

Thursday, January 8, 2026

“Don’t be conformed to the patterns of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds so that you can figure out what God’s will is—what is good and pleasing and mature.” Romans 12:1

Happy New Year, Beloveds.

Are you one of those individuals who enters the New Year full steam ahead with a fresh vision board and a list of goals you hope to accomplish?

There is something new and refreshing about the new year, but I saw this quote the other day that says:

“This January, if you feel low and heavy and unready—please remember that in nature, the new year begins in spring. January is not nature’s rest. March is. In a few months’ time temperatures will rise and the days will be long enough to actually do things. Nature is still unwinding. It’s okay if you are too.” Sian Wilmot

This resonated with me because it felt like permission to not make a bunch of goals and chase after new ambitions just because everyone else is. I saw so many social media posts as December was winding down about how many books people read and how many miles people walked. There’s nothing wrong with celebrating your achievements and accomplishments, but just because everyone else is doing it, does not mean I have to follow suit.

So what if focusing on how many books, miles, or macros for the new year and how that that is going to “transform us,” what if we shifted to the renewing of our minds by simply being more intentional, purposeful, and consistent in the ways we Love God and Love Others?

The Message Paraphrase bible phrases Romans 12:1-2 this way:

“So here’s what I want you to do, God helping you: Take your everyday, ordinary life—your sleeping, eating, going-to-work, and walking-around life—and place it before God as an offering. Embracing what God does for you is the best thing you can do for him. Don’t become so well-adjusted to your culture that you fit into it without even thinking. Instead, fix your attention on God. You’ll be changed from the inside out. Readily recognize what he wants from you, and quickly respond to it. Unlike the culture around you, always dragging you down to its level of immaturity, God brings the best out of you, develops well-formed maturity in you.”

For those of you who are serving on a leadership team in 2026, both new and returning, we will be having a Leadership Kick Off on Sunday, January 25th after worship. We will share in a time of fellowship with a potluck (bring something to share!) and then spend some time learning, discussing, preparing, planning, and praying for our new year ahead.

Remember over the next several Sundays while I am still in my coaching season, we will be having a variety of guest speakers/preachers with us in worship. During these Sundays, we will be collecting a Love Offering for each of their ministries. If you are able and feel so led, please consider what you can give above your normal tithes and offerings. The children have created some extra special envelopes for the Love Offerings that you will find in your bulletin each of those three Sundays.

THIS SUNDAY we will have Rev. Nancy Lane who is the IGRC Coordinator of Camping and Retreat Ministries with us. Y'all! She's bringing S'Mores Indoors and all kinds of great camp merch! Don't miss!

See you in worship!

Pastor Becky

Ways to share LOVE with those experiencing Food Insecurity

Donate Items for the Upper Rock Island County Food Pantry located at Messiah Lutheran Church. PRAISE GOD! The Shelves are FULL!!!! Keep watching for updates.

Support places that support the people with your prayers, presence, or gifts:

Two Rivers UMC Weekly Meal Sight [Service – Two Rivers Church](#)
Cafe on Vine [Building Community One Meal At A Time | Café On Vine](#)
NEST Cafe [NEST](#)

Ways to share LOVE with our neighbors at Whispering Hills

Items for Mission Welcome Kits: The Mission Committee is preparing ongoing Welcome Kits for new residents at Whispering Hills. The following items are needed: shampoo, body soap, deodorant, toothpaste, toothbrushes, dish soap, small laundry detergent, cleaning wipes, small all-purpose cleaner, single-roll paper towels, and a 4-pack of toilet paper. Thank you for your donations and support of this local mission!

Ways to share LOVE with victims of Hurricane Melissa

UMCOR International Disaster Response (Advance #982450)
<https://igrc.brtapp.com/page/donate/umcor-international>

Midwest Mission Hurricane Relief (Advance #6620)
<https://give.midwestmission.org/donate/hurricanerelief>

Ways to share LOVE with the Leesman Family

Prayers: Pray! Pray! Pray! Please continue to PRAY!

Meals or monetary donations: If you would like to make a monetary donation towards fuel for Pastor Krey's travel to and from Galesburg for treatments.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

If you need anything church-related, please contact Pastor Becky, Nikki Stuart, or Melissa Hogren until further notice.

Pastor Becky: 309-292-2287

Nikki Stuart: 309-738-8099

Melissa Hogren 309-230-8400

If you would like to schedule an event at the church, send an email to portbyronfirstumc@gmail.com and someone will provide you with the building agreement, policies, and forms to book the date on the church calendar.

Please check out the sign-up sheet in the Fellowship Hall to **SHARE LOVE** with the GROW community by providing and serving them a meal

Every Wednesday- GROW: a faith community for youth in grades 6-12. Doors open at 6:30 pm, Dinner is at 7:00 pm, and Discipleship Activities 7:30-8:30 pm.

Every Sunday-Discipleship Groups for PreK-12th Grade 9:30 am-10:15 am

SAVE THE DATE! Vacation Bible School June 8-10th 9am-11:30 am. Snowball Mountain Challenge!

We're excited to announce our **2026 Summer Youth Service Trip to Detroit, Michigan**, to partner with **Motown Mission** as we serve and learn more about city and our neighbors who live there. We have 20 youth spots reserved for students in grades 8-12 for the week of July 19-25, 2026. See Pastor Becky for more information! Deposits and paperwork are due by February 1st. Incentives available for those who register early!

Coming Up-

Sunday, January 11th-Noisy Offering for Missions after the Children's Message

Sunday, January 11th-CAMP SUNDAY .Guest Speaker: Rev. Nancy Lane, IGRC Coordinator of Camping and Reiterat Ministries. We will be collecting a Love Offering for Camping Ministries.

Sunday, January 18th-Guest Speaker: Caitlin Floyd, Cunningham Children's Home Development Officer. We will be collecting a love offering

Sunday, January 25th-Guest Speaker: Rev. Shawna Speaker, Chaplain, Chaddock Children's Home. We will be collecting a love offering

Sunday, January 25th, Leadership Kick Off/Potluck-Immediately following worship! For all new and returning leaders who will be serving on church leadership teams for 2026. Bring a dish to share, gather with your team, learn about the roles and responsibilities of your team, set goals and meeting schedules.