

Light in the Beartooths

MESSIAH LUTHERAN NEWS

Pastor Ben Cherland



Dear Messiah,

Welcome to Advent – the season that will slowly lead us to Christmas Eve and the birth of the Christ child. For many of you, this season will go all too quickly with all there is to do! Scheduling and preparing meals with loved ones, making sure Santa comes (sufficiently) to everyone in your life and family, and coordinating your own life in the middle of it all. Church this season is the place where you can come to slow down, find quiet, and “drop in” to the rhythm of the journey we’re making together to Christmas.

So much of the world this time of year pushes at us. *Be merry and bright!* is the call of the season I encounter most around town, on social media, and in tv adds. There is cause to be happy of course, even to rejoice: Jesus, the word made flesh, is coming and soon. But this matters little to the world we live in.

But in the church it matters to us, so much so that we approach this season much differently. We center anticipation of his coming, we prepare for it, and we reflect on what his coming means for ourselves and for the world. And we do these things with rituals we only use in Advent, in this season of waiting.

For instance, we will be lighting an Advent Wreath – this helps us mark each of the four Sundays of Advent with the lighting of an additional candle each week.

Imagining the first candle lit this coming Sunday, I am struck this year by those that are not yet lit. These candles signify to me what is missing, what is *wanting*, in the world and in our own lives. It speaks to the loss of loved ones no longer celebrating with us, the lack of basic necessities for so many (including food, housing, and even safety), and all those we know and love suffering in darkness. But one candle *is* lit, flickering hope in us and anticipation for the growing, insistent light of the journey pushing back the darkness.

Some churches that do not celebrate Advent (and some that do) sing Christmas carols to push back that dark. It’s a season of celebration for them – Joy to the world! all month long. We will be singing Advent carols until Christmas Eve, as another way of marking time and extending our journey through Advent, delaying the gratification that is promised but has yet to arrive.

And once again this year, in hopes that it will increase our anticipation even more, we will not be celebrating the Eucharist (Holy Communion) during Advent. In this way we will lean into the wanting of this season, anticipating all the more “God with us” in the Christ child. On Christmas Eve, we will feast once again on all that God promises to do through this child.

I hope none of this leaves you feeling deprived this season. Rather, I hope you find that your journey through Advent is deepened and that when Christ arrives, as he surely will, what we find wanting in our own lives pales in the light of his presence.

Pastor Ben

December, 2025



Do you want to help mothers and babies through Lutheran World Relief?

We have been collecting cotton flannel sheets and yardage to be made into diapers. These diapers then become part of the baby care kits which are donated to Lutheran World Relief. Heretofore, Pastor Paul and his wife, along with Sunne Lutheran Church in Wilton, North Dakota, have been doing the sewing and assembling of these kits. We would like to begin making diapers and assembling the baby care kits here in Red Lodge.

The diapers are fun and easy to make, no sewing experience is necessary. Everyone can help, including kids! Please contact Dianne (406-425-3222) and we'll get rolling.

12/01 Owen Yates

12/15 Suzi Hansen

12/16 Laurie Grygiel

Newsletter News

Dear Messiah Friends,
This is your newsletter and you are encouraged to submit information to be included. Here's the catch, all articles must be submitted by the 25th of the month.

Messiah Charity Quilters would love your help

from 1pm—3 pm each Monday. Everything is provided except your sewing needle and a pair of scissors. We will teach you what you need to know.

Prayer Shawl Ministry

If you are interested in making prayer shawls, please contact Pat Thompson or Mary Ames. If you are in need of a prayer shawl, please contact Pat Thompson, Mary Ames or Pastor Ben.

WOMEN'S SAFARI BOOK CLUB

Date: 12/17/25

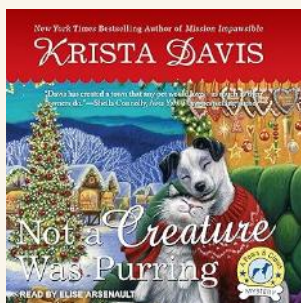
Time: 12:00 noon

Book: Not a Creature Was Purring

Author: Krista Davis

Facilitator: Marla Ebel

Location: Roberts Cafe



Did you know?

Messiah has a puzzle library! It is located in the bookshelf in the hallway. There are 100, 500, 1000 piece puzzles and more. There are several new puzzles, too.

Contact host, Marla Ebel, at

406-664-3178 for more Information

Let's keep in touch!

If email is not your favorite way of receiving communications from the church, please talk to Dianne in The office and let her know how you prefer to be contacted.



December, 2025

Member Spotlight

By Dianne Milleson

Barb Ostrum, in my mind, has always been the "get it done" person around here. As a retired administrator, she has the critical thinking skills and abilities to keep things moving in the right direction, and has served on our church council for many years. She is an excellent singer, music reader, and bridge player who actually teaches people how to play bridge. I am in awe of her dedication to Messiah and to our community. We are indeed blessed that she is a member of our flock.

My faith journey began with my parents at American Lutheran Church in Billings: Sunday school, Sunday church, confirmation, youth group, church choir and pot lucks.

At college, I always sought out and found a church I could walk to. My first teaching job in Denver proved more difficult to find a church fit. So I really church shopped that year.

After marrying we attended American Lutheran in Billings. We followed Sunday church and Sunday school as well. We volunteered as money counters as well and going out to lunch afterwards. We also were nursery attendants, room decorators, choir members, served on church council and attended many pot lucks too. Then the marriage dissolved. I continued volunteering at American Lutheran in many worthwhile events and projects.

In 1996 I began my remodel of the Red Lodge cabin as general contractor and electrician of record. I also attended Messiah, the only Lutheran church in Red Lodge. The congregation was welcoming for sure. I retired from education in 2000 and became a member of Messiah.

I loved volunteering at Messiah by singing in the choir and serving on church council. I volunteered in the community as part of DSVS, Habitat for Humanity, Carbon County Arts Guild, and Thrivent. I have always enjoyed my time spent in helping others in purposeful ways.

For decades my main service project has been quilting. Even to this day I quilt at Messiah and keep my machine at home well oiled. Last year our fourteen hands created 104 Lutheran World Relief quilts and so far this year 49 quilts are ready for packing.

My faith has been the mainstay of my life. Well, I enjoy playing Bridge too...only one group has a money pay off. And Christmas Kids Shoppe is on Sat Dec 6 this year, coming up very soon. So please gather your treasures to donate to this community kids event. And if you can help. please sign up as well. We need all the help we can get.

Romans 8:28 has always been meaningful to me. "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to His purpose."

Barb Ostrum



December, 2025

All Saints' Day at Messiah Lutheran Church



Tonight the cemetery glows softly with luminaires placed in honor of All Saints' Day — a beautiful reminder of the light and love of those who have gone before us.

Many thanks to all the good folk who helped place the luminaries in the cemetery and to those who stayed Sunday after church to help take them down.



Lights of remembrance Sunday morning All Saints Day

December, 2025

MESSIAH CHIMES & HANDBELLS OUT & ABOUT

Go Tell It on the Mountain that Messiah Chimes will Jingle Bells their Joy to the World, representing our congregation at Christmas Stroll.

Come and help
with the Carol Sing
at The Pollard

Friday & Saturday Christmas Stroll

December 5 & 6, at 7:00 pm

The Pollard Hotel Hemingway Room

Sunday Worship, Dmber 8, at 10:00 am



COMMUNITY THANKSGIVING SERVICE AND MEAL—NOVEMBER 23, 2025

Submitted by Dianne Milleson

Sunday evening, three churches, the Red Lodge Community UCC, Calvary Episcopal, and Messiah Lutheran Church joined together to offer a Thanksgiving service and meal to the greater Red Lodge Community, here at Messiah. Gwen Williams, a friend of our congregation, gave a generous donation to ensure that we would have plenty of turkeys and hams and whatever else we needed to feed a crowd. The community church was bringing salads and Calvary Episcopal was bringing desserts. Because we had no idea how many people might attend, we sent out a plea to the Messiah congregation for side dishes and desserts, hoping we would have enough food and also hoping we wouldn't have far too much.

Saturday, our Family Life Committee decorated the gathering space and set up 97 place settings as well as tables where the food would be served. We were hopeful that we had calculated correctly so that all would be fed. Our treasurer and master chef, Paul Schauer, was here cooking turkeys, stuffing, hams, mashed potato casserole and his famous creamed corn, and food donations began coming in.

Sunday evening came and people began arriving, bearing side dishes and desserts. Oh my! We had an abundance of everything. The seats in the sanctuary were full, we shared a lovely service of thanksgiving, and then we ate. We estimate that we fed about 100 people as well as delivering meals to shut-ins.

So many people helped to make this a success. Many thanks to everyone who helped out in any way or brought food or simply came and enjoyed the fellowship!

All this would not have been possible without one special guest, a visitor who offered to come and help with the meal; his name is Dennis. He pitched right in, cut up the hams and turkeys, dished up stuffing and much more. He even stayed to clean up and take out the garbage! We suspect he was an angel sent to help us. Thank you, Dennis.

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



Dennis Walsh and Jeri Kyner

December, 2025



Guests Arriving



Just desserts



The Feast is Ready



A bountiful table



Good Food, Good Friends



Pleasant Conversation



Jodie and Pearl cleaning up the inevitable spills

Christikon Clips

December 2025



As we enter this holy season of Advent, we at Christikon give thanks for each of you—partners in ministry, companions on the way, and bearers of hope in your communities. May these weeks of waiting and watching draw you into deeper wonder at God's nearness, kindle in you a quiet courage for the days ahead and open your hearts to the Light that is already dawning. Christikon holds you in prayer as together we journey toward the promise of Emmanuel—God with us, now and always.



A blessed Advent and Christmas to you and yours from your Christikon family.

It is the mission of Christikon to awaken and nurture faith in Christ— exploring God's creation and the adventure of life together.

CHRISTIKON • 1108 24th Street West • Billings, MT 59102

406 656-1969 • secretary@christikon.org • www.christikon.org

Messiah Calendar—December, 2025

<u>Sunday</u>	<u>Monday</u>	<u>Tuesday</u>	<u>Wednesday</u>	<u>Thursday</u>	<u>Friday</u>	<u>Saturday</u>
	1	2	3 Advent Service Soup and Bread Noon At Community UCC Church	4	5 Christmas Stroll Chimes/Bells play at 7:00 pm at the Pollard. Come and join in the caroling.	6 Christmas Stroll
7 Worship 10:00 am	8 Great Books 9:30 am Quilters 1:00 pm	9 Staff Meeting 2:00 pm Bible Study with Pastor Ben 6:00 pm	10 Advent Service Soup and Bread Noon At Messiah Council Meeting 6:00 pm	11	12	13
14 Worship 10:00 am	15 Great Books 9:30 am Quilters 1:00 pm	16 Staff Meeting 2:00 pm Bible Study with Pastor Ben 6:00 pm	17 Advent Service Soup and Bread Noon At Calvary Episcopal	18	19	20
21 Worship 10:00 am	22	23 Staff Meeting 2:00 pm Bible Study with Pastor Ben 6:00 pm	24 Christmas Eve Service 5:00 pm	25 	26	27
28 Worship 10:00 am	22	30	31 			

December, 2025

Council Corner Highlights

Greetings and Blessings!

Your Messiah Church Council met on November 12th at 6 pm.

You can get the full report, including financials, by requesting a copy from our Administrative Assistant at the church office (406) 446 - 2430.

Stewardship Drive update: There was discussion about Operations, LIB, pledges and estimates. Council voted to present the Mission Spending plan to the Congregation for approval at the meeting on November 23, 2026.

The Congregational Surveys have been returned as well as reviews for Pastor Ben and Dianne. The executive committee is meeting later in November. Pastor Ben's and Dianne's yearly reviews will be completed the week before Thanksgiving.

Special Projects 2026

January:	Bare Tooth Food Bank	July:	RLACF Fun Run
February:	Boys and Girls Club	August:	Carbon County Arts Guild Youth Education
March:	St. John's Ministries	September:	ELCA World Hunger
April:	LWR Quilters	October:	DSVS
May:	Christikon	November:	Campus Ministries
June:	Montana Synod Hunger Fund	December:	The CART

Current 2025 Goals There was discussion about the goals for 2025. All goals are in progress (check mark) or completed (plus sign). Yeah!!!!

Complete Memorial Garden

- + Expand Outreach efforts
- + Support one new mission initiative (Fun Friday)
- + Expand Music program

Save for the Endowment Fund

- + Participate in small group pilot program

Establish a connection with the Cemetery

Finalize Policy & Procedure Manuals, Member handbook and Building Use documents

Develop congregation-led worship

Our next regular Church Council Meeting is on Wednesday, December 10th at 6:00 pm.

PRAYER REQUESTS

Please write your prayer requests in the prayer request book in the gathering area.

We ask that you re-submit requests at the first of each month if they are still desired

Or contact the church office at 406-446-2430 or email requests to redlodgemessiah@gmail.com with specific information and permission from the person you are adding.

This month the people of Messiah are praying for, Vince and Mary Ames,

Claudia B, Hannah Gonzales,

Dolly Koski, Rick and Sandy Koski, Jim Kyner, Doug & Mary Lair,

Jackie Odegard, Carlos Ramalho, Sadie Sceva, Guynema Terry,

Pam Tuscher, Josh Wilker, Raj and Colette and Lexi

December, 2025

HELP THE HOMELESS IN BILLINGS, MONTANA

I am collecting items for a program at Bethlehem Lutheran Church to help the homeless people of Billings, Mt.

Please donate if you have extra men's coats, boots, sleeping bags, blankets and tarps. Items may be brought to Messiah in Red Lodge and I will pick them up.

God Bless! Teri Wilker

Hebrews 4:16: Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

PRAYER REQUESTS

Please write your prayer requests in the prayer request book next to the office or contact the church office at 406-446-2430 or email requests to redlodgemessiah@gmail.com with specific information and permission from the person you are adding.

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Jackie Odegaard, Carlos Ramalho, Sadie Sceva, Guynema Terry,
Pam Tuscher, Josh Wilker, Raj and Colette and Lexi

There are also several private requests for healing.

Each month Messiah Lutheran supports a designated charity. If you would like to contribute to this cause, please designate "special offering" on your check or with your online gift.

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SAVE YOUR SUDS

a community ministry of kindness

Save Your Suds is a ministry that was started by Calvary Episcopal Church in June of 2023.

The purpose of the program is to spread kindness in our community by helping people pay for their laundry expenses at Rock Creek Laundromat.

Owner of the laundromat, Jim Moore, generously donates the cost of washing. He provides us with a key to the washing machines that allows us to bypass the need for quarters or credit cards.

The cost of drying is covered by donations from the Episcopal Church Women and from parishioners from Calvary.

Volunteers run the program which is held on the first and third Sundays of every month from 5-7p.m.

Each week a bin is provided to that week's volunteers.

The bin is outfitted with the following items:

Detergent, Dryer sheets, Washer key and instructions for the use of the key, Quarters for the dryers, Clipboard to record number of loads and amount of quarters used

Members of the community have become somewhat dependent on the SYS program and are very appreciative of the help. This is a wonderful way to support our neighbors and spread kindness in our community. Calvary would love to have our friends from Community UCC and Messiah join us in this essential ministry. To volunteer, please contact Kathie Wilson at: grgtlv@aol.com



St. John's United

FAMILY SERVICES

Dear Friends and Supporters,

With heartfelt gratitude for your generosity and steadfast support over the years, we want to share an important update: after seventy years of dedicated service, St. John's United—formerly Lutheran Social Services of Montana—will be concluding its Adoptions program.

This decision comes after deep reflection and in response to the evolving needs and realities of our field. Since our earliest days, your support has made it possible for us to walk alongside children, birthparents, and adoptive families, helping to create loving, stable homes and offering compassionate guidance every step of the way. The impact of your contributions is immeasurable and lives on in the stories of the families we've helped build.

As we close this chapter, we are not stepping away from our mission—we are evolving it. Moving forward, our focus will deepen around prevention and early intervention through our C.A.R.E.S. program, which provides critical support to families before crises occur. This shift reflects our commitment to building stronger, healthier communities by addressing root causes and supporting families in staying safely together. Over the past four years, this program has helped stabilize 251 families by supporting them through crises, connecting them with vital resources, and fostering meaningful relationships that strengthen their support systems.

We hope you will continue to walk alongside us in this next phase. Your ongoing support will be vital as we expand our efforts to serve children and families in new and meaningful ways. Together, we can continue to make a lasting difference—one rooted in compassion, connection, and care.

On behalf of all of us at St. John's United Family Services, thank you for your trust, your partnership, and your enduring commitment to the well-being of children and families.

With Gratitude,

Jamie Rettig
Director of Family Services

Please use the reply envelope or go to www.st.johnsunited.org to send your gift of hope, dignity, and love.

For more information, please call (406) 655-5427.

FALL 2025

December, 2025

Messiah's Mission:

“Live by Faith, Share Christ's Love, Be a Voice of Hope”

HOW TO CONTACT US AND STAY IN TOUCH:

Office Hours: Administrative: Mon-Thurs. 11 am - 3 pm

Messiah Lutheran Church phone: 406-446-2430

Administrative Assistant, Dianne Milleson's cell phone: 406-425-3222

Pastor's Office Hours:

Monday: Off

Tuesday : 9:00-4:00

Wednesday: 9:00-3:00

Thursday: 9:00-3:00

Friday: 9:00-4:00

Saturday: Off

Sunday: 8:00-12:00

Pastor's Cell Phone: 646-708-1389

Church Address: P.O. Box 1330

912 Lower Continental Dr.

Red Lodge, MT 59068

Website: www.redlodgemessiah.com

Facebook: Messiah Lutheran

Email: General: redlodgemessiah@gmail.com

Prayer Requests: redlodgemessiah@gmail.com

Pastor Ben: pastorbencherland@gmail.com

Sunday Worship Service:

10:00 a.m. Worship



In an effort to make Messiah comfortable and welcoming for everyone we ask that you refrain from using strong personal scents or perfumes.

Thank you.



Messiah Church Council

P.O. Box 1330

912 Lower Continental Dr.

Red Lodge, MT 59068

Church: (406) 446-2430

Church email: redlodgemessiah@gmail.com

Pastor's email: pastorbencherland@gmail.com

Website: www.redlodgemessiah.com

Pastor	Ben Cherland	646-708-1389c	pastorbencherland@gmail.com
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President	Katrin Chandler	406-290-4263c	katregcha@gmail.com
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Vice President	Roy Olpin	360-888-7733	roy_olpin@hotmail.com
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Secretary	Brooke Flynn	406-656-0173	flynnquilt@gmail.com
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Treasurer	Paul Schauer	701-391-0584	pschauer62@gmail.com
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Education	Maria Gibson	727-744-4630	mgibson@wdmoffice.com
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Family Life/Volunteer

Coordinator	Martha Crofts	239-643-3027c	marthacrofts@gmail.com
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Outreach	Sandy Moe	218-341-0283	sandra.moe@rocky.edu
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Property	Kathy Kreatz	406-425-1595	kkreatzgmail.com
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Stewardship	Linda Daily	406-426-0841	lindatodd94@yahoo.com
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Worship	Dianne Milleson	406-425-3222	dmille46@gmail.com
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Other Important Contact Information

Computer	Gwen Williams	406-425-2401	(Text Gwen Only)
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Ministerial Ass'n.	Bryan Lowen	406-860-5571	(financial assistance to the community).
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