

Lake Harbor's Harbor Light

Volume 25.1 January 2025

REFLECTIONS FROM PASTOR MARY IVANOV



Through the Advent season, I was particularly struck by **how God speaks through unexpected people and shows up in unexpected places.** As we celebrate the joy of Christmas, celebrating the birth of our Savior, **I pray that we experience God in surprising ways.** Thank you for your generosity in the love gift you gave to me and my family. We're grateful to serve God and others alongside you at Lake Harbor UMC.

As we move into the season of Epiphany, when we're amazed by God's presence with us and for the whole world, **I hope that we pay attention to how God is moving us to worship more fully and serve more faithfully.** We'll be focusing on a foundational teaching - the Golden Rule - which will be both a challenge and an invitation. It promises to be a powerful time of learning together in this new year.

See you on Sunday, *Pastor Mary*

Reminders and opportunities for the new year:

On behalf of our Lay Leadership Committee, **thank you to those who have served faithfully during 2024.** And **thanks to those who have said "yes"** to serving on teams and committees in 2025. Your partnership in mission and ministry is a blessing!



Bishop David Bard of the Michigan Area of the United Methodist Church is touring the state on a listening tour, and **he's making a stop at Grandville UMC on Sat., Jan. 11 from 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.** He will share an overview of what the Michigan Conference is doing to support our church in being a vital and vibrant member of our community. If you're interested in attending, please contact Pastor Mary.

Muskegon Methodist Ministries invites you to their quarterly meeting on **Thurs., Jan. 30 at 6:00-8:00 p.m.** at Community UMC in North Muskegon. Dinner is provided.

From our Education Team: We're looking for some loving, caring people to join our Nursery Caregiver crew on Sunday mornings – either as a regular part of the team or as a substitute. A background check is required, and more details are available from Kate Robbins, our Children's Christian Education Director or Pastor Mary Ivanov. Please contact one of them if you'd be interested in learning more about this opportunity to care for our young ones!

January Worship News by Karen Booth

January 5, 2025 at 10:00 a.m.: “Living in the Light of Jesus” *Scripture:* Isaiah 60: 1-6; Matthew 2: 1-12
Synopsis: *Epiphany* is a word derived from the Greek for “manifestation” and is usually used as a reminder that Jesus is God’s revelation for the whole world. We worship as our witness that God is worthy of our praise – and we seek to follow God’s way – led by Jesus, the Light of the World.

There will be a **congregational informational meeting after worship in Fellowship Hall.** This is an opportunity for our Administrative Council to share the proposed budget and celebrate mission and ministry as we begin a new year.

January 12, 2025: “Living Water” *Scripture:* Isaiah 43: 1-7, Luke 3: 15-18, 21-23a
Synopsis: As we celebrate remember Jesus’ baptism, we’ll use the beautiful stained-glass window in our sanctuary to remember God’s grace in our lives through Scripture.


“Do Unto Others”

Jesus taught that we should treat others as we want them to treat us – including those with whom we disagree. Known as The Golden Rule, a version of this teaching can be found in almost every religion in the world. This holds the power to bring people together again. And this is one of the most important things we can proclaim right now.



January 19, 2025: “Blue and Red Make Purple: **Kindness**” *Scripture:* Luke 6: 31-36
Synopsis: Did you know that over 99% of our DNA is the same from one human to another? This surely makes us kin. The word *kindness* originally developed from a root word that mean “family” or “with the feeling of relatives for each other.” We begin this series considering the implications of spending so much of our time feeling estranged from, and resentful toward, those whose less than 1% moves them in a different direction from us. And we begin to dream of finding a “purple space” in which to exchange goodness.

January 26, 2025: “The Polarization Within: **Compassion**” *Scripture:* Isaiah 11: 6-9
Synopsis: Because we are complex beings living in a complex world, we sometimes deal with conflict *within us* in addition to the conflict *between us*. Research tells us that because we humans are desperate for a sense of cohesion and belonging in these confusing times, we are hanging onto ideological generalities instead of treating ourselves and each other with the compassion required to alleviate despair. Compassion grows when we are able to know ourselves and one another on a deeper level and act out of understanding.

 **Fellowship Time is offered after both worship services,** so we’re looking for people to serve coffee and refreshments. **Please Sign up** at the Welcome Center.

Worship Connections Team meetings are open to everyone. Karen Booth leads the Worship Connections Team which meets **most Mondays at 1:00 p.m.** at church. Please contact Karen, for more details. We have a team of people that now leads the Celebration Team. Please contact the Office at 231-798-2181 or Offece@LakeHarborUMC.org for more details.

If you're on Facebook, make sure to CONNECT and SHARE what's going on:



- Lake Harbor United Methodist Church page (**live-stream Sunday worship**)
- Lake Harbor UMC – closed group
- Lake Harbor Youth Group – page
- LHUMC Children's Ministry – closed group

Please **“Check In”** on Facebook whether you worship in-person or on the live-stream.

We also have a **YouTube channel** (Lake Harbor UMC) where you can access all of our worship service recordings. Feel free to subscribe!

MUSIC MINISTRY NOTES... *“God gave us music that we might pray without words.”*

The Advent season was a busy, musical month for both the choir and the hand bells. Every Sunday in Advent and on Christmas Eve, both groups shared their ministry with our congregation.

During December, our hand bell choir traveled to Seminole Shores and DaySpring retirement homes to share our Christmas music with them. We were excited to recognize friends and members of LHUMC in the audience. Prior to the 10:00 p.m. Christmas Eve worship service, we rang Christmas carols for those entering the sanctuary.



Both the hand bells and choir will resume rehearsals in January 2025. We'd love to have you join us – short or long term. Please contact Diane Thompson, for further information.

PRAISE TEAM rehearses on **Saturdays at 10:00 a.m.** Contact Michael Boersma, if you're interested in joining them.

“Lord, Hear our Prayers...”

Our Monthly Prayer Service is **Wed., Jan. 22 at 6:00 p.m.** in our sanctuary. This is intentional time to lift up our prayers to God and to pray for our congregation, community, and world – and to remember the words of Jesus: *where two or three are gathered in my name, I am with them.*

Our Prayer Chain is one way to be more intentional about praying for others. Contact the office at Office@LakeHarborUMC.org if you want to be included on the E-mail Prayer Chain.

Prayer Requests are posted on the tower by the sign-in tables.



GriefShare offers help and encouragement after the death of a loved one. We begin our next 13-week session on **Mon., Jan. 13, 2025 at 6:30 p.m.** and we meet on **Mondays through April 7.** More information is at www.griefshare.org. Please share this with family, friends, or neighbors.

For additional resources on grief, visit www.sytsemcompass.com. They have compiled a listing of local grief support resources.

INTENTIONAL FAITH DEVELOPMENT

January/February Upper Room devotionals (both small and large print) are available at church.

Devotional readings are also **posted on our Facebook page** every day. This is great way to nurture your spiritual health! **You can access an audio recording of the Upper Room daily devotional at 1-877-600-7218.** It's free and easy to do!

Tuesday morning Bible study meets at **10:00-11:30 a.m.** in the Lounge – and on Zoom. We're studying the Gospel of John. New members are always welcome! We will **resume meeting on Jan. 7, 2025.**

Men's Bible Study meets on **Tuesdays (Jan. 7, 14, 21 & 28) at 7:00 p.m.** in the Library as they resume their study of Deuteronomy. Contact Mike Layman, if you have any questions.



SPIRIT SISTERS BIBLE STUDY meets **Wednesdays (Jan. 8, 15, 22 & 29) at 6:00-7:30 p.m.** in the Lounge. We'll begin a new study called **Strength in the Struggle** - a Bible study for women on letting go of fear and anxiety. Join us – we'd love to welcome you!

We collected baby items during Advent season and donated them to the Kids Belong clothing closet for infants in the Foster Care system. What a joy to bless others!

Social Justice Issue: Celebration Worship chooses a **prayer focus each month** to raise awareness of **how our faith connects to important social issues.** We begin with prayer, and we're called to action. In **January**, our focus is **Human Trafficking Prevention.**



Human Trafficking Forum is scheduled for **Wed., Jan. 29 at 5:30-8:00 p.m.** at Christ Church (1910 Ruddiman Dr. In North Muskegon). Watch for more details to come!



The **January Series** is a **FREE 10-day award-winning lecture series** that takes place each year at Calvin University. The series aims to cultivate deep thought and conversations about important issues of the day, to inspire cultural renewal and make us better global citizens in God's world. Join us **from Mon., Jan. 20 through**

Fri., Jan. 31, 2025 at 12:30 p.m. daily. This is an excellent opportunity to learn! Go to:

<https://calvin.edu/january-series/speakers/>



CHILDREN'S CHRISTIAN EDUCATION NEWS...

Happy New Year! Sunday School will not meet on Jan. 5 - see you on Jan. 12! We're excited for the New Year and making plans for some fun activities in 2025. Mark your calendar for a Movie Night on **Fri., Feb. 7!**



Meaningful memories were made at our "Come Let us Adore Him" Advent event. All generations came together in creating cards, painting ornaments, enjoying brunch, and having fun with a scavenger hunt! It was a beautiful way to start off the Christmas season.



5th-8th grade at 6:00-7:00 p.m. **9th-12th grade** at 7:00-8:00 p.m.

Youth will meet on **Wednesdays: January 8, 15, 22, and 29**

Our focus for 2025 will be CREATION. We'll be doing lots of creating and using our own creativity. New Year! New Beginnings!

We hope to have some winter fun with the snow and outdoor activities! We'll see if the weather cooperates! Think sledding, ice skating, snowball fights, and hot chocolate!

We were blessed to help provide Christmas to 4 families this year. The students did such an amazing job shopping for all the family members. So much thought and care goes into each gift. We have so much fun helping these families out and spreading the joy of Christmas and the love of Christ!

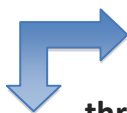


A huge THANK YOU to everyone who participated in the cookie walk. What a fun day full of laughter and joy!



Happy New Year to all,
PEACE AND LOVE, JIMMY

Contact Info: cell # (231) 750-9707, peaceandlovejimmy@gmail.com, Facebook = Jimmy Epplert

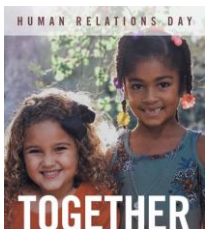


Missions Corner: Thank you for participating in mission giving during the holiday season. We delivered stockings to Kids Belong, gifts to children through Prison Fellowship Angel Tree, MAP Teen Town, gifts to MAP Teen Town, and items to the chaplain's office at Muskegon County Jail. It was one way for us to be present with others in need, and we're grateful for your generosity!



Supper House: We serve on **Tues., Jan. 7 at 3:00-5:00 p.m.** with a team of 6 people. **If you plan on serving, call Sheryl Thompson** so we can plan accordingly.

Our January Noisy Offering will support our **Lake Harbor UMC Supper House Fund**. We offer \$200 each month to support Supper House's work to feed the hungry in Muskegon.



Human Relations Sunday is January 19. We are called to make an impact in communities where people struggle because they don't have the tools or resources to reach their God-given potential. Our gifts are part of building beloved community through faith-based volunteer programs, community developers and programs that work with at-risk teens.



Our special Christmas offering will support UMCOR's response to natural disasters.

Thank you for your generous support of this important mission. These gifts will be received through the beginning of the year.



January MAP Food Pantry items: Canned Fruit and Bars of Soap

MAP Clothes Closet: We serve on **Tues., Jan. 28 & Thurs., Jan. 30 at 12:15 p.m.** If you're willing to help, call the Office at 231-798-2181. There is an **urgent need for winter wear and bed sheets** and always need for **men's clothes, housewares, and plastic shopping bags.** They can be left in the MAP box by the main doors in the sanctuary.



Kids' Food Basket currently serves **2,000 students in Muskegon daily.** Fill the **wish list:** Fruit cups or pouches, Pudding cups, and Meat sticks (like Slim Jims). Items can be put in the KFB tote in the sanctuary. They also need **sandwich and snack size Ziplock bags and decorated bags.** Visit their website to help: <https://kfb.volunteerhub.com>.



Hand2Hand helps kids with a weekend pack of food. We're collecting **canned pasta (pop top cans please!)** to assist Temple UMC as they provide meals for the students of Edgewood Elementary School. There is a box for your gifts in the sanctuary by the Hand2Hand banner.



Be not forgetful to entertaining strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares. - Hebrews 13:2

Our are serving is Dec. 29-Jan. 4 – providing food items and delivering meals to the Day Center. Please sign up where you will help out at: [Family Promise Sign-up](#) or contact Jill McMahon or Ruth Pyman ruthpyman@gmail.com

Membership, Nurture & Outreach (M.N.O.) News:

We filled and delivered **35 Holiday goodie bags** to our homebound members and friends early in December. **A huge Thank You** on behalf of our homebound and care facility members to all those who donated and sorted the goodies and personal care items as well as those who delivered the Christmas care packages. The beautiful (and very full!) bags were greatly appreciated by all who received them. This annual holiday project is such a great way to remind those we don't see in church that we remember and love them!



Blessings, Pastor Mark Erbes, Congregational Care Coordinator

Lunch Bunch meets on **Tues., Jan., 14 at 12:00 p.m.** at **Driftwood Café.** Everyone is invited!

It's a great way to see friends and meet new people!




Our Care Team meets on **Wed., Jan. 22 at 11:00 a.m.** We're always happy to welcome new members, so please join us!



If you're in the hospital or care facility, because of the privacy laws, we may not know that you are there. Please have a family member or friend notify the office at 231-798-2181.

Snowbirds: Please let the church office know your contact information before you leave. We appreciate knowing your departure date and return date for our mailings.

An updated Photo Directory will E-mailed out mid-January. Please take a look and make sure that your contact information is accurate. **It's never too late** to submit or update your photo! Email it to Office@LakeHarborUMC.org.


 Thank you for remembering Robin and Jared for Christmas. Your gift and cards are so appreciated.
Many blessings, Renee Hoadley

Thank you for your generous Noisy Offering donation. Your kindness is the fuel that drives our work. When you donate to AgeWell Services, you're helping create a vibrant community where aging is celebrated, not feared - where every moment is an opportunity for growth and joy.
With heartfelt gratitude, Kris VanderStelt, Executive Director and Jennifer Drury, Advancement Director

I want to thank my Lake Harbor family for the generous love offering that I received. It is such a thoughtful gift, and means so much at Christmas time. I am grateful for the opportunity to work with so many people in our family that make me feel valued. *Blessings to all, Kate Robbins*


Thank you for your generous Christmas Love Offering gift to the staff. Lake Harbor is a wonderful place to work, and I am so grateful to be a part of this church family.
Peace to all, Myke Bos, Administrative Assistant

To our Lake Harbor family--THANK YOU for the generous Christmas gift. It is such a joy and privilege for both Annette and me to be serving among you again. It is our prayer that Christ will make himself known to you all in new ways in the New Year! *Blessings, Pastor Mark Erbes*

Beginning the New Year with joy and thanks, I would like to thank my Lake Harbor family for your generous gift. I appreciate the acknowledgement of my service and wish you all the best in 2025.
Thanks, Gail Barefoot, Financial Secretary

Thank you so much to the LHUMC congregation for the Christmas Gift. It's a pleasure being of service to you all. *With love, Smeeta Thompson, Treasurer*

Thank you for all of your love and support this year. I am truly blessed to be part of such an amazing community that shows me and my family so much love! A special thank you for the gift I received on behalf of the congregation for Christmas this year. I will put it to good use turning it into lift tickets and snowboarding memories! Thank you so much! *PEACE AND LOVE, JIMMY Epplert*

 I want to thank the church for the beautiful bag of goodies. It was so nice and so many goodies. It was so nice to be remembered. *Thanks again, Love, June Hilton*

From our FINANCE Team: Thank you for your faithful giving this year! We're so grateful for God's faithfulness in leading us in generosity. **At the end of November 2024**, our total income for General Fund was \$371,008 with expenses of \$347,254. We've met all of our financial obligations and are able to support mission and ministry locally and globally. Because of our Faith Commitments for 2025, **we're**

confident in approving a working budget of \$411,030 for 2025, which is an increase of approximately 4% over our 2024 budget. A copy of the proposed budget – both a numbers budget and a narrative budget – will be available at the beginning of January.

It's not too late to offer your Faith Commitment, and we're grateful for everyone who has pledged their prayers, presence, gifts, service, and witness. It's a blessing to all of us as we love and serve God together.

YTD Giving Statements were sent out and available the week of December 15. **Please check these statements for accuracy** of your giving in 2024. If there are questions or concerns, contact our Financial Secretary, Gail Barefoot, at FinSec@LakeHarborumc.org or call the office. A final 2024 giving statement will be mailed in January.

ONLINE giving Contributions can be debited automatically from your checking or savings account or processed using your credit card or debit card. Electronic giving is easy and stress free, offers convenience for you, and offers consistency in giving, which blesses our church. You can set up your donations on our website or if you'd rather, stop by the church office for assistance.

To set up your electronic donation on our www.lakeharborumc.org:

- Click on "Give" button
- Click on "Create Profile" button
- Follow onscreen instructions.

Use this QR code to connect to online giving.



From our Trustees: Thank you for your continued financial support that helps us to care for the needs of our physical space for our ministry. The parsonage bathroom on the lower lever was remodeled in December, and we're grateful to be able to care for the continued upkeep of the home. **Gifts to our Preservation Fund, which we use for building needs, are always appreciated** – whether planned or given anytime!



OFFICE HOURS are Monday – Thursday from 9:15 a.m.-4:15 p.m. The office is closed on **Friday and Saturday**. The office phone is **231-798-2181**. Messages left on weekends will be returned on Monday. **The office is closed on Jan. 1 and Jan. 20 in observance of MLK Jr. Day.**

Our website is updated! There are still some additions to come, but go to www.lakeharborumc.org to see the new look!

Lake Harbor UMC Weather Policy: If there's an activity scheduled in the evening, and the weather looks bad, call the church office (231-798-2181). A decision will be made by 3:00 p.m. if events are cancelled.

ONLY Tuesday Bible Study will automatically be cancelled if Mona Shores Schools are closed.

Stay connected: United Methodist Church: www.umc.org **Michigan Area UMC:** <http://michiganumc.org>
Midwest District: <https://midwest.michiganumc.org/> **Lake Harbor UMC:** <http://lakeharborumc.org>

COMMUNITY OPPORTUNITIES



La Leche League, the breastfeeding group for parents, will meet at Lake Harbor UMC Nursery area on **Tues., Jan., 21 at 11:00 a.m.** Questions? Contact Mary Swisher.



PUZZLE SWAP: Come swap puzzles you've done with new-to-you puzzles! **National Puzzle Day is Jan. 29, but you can come swap any day between Jan. 19-Feb. 8.** There will be puzzles of all sizes to choose from in the work room across the hall from the Lounge. Trade in as many as you like. Puzzle Swap will be available any time the church is open or your groups are meeting here (except on Monday mornings when the room is used for counting). Questions? Contact Kate Robbins.

We're grateful to offer meeting space to **Girl Scouts, Pioneer Resources, LARC, and other groups too!**

Sunday Servants:

THANK YOU for making our worship services meaningful, memorable, and accessible. Your time and skills are appreciated!

Serving Jan 5 at 10 a.m.:

Worship Leader: Brad Hilleary
Greeters: Sheryl Thompson & G.L. Bates
Computer: Skyler Bosch *Camera:* Russ Loomis
Sound: Bob Bosch *FB Host:* Jill McMahan
Tear Down: Jimmy & Niki Epplert
Counters: Madonna Borgerding, Mike Layman

Serving Jan. 12 at 9:00 a.m.:

Worship Leader:
Ushers: Jim Post, Karen Post, Peggy Tully
Computer: Fred Yonkers *Camera:* Pat Yonkers
Sound: Ruth Pyman *FB Host:* Ivan Ivanov

Serving Jan. 12 at 11:00 a.m.:

Worship Leader: Dirk Fuller
Greeters: John Thompson & John Colella
Computer: Jim Grace *Camera:* Julie Fuller
Sound: Karen Grace *FB Host:* Niki Epplert
Tear down: Nicole & Dan Malseed

Counters: Bev Layman, Allen Winslow

Serving Jan. 19 at 9:00 a.m.:

Worship Leader:
Ushers: Fred & Pat Yonkers, Rod Moon, Kathy Mertz
Computer: Lisa Kasmauski *Camera:* Jean Kelly
Sound: Gary Cooper *FB Host:* Jen Cooper

Serving Jan. 19 at 11:00 a.m.:

Worship Leader & Tear down: Chris Beaudoin
Greeters: Jill Warren & Jill McMahan
Computer: Julie Fuller *Camera:* Jay McMahan
Sound: Arianna Davros *FB Host:* Ruth McPhail Ubaldo

Counters: Madonna Borgerding, Mudgi Cavender

Serving Jan. 26 at 9:00 a.m.:

Worship Leader:
Ushers: Mark Rousell, Bob Keim
Computer: Luka Ivanov *Camera:* Derek Mertz
Sound: Rob Mertz *FB Host:* Ivan Ivanov

Serving Jan. 26 at 11:00 a.m.:

Worship Leader: Rose Emmons
Greeters: Jan Pascavis & Ruth McPhail Ubaldo
Computer: Brian Mosley *Camera:* Jason Colella
Sound: Pete Thompson *FB Host:* Michelle Frazier

Tear Down: Rose Emmons & G.L. Bates
Counters: Ed Baranowski, Fred Woodworth

Lake Harbor United Methodist Church

4861 S. Henry St.
Norton Shores, MI 49441



2025

www.lakeharborumc.org

(231) 798-2181

*Our mission is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.
Our vision is that all people may experience the love of Jesus.
Our call then, is Love: welcoming all, empowered by Christ, sent forth to serve.*

The Work of Christmas by Howard Thurman

THE WORK OF CHRISTMAS

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 flock,
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 brothers,
To make music in the heart.