



Pastor's Ponderings

“What then are we to say about these things?” —Romans 8:31

I feel like these words from the Apostle Paul are the constant refrain running through my head. Every day, we witness fresh outrageous acts. Every day, our head is sent spinning by another misdirection. Every day, we struggle to get our bearings in our world where truth, beauty, honor, and character no longer hold any meaning. Every day, we see decency desecrated and authority without accountability. Slack-jawed and stunned, I struggle to find any words to communicate how upset I am at the state of our nation and world.

If you are feeling the same way, then I invite you to let the language of worship, scripture, prayer, and song shape your words, your silence, your emotions, and hopes. We will gather on Ash Wednesday at 6:30 PM (note the time change!) to start anew a journey of repentance toward life. On each Wednesday in Lent, we will gather at 6 PM for Prayer at the Cross, praying for the Healing of the Nations. This evening prayer setting will direct our attention to God’s promise of the future and our yearning for peace.

Another way to confront these feelings of outrage, cynicism, and hopelessness is to do something. Go for a walk! Talk with a friend! Find a way to serve a neighbor! Attend a protest! Call your legislator! Learn something new! Three of us from Concordia will depart early in February to El Paso, TX and Juarez, Mexico for a week of learning and serving, where we hope that our experience will help us channel our emotions and thoughts into faith, hope, and love. We hope to share more about this immersion in the months following our return.

Even though we feel a “What then are we to say about these things” way, it is my hope and prayer that we land on the rest of that verse: “If God is for us, who is against us?” God is for this beloved world and even now is working to bring it to health, wholeness, justice, and peace. May this be our trust!

Pastor Jeff



Worship Schedule

Sunday, February 1 **Fourth Sunday after Epiphany**

First Lesson: Micah 6:1-8
Psalm 15

Second Lesson: 1 Corinthians 1:18-31
Holy Gospel: Matthew 5:1-12

Sunday, February 8 **Fifth Sunday after Epiphany**

First Lesson: Isaiah 58:1-12
Psalm 112:1-10
Second Lesson: 1 Corinthians 2:1-16
Holy Gospel: Matthew 5:13-20

Sunday, February 15 **Transfiguration Sunday**

First Lesson: Exodus 24:12-18
Psalm 2
Second Lesson: 2 Peter 1:16-21
Holy Gospel: Matthew 17:1-9

Wednesday, February 18 **Ash Wednesday**

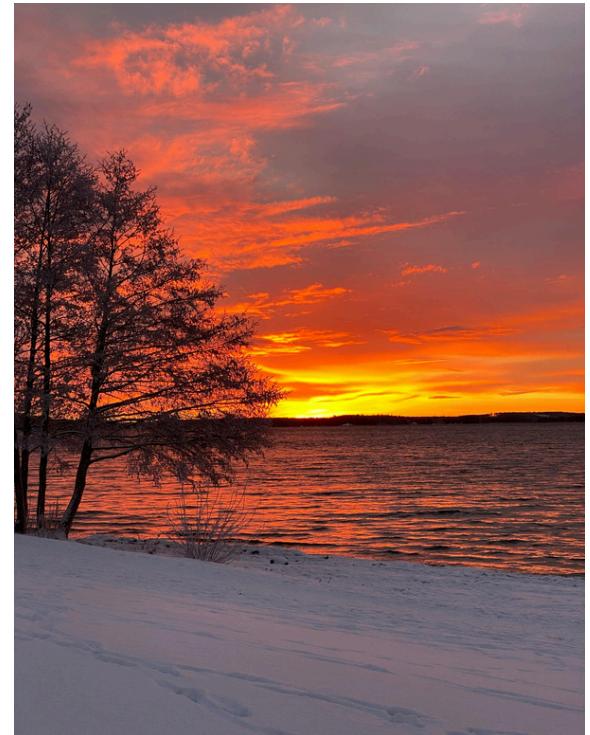
First Lesson: Joel 2: 1-2, 12-17
Psalm 51:1-17
Second Lesson: 2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10
Holy Gospel: Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

Sunday, February 22 **First Sunday in Lent**

First Lesson: Genesis 2:15-17, 3:1-7
Psalm 32
Second Lesson: Romans 5:12-19
Holy Gospel: Matthew 4:1-11



Joyful Voices Rehearsals:
Tuesday, February 10 @ 6 p.m.



Worship Matters:
Time after Epiphany – Part 2
Expanding Light . . .

February finds us continuing our journey through the **Time after Epiphany**, the season that bridges Christ's birth and passion. We are witnesses to the growing light of Christ as Jesus' life and ministry unfolds. Jesus is in our midst, and the Word is being heard and felt in new and profound ways.

“Blessed.” In the second half of this season, we sit with Jesus on the side of a hill, listening to the Beatitudes and other teachings from the Sermon on the Mount, learning about a life of discipleship. Jesus helps his first followers (and us) to understand faith as a daily walk in the world, and in his explanation of the law, we see new hope and a new community being born in the midst of the old. We are called to consider the impact of God’s love not only on our lives, but on the lives of those around us.

This season began with a festival (Baptism of Our Lord) and it concludes on **February 15**, with another festival, **Transfiguration of Our Lord**. God’s presence, glory, and holiness are described through some amazing mountaintop experiences. The voice from the cloud that we heard at Jesus’ baptism returns, identifying Jesus as the Son of God, the Beloved. This time with the instruction, “listen to him,” calling us to a deeper understanding of Jesus and what it means to follow him. Our texts also speak to what happened in the world through the witness of those who saw the glory of God revealed. Our discipleship may involve a long journey up a mountain, but we cannot live a Christian life and expect to stay there. Like Peter, James, and John, we encounter the glory of God, and just like Peter, James and John we come down from the mountain, to engage the world and share the message of God’s transforming power. It is through the lives of people and communities pursuing this path together – that God transforms us all . . .

Lent begins on **Ash Wednesday–February 18**, a day of introspection, reflection, and repentance. The liturgy we celebrate on this day, *dies cinerum* (day of ashes) can be traced to the 5th century, becoming common practice in the church in the 8th century. We join Christians around the world as we begin the journey that will lead to the new life and resurrection of Easter. “Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return” (Genesis 3:19). It is a journey for the sake of life, but we begin by recalling our mortality and the sin that deadens us. We enter these 40 days bearing the mark of ashes, a reminder of God’s love and claim on our lives.

JANUARY, 2026 FINANCIAL REPORT

<u>DECEMBER, 2025 FINANCIALS</u>	<u>ACTUAL</u>	<u>BUDGETED</u>	<u>YEAR END, 2025</u>
INCOME	\$19,211.00	\$13,696.17	\$151,099.00
EXPENSES	\$16,109.85	\$14,537.42	\$171,576.82
NET	\$3,101.15	(\$841.25)	(\$20,477.15)

Concordia Announcements

Bridges To Christ is meeting on Monday, Feb 2nd at 6:45 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. Bring \$ for CHUM & we'll start planning spring events.

Day Time Quilters will be meeting on Thursday, Feb 12th from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. We have several quilts ready for tying. Bring your lunch & dessert is provided.

Evening Tide Quilters will be meeting on Thursday, Feb 12th from 6 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Learn piecing, sewing & tying quilts. Light refreshments provided.

My apologies for this omission from the Annual Report for Caring Ministries:

Cards/Books etc sent in 2025: 309 Cards for Birthdays, in Sympathy, or Outreach
9 Birthday Books & 1 Birthday Puzzles

A special thank you to Pat Tessier for her caring attention to sending so many wonderful holiday cards.

Caring Ministries presents books to each of our Sunday School children on their birthday. Our goal is to remind all of them that everyone at Concordia cares for them, that they are in a safe place where they can reach out to anyone if they need adult help.

CHUM Food Pantry: during the 12 months of 2025 together at Concordia, we have donated approximately 405 lbs of canned soups, boxes of macaroni & cheese, Girl Scout cookies, fruit cups, boxes of breakfast cereal and so many other appreciated foods. And every Friday, when Dave & I sort food stuffs at CHUM, we see how quickly they are distributed to and appreciated by our siblings in need. So Thank you for continuing in your generosity!

This does not include the donations made directly by Bridges To Christ, nor the cash donations made by Concordia's members.

(more announcements on following page)

Continuation of Caring Ministries Annual Report

St Francis Apartment Meals: 3 meals for approximately 40 diners per meal provided through a generous grant from the Endowment Fund.

April 10, 2025 – Hot Beef with gravy & buns

Baked Potatoes

Mandarin Orange Salad with toasted Garbanzo Beans

Chocolate Cake

(\$234.86 – approx \$6/serving)

June 23, 2025 – Sliced Roast Turkey in Gravy (with bread for sandwiches)

Au Gratin Potatoes

Green Bean Casserole

Blonde Brownie Dessert

(\$298.07 – approx. \$7.45/serving)

October 22, 2025 – Sliced Honey Ham

Baked Beans

Grandma Anderson's Carrot Casserole

Apple Crisp and Rhubarb Crisp (made by Sunday School kids)

(\$135.30 – approx. \$3.38!) (food donations made the difference)

Total spent for meals to date - \$668.23 or approximately one half of our funding from the Endowment Fun, leaving funds for more meals in 2026.

Fabric for Mexico: To date, we have sent 11 boxes of fabric & sewing supplies to our neighbors in the Copper Canyon region of Mexico. These families live in the rugged mountain areas where they farm in the fertile valleys, growing corn, potatoes, goats & chickens. They live simply -- being light, not burdened by so many things. Sewn and woven items are often sold at market or traded for what they need. Again, thank you to the Endowment Committee for supporting this project, and to all of you who have donated. At least 3 of the 11 boxes contained only items donated from your sewing boxes and fabric supplies.

S

Best always,
Dave & Jane Wedin

Lent at Concordia



ASH WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY
18TH AT 6:30 PM

EVENING PRAYER FOR THE
HEALING OF THE NATIONS

6 PM

WEDNESDAYS

FEBRUARY 25, MARCH 4, 11, 18, 25



SANDWICH AND SCRIPTURE

Concordia Narthex

11:30 A.M.

Wednesdays

February 25th, March 11th and 25th

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 Warren Roberts, Roger Erickson, The family of Alex Jeffrey Pretti, Liam Conejo Ramos and his family, The family of Nicole Renee Goode, Tim Bell, Migrant families, The people of Palestine, Iran, and Ukraine, Phillip Hedges, Those unlawfully detained, Carrie Birdseye-Erickson, The families, the survivors, and communities where mass shootings have occurred. Patti Pearson, Shawn Jamison, Those marginalized for their sexual or gender identity, race, or ability, Tom Nelson, Max, and Wayne Kari.

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 are important ministries of our congregation.

Aftenro: Wayne Kari

If I cannot do great things, I can do small things in a great way.

-Martin Luther King, Jr.



February Birthdays

- 2 Lynn Mass
- 3 Richard Voltzke
- 8 Emma Natale
- 9 Iris Goodman
- 12 Debbie Roach
- 14 George Sauter
- 15 Greg Grunwaald
- 17 Matthew Bohn
- 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."





Wish Lists

The Chum Wish List is where we keep what we need most for each program. Donations can be brought to our administrative office at 102 W 2nd St from 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. If possible, please sort your donations into separate bags/containers by item. We do not accept miscellaneous clothing items; kindly take miscellaneous clothing items to the Damiano Center or the Salvation Army. We are no longer in need of blankets or coats this winter.

Thank you so much for partnering with us and supporting our mission!

Check out our [Amazon Wishlist](#) to have items sent straight to those in need.

St. Francis Apts.

High Priority: Furniture

- We're running out of "nonessential" furniture for tenants, especially the ones just moving in.
- Comfy chairs
- Bookshelves
- Small dressers
- Tables

Always Need

- Monthly bus passes
- Gift cards for grocery stores, dollar stores, pharmacies etc.
 - when tenants have no cash, it would be nice to have gift cards to get them through the month
- Toiletries
 - shampoos
 - conditioners
 - deodorants
 - mouthwash
 - air fresheners
- Quart-size Ziplock bags
- Can openers
- Cleaning supplies
 - dish soap
 - bleach kitchen cleaner
 - Tide Pods/Laundry detergent
 - window cleaning solution
 - disinfectant wipes
 - Scrubbing bubbles fresh gel toilet cleaning stamp or Clorox toilet cleaning wand
- Towels of all kinds
- Regular light bulbs
- Toilet paper
- Paper towels

Steve O' Neil Apts.

High Priority:

- Shelf-Stable Food Donations
- Sponges
- Mops
- Brooms
- Laundry baskets
- All purpose cleaner
- Laundry detergent
- Dish soap
- Lysol wipes
- Toilet bowl cleaner
- Toilet paper
- Paper towels
- Lice Kits
- Garbage Cans

For Those Who Are Living Outside

- Two Person Tents Preferably with a rain fly.
- 0 Degree Sleeping Bags.
- Rain Tarps.
- Winter Gear: Socks, Hats, and Mittens.
- Gas Cards to Gas Stations \$20.

For Those Who Are Hungry

- Canned Fruits and Vegetable
- Juice
- White or Brown rice
- Pasta
- Pasta Sauce
- Cereal
- Peanut Butter
- Canned Tuna and Chicken
- Macaroni and Cheese
- Canned Soups (not Creamed)
- Canned Pasta

For Those Staying in Our Shelter

- Hygiene Products
- Combs
- Sewing Kits
- Socks
- New Underwear (Men's and Women's)
- Towels
- Washcloths
- Fitted Single Sheets
- Adult Coloring Books and Markers

What we do not need

- Mouthwash Containing Alcohol
- Make-Up
- Perfumes
- Stuffed Animals
- Decorative Pillows
- Miscellaneous Clothing
- Used bottles of any product



Chum Extravaganza 2026

Chum's Extravaganza is a vibrant annual fundraiser that unites the community to support access to food, shelter, and vital services.

Date & Time: Thursday, February 12, 2026 | Evening
5:30-8:30

Location: DECC Harbor Side Ballroom, Level 3
Theme: Food, Fun, & Philanthropy

Tickets start at \$55.20 and are available from David or
Jane Wedin





From the 1992 Earth Summit to the 2015 Paris Climate Agreement to the 2025 COP30 Climate Conference: Where Do We Stand?

Researched by Laura Raedeke, EcoFaith Network NE MN Team, Lutheran Church of the Cross, Nisswa, MN, NEMN Synod

1. For the first time since countries began gathering 30 years ago to wrestle with global warming, the U.S. did not send any top government officials to the U.N. Climate Summit (COP30) held on the edge of the rainforest in Brazil this past November. Since the 2015 Paris climate agreement, the U.S. and 197 other countries made pledges to hold the average global temperature rise to preferably 1.5 C (2.7F) by controlling the greenhouse gas pollution that is dangerously heating the planet, causing dangerous heat waves, wildfires, water and food shortages, and coastal flooding. While there has been some progress, Earth's annual temperature jumped about 0.83 degrees F since 2015, one of the biggest 10-year hikes on record, according to the European climate service Copernicus. In addition to the 140 countries who did attend the climate conference, about 100 American leaders, mayors, governors, and business leaders participated, sending a message that climate change issues be prioritized, focusing on global coalitions to create jobs and cut toxic pollution.

2. A decade after world leaders from 198 countries reached a landmark agreement in Paris that aimed to slow and then stop the planet from warming, the U.S. is withdrawing from the 2015 Paris climate agreement, although it is technically a party to the agreement until January 27, 2026. As the U.S. backs away from its pledge, it has also teamed up with other oil-producing nations to oppose both a global plastics treaty and a first-ever global fee on carbon pollution in the shipping industry, while compelling Europe to abandon a climate law, according to the European Climate Foundation, a research organization. Researchers at CICERO Center for International Climate Research in Oslo find that despite carbon emissions continuing their relentless rise, technologies such as solar panels, wind turbines and electric vehicles are proliferating rapidly, although their effectiveness is uncertain due to policy changes that reduce economic incentives for renewable power. By contrast, fossil fuels benefit from the \$7 trillion in annual global subsidies.

3. The U.S. was a key player in the 1992 Earth Summit, the first gathering of world leaders to address climate change, and two years ago in Dubai, world governments endorsed a transitioning away from fossil fuels responsible for heating the earth's oceans and atmosphere, keeping global temperatures from rising more than 1.5 C (2.7 F). But the lack of decisive action at COP30 (the U.S. did not participate) leaves the earth heading for at least 1.7C of temperature rise according to Johan Rockström, director of the Potsdam Institute for Climate Research in Germany. Despite demand from more than 80 countries (including Colombia, France, Germany and the U.K.) to endorse a "road map" for phasing out the use of fossil fuels, other countries, led by Saudi Arabia, refused to sign any agreement targeting fossil fuels. Also missing from the final text was a road map for halting deforestation, the second-most-potent driver of global warming. According to Rockström, humanity can avoid a nightmarish future only by "phasing out fossil fuels in an accelerated, orderly, and just way."

4. More than 2 degrees F have been shaved off future warming projections since the 2015 Paris climate agreement, but research at the Potsdam Institute for Climate Research in Germany warns that efforts are not keeping up with the more costly, dangerous and extreme weather afflicting the planet. According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the decade since 2015 saw the most Category 5 Atlantic hurricanes and the most billion-dollar weather disasters in the U.S. (193 disasters for a total bill of \$1.5 trillion). The bright spot is that renewable energy is now cheaper in most places than polluting coal, oil, and natural gas. Last year, 74% of the growth in electricity generated worldwide was from wind, solar and other green choices, while 17 million electric vehicles were sold worldwide, up from a half-million in 2015.

BOOK DRIVE

Big Red Bookshelf

Donate new or gently used children's books to the Big Red Bookshelf,
a program of Lincoln Park Children and Families Collaborative.

The mission of the Big Red Bookshelf is to give children of Duluth access to free, age-appropriate books that will encourage a love for reading and learning. Bright red bookshelves stocked with these children's books are located across Duluth in locations available to families and now Big Red Donation Bins are also available!

For more info call 218-464-0588 or email rachel.lpcfc@gmail.com.

Donation Locations:

- Lincoln Park Children and Families Collaborative
 - 2424 W 5th St, Duluth MN 55806 Suite 108
- Whole Foods Co-op Denfeld
 - 4436 Grand Ave, Duluth, MN 55807
- Whole Foods Co-op Hillside
 - 610 E 4th St, Duluth, MN 55805
- Duluth Area Family YMCA
 - 302 W 1st St, Duluth, MN 55802
- Duluth Children's Museum
 - 2125 W Superior St, Duluth, MN 55806
- Lake Superior Community Health Center
 - 4325 Grand Ave, Duluth, MN 55807
- Lake Superior Zoo
 - 7210 Fremont St, Duluth, MN 55807
- St. Louis County Probation Office
 - 100 N 5th Ave W. rm 319, Duluth, MN 55802
- Proctor Area Community Center
 - 100 Plonk Dr, Proctor, MN 55810
- St. Luke's Pediatric Associates
 - 1012 E 2nd St 4th Floor, Duluth, MN 55805



YOU MAY ALSO BRING GENTLY USED CHILDREN'S BOOKS TO CHURCH AND PLACE THEM IN THE BASKET IN THE NARTHEX.

Pastor: Rev. Jeffery Davis

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

Trevor Christensen, President

Delores Grunwald

Ashley Hoppe

Makenzie Morse

Mark Morse, Treasurer

Dan Norlien

Committees

Building & Grounds: Trevor Christensen

Social Justice: Pastor Jeff

Stewardship: Pastor Jeff

Worship & Music: Lynne Erickson, Mary Johnson, and Patti Martenson

Ministries

Altar Guild: Reba Almquist

Bridges To Christ: Ann Edwards

Caring Ministry: Jane Wedin

Quilters: Lynn Carlson and Ann Edwards

Contact information

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Duluth, MN 55803

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

CHUM

David and Jane Wedin

Conference and Synod Assemblies

Carmen Norlien

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 17th. Please email your items, corrections, questions, or comments to duluthconcordia@gmail.com

We reserve the right to edit your items. This newsletter was produced using Canva.

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