministry Duluth Board

Patti Martenson

NE Minnesota Synod Youth Board

Margaret Roeser

Union Gospel Mission

Lois Witchall

Voyageurs Lutheran Ministry

Bridget Bohn



The Messenger is a monthly publication of Concordia Lutheran Church. Items for the March newsletter are due by Tuesday, February 23. Please email your items, corrections, questions, or comments to duluthconcordia@gmail.com

We reserve the right to edit your items.
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