



PILGRIM LUTHERAN CHURCH

44 CHAPEL ROAD – KENMORE, NY 14217

(716) 875-5485

www.pilgrimkenmorelcms.org

A Congregation in Mission, Community and Service

PILGRIM'S PROGRESS

JANUARY 2026

PASTOR: Rev. David Walsh

SUNDAY SCHOOL: 9:00 AM

EDITOR: Mary Werth

TUESDAY BIBLE STUDY: 6:00 PM

ASSOC. EDITOR:

WORSHIP: 10:00 AM



EPIPHANY



We continue our look at the divine service with the Lord's Prayer and the Words of Institution. The Lord's Prayer being here, before the reception of the Sacrament, is for the confessing of sins. Yes, we confess sins and receive absolution in three different places in the Divine Service: Confession and absolution in itself at the beginning, during the proclamation of the Word in the sermon and here in the praying of the Lord's Prayer and receiving of the Sacrament.

The Lord's Prayer, as a way of a reminder, is a teaching tool for prayer, a confession of sins, and a confession of faith. The Lord's Prayer consists of an address, a confession from Scripture, 7 petitions, a second address, and an amen. Every prayer that we have consists of these elements, and Christ invites us to use this rubric as we pray other prayers. The Lord's Prayer guides us to the confession of sins, we pray literally "forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us." We trust as well, that in praying such, we would receive the forgiveness of sins, hence as we learn in the catechism, "Amen, Amen, means yes, yes, it shall be so." Let's reflect on the word "trespass." Trespass means to enter a land unlawfully or an unwarranted incursion and a violation of moral and social ethics. Obviously, in this case we refer to the breaking of the Lord's moral law against both the Lord and our neighbor. But we do well to note that Matthew 6 refers to the idea of being released from debt between God and our neighbor, and Luke 11 states outright the forgiving of sins with the Lord and the release of our neighbor's debt with us. The debt with the Lord is eternal death as the price for sin, but because of Christ's death He releases us from that debt of death; with our neighbor the debt is hurt frustration and a lack of trust with that neighbor, and we are called to release that neighbor from their debt as hard as that is. This prayer can also be chanted as you see in the hymnal notes for the prayer, and maybe we will introduce that someday.

Now, we look at the Words of Institution. If you look in the hymnal (pg. 197) you will see listed the four Scripture passages that we get the Words of Institution from. The important thing to remember is that Christ, as He is speaking these Words, is holding bread and wine. Thus, the word "is" gets its full force, for He is not only saying but showing physically that these things are so. The things that make the Sacrament what it is are found in Christ Himself, for He has called the Pastor in His stead to speak His Words upon the bread and the wine, thus it is not the work of the man but the work of Christ in the office. This is why I wear the chasuble, so that I am hidden, and you may see Christ as the one offering Himself to you. During the institution you will notice that I pause during the words, in that moment I lift each element. Some Pastors do it after the words. This pause is for the reflecting and reverence of the presence of Christ in the sacrament in each element. Once the Words of Christ are spoken, it is no longer merely bread and wine, but it is also now the body and blood of Christ. Now the question we have left to ask is "how long is the bread and the wine the body and blood?" Well simply we do not have an answer per se, so for best practice we make that we consecrate what we need and consume at the altar what is left. Fun fact, I do not like the taste of wine, but out of reverence for Christ I finish what is left over, so that there is no doubt.

Christ blessings

Pastor David Walsh



ESTHER CIRCLE

We will be meeting via ZOOM on Monday, January 12th, at 12:30 p.m. You will receive a link in your e-mail from Sharon McGuan a few days before and that link will connect you. This will not be a business meeting, only a gathering and devotion. We only have 45 minutes. We will try to help those who are not familiar with using Zoom. Please contact Carol Obot at 218-349-3397 on any concerns.

We assembled and delivered 9 shut-in packages. Thank you to those who assisted with this outreach.

REMINDER: Dash's receipts go to Sue Holway; cancelled stamps to Sharon McGuan and mites to Karen Smith. The mites are needed to fulfill mission grants already approved. Thank you for your support.

Welcome 2026! We pray to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ for continued good health, lots of Joy in serving Him and inner PEACE .

Carol Obot



“The Wise May Bring Their Learning”

The wise may bring their learning, the rich may bring their wealth,
And some may bring their greatness, and some bring strength and health;

We, too, would bring our treasures to offer to the King;
We have no wealth or learning; what shall we children bring?

We'll bring him hearts that love him; we'll bring him thankful praise,
And young souls meekly striving to walk in holy ways;
And these shall be the treasures we offer to the King,
And these are gifts that even the poorest child may bring.

We'll bring the little duties we have to do each day;
We'll try our best to please him, at home, at school, at play;
And better are these treasures to offer to our King;
Than richest gifts without them — yet these a child may bring.
—Anonymous

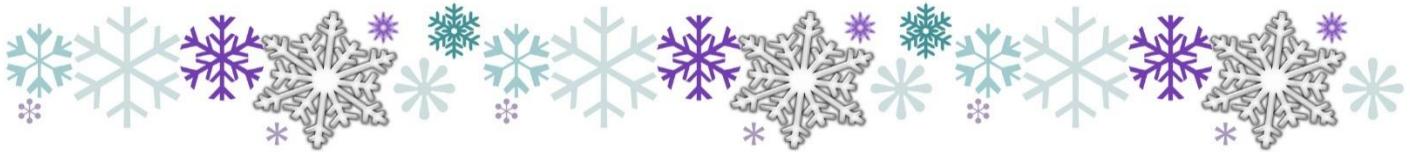


Jennie Alessi

Jan. 1

Amber Trimmer

Jan. 9



NATIONAL PARK QUESTIONS

Grand Canyon National Park:

- Was this man-made?
- Do you light it up at night?
- I bought tickets for the elevator to the bottom – where is it?
 - Is the mule train air-conditioned?
 - So, where are the faces of the presidents?

Carlsbad Caverns National Park:

- How much of the cave is underground?
- So what's in the unexplored part of the cave?
 - Does it ever rain in here?
- How many Ping-Pong balls would it take to fill this up?
 - So what is this – just a hole in the ground?

***** VOTERS MEETING *****

A Voters Meeting was held on December 7th after the service. The Church Council members for 2026 are:

President – Carolyn Alessi
Vice President – Dianne Wuerch
Recording Secretary – Janice Vogel
Financial Secretary – Jim Hartz
Treasurer – Ann Seyboldt
Elders – Tim McGuan, Ed Walsh, Mike Wuerch

Thanks to Sue Holway and Rhonda Mohr for their service!

Mike Rollo was accepted into membership. Welcome to your new church family!

Pilgrim's Blessing Box is being well used. Thank you to Christine Gempko who has taken over for Nancy Loster temporarily.

The budget for 2026 was discussed and passed. We should prayerfully be able to meet it. Try starting a habit of preparing your envelopes weekly (or even monthly) and remembering to bring them to church. It's simple and easy!

The offering envelopes for 2026 are here. Please use them. The pew envelopes are for guests. Since envelope numbers have changed, please do not use leftover envelopes from 2025. They will not match the 2026 list of numbers that the Financial Secretary uses, and your offering will not be credited to you on your quarterly tax statement.

We will be having a Christmas Party after the service on December 21st. Pizza, salad and cookies are on the menu. Dianne Wuerch has agreed to coordinate this.

Carolyn Alessi and Ann Seyboldt are working with Paychex to correct recently discovered payroll issues. The Council has voted to switch payroll service providers. We will use MyAdminPartner (MAP), a new and FREE service provided by Concordia Plan Services. MAP is uniquely positioned with the expertise and infrastructure to provide accurate, compliant payroll services specifically for churches. We will onboard with them in March/April of 2026.

House & Grounds: The AED has been installed under the board with the flower chart. The gap by the window has been sealed. We have two freezers (horizontal) which are being offered for free. Please pass the word so we can free up the space. We have a plow service for the lot. Ed Walsh, Jim Hartz, Mike Wuerch and Steve Gempko will handle the shoveling/snowblowing and salting. Summer means lawn mowing and flowers. If you would like to pitch in and help with any of this, please contact Mike Wuerch.

Cleaning: La Santa Cruz still cleans once a month. Christine Gempko has agreed to clean as well. If we could clean once a week, that would be great. Please consider volunteering for this.

Our next meeting is scheduled for March 15th. We adjourned and closed with the Lord's Prayer.



Last year, we read John, Psalms, Mark, and Hebrews. We got into the practice of reading the Bible every day. Now we've built up some stamina, so we can read a little bit more (35 verses will be an approximate maximum). We will finish the New Testament this year and read some Old Testament Wisdom literature on the weekends.

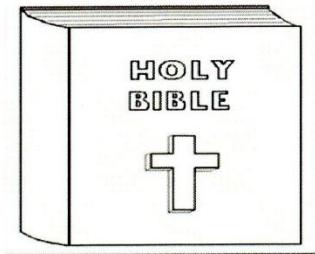
Jan. 1 – Luke 1:1-25	Jan. 9 – Luke 3:23-38	Jan. 17 – Prov. 3:1-18	Jan. 25 – Prov. 4:20-27
Jan. 2 – Luke 1:26-56	Jan. 10 – Prov. 2:1-11	Jan. 18 – Prov. 3:19-35	Jan. 26 – Luke 9:1-27
Jan. 3 – Prov. 1:1-7	Jan. 11 – Prov. 2:12-22	Jan. 19 – Luke 6:27-49	Jan. 27 – Luke 9:28-48
Jan. 4 – Prov. 1:8-33	Jan. 12 – Luke 4:1-30	Jan. 20 – Luke 7:1-35	Jan. 28 – Luke 9:49-62
Jan. 5 – Luke 1:57-80	Jan. 13 – Luke 4:31-44	Jan. 21 – Luke 7:36-50	Jan. 29 – Luke 10:1-24
Jan. 6 – Luke 2:1-21	Jan. 14 – Luke 5:1-26	Jan. 22 – Luke 8:1-25	Jan. 30 – Luke 10:25-42
Jan. 7 – Luke 2:22-52	Jan. 15 – Luke 5:27-39	Jan. 23 – Luke 8:26-56	Jan. 31 – Prov. 5:1-14
Jan. 8 – Luke 3:1-22	Jan. 16 – Luke 6:1-26	Jan. 24 – Prov. 4:1-19	



Day in, day out

In *Walking With God Through Pain and Suffering* (Dutton), Timothy Keller says many people think spiritual growth is something akin to high diving, when really it's more like walking — nondramatic and rhythmic:

“A walk is day in and day out praying; day in and day out Bible and Psalms reading; day in and day out obeying; talking to Christian friends, and going to corporate worship, committing yourself to and fully participating in the life of a church. It is rhythmic, on and on and on. To walk with God is a metaphor that symbolizes slow and steady progress.”



Catechesis page: We encourage you to put this on your fridge and learn God's Word and things that help us better understand it together.

January 2026

Did you know? On the 25th of January we celebrate the conversion of St. Paul. Paul was known as Saul before his conversion and his conversion happened when he was on his way to a place called to Damascus to jail and/or kill Christians. The whole account can be found in Acts 9.

Bible verse of the month: "But the path of the righteous is like the light of dawn, which shines brighter and brighter until full day." -Proverbs 4:18

Catechism: The First article of the Creed and it's explanation

What is the first article of the Creed?

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.

What does this mean?

I believe that God has made me and all creatures; that He has given me my body and soul, eyes, ears, and all my members and takes care of them.

He also gives me clothing and shoes, food and drink, house and home, wife and children, land, animals, and all that I have. He richly and daily provides me with all that I need to support this body and life.

He defends me against all danger and guards and protects me against all evil. All this He does only out of fatherly divine goodness and mercy, without any merit or worthiness in me. For all this it is my duty to thank and praise, serve and obey Him. This is most certainly true.

Liturgical seasons and colors (look on the altar and pastor) for January: Christmas- white Epiphany-white and green

Christian symbol of the month: Chasuble: Every time we have communion you see Pastor wearing a chasuble that is the color for the part of the Church year that we are in. It is worn to cover up Pastor and to direct you to Christ which is who you are receiving in communion.



Hymn of the month: (definitely check out the other verses in the hymnal, for the sake of space we have v. 1 only here) Brightest and Best of the Stars of the Morning #400 LSB

V 1. Brightest and best of the stars of the morning

Dawn on our darkness lend us thine aid

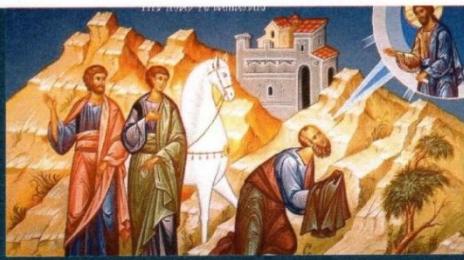
Stars of the East, the horizon adorning

Guide where our infant Redeemer is laid.

"We should rejoice and take comfort and also thank God, who has called such a glorious apostle, Paul, for us Gentiles and has sent him to us." -Martin Luther



January



2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				7 Circumcision and Name of Jesus	1 J.K. Wilhelm Loehe	2
4	5 Epiphany (coming of the magi)	6	7	8	9	10 Basil the Great of Caesarea, Gregory of Nazianzus,
11 Baptism of Jesus (this changes every year)	12	13	14	15	16	17
18 Confession of St. Peter	19 Sarah (Abraham's wife)	20	21	22	23	24 St. Timothy
25 Conversion of St. Paul	26 St. Titus	27 St. John Chrysostom	28	29	30	31

Scripture Keys to a Joyful New Year

Hold fast to your faith (Hebrews 4:14)

Assemble with the saints (Hebrews 10:25)

Pray earnestly every day (1 Thessalonians 5:17, 18)

Pray for great blessings (Malachi 3:10)

Yield not to temptation (1 Thessalonians 5:22)

Negelect not your talents and opportunities (Galatians 6:10)

Examine yourself daily (2 Corinthians 13:5)

Work diligently for the Lord (1 Corinthians 15:58)

Yield your members to righteousness (Romans 6:11,16)

Exercise yourself in godliness (1 Timothy 4:7)

Aim at sinless perfection (Hebrews 6:1)

Redeem the time (Ephesians 5:15, 16)

— Gus Nichols

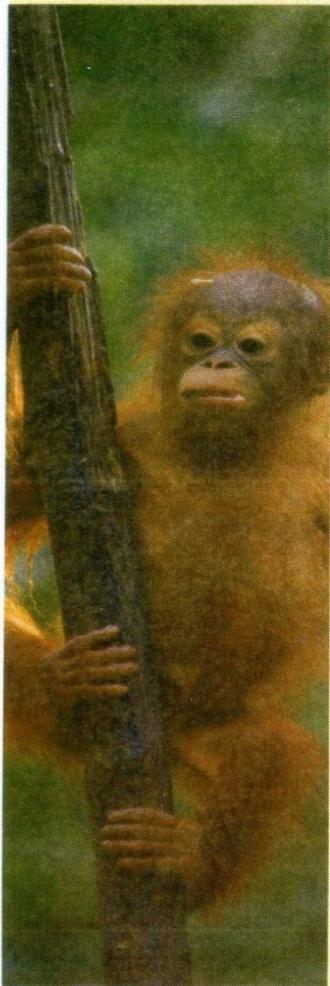


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Letter to my sponsor

Tanggal (Date) 28 October 2025



Salom Sudah lama kita tidak saling kirim surat. Semoga kita di hindari oleh Tuhan. Jang maha kususa dan semoga kita diberikan rezeki. Jang memimpah kegiatan saya sehari-hari. Main bola dan kuliah saja. Saya suka berolahraga apakah kita memiliki hobi yang sama? Jika ya beri tahu saya. kegiatan apa saja yang sering teman lakukan. Saya berharap teman bersama keluarga disana semuanya dalam keadaan yang sehat. Saya selalu berdoa supaya teman di beri kesehatan oleh Tuhan. Saya bersyukur bisa berjumpa lagi melalui surat ini. Saya berharap teman selalu di hindari oleh Tuhan. Kegiatan saya saat ini sibuk dalam mengerjakan tugas kuliah. doakan ya semoga kuliah saya lancar.

Translation

Oct 28th, 2025. Shalom dear friends. It has been so long we do not write to each other. I hope God will always protect us all and give us abundant blessing. My daily activities are attending university and playing soccer. I love to play sports. Do you also have the same hobby? If you do, please tell me. What activities do you do recently? I hope you and your family are all healthy. I always pray for you to have good health from God. I am grateful to see you again through this letter. I hope God will always protect you. I am busy to make my assignments. Please pray for me that my study will go well. Thank you.



Setian Surat dari Aril salam kasih
Tuhan Yesus memberkati

Translation

This is all my letter for now, see you again. Jesus bless you.
Much love, Aril.

WE CELEBRATED PASTOR WALSH'S SECOND ANNIVERSARY WITH US.

His installation was on December 10, 2023.



DID YOU KNOW?



The Altar Guild is responsible for the pew racks. The cards, envelopes and pencils are kept in the credenza at the back. We are responsible for keeping them filled and purchasing the items when needed.

BOXES FOR FLOWERS



If you want to take your flowers home, there are boxes in the Altar room just inside the door.

PILGRIM CHRISTMAS PARTY – DECEMBER 21, 2025





Cyber Corner for January

This month I want to talk about AI, the good and the bad involving it; and how to live safely with the terminators (just kidding). First, I know I have been talking about the dangers of AI, and like a lot of things there is truth in that. I recently read how they are incorporating AI chatbots in what they call AI toys for kids. These will allow kids to pretty much have a conversation and ask it anything they want while looking like a harmless bare or robot. Sadly, it has led to harming some children; or giving them some information they should not have. Or how hackers have used AI bots and tools to scam people. I bring this up because, as a software developer, I can tell you firsthand that AI in our lives is not going away. And even if we say we are going to not use it directly, it will be used in the things that we interact with. However, there is a lot of good it can do. The important thing is not to hide from it but to learn how to use it as safely as possible if you go to legit AI sites like ChatGPT or use Copilot on your computer. ChatGPT is a site you can go to and ask anything you want, and it will give an in-depth answer. AI tools like this are far more advanced than regular search engines. This is because, to put it simply they are developed on what is called Large Language Models of information on very high-end servers and databases. They can give you information very fast and save a lot of time. For example, in a word document, if you have Copilot installed, you can ask anything and it will put it right in the document, usually in a matter of seconds. If I want to write a 300-word document on how a car engine works; it will spit it out in about two seconds, and then I can edit it if I want. Here you must learn how to design your question to get exactly what you want and how much of it you want. But you do need to check what they give you, it is not always right; or matches what you may believe.

There are AI apps that you can use for the camera on your phone - point it at the image and ask questions about it. Another example I will give here is that, especially for a mid-size company, they used to have to spend hundreds of thousands of dollars to set up things like websites, applications, and databases to keep track of inventory and sales; just to name a few. Now there is software that they can get that will do all that for them, with little or no code, saving them time and money.

While these are all good, you must be careful. The questions you ask on say a ChatGPT site are stored on their servers. So, you need to ask yourself what matters to you, also it is not impossible to be picked up by hackers; like pretty much anything else you do on the web. There are places you can go and talk to AI chatbots for friendship, or even Physiological therapy. These look and sound so real you forget you are talking to a machine. I personally would not recommend any of these. Let's stick to real people for friends or anything else. You also cannot be sure if they run and were designed by scammers or hackers. One of the key things I will recommend here is to only use well-known AI sites and tools; and again, do your research on whatever you are looking for, and only get what you know is safe.

Finally, I will point out that when you call places now, they are increasingly having these AI chatbots talking to you. For example, I know someone that worked at a car dealership. He said that they have AI chatbot talking to customers to answer any preliminary questions they may have. He said that it sounds so real that people have come in asking for it, because they thought that it was a real person. For this it may not matter, but if it is something that is really important to you, you may want to make sure you are talking to a real person. Of course, soon that may not be possible. However, if you listen closely, you can usually tell if it is real or not. You also can test it by asking it for things outside of the subject, it usually will usually go on without answering your question. Or you can ask if it is a real person, it may start to sound childish if you insist it is not real or it might hang up.

2025–2027 Mission Grant #5

Growing Together to Share Braille and Large Print

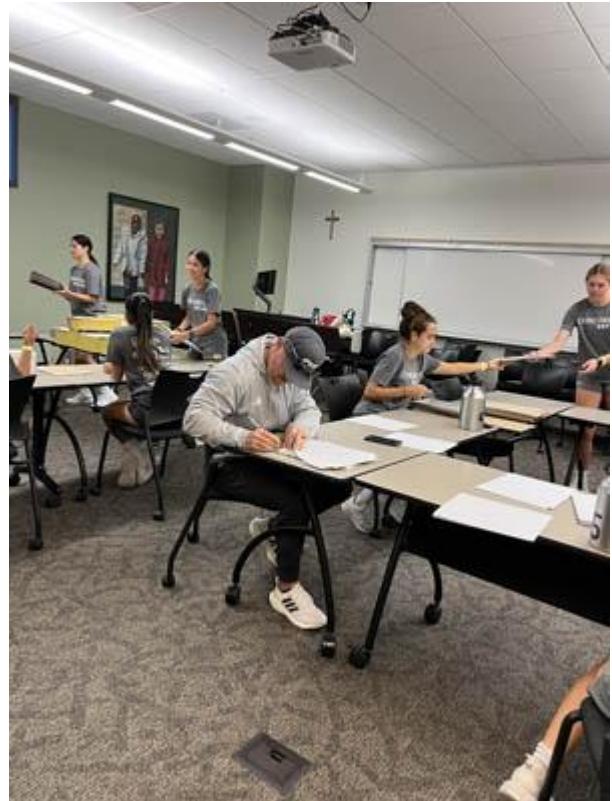
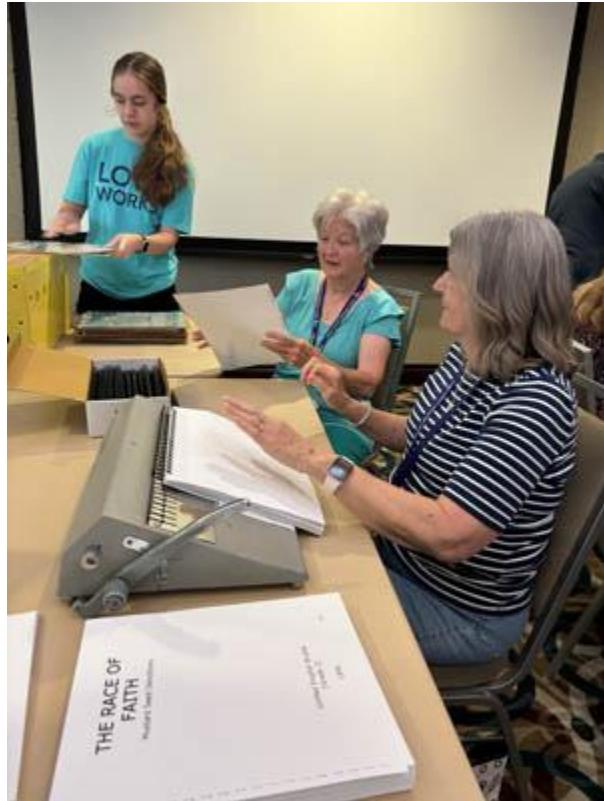
Lutheran Braille Workers, U.S.

About This Mission Grant

Millions of people around the world are blind or visually impaired and are seeking to strengthen their Christian faith but find it difficult to access scripture-based reading materials. Lutheran Braille Workers (LBW) is committed to providing Christian materials in braille and specialized large print worldwide at no cost.

With a part of the grant funds, LBW will establish five new Ministry Production Centers in the United States. LBW will hold five related servant events at LWML conventions, Lutheran universities and schools, and district youth gatherings. Service opportunities provide young people with the chance to grow in their God-given gifts and share the Gospel.

This grant will allow LBW to produce and freely distribute approximately 10,000 additional volumes of Bibles and other Christian materials. This grant will be used to purchase specialized paper, card stock, braille plates and equipment, and for training and shipping costs.



1. Youth and adult volunteers produce Braille together at a servant event in Ohio.
2. Student volunteers produce Braille at a servant event, Concordia University, Irvine, CA.



Volunteer prints Specialized Large Print pages to be bound into a volume.



Volunteers binding Braille volumes.



660 MASON RIDGE CENTER DRIVE

ST. LOUIS, MO 63141-8557

1-800-876-9880

Sharing God's Love with a Hurting Man

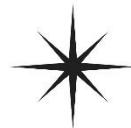
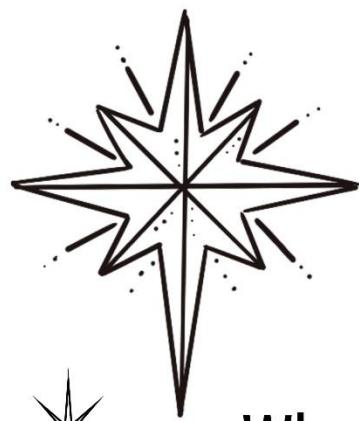
Dilan is 29 years old and has been in contact with LHM staff in Central and South Asia. He had a difficult childhood because he was abused by his father, so he left home and lived on the streets when he was a teenager. Dilan said that he never felt real love from his parents. After LHM staff sent him a Bible, he started asking deeper questions about God's love. He was surprised and initially did not believe God's love, saying if his parents didn't love him, how could God. The LHM staff member prayed with him and guided him to a local church. Dilan and his fiancé went to church together and after the service, they wanted to learn more. They continued attending worship services and through the power of God's Word, Dilan and his fiancé became Christians. Now they are preparing to get baptized as they continue growing in their faith.

LHM Facebook Page Brings Man to Faith

Narongrat is a government officer who comes from a non-Christian religious household. He has always wondered about the true meaning of life. He often felt lonely and believed that he did not have anyone to lean on. One of his friends took him to a local Lutheran church where he started studying the Bible and attending worship services there. He signed up for LHM—Thailand's daily devotions and followed their Facebook page for additional encouragement. He no longer feels lonely and is thankful for LHM—Thailand's programs and resources. Through the power of God's Word, Narongrat became a Christian. He continues working on growing in his faith and applying God's Word to his daily life.

Project JOEL Program Teaches Student About Jesus

James is a student who loves to play soccer. He lives in a poor area, and his family often cannot afford basic needs like food and medication. While he considered himself a Christian at one point, he went away from his faith at an early age when he started facing trials in his life. LHM—Kenya started a Project JOEL program in his region where they passed out backpacks to children. When he met the LHM staff and volunteers who were handing out the backpacks he heard the Gospel message and was interested in learning more about Jesus. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, he has started attending church services and programs to strengthen his faith. "I am filled with joy after receiving these learning materials," says James. "I thank God for the opportunity to learn more about Jesus."



When they saw the

STAR, they

rejoiced

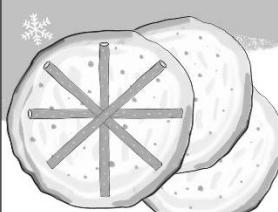
exceedingly with

**GREAT
JOY.**

Matthew 2:10, ESV



Snowflake SNACK CAKES



Celebrate the beauty of winter with these fun snowflake-inspired treats!

What you need:

- Graham cracker squares or sugar cookies
- White frosting or marshmallow fluff
- Pretzel sticks (snowflake arms)
- Shredded coconut or white sprinkles
- Mini marshmallows or candy pearls

What you do:

1. Frost each cracker or cookie.
2. Arrange pretzel sticks in a crisscross for the snowflake base.
3. Sprinkle with coconut or sprinkles for snow.
4. Add marshmallows or candy pearls to the ends for detail.

Lesson tie-in:
Remind kids that God made each of us unique—just like no two snowflakes are alike!
(Psalm 139:14, KJV)

PUZZLE



TRANSLATE GOD'S WORD

The Bible we use is translated into English from other languages. "Translate" the verse below using the code.

CODE	E=△	L=□	R=+
	G=●	M=↗	S=■
A=■	H=◀	N=†	SH=✿
B=×	I=▲	O=✿	T=♪
D=◀◀	K= 	P=□	TH=♦

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Proverbs 3:13

Answer: Happy is the one who finds wisdom and the one who gets understanding.

THE DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS FOR THE FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER IS JANUARY 23RD.