



January 2026

the VINE

Dear Grand Avenue Church Family and Friends,

Happy New Year and welcome to 2026. The fresh start of a New Year is typically a time in which we look forward. It is a time for fresh starts and new beginnings. It is this perspective that spawned the popular practice of New Year's resolutions. People seeking to make positive changes entering a new year that that will improve their lives. Conversely this chronological line of demarcation can be a time to reflect on the journey of our lives, where we are and how we got here. This contemplative process of critical introspection is one that is necessary for us to be awake in our present and move with lucidity into our future. This concept of conscious self-awareness is captured by the ancient Greek philosopher Socrates who said, "The unexamined life is not worth living." It is in this mindset that I sit quietly thinking about the many New Year days that I have passed in arriving here today. I juxtapose my adult children with my memories of them as small children running around laughing and playing. I think back to times of joy and difficulty in my life. This paradigm is one that allows us to be truly connected to our lives, a participatory posture that connects our past, present and enables us to embrace our future. This perspective is one that we should also apply to our faith. As we look forward to a fresh start in the New Year let us examine how God has loved and cared for us over these many changing life circumstances that have brought each us to this point.

As we begin a New Year we can look back at how God has been with us, loving and sustaining us, through the many tosses and turns of this life. This provides us with a renewed sense of comfort and is a great means of strengthening our confidence in the truth that God loves us and walks with us. It is also an excellent opportunity to examine our path of discipleship and resolve to strengthen it in the coming year. While there is no doubt there are many New Year resolutions that can be beneficial, none could provide a greater benefit for us than strengthening our relationship with God.

Romans 12:1-2, "I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, on the basis of God's mercy, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your reasonable act of worship. Do not be conformed to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of the mind, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect."

Mark 12:28-31, "Which commandment is the first of all?" Jesus answered, "The first is, 'Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one; you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' The second is this, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these."

Happy New Year,

Pastor Vince

CELEBRATE

Happy Birthday

Larry Maechtle	1	Charles Kirkendall	23
Tori Meins	3	Ann Schmidt	23
Cathy Guse	12	Rick De Yarman	25
Lin Lohr	13	Vince Pepin	26
Axton Meins	16	Rama Bharadwaj	27
Larry Caro	19	Gregg Lentz	30

VOLUNTEERS

Thank you, Volunteers, for serving in our ministry!

Date	Usher	Liturgist	Cupbearer	Coffee Host	AV
1/4	Larry Maechtle	Cathy Guse	Cathy Guse	Needed*	Scott Penkivech
1/11	Larry Maechtle	Mary Downing	n/a	Needed*	Scott Penkivech
1/18	Larry Maechtle	Nancy Haacke	n/a	Needed*	Scott Penkivech
1/25	Larry Maechtle	Marc Eernisse	n/a	Needed*	Scott Penkivech

*Please see sign-up sheet on the church bulletin board.

Worship Committee

We are forming a Worship Committee again this year to plan our Lenten & Easter services. The **first meeting is Sunday, January 4th**, following worship.

If you want to share ideas and look at ways to enhance our Lent & Easter worship, please sign up on the bulletin board and plan to attend.

Fair Trade Coffee



We are collecting orders again for fair trade coffee. Equal Exchange is a fair-trade organization that eliminates the middleman, offering farmers a fairer price for their product and labor. Equal Exchange makes it simple to buy coffee that supports our social justice values.

Organic Breakfast Blend	\$8.75 per 12oz. bag
Organic French Roast	\$9.25 per 10oz. bag
Organic Decaf	\$10.25 per 12oz. bag

Please see the order form on the counter in the narthex.

CHRISTMAS JOY

Awesome Women Christmas Dinner

Thank you to all the women of the church that could attend this year's Awesome Women Christmas Dinner at Plier's Full Circle Restaurant. It was a delightful evening with entertainment from the Port Washington High School choir, Limited Edition.



(Photo credit: Gwen Freier)

MISSIONS & OUTREACH



Non-Perishable Donation Needs

Pudding Snacks, Canned Fruit, Fruit Cups, Applesauce, Boxed Potatoes, Beef Stew, Soups, Pasta, Pasta Sauce, Canned Chicken, Oatmeal, Peanut Butter, & Toilet Paper.



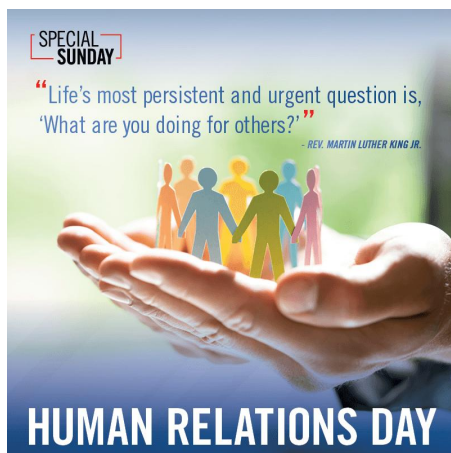
Meal Week Thank You!

We plan to serve 20 guests at the Portlight Shelter during our meal week this week. Thank you to Kay Hamann, Nancy Haacke, Mary Kae Geittmann, Ardelle Dionne, Mary Downing, Sue Merrill, Sandy Grams, Rama Bharadwaj, Jeff Killey, and Cheryl & John Wozniak for donating food and other items to the New Year's Eve buffet. Also thank you to everyone that donated money toward the pizzas we are serving on New Year's Day.

Current Shelter Needs

Gift Cards (especially gasoline gift cards), Kitchen Dish Towels, O Cedar Easy Wring Mop Heads/Handles, Latex-Free/Powder-Free Gloves - Size Large, Scotch-Brite Non-Scratch dish wand Refill Sponges, non-scratch cleaning sponges, toilet paper, size 4 diapers, and training pants/pull-ups size 2T/3T, and men's shampoo/body wash.

[Portlight Shelter Amazon Wish List](#)



January 18th is Human Relations Day

On Human Relations Day, we answer God's call to love and serve by supporting programs that build strong communities. You can support this Special Sunday by making a special offering any Sunday in January and indicating "Human Relations Day" in the memo line.

FAITH GROUPS & ACTIVITIES



January Events



January 4th from 6:30-8:00 pm – Lighthouse Life Night

Lighthouse Life Nights will be offered once a month and will be a mix of games, conversation, and activities centered around a particular topic for each night. This semester, we will continue walking through the Bible together and digging into the Gospels and other New Testament themes as we explore God's story of love and redemption for the world.

January 11th from 1:00-5:00 pm – Skiing/Snow Tubing at Sunburst

Come enjoy an afternoon of winter fun with friends as we hit the slopes together! We will carpool from Lighthouse and travel to Sunburst in Kewaskum. Students can choose between snow tubing, skiing, or snowboarding and Lighthouse will cover the rental/lift costs. Please come dressed for the weather and bring along some money for snacks if you'd like. Must RSVP to Christin & register on Sunburst's online portal by Sunday, January 4th.



**Note, Sunburst has switched over to being a cashless facility. There are machines onsite to convert cash to a preloaded Mastercard, which can be used there as well as anywhere Mastercard is accepted.*

Saturday, January 17th from 12:30-4:30 pm – Trip to America's Black Holocaust Museum



Join Lighthouse as well as other youth groups from around greater Milwaukee as we gather for an educational and reflective afternoon in celebration of Martin Luther King Jr. Day. We'll take part in a guided tour of the museum and afterwards there will be time for discussion and debriefing to help process the experience as we take a look at how racism has affected (and continues to affect) our nation, and how we as Christians are called to respond.

Please RSVP no later than Sunday, January 4th.

January 25th from 6:30-8:00 pm – Lighthouse Life Night

Lighthouse events are open to all students in grades 5-12.

Have questions or want to get involved?

Contact Director Christin Flucke at 262-483-9582 or email christin.flucke@lighthouseyouth.org

FAITH GROUPS & ACTIVITIES, cont.



One Voice in Prayer Community Prayer Group



✦ As we enter the New Year, do
you feel called to deepen
your prayer life?

✦ Would you like to develop a
closer personal relationship
with our Creator but aren't
sure where to begin?

Join us
in a welcoming, relaxed atmosphere
to pray for others, creation,
and the world.

Everyone is welcome!
Bring your prayer concerns and
requests, or simply join us in prayer,
thanksgiving, and music.

1st Wednesdays

beginning January 7th
9:30 am - 10:30 am

Meeting at
Christ the King
Lutheran Church
420 W. Whitefish Rd
Port Washington, WI

*...God's Spirit is right alongside
helping us along. If we don't know
how or what to pray, it
doesn't matter. He does our praying
in and for us, making prayer out of
our wordless sighs.
Romans 8:26, 27 Message Bible*

For more information

Contact Leslie Braun
lesliebraun050@gmail.com
(262) 227-8905

Sister Circle - Thursday, January 15th, 7:00 pm **Christ the King, 420 W Whitefish Rd, Port Washington**

We will continue our reading and discussing of the book, *The Resolution for Women* -New Revised Edition by Priscilla Shirer. For the January meeting, please read Part II: This is what I have sections: My Forgiveness and My Integrity.

Questions about Sister Circle or to get our newsletter, please contact Mary at 414-828-4675 or mariwags@gmail.com.

LOVE LIGHTS 2025

We give thanks for all the gifts of life and love. We praise God for the people who have so richly blessed our lives by offering this gift of "Love Lights".

In memory of George & Louise Fortier. They loved my whole family, and inspired me in a multitude of ways.
From Mary Downing & Family

In honor of Dave & Cathy Guse.
In memory of my sons Skip Holle & Michael Holle.
From Barbara Jones

In honor of our dear family and special friends.
In memory of our dear loved ones in heaven.
From Grace and Marc Eernisse

In honor of my daughter Chris Craig, son Todd Craig, and grandson Jake Craig & wife Jesse Craig.
In memory of my sister Jean Tippery.
From Pat Craig

In honor of family and friends.
In loving memory of my wonderful husband, Merton, my best friend and the love of my life.
From Margaret Lueptow

In honor of my son Hans Geittmann and granddaughter Brynne, who continually bring me joy.
In memory of my husband Phill Bruno, son Peter Geittmann, and grandson Mathias Geittmann – all deeply loved and always missed.
From Mary Kae Geittmann

In memory of Jim & Ron Swirth (Jackie's brothers).
From Jim and Jackie Sorenson

In memory of my parents, grandparents, sister-in-law Wendy, Gordon Dionne, Joanne Swanke, Helen Zyvoloski, and Michelle Pachner.
From Larry Maechtle

In memory of Michelle Pachner.
From Bonnie & George Pachner

In honor of my sons Dennis and Peter.
In memory of my parents, Wilfred & Alma Maechtle, and my husband Denny.
From Sue Merrill

In honor of my friend with a heart of gold, who makes me bacon-wrapped water chestnuts!
From Anonymous

In memory of David Olson and our parents.
From Anne Marie, Bryan, & Claire Olson

In memory of Norbert, Cathy's sister Luci.
From Cathy Guse

LOVE LIGHTS 2025, cont.

In honor of George & Clara Miller Family, William & Dorothy Martin Family, William & Emma Martin Family.
In memory of Fred & Johanna Wilke Family, Carl & Louise Setzer Family, Ben & Scooter Martin, and Wamdoodles Martin.

God bless my church family at Grand Ave UMC.

From Jay Martin

In loving memory of Wayne Frank, Missing You Always, From Spencer Frank Family. Sean Frank Family, Stefan Frank Family and Barbara.

From Frank Family

In memory of our daughter, Katie.

From Chuck and Lin Lohr

In honor of Social Justice and our bishop who bravely represents us as United Methodists.

In memory of my husband, Al Haacke, and my parents, Beth and Don Conway.

From Nancy Haacke

In memory of Nicolas Vincent Pepin.

From Pepin Family

In honor of Rama Bharadwaj.

From Jeff Killey

In honor of my kids Daniel, Glen, Vera Kroening, and Carolyn & Steve Werth; my grandkids Sarah, Emily, & Alexis Werth, and Kyle Kroening.

In memory of my beloved husband, Gordon.

From Ardelle Dionne

In honor of my family and "Joy".

In memory of Bob.

From Kay Hamann

In honor of our children Tab, Robyn, and Marty. Grandchildren Sarah, Brittany, Brandon and Nick. Great-grandchildren Aiden, Jordy, Ivy and Scarlet.

In memory of Mom & Dad Freeland, Mom & Dad Price, Brothers Kenny Price, Ken Freeland, and Phil Freeland. Sister-in-laws Shelly and Karol Freeland. Neice Kim Freeland, Sarah's Mom Donna, and Great nephew Tyler.

From Netta and Jake Freeland

In honor of Mom, Pastor Vince, Sherri Pepin and family, Pastor Dave and Cathy Guse and family, secretary Stacy Peters and organist Mason Thill.

In memory of Dad, Gordon Dionne, and Michelle Pachner.

From Joanne Koskamp

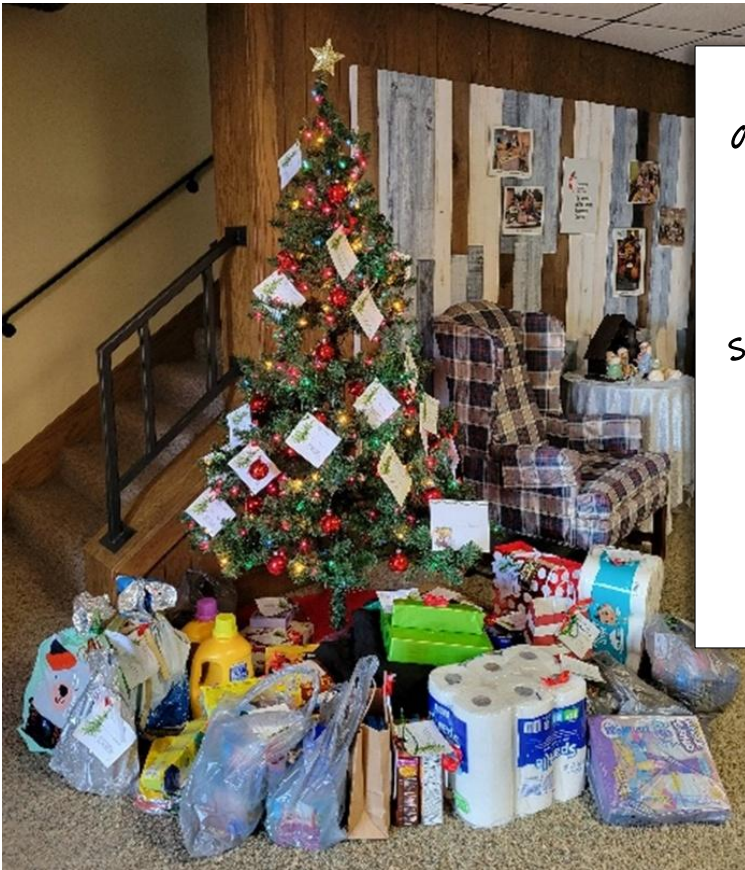
In honor of my daughter, Joanne, Pastor Vince, Sherri and family, Pastor Dave, Cathy and family, our organist, Mason, and all the faithful workers in our church.

In memory of Paul, my two sisters, Gordon Dionne, Helen Zyvoloski, Joanne Swanke, and Michelle Pachner.

From Edna Koskamp

THANK YOU NOTES

Thank you to all who participated in our Christmas Eve Candlelight service. The readings and special music selections made it a wonderful service! A special thank you to Mason Thill for not only all the regular hymns, but also for accompanying all the special music.



Thank you to everyone that donated to our Giving Tree for The Food Pantry and Family Promise. Thanks to your generosity we were able to spread some cheer and help our neighbors in need!



Dear GAUMC Council and Congregation,
Thank you all so much for your participation in our recent Giving Tuesday fundraiser! It was great to see several GAUMC folks there at the event enjoying the spaghetti, music, and of course the silent auction. 😊 Because of supporters like you, we raised \$14,000 which we will continue to pour into the youth of our community. Most of all, we thank you for your continued partnership with Lighthouse Youth Ministry – your prayers, financial support, and of course the use of our wonderful Lighthouse facility are all so greatly appreciated as we create a safe space for students to grow in faith and experience God's love.
Blessings, Christine Flucke and the Lighthouse Board



United Methodist Corner

One of those memorable songs that gets sung around Christmas time is “The Twelve Days of Christmas”. The song reminds us that Christmas is not over on December 26th. The season of Christmastide is twelve days in length leading to the Feast of Epiphany on January 6th. It’s a time when the church continues to celebrate and reflect on the meaning of Christ’s birth. I found a poem entitled “The Work of Christmas” written by the late Howard Thurman. Thurman was an Afro-American theologian, educator and civil rights leader. It is a very fitting piece for Christmas and the New Year ahead.

When the song of the angels is stilled,
when the star in the sky is gone,
when the kings and princes are home,
when the shepherds are back with their flocks,
the work of Christmas begins:
to find the lost,
to heal the broken,
to feed the hungry,
to release the prisoner,
to rebuild the nations,
to bring peace among the people,
to make music in the heart.

The poem “The Work of Christmas” is from Howard Thurman’s *The Mood of Christmas and Other Celebrations* and is used by permission of Friends United Press. All rights reserved.

On a personal note, I want to thank all of you who have sent me your best wishes via Cathy. I think I am holding up well in my current assignment. My experience has convinced me now more than ever that our strength and our wisdom come from the Lord. I praise the Lord every morning that I am able to minister and serve. At the same time, I am looking forward to a needed sabbatical time once this interim has ended.

In Christ’s Love,

Dave

CALENDAR

January Events

Worship Service	Weekly Sunday at 10:00 am	Sanctuary
AA Meeting	Weekly Wednesday at 8:00 pm	FAC
Private Meeting	Weekly Thursday at 5:30 pm	FAC
ADRC Meal Distribution	Mon – Fri from 10:30 am – 12:30 pm	Kitchen
New Year's Day	Thursday, January 1	Office Closed
Lifeline Health Screening	Friday, January 2, 8 am – 5 pm	Fellowship Hall
Worship Team Meeting	Sunday, January 4 at 11 am	Fellowship Hall
Administrative Council	Thursday, January 8 at 7 pm	Zoom
Port Washington Woman's Club	Monday, January 12 at 11 am	Fellowship Hall
Social Principles	Tuesday, January 13, 1 pm	Gathering Area
Friendship Club	Wednesday, January 14, 6:30 pm	Fellowship Hall
Sister Circle	Thursday, January 15, 7 pm	Christ the King
UM Human Relations Day	Sunday, January 18	
Stockbox Distribution	Tuesday, January 20 at 10:00 am	FAC & Parking Lot
Newsletter Articles Due	Friday, January 23	Office
Mark Grams Reserved	Wednesday, January 29, 6-9 pm	Fellowship Hall

GRAND AVENUE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

505 W Grand Ave Port Washington WI 53074 262-284-9478 www.portumc.com

Pastor:	Vince Pepin	pastor@portumc.org
Pastoral Assistant:	Dave Guse	senegaldave1@gmail.com
Administrative Assistant:	Stacy Peters	office@portumc.org
Lay Leader:	Dan Benning	bennida01@att.net
Admin Council Chair:	Mark Grams	mgrams@wi.rr.com

Bishop: Dan Schwerin / District Superintendent: Rev. Dr. InSun Lee

Did you know you can help support our church through the fundraisers below?

- **Aluminum Can Collection** – Put your aluminum cans in the barrels at the back entrance into church and we'll recycle them for you.
- **RaiseRight Scrip (Gift Card) Program** – You can order gift cards for businesses you already shop at and the church gets a donation. Forms are on the counter in the narthex or go to www.raiseright.com and use our enrollment code of 45F776D958L66.



Open hearts. Open minds. Open doors.
The people of The United Methodist Church™

Orders are due in the church office on the 1st Sunday of each month. Please remember to include your payment. You can also order on-line at www.raiseright.com Your order of gift cards will be ready for pick-up at church on the 2nd Sunday of the month.

Questions? Contact the Kay Hamann at 262-284-3168 or khamann530@yahoo.com

*Each retailer makes a donation to the church for every gift card purchased.
For a complete list of over 700 participating retailers, go to www.raiseright.com*

RETAILER	QTY	TOTAL
Amazon \$25		
Amazon \$100		
Arby's \$10		
AutoZone \$25		
Barnes & Noble \$10		
Barnes & Noble \$25		
Bath & Body Works \$10		
Bath & Body Works \$25		
Bed Bath & Beyond \$25		
BP \$50		
BP \$100		
Burger King \$10		
Cousins Subs \$10		
CVS Pharmacy \$25		
CVS Pharmacy \$100		
Dick's Sporting Goods \$25		
Dick's Sporting Goods \$100		
Exxon \$50		
Fleet Farm \$25		
Fleet Farm \$100		
Home Depot \$25		
Home Depot \$100		
Jiffy Lube \$30		
Kohl's \$25		
Kohl's \$100		
Kwik Trip \$25		
Kwik Trip \$50		
Kwik Trip \$100		

RETAILER	QTY	TOTAL
Meijer \$25		
Meijer \$50		
Meijer \$100		
Mobil \$50		
Noodles & Company \$10		
Panera Bread \$10		
Panera Bread \$25		
Papa Murphy's Pizza \$10		
Pick'n Save(WI) \$25		
Pick'n Save(WI) \$50		
Pick'n Save(WI) \$100		
Piggly Wiggly (WI, IL) \$25		
Piggly Wiggly (WI, IL) \$50		
Piggly Wiggly (WI, IL) \$100		
Qdoba Mexican Grill \$25		
Sendik's Food Market \$25		
Sendik's Food Market \$50		
Sendik's Food Market \$100		
Speedway \$25		
Speedway \$50		
Starbucks \$10		
Starbucks \$25		
Subway Restaurants \$10		
Target \$25		
Target \$50		
Walgreens \$25		
Walmart \$25		
Walmart \$50		
Walmart \$100		

Total number of gift cards ordered: _____

Total amount due: _____

Name _____ Date: _____

Make checks payable to
Grand Ave Church