

# THE MESSENGER

January 2025

The newsletter of Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church

## Open Forum

On **Sunday, January 12**, at 10:30 am in the church fellowship hall, we'll be holding an open forum for all members. This is a great opportunity to share your thoughts, ask questions, and engage in informal discussions on important topics like the free sale, budget and ministry support, the new piano/organ, Souper Bowl of Soup event and the new Time and Talent Survey. Whether you're a youth or an adult, your voice matters, and we welcome your input! Please note, there will be no Teen or Adult Bible Study that day, so we encourage everyone to attend and be part of the conversation. Sunday School will be held. Ask a council member for information on how to attend if offsite.

## Annual Voters' Meeting

**Sunday, January 26 at 10:30 am**

**Elections** will be held for the following positions of the church council (**two-year terms**): President, Treasurer, Board of Christian Education, Board of Elders, Stewardship & Finance Committee, Technology Committee.

The Secretary position will also be up for **election** for a **term of one year**.

A slate of nominees will be posted on the bulletin board near the elevator.

A slate of nominees and agenda items will be posted on the bulletin board near the elevator.

To join the meeting virtually, contact a council member for the link.

## In this Messenger:

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## Look at All the Blessings

Another of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, spoke up, "Here is a boy with five small barley loaves and two small fish, but how far will they go among so many?" Jesus then took the loaves, gave thanks, and distributed to those who were seated as much as they wanted. He did the same with the fish. When they had all had enough to eat, he said to his disciples, "Gather the pieces that are left over. Let nothing be wasted." So they gather them and filled twelve baskets with the pieces of the five barley loaves left over by those who had eaten. (John 6:8-9, 11-13)

The third Monday of January has been nicknamed Blue Monday because it's considered the saddest day of the year. Multiple reasons are given why this day is considered the saddest day of the year: the excitement of the holidays is over, the weather is cold and the days are short, credit card bills need to be paid, new year resolutions that were made have been broken, etc. Maybe you may even find yourself being a little more depressed during this time of the year, and this is why I want us to focus on the apostle Andrew.

Although Andrew may not have been depressed in the above account, he had his doubts. Five thousand people have gathered to see Jesus. It was time to eat but no one had brought any food. Jesus told the disciples to feed the crowd, and he did this to test them. Andrew brought forward a young boy with his small meal, but Andrew thought there was no way that could feed everyone. Jesus took the small meal, thanked God, and fed five thousand people. Then he told the disciples to pick up the leftovers, and they filled twelve baskets with food. Just imagine the look on Andrew's face who earlier said the meal couldn't feed everyone was now holding a basket full of food after the people had their fill.

Now think about how this applies to us. When we are sad or depressed we usually only focus on the negatives, the impossibilities, the struggles in life. Therefore, we may focus on how the excitement of the holidays is over, on how the weather is cold and the days are short, on how we need to pay the credit card bills, on how we may have broken new year resolutions, and on everything else.

But let us learn from Andrew who once doubted but saw what Jesus could do. **Look at all the blessings the Lord has given you throughout your life, throughout this past year, and the blessings he has given you in this new year so far.** Even though the excitement of the holidays may be over, the message of Christmas applies to us each day for Christ was born to be our Savior. Even though the weather is colder and the days are shorter, each day is a gift of God's grace and his mercies are new every morning. Even though the credit card bills are due, the Lord has given us jobs and money to pay those bills. Even though we may have broken our new year resolutions, the Lord has promised to bless the work of our hands in all we do. Therefore, just like Andrew who looked down and saw a full basket of food, let us look at all the blessings from our Lord and let this fill us with joy.

- Pastor Neal Behm

# January 2025

View the most up to date calendar at [christmerrill.com](http://christmerrill.com)

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			<b>1</b>	<b>2</b> 6:30 pm Women's Discipleship Group  6:30 pm Men's Bible Study	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>5</b> 9:00 am Worship (Holy Communion)  10:30 am Sunday School 10:30 am Teen Bible Study 10:30 am Adult Bible Study	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b> 9:00 am Adult Bible Study  TBD Catechism Class	<b>9</b> 4:30 pm Board of Christian Education Meeting	<b>10</b> 7:30 pm Swing Dancing	<b>11</b>
					<b>Winter Teen Retreat at Camp Phillip (Fri- Sun)</b>	
<b>12</b> 9:00 am Worship  10:30 am Sunday School 10:30 am Open Forum  11:45 am Youth event @ Church and <b>Melody Gardens</b>	<b>13</b> 6:30 pm Fellowship Committee Meeting	<b>14</b> <b>2:00 pm</b> <b>Worship @ Bell Tower</b>  6:00 pm Council Meeting	<b>15</b> 9:00 am Adult Bible Study  TBD Catechism Class	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b> <b>1:30 pm</b> <b>Sylvan Hill Fellowship Outing</b>
<b>19</b> 9:00 am Worship (Holy Communion)  10:30 am Sunday School 10:30 am Teen Bible Study 10:30 am Adult Bible Study	<b>20</b> 6:00 pm Board of Elders Meeting	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b> 9:00 am Adult Bible Study  TBD Catechism Class	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>26</b> 9:00 am Worship  10:30 am Sunday School 10:30 am Annual Voters' Meeting  <b>5:45 pm WELS Youth Night at Northland Lutheran High School</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b> 9:00 am Adult Bible Study  TBD Catechism Class	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>	

8:00 am Sundays - worship service on the radio (**96.3FM, 730AM**)

9:00 am Sundays - worship service online at [youtube.com/@christmerrill](https://www.youtube.com/@christmerrill)

## MEN'S BIBLE STUDY:

Join us on **January 2** at **6:30 pm** for Bible Study in the entry! It's an opportunity to read Scripture, discuss it, and see how it relates to our lives today. All men are welcome, no matter your age or previous Bible Study experience. The next series will be on leadership principles from the Bible.

## WOMEN'S DISCIPLESHIP GROUP:

New Year. New Priorities? Women, come join us as we discuss decision-making so that we respond to daily choices in how we use our time with a "joyful yes" or a "graceful no" on Thursday, **January 2** at **6:30 pm**.

## CONNECTING OUR COMMUNITY

New church directories will be printed this month and distributed to those that signed up. This resource will include members' names and contact information. Contact Colleen if you would like a copy and did not sign up.

**SHUT-IN VISITATION:** The Elders welcome help from members visiting our shut-ins. Members are encouraged to visit and/or keep them in our prayers. Please reach out to Pastor or an elder for contact information.

**Brad B.    Laurene H.    Tom L.    Phil M.**  
**Lorna P.    Kathleen P.    Dick S.**

## YOUTH ROLLER SKATING OUTING

Save the date! On **January 12**, all youth in **grades 6-12** are invited to a fun-filled day of roller skating at Melody Gardens in Marshfield. We'll start with **lunch at the church at 11:45 am, then head to the skating rink**, returning to church by 5:30 pm. The cost of skating will be covered for all attending youth, and friends or family are welcome to join us for the event!

**PRAYER SUPPORT:** Are there things going on in your life, or the life of others, that you would like your church family to pray about at a church service or during the week? Contact Pastor with a prayer request.

<i>Spiritual Growth Weekly Averages</i>	November
Sunday worship/Online: (includes evening service)	73/5
Bell Tower worship	8
Men's Bible Study	4
Sunday Bible Study	20
Wednesday Bible Study	13
Women's Discipleship	4
Sunday School & Teen Bible Study	9

## CHURCH FINANCIAL UPDATE

Our Offerings to the Lord (as of 11/30/24)

Approved budget: \$149,207

Actual offerings: \$124,309

Actual spending: \$128,841

Your offerings help to support the ministry of the congregation. For more information, see the Treasurer Report on the bulletin board by the elevator.

## P-16 & CALLED WORKER TUITION APPLICATIONS DUE FEBRUARY 1

P-16 Tuition Assistance applications for assisting students attending WELS preschool, elementary, secondary, and college level schools are due February 1 for the spring semester. Likewise, called worker applications which assist students going into ministry are due February 1. Applications for both are available in the narthex to the right of the education bulletin board. Please place completed applications in the Board of Christian Education mailbox.

### JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

1 Decylin C.	5 Thomas M.	25 Christy C.
3 Henry M.	6 Diane T.	28 Mike S.
4 Allie M.	13 Tracy H.	29 Corey M.



### JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES

17 Joe & Kathleen P.  
22 Dave & Donna P.  
29 Scott & Colleen S.





The 15th Annual **Men Of His Word** Conference will be held at the Best Western Premier Waterfront Convention Center in Oshkosh on Saturday, **February 8.**

Speaker, session details and online registration are available at [www.menofhisword.org](http://www.menofhisword.org). **Financial support is available.** Contact any member of the Board of Christian Education. Approved support will be given before registration so the attendee can apply the money toward their costs.

The registration fee is \$75 for adults and \$35 for youth – these rates increase after January 21.

In Philippians 3:14 the apostle Paul reminds us that there is a prize at the end of this fight. He reminds us that God has called us to that prize in heaven. Through his word and the encouragement of one another, God himself will give us the strength to **FORGE AHEAD IN FAITH**. We invite you to attend the Men of His Word conference to receive such strength and encouragement to **FORGE AHEAD IN FAITH** in your own life.



Northland Lutheran High School  
and WELS United hosts:

# WELS YOUTH NIGHT

Sunday January 26 5:45 - 8:30pm  
at Northland Lutheran HS

Grades 8-12

## NERF WAR 2

### REVENGE OF THE NERF

WELS membership not required.  
Invite your friends!

FELLOWSHIP MUSIC PIZZA GAMES



Register at <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/9040A48AEAF22AAF94-54006224-youth>

**Mark your calendar for these upcoming events!**

CAMP PHILLIP 2025	
Jan 10-12	Winter Teen Retreat (8-12)
Feb 28 - Mar 2	Women's Quilting Retreat
Mar 28-30	Spring Teen Retreat (8-12)
April 4-6	Women's Retreat
April 25-27	Woodcutting Weekend
May 9-10	Disc Golf Retreat
May 16-18	Spring Work Weekend
May 23-26	Memorial Day Weekend Camping (Half price camping!)
May 31	Fancy Schmancy Fundraiser Dinner

Visit [www.campphillip.com](http://www.campphillip.com) for more information.

## Church Decorating at Christ Lutheran



## **Make a Difference with SCRIP!**

Support Northland Lutheran High School (NLHS) effortlessly with SCRIP! Choose from a wide selection of gift cards and make your everyday purchases count. Connect with **Cindy, our church's SCRIP coordinator**, to place your order today.

### **How does SCRIP work?**

**You purchase gifts cards for your everyday expenses such as gas, groceries, clothing, household items or dining out. A percentage of each gift card you purchase is given to NLHS as a rebate.** For example, Kwik Trip offers a 5% rebate so if you purchase a \$100 card from the NLHS Scrip Program, NLHS receives \$5 from the transaction.

### **Which businesses offer SCRIP cards?**

See the full listing on the back side of this page, on the SCRIP table in the church narthex and in the rack to the right of the Education bulletin board in the hallway.

### **What is the SCRIP Tuition Credit option?**

This option allows you to split the rebate from your SCRIP purchases 50/50 between Northland Lutheran High School and your family. Using the example from above, the \$5 rebate would now be split with \$2.50 going to NLHS and \$2.50 being 'banked' for your family's personal tuition obligation. All accounts are maintained by the NLHS SCRIP Office and tuition credits that accumulate are used the following academic year.

### **How do I start a family account for the SCRIP Tuition Credit option?**

Complete a Family Agreement form (available at the NLHS SCRIP Office or contact NLHS at 715-359-3400) and submit it to the NLHS SCRIP Office. Once the form has been completed, your account will begin accruing tuition credit with your first SCRIP purchase.

Accounts may be opened for newborns through 12th grade students. Once your family account has been started, grandparents, family members, coworkers, neighbors or friends can have their SCRIP purchases applied to your account – just have them provide your family account's name and account number at the time of purchase.

## **Dime and Dollar**

Dime and Dollar is a thrift store that is made up largely of volunteers. This ministry shares God's Word with the community and provides necessary items to the community at reduced prices. Dime and Dollar also provides tuition assistance support for all Northland families by contributing about \$200,000 per year and has given over \$3 million to Northland over the years. Please consider how you can serve by donating clothes, volunteering at the store, serving as a Board member, helping with maintenance and clothes pick up, etc. Locations are at 211 Alexander St in Wausau and 1351 8th St S in Wisconsin Rapids.