

Thursday, December 11, 2025

Last week in worship, we turned to prophets Malachi and John the Baptist, and were invited through scripture to look beyond personal serenity and consider the kind of peace our world needs. Both prophets proclaimed that the Messiah was coming with a peace that purifies, restores, and reorders the world.

While having a sense of inward, quiet peace is important for our well-being, the world is bigger than our personal serenity. We cannot have “peace on earth” while people still suffer under systems of oppression and inequality. Nor can we claim true peace for ourselves while others are denied safety, dignity, or freedom. So we pray and work for the “*peace that was meant to be.*” A peace where evil, oppression, and injustice are no more. A peace God intends for all creation to have and experience.

This week we will talk about Unexpected Joy. Give Isaiah 61:1–4, 8–11 and Luke 1:39–55 a read and let the Holy Spirit start to stir in your heart and prepare you for what God has to say to us on Sunday.

I wanted to share with you some AMAZING things some of our younger disciples have said recently. In Discipleship Group a few Sundays ago, Kathy Mahraun gave her students an opportunity to make a list of some ideas to “petition the pastors.” This week I asked our P3 students to write out their definition of Church. Give them all a good read and let them wow, bless, and inspire you!

“Petition the Pastors” from the 3-5th grade Discipleship Group

- More baptisms
- More prayer
- Sunday night fun (early) family and food
- Sand Volleyball pit (student said he would make this his Eagle Scout project)
- Always donuts
- Game night.

Definitions of Church from our P3 (Confirmation) Students

- The church is a peaceful place where people come to worship. The church is understanding of actions, words, and thoughts, so you can be compassionate towards yourself and others. The church is a holy family.
- Church is a place where the congregation goes and worships and prays. They love and are at peace at church
- The church is a safe and Holy place where you can share your beliefs.
- The place where people come together in faithfulness and joy.
- Church is a place where you can find love, safety, and acceptance.
- To define Church, you may think of it as a place to find peace, faith, connection, or to learn more. Church can also be a place, like family, where everyone is together.

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. Immediate needs: pancake mix, cake mix, children's cereal, corn muffin mix, canned pasta, condiments (ketchup & ranch).. ***Be sure that your donations are within the "best by/best use" expiration date and that the item has not been opened. The food pantry cannot accept items that are expired.*** Thank you for your continuing support of this ministry!

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 donate a meal, please contact Kathy. Monetary donations towards fuel for Erin and/or takeout meals while she and the kids travel to Peoria can also be made. Please let any of us know, and we will make sure she receives it.

Child care: If you would enjoy spending some time with Lewis and Wesley, Please let us know if this interests you.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

If you need anything church related, please contact Pastor Becky, Nikki, or Kathy until further notice.

Pastor Becky: 309-292-2287
Nikki Stuart: 309-738-8099
Kathy Mahraun: 646-729-3919

If you would like to schedule an event at the church, contact Steph at 309-848-4050 or portbyronfirstumc@gmail.com. She will provide you with the building agreement, policies, and forms to book the date on the church calendar.

Steph's Office Hours: Wednesday 8 am-12 pm, Thursdays 8-10 am

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

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 for those who register early!

Coming Up-

*If you/your family/your friend would like to be an Advent reader, please let Pastor Becky know!

Sunday, December 14th-Children collect Noisy Offering for Missions after Children's Moment

Monday, December 15th-Frist Day of Hanukkah

Wednesday, December 17th- Early Bird Deadline 1 for Youth Service trip to Detroit!

Sunday, December 21st, Choir Practice 9:30am

Sunday, December 21st-Kids Korner after the Children's Message

Sunday, December 21st, Choir Sings during worship

Wednesday, December 24th-Christmas Eve Celebration Service 7 pm. We will have a time of fellowship following the service.

If the 7 pm time does not work for you, or you prefer a quieter, more reflective Christmas Eve, the Sanctuary will be open and available until 10 pm for anyone to come and sit in the presence of God in that place, surrounded by the lights all aglow.

Thursday, December 25th-Saturday, January 3, 2026-Pastor Becky on vacation. Please contact Kathy Mahraun or Nikki Stuart with any emergencies.