

January, 2025

# *Light in the Beartooths*

MESSIAH LUTHERAN NEWS

Pastor Ben Cherland



January, 2025

Do not go gentle into that good night,  
Old age should burn and rave at close of day;  
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

Dear Messiah,

These are the opening words of a poem by Dylan Thomas (1914-1953). I heard them in these first days of this new year amid the news (a terrorist truck attack in New Orleans, a bombing in Nevada, a plane crash in Korea, and more). In these last days of the Christmas season, I'm reminded how easily this buoyant, season of joy at the birth of Jesus gives way to the darkness of January, just days after the darkest day of the year. Are you feeling a little bit of dread as the rest of winter approaches? A little bit curious about where that sense of hope that came with Christmas will come from next?

But as all seasons go (including liturgical seasons in the church) with the end of one another approaches. Epiphany starts on Monday, January 6<sup>th</sup>, and it is the season of Light. The joy of Christmas gives way to the season of light – the light of Christ entering the world, the star by which the “Wise Men” find Jesus, the light of wisdom, the light of truth, the light of hope, and the light each of us carries in the world that we're exhorted to let shine. Even as the Sun begins its slow return, lengthening these days, Epiphany and the long, dark months ahead are a time to “rage against the dying of the light.”

I was reminded too in these first days of 2025 that in John's gospel “Belief” is always an active thing – it's not something you have, in other words, it's something you do. I think this is true. I also think it's true for a lot of other things. Like happiness – it's not something you have, it's something you do. What about hope? Do we have hope, or do we do it? Maybe a little of both, but you get my drift.

What I'm getting at is, I want to know, what are you planning to do to keep your light burning, to keep your hope alive through this dark season of light? How are you planning to rage against the dying of the light, your light? Will you be exercising more? Eating less junk food? Maybe getting a little more consistent with your daily devotionals? These might sound like new year's resolutions, but they are not. These and many more things are ways to sustain your light – because the world needs your light, this year and beyond.

“Do not go gently into that good night. Rage, rage against the dying of the light.”

Pastor Ben



- 1/3 Vince Ames
- 1/12 Pastor Ben
- 1/15 Don Peterson
- 1/19 John Elsberry

### A new ministry here at Messiah Cotton flannel diapers

We are collecting cotton flannel sheets and yardage to be made into diapers. Soon we will begin making diapers here in Red Lodge to be donated to Lutheran World Relief at the same time we donate our quilts. These are fun and easy to make.

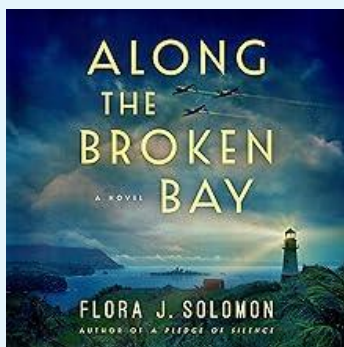
### Messiah Charity Quilters would love your help

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.

Please plan to stick around after worship on January 26th. Along with the annual meeting, a delicious dinner will be provided. Swedish meatballs, mashed potato casserole, corn, veggie tray, lingonberries, and chocolate cake are all part of the menu. There is no cost.



## WOMEN'S SAFARI BOOK CLUB



Date: January 16, 2025  
Time: 3:00 pm  
Book: Along the Broken Bay  
Author: Flora J. Solomon  
Facilitator: Carol Erkens  
Location: Home of Mary Ames

Contact host, Marla Ebel, at  
406-664-3178 for more Information

### Book Exchange

Books in the book case in the hallway are available to be taken and read. You may also leave books for others to read.

### 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.





## WHAT'S GOING ON AT MESSIAH



**CHRISTMAS KIDS SHOPPE** was again a success this year with 161 kids selecting 847 gifts which were wrapped, tagged, and bagged for their family and some friends. We have been keeping some records of the numbers but not from the start when Teri Wilker, wife of Pastor Wilker, told of this community giving project about twenty years ago.

Here are the numbers of kids "shopping" and the # of gifts selected by year. Note that through 2019, the event was held over two Saturdays. Please understand that we will NEVER go back to two Saturdays again.

2012	220	1120
2013	269	1236
2014	270	1343
2015	282	1385
2016	248	1203
2017	245	1175
2018	187	889
2019	187	880
Pandemic Years		
2023	251	1304
2024	161	847

### Council Corner

Council met on December 11. Highlights are below. You can find the full report, including financials, in the member section of our website or by requesting it from our Administrative Assistant.

- The mission spending plan was approved at the MSP meeting held on Nov 24th.
  - Determined where AED should be placed
  - - Discussed the many Christmastime activities and worship services
  - - Set the date for the Annual Meeting to be January 26th. Paul and LeeAnn are providing the meal with Council assisting in serving & clean-up.
  - - Worship Assistant Training and Sermon feedback sessions were discussed and will be put in place in some form in 2025.
  - Mortgage Balance as of November 30, 2024: \$331,033.91

## **ANNUAL MEETING**

Please join us for our annual meeting being held on January 26th. After worship, we invite you to enjoy an early lunch provided by Paul Schauer and his wife, LeeAnn. We will hold the annual meeting in the gathering space toward the end of the meal. At this meeting, we will be asking members to vote on the nominations ballot, the gift policy and the sabbatical policy. We invite members and non-members to attend the lunch and the meeting and openly welcome comments and questions. It is a meeting where we reflect on the year we just closed and look to the coming year and all we want to accomplish.

## **OPEN LEADERSHIP POSITIONS**

We are still seeking 3 people to fill Council positions.

1. Vice President. This person steps in to run the meetings if the President is not able. This person works on specific projects as requested/needed (i.e. endowment fund, policy manuals). The term of this position is for 3 years, ending Jan, 2028.
2. Outreach. This team leads Outreach activities, striving to include the community in good works (ex. concerts on the land, worship on the land, snow-angel making) and to invite the community to join us at Messiah. This team also leads the monthly special offering, seeking speakers to present on various topics. The term of this position is for 3 years, ending Jan, 2028.
3. Stewardship. This team leads our annual stewardship campaign for both the general fund and for our mortgage. Additionally, this team oversees the counting and reporting of donations as they are gathered. As this position has been vacant for some months, the term of this position is for 2 additional years, ending on Jan, 2027.

We are also seeking one or two people to serve on the Nominating Committee for 2025. This team works primarily Oct - Dec, finding members for the various church leadership roles each year. The outcome of this team is the ballot that is presented to the congregation at the annual meeting. The term for this committee is 1 year.

**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.**

**January Baretooth Cupboards**

**February Meadowlark CC**

**March St. John’s Ministries**

**April LWR Quilters**

**May Christikon**

**June Boys and Girls Club**

**July Red Lodge Pool**

**August Red Lodge Fun Run**

**September Pastor’s Discretionary**

**October DSVS**

**November Campus Ministries**

**December Prison Ministries (Freedom in Christ)**



We are a local food bank serving Carbon County, Montana. Please browse this site to learn about the services we offer as well as how to support us.

We are run entirely by volunteers and because we are "all volunteer," nearly 80% of every dollar donated goes directly to food purchases. The community supports us through food drives, fundraisers, and direct donations of food or cash by individuals. Packaged items such as cereal, pasta, canned soup, canned fruit and vegetables are always on hand and donations of such items are always welcome. Frozen hamburger is also always available as is fresh produce, bread, eggs and dairy products. Frozen wild game such as elk or deer is sometimes available. **Phone 406-446-1255**

### **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](mailto:redlodgemessiah@gmail.com)  
with specific information and permission from the person you are adding.

This month the people of Messiah are praying for  
Burt and Donna Douthit, the family of Jim Koski, Dolly Koski, Rick and  
Sandy Koski, Rob Loney, Carlos Ramalho, the family of Dolly Stuber,  
Marcy Wilrich, and David Tilton


## **DSVS VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR**

We are proud to announce our very own Connie Baehr was named Volunteer of the Year by DSVS. She dedicated an incredible 711 hours of her time to answering the DSVS Helpline in 2024!

Connie shared, "I've been volunteering on the DSVS Helpline for about 2 1/2 years. The training I was given was very thorough and I was well prepared to take the helpline. Sometimes my shifts go by with no calls at all. Sometimes it can be busy. I find it rewarding to be able to listen to someone who has some difficulties in their life and, if desired, maybe offer some suggestions or refer them to additional assistance. Sometimes all that is needed is a person to listen and not judge. I've always been well supported by my backup when I have questions or need to brainstorm ideas to help someone. Sometimes calls come from outside our service area of Carbon and Stillwater Counties, even out of state. I still try to listen and make suggestions about how they might get help in their location. My experience has been one of my most rewarding volunteer activities. Thanks to the DSVS professional staff for all they do to make our community a better place to live."



# Messiah Calendar—January 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	4
5 Worship 10:00 am Chimes 11:30 am	6 Great Books 9:30 am Quilters 1:00 pm	7 Bible Study with Pastor Ben 6:00 pm	8 <i>Epiphany Bonfire</i> <i>6:00 pm</i> 	9	10	11
12 Worship 10:00 am Chimes 11:30 am	13 Great Books 9:30 am Quilters 1:00 pm	14 Bible Study with Pastor Ben 6:00 pm	15	16 Safari Book Club 3:00 pm	17	18
19 Worship 10:00 am Chimes 11:30 am	20 Great Books 9:30 am Quilters 1:00 pm	21 Bible Study with Pastor Ben 6:00 pm	22	23	24	25
26 Worship 10:00 am  Annual Meeting following worship Swedish Meatball Dinner	27 Great Books 9:30 am Quilters 1:00 pm	28 Bible Study with Pastor Ben 6:00 pm	29	30	31	



This is the proposed Sabbatical Policy for Messiah Lutheran Church.

# **MESSIAH LUTHERAN CHURCH SABBATICAL GUIDELINES**

## **PURPOSE OF A SABBATICAL**

Wholeness and wellness are important principles in the life of the church and in the practice of its ministry. Congregations and agencies will be served best by pastors and deacons who are healthy--both spiritually and physically--and who are committed to grow both in their understanding of the faith and in enhancing their skills in ministry. A sabbatical provides an opportunity for the pastor to take an intentional, extended period of time away from regular parish demands to experience renewal, study, spiritual growth, travel, or skill development. After the sabbatical the pastor returns to the parish with new energy and resources for ministry.

## **LENGTH OF SABBATICAL**

A sabbatical may be granted for twelve weeks (three months). The sabbatical takes the place of any continuing education time for that year. Vacation time is not included as sabbatical time.

## **ELIGIBILITY**

A pastor may take a sabbatical after every sixth full year of service with approval by the church council.

## **FINANCING A SABBATICAL**

The congregation will pay full salary and benefits during the sabbatical. Expenses incurred during the sabbatical – e.g. Tuition, books, supplies, travel and living expenses outside of the parsonage – will be borne by the pastor. These expenses may be covered by allotted continuing education funds.

## **PLANNING**

Planning for a sabbatical should begin the calendar year before the sabbatical. A written proposal for a sabbatical should be submitted for approval no later than six months before the sabbatical. The timing and proposed plans for a sabbatical must be approved by the church council.

## **COMMITMENTS FOLLOWING A SABBATICAL**

The pastor is normally expected to serve Messiah for at least twelve months following the sabbatical. The pastor will present the results/impact of his/her sabbatical to the congregation within a mutually agreed upon period of time following the completion of the sabbatical.

Christikon Clips



January, 2025

Information for our Congregations

2025 Camp registration will open January 2nd.

Go to our website [www.christikon.org](http://www.christikon.org) in January and check it out!

Search for new Executive Director: As you read this, we hope to be in the final process of hiring a new director. We are excited and hopeful! Please continue to pray for this process, our call committee and our candidates as they discern this calling.

2025 Summer Staff Application is live on our website. Our Assistant Director will be out recruiting through February. If you or someone you know is interested in applying, go to <https://christikon.org/employment/> and complete the form.

Save the date: Christikon Benefit Auction is scheduled for April 27th. We are looking for items. Do you or someone you know provide a service, have a cabin, vacation condo, sky miles, sports tickets, event tickets that would be willing to donate? We would love to speak with them. Call or email the office.

Too few of our nation's young people (not to mention adults) have significant outdoor experience. Christikon combines spirited outdoor experience within intentional Christian community that helps open people to the life of faith. Think about joining the Christikon life this coming summer. It can do a world of good...

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](mailto:secretary@christikon.org)

[director@christikon.org](mailto:director@christikon.org) • [assistantdir@christikon.org](mailto:assistantdir@christikon.org)

[www.christikon.org](http://www.christikon.org)

## Messiah Church Council

P.O. Box 1330      912 Lower Continental Dr.

Red Lodge, MT 59068

Church: (406) 446-2430

Church email: [redlodgemessiah@gmail.com](mailto:redlodgemessiah@gmail.com)

Pastor's email: [pastorbencherland@gmail.com](mailto:pastorbencherland@gmail.com)

Website: [www.redlodgemessiah.com](http://www.redlodgemessiah.com)

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Pastor	Ben Cherland	646-708-1389c	<a href="mailto:pastorbencherland@gmail.com">pastorbencherland@gmail.com</a>
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President	Linda Daily	406-426-0841c	<a href="mailto:lindatodd94@yahoo.com">lindatodd94@yahoo.com</a>
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Vice President			
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Secretary	Brooke Flynn	406-656-0173	<a href="mailto:flynnquilt@gmail.com">flynnquilt@gmail.com</a>
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Treasurer	Paul Schauer	701-391-0584	<a href="mailto:pschauer62@gmail.com">pschauer62@gmail.com</a>
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Education	Katrin Chandler	406-290-4263c	<a href="mailto:katregcha@gmail.com">katregcha@gmail.com</a>
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Family Life/Volunteer			
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Coordinator	Martha Crofts	239-643-3027c	<a href="mailto:marthacrofts@gmail.com">marthacrofts@gmail.com</a>
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Outreach	Barb Ostrum	406-446-4121	<a href="mailto:hobin727@gmail.com">hobin727@gmail.com</a>
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Property	Kathy Kreatz	406-425-1595	<a href="mailto:kkreatz@gmail.com">kkreatz@gmail.com</a>
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Stewardship			
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Worship	Dianne Milleson	406-425-3222	<a href="mailto:dmille46@gmail.com">dmille46@gmail.com</a>
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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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January, 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](http://www.redlodgemessiah.com)

**Facebook:** Messiah Lutheran

**Email: General:** [redlodgemessiah@gmail.com](mailto:redlodgemessiah@gmail.com)

**Prayer Requests:** [redlodgemessiah@gmail.com](mailto:redlodgemessiah@gmail.com)

**Pastor Ben:** [pastorbencherland@gmail.com](mailto: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.**

