

# CLC NEWSLETTER

February 2026



## Vision & Mission

"Gathered in the love of Christ, we connect, grow and serve."  
Central Lutheran Church exists to make disciples: people who are passionate about following Jesus and living their faith each and every day.



## Inside

Page 2	Pastor Short's Message
Page 3	Pastor Massa's Message
Page 4	Worship, Music & Arts
Page 5	Child Care Center News
Page 6	CLC Events
Page 7	Children, Youth & Family Events
Page 8	Council Report
Page 9	Council Report Continued
Page 10	Financial Report, Annual Meeting,
Page 11	Church Calendar

# A MESSAGE FROM OUR DIRECTING PASTOR



REV.  
MICHAEL  
SHORT

Brothers and Sisters in Christ;

As you read this I am halfway around the world on a mission trip with our synod visiting our companion synod in Tanzania. Each of the synod's in the ELCA are matched up with a companion synod in the ELCA along with a companion synod elsewhere in the world. For us in the Southeastern Synod of MN, our companion synods are the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania – Central Diocese and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Colombia.

Part of being a companion synod is building relationships between the synods and between individual congregations within the synods. These partnerships/relationships with other synods and congregations have been a part of the life and ministry of Central for decades. It was back in Nov of 2023 that we welcomed Bishop Ata, who at the time was the presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Colombia. He came and spoke during worship and met with some of our immigrant families. Since then, we have remained in a relationship with him and with the church in Colombia.

Our relationship with the Central Diocese in Tanzania has even deeper roots. Many of our members have traveled to do mission work, to assist in building a clinic and supported missionaries from Central. It was back in the 1980's, according to our history, that we entered into a relationship with Immanuel Lutheran Church in Singida, Tanzania. During my trip one of the places I will be visiting will be with the people at Immanuel seeking to re-establish our relationship.

Over the past couple of years, our Synod has assisted the Central Diocese in building a school, specifically a school for girls. During our trip I will participate along with our bishop, Regina Hassanally in the dedication of the school. In that culture, women and girls often have limited opportunities for education. As such, the Central Diocese is naming the school the Bishop Regina School for Girls, as a way to lift up the role of women in society as well as in the church. I will have much to share with all of you upon my return. In the meantime, please pray for us as we travel as well as for the people in the Central Diocese of Tanzania and in the Lutheran Church in Colombia. These are places of great growth for the Lutheran Church and for Christianity in the world.

I also want to thank you and the CLC Foundation for your support. As our relationships grow with our companion synods, I invite you to consider participating, by traveling or finding ways to connect with our brothers and sisters in Tanzania or Colombia. I will provide additional information about how you might do so upon my return.

God's work and mission extend beyond the walls of Central, beyond the Winona area. The mission of Central and of the greater church is to take the Good News to the ends of the Earth.

Peace,  
Pr Michael

# A MESSAGE FROM OUR ASSOCIATE PASTOR

Sisters and Brothers in Christ:

On the morning before one of the coldest days of the year, I sat in the sanctuary with over 40 kids under the age of 5, talking about the calling of the disciples, as told by a children's Bible. I started out our weekly chapel lesson by asking the kids- "Shake your head yes (up and down) or no (left and right) if God loves you!" Almost all of them shook their heads as they agreed that "Yes, God loves them!". Then, I asked the toddlers and preschoolers that sat there to tell their classmates sitting next to them that God loves them. All of us in the room, teachers included, looked to someone next to them and said "God loves you!".

I asked the group of excited, giggly little kids with their bright smiles if that was hard to tell people that God loves them. They all screamed "NOOOOO!" We then went on to sing a few songs (one of my favorites being a song we lovingly call the "Hippo Song"), and read the children's Bible story on the calling of the disciples- making them fishers of people. One of the things that stuck with me on that morning was how easy it was for all of us to say "it wasn't hard to tell my friend next to me that God loves them". The reality for some of us as adults may not be as easy as that. Furthermore, saying and doing are two different things. How many of us find it's hard, especially in the charged political environment of our present day, to treat others like the beloved children of God that they are- no matter what they do in life.

We are called, church, to love our neighbors, to care for one another and to speak about God's radical love, grace and mercy for all. It is easy to say that we know that we are all beloved children of God, but it's harder to look past peoples' mistakes and choices in life and say that no matter what- they are still a child of God, forgiven and loved. Treating people like children of God still asks us to speak up for the oppressed, serve our neighbors, fight for justice and strive for peace, but it also calls us to act with love and decency towards one another.

You beloved, are loved by God, no matter what. You are loved, you are forgiven, you have been offered grace. As we move into February, and a winter that will no doubt continue on, I pray that you find peace and joy in loving God and knowing you are loved by God. I pray that you too find it easy to tell others by your words and actions that they are also loved.

In Christ,

Pastor Kristen Massa



REV.  
KRISTEN  
MASSA



# A MESSAGE FROM OUR WORSHIP, MUSIC & ARTS DIRECTOR



*"As long as the earth endures, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night will never cease."  
(Genesis 8:22)*

## IT'S NEVER TOO EARLY TO THINK ABOUT SUMMER!

The coldest time of the year is, perhaps, the best time to think warm thoughts of summer.

Although summer seems light-years away, now is a good time for us to plan for our outdoor worship schedule and reserve the spaces.

Central is once again looking towards warmer days and would like your input.

Last year, we were only rained out once, unfortunately, at the Minnesota Marine Art Museum

- Minnesota Marine Art Museum
- Levee Park
- Lake Park Bandshell
- Unity Park
- Windom Park
- Central's front yard

Where are your favorites? Do you have other suggestions?

## WE VALUE YOUR INPUT

Write your comments below and bring this page to worship in the next few weeks or drop off with Shayna. Let us know which of the venues listed you prefer and why. Or tells us where some other places are we should consider holding our outdoor summer services.

Thank you for taking time to during these cold days to think about the warmth to come.

It continues to be my honor, privilege, and joy to serve this amazing congregation.

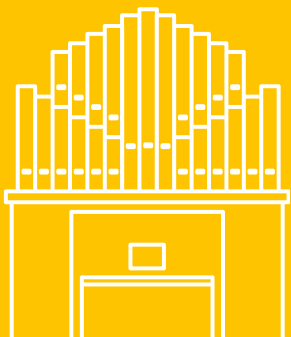
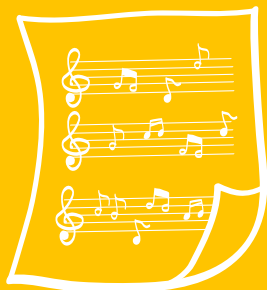
Blessings, always.

—  
A. Eric Heukeshoven, M.S.  
Director of Worship, Music & Arts



Princess Wenonah searching for spring

A. ERIC  
HEUKESHOVEN



**Mission: Provide the building blocks of child care by creating learning opportunities infused with faith while supporting the whole family**

## The Numbers

Central Lutheran Church Child Care Center is currently serving 41 families. We have 13 infant, 16 toddler, 15 preschool, and 12 4K children at the center. We have 40 staff who work at the center supporting the needs of the children. Those needs require 130 hours daily to have the center running at the successful rate it is!



## Butter Braid Fundraiser

Sending a big THANK YOU to all those who ordered Butter Braids from the Center's Fundraiser! Your orders are helping make a difference in the lives of our children and their families. All proceeds will go towards new experiences and equipment to enhance the child care programming. Butter Braids will be delivered on Wednesday, February 4. Please coordinate with the office for your pick up. Thank you so much for your continued support of this ongoing mission for the Winona Community!



**Thank you for your support of  
CLC CCC and the team!**

Questions, please contact us...  
[childcarecenter@centrallutheranchurch.org](mailto:childcarecenter@centrallutheranchurch.org)

# CLC EVENTS



WELCA held its annual meeting on Sunday, January 26<sup>th</sup> in Grace Hall in between church services. The meeting reviewed activities from 2025 and elected new officers for the coming year as well as discussed plans for the 2026 year. At the time of writing this the slate of officers to be voted into service for 2026 are: President - Gayle Garrity, President elect- Betty Lou Pries, Past President - Janet Heukeshoven, Secretary - Sheri Maier, and Treasurer - Gloria Freiheit.

All confirmed women at CLC are already members of WELCA - you're welcome to participate in WELCA activities and planning for 2026. Meetings are held at church the first Monday of the month at 9:30 am. All are welcome to come to meetings. If you are interested in becoming more active in any WELCA activity or have ideas for new initiatives please contact one of the officers. Becoming active in WELCA means deepening friendships, learning new skills, assisting CLC with a variety of outreach and fundraising, and experiencing spiritual growth. I thank everyone for allowing me to serve as president this past year, I look forward to assisting and serving WELCA in new ways in 2026. - Janet Heukeshoven

## Central Lutheran Book Group

**Central Lutheran Book Group has a new meeting time. The group will meet on the second Friday of every month at 10:00 am.** Please consider joining us. Contact Rev. Diane Markevitch 608-642-1542 or Gayle Garrity for more information.

The reading list:

February 13: Barking at the Choir by Gregory Boyle. "Barking at the Choir offers a snapshot into the challenges and joys of life on the margins through the people Boye meets."

March 13: Theo of Golden by Allen Levi

April 10: Culpability by Bruce Holsinger

May 8: The Book Woman of Troublesome Creek by Kim Michele Richardson

June 12: The Satisfaction Cafe by Kathy Wang

## FEAST

The FEAST is serving up warm hearty meals throughout the chilly winter months. We have cooks lined up for lots of great meals, but we need dessert bakers. Can you contribute 2 dozen bars or cookies? No need to be extra fancy or make for the whole crowd, bring what you can. If you can commit to a week, please call Pam Davick at 507-459-2806 and she will schedule you for a week. Thanks in advance!

Cooks and menus for February:

February 4: Watkins- come and be surprised!

February 11: Cindy Pye- Shepherds Pie

February 18: Tami Lubinski-Turkey gravy over mashed potatoes

February 25: Cindy Pye-Chicken dumpling soup

## Prayer Shawls

"When you give a prayer shawl you are giving the warmth of God's love. Prayer shawls are made with care and love. If you are interested in giving a prayer shawl contact the church office 507-452-5156 or Sheri Maier 507-458-5574."

# CENTRAL/FAITH LUTHERAN YOUTH MISSION TRIP FISH FRY

Support youth from both Central and Faith Lutheran as they raise money for their summer mission trip to Denver, CO!

Dine-in or  
take out!



\$15/++  
ticket

Friday February 20th, 5-7pm @ the Winona Eagles Club

# BLAZE

igniting the central flame of faith

FEBRUARY 28, 2026 10AM-7PM

a day long faith retreat for 8th-12<sup>th</sup> graders

register here:



experience connection, good food,  
meaningful worship and  
conversation on how we  
authentically engage in our faith.

Cost: \$20 (Includes lunch and dinner)

CENTRAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

259 W. WABASHA ST.

WINONA, MN

507-452-5256

[prmassa@centrallutheranchurch.org](mailto:prmassa@centrallutheranchurch.org)



# FAMILY BINGO NIGHT

February 27

LIGHT DINNER AND SNACKS- 5:30-6PM  
BINGO- 6-7PM

All  
ages  
invited!



# CHURCH COUNCIL

## COUNCIL REPORT: NOVEMBER 18, 2025

**PRESENT:** Pastor Short, Pastor Massa, Steve Everson, Tim Laib, Steve Hacken, Scott Mlynczak, Julie Palubicki, Myrna Olson

**ABSENT:** Tammy Swenson Lepper

Steve Everson called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and opened with devotions.

### APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Steve Hacken moved, Tim seconded, carried to approve the agenda.

### COMMITTEE REPORT – Social Concerns

Kathy Benke gave an update to Council of the projects and areas of support the Social Concerns Committee has been involved in. Members of the committee have delivered meals to people through Volunteer Services. They have worked with Habitat for Humanity, sponsored Red Cross blood drives, raised money through the mum flower sale in the fall along with selling Rada knives. The Social Concerns Committee is very active and helps in different ways. Council thanked Kathy for the information provided.

### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Scott moved, Julie seconded, carried to approve the October 21, 2025, minutes.

### TREASURER'S REPORT

Steve Hacken presented the following Treasurer's Report..

#### October Treasurer's Report

Here are some general financial summary numbers through the end of October

October Income:	\$38,489
October Offering:	\$35,827
Year to Date Income:	\$417,489
October Expenses:	\$47,238
Year to Date Expenses:	\$579,109
October Balance:	(\$8,749)
Year to Date Balance	(\$161,610)

Following discussion, Tim moved, Steve Everson seconded, carried to approve the October Treasurer's Report.

### OLD BUSINESS

#### Child Care Center Expansion

A date has been set to meet with Faith Lutheran regarding the expansion of the Child Care Center at Faith.

#### Review of Constitution and By-Laws

The review of the Constitution continues.

#### Purchase of House

Pastor Short informed the Council that the closing for the house at 260 West Sanborn will be on December 27, 2025, at a price of \$230,000.

### PAST PRESIDENT

Scott Mlynczak

### PRESIDENT

Steve Everson

### PRESIDENT

#### ELECT

Tim Laib

### TREASURER

Steve Hacken

### SECRETARY

Myrna Olson

### AT LARGE

Tammy  
Swenson-  
Lepper

### AT LARGE

Julie Palubicki



# COUNCIL REPORT CONTINUED

## NEW BUSINESS

### Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee will provide a list of nominations for open positions at the 2026 Annual Meeting for congregation consideration and approval.

## FEAST

The Council selected March 4, 2026, as the date they will cook for the Feast. Menu to be determined.

## STAFF REPORTS

Staff reports were reviewed:

### PASTORS:

- Weekly staff meetings
- Planning for organ renewal fundraising
- Working on review of Constitution and By-Laws and CLC policies
- Working on purchase of house and fundraising
- New member class on November 16
- Preparing for Advent and Christmas
- Weekly Confirmation
- Wonders of Worship
- Ten students were confirmed on October 26
- Gathering Expedition Retreat at Lutherdale in Elkhorn, Wisconsin. Eight students and two chaperones
- Fundraising planning for youth mission trip in 2026

### STAFF:

- The annual Messiah Sing-In will be on December 6.
- The Child Care Center has 49 children enrolled serving 38 families

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

- Worship and Welcome – picture directory completed
- Start Advent and Christmas planning
- Personnel Committee reviewing policies
- Foundation met in November, approval of support for house and approval of reimbursements
- Worship and Music overseeing picture directory
- Properties Committee waiting for estimates for Shayna's desk area
- Fundraising in February 2026 will focus on organ fundraising and the sanctuary updates will be put on hold due to the fundraising for the purchase of the house
- CLC Foundation approve up to \$15,000 to carpet Grace Hall

Steve Hacken moved, Julie seconded, carried to approve the staff and committee reports.

### Child Care Center Proposed 2026 Tuition Increase

The Council was presented with a proposed 2026 Tuition Enrollment Contract with increased rates. Following discussion, Scott moved, Steve Everson seconded, carried to approve the increase in tuition rates for 2026.

Closed with the Lord's Prayer. The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 P.M.

Next meeting will be December 16, 2025.

Myrna Olson  
Secretary

# CHURCH COUNCIL

## PAST PRESIDENT

Scott Mlynczak

## PRESIDENT

Steve Everson

## PRESIDENT ELECT

Tim Laib

## TREASURER

Steve Hacken

## SECRETARY

Myrna Olson

## AT LARGE

Tammy  
Swenson-  
Lepper

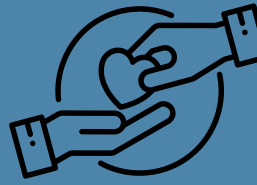
## AT LARGE

Julie Palubicki



# FINANCIAL REPORT

December 2025  
 Total Income: \$113,092.73  
 Total Expenses: \$53,672.80  
 Offering Goal: \$88,630.00



Thank you for your support of Central's Ministry

Gifts in memory or honor of someone **Memorials December 8, 2025 through January 15, 2026**

**Thrivent Choice Dollars**  
**Given by** Mark Boysen, Marilyn Marquardt,  
 Hayley Martin

**In Memory of Conway Elton**  
**Given by** Mia Martin, John Dave & Betsy Rowekamp, James & Betty Pries, Robert Skeels, Harvey & Kathleen Schulz, Ann & Mark Houge, Don & Joni Klagge, Frank & Diane Wohletz, David & Lynn Theurer, Kevin & Vicky Haessig, Sharon & Clifton Kjos, Dick & Jaci Will, Don & Donna Peterson, Carol Pflughoeft, Marlene Flanagan, MaryAnn Severson, Ruth Streater, Dorothy Sorum, LaVern & Nancy Hauschildt, Kevin & Marsha Mehus, Dean & Mary Auna, Arden & Sharon Auna, Lois Morken, John & Patricia Brandt, Christine Wetstone, Donna Riggle, Lee & Pat Buxengard, Brad & Ellen Turner

**Memory of Maryanne Duffy Hohener**  
**Given by** Donna Goede

## Designated Gifts in December

Building Maintenance Fund	\$468.00
WVS Food Shelf	\$3,303.00
Building Purchase	\$22,466.00
Youth Fund	\$220.00
Organ Fund	\$1,167.00
FEAST	\$1,377.00
Youth Mission	\$13,469.00
WELCA	\$4,799.00
Hannah Circle	\$647.00

CENTRAL  
LUTHERAN  
CHURCH

**ANNUAL MEETING**  
**FEBRUARY 8, 2026**  
**@ 9:30 IN GRACE HALL**

**JOIN US IN PERSON OR VIA ZOOM**  
[HTTPS://US02WEB.ZOOM.US/j/82482553337](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82482553337)  
 FWD=6P5B8WLD1A0GVBJ2FCWM  
 NOAANBWTC1





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55987

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## What's Coming Up

**Feb 8-** 9:30 am, Annual Meeting

**Feb 17-** Newsletter Articles Due

**Feb 18-** Ash Wednesday

9 am - 4 pm, Drive Thru Ashes

6:30 pm, Ash Wednesday Service

**Feb 20-** 5:00 pm, Youth Fish Fry Fundraiser - Eagle's Club

**Feb 27-** 5:30 pm, Free Family Bingo & Pizza Night

**Feb 28-** 10 am - 7 pm, SEMN Youth Retreat



507.452.5156

Contact Us

[centrallutheranchurch.org](http://centrallutheranchurch.org)



[office@centrallutheranchurch.org](mailto:office@centrallutheranchurch.org)

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