



ANNANDALE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

250 OAK AVENUE NORTH
PO BOX 329
ANNANDALE, MN 55302
(320) 274-5127

The Grapevine January 2026

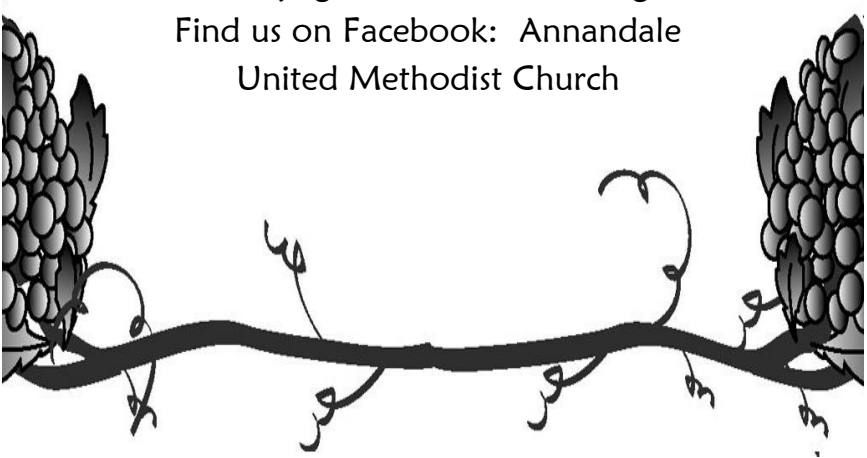
Pastor Mark Schlasner

(Pastor) am.umc.pastor@gmail.com

(Office) aumcsecretary@outlook.com

Webpage: annandaleumc.org

Find us on Facebook: Annandale
United Methodist Church



January 2026 Grapevine

A New Year's Dawn: Carrying the Light Forward

As we step across the threshold of a new year, we often find ourselves yearning for a fresh start, a new clarity of purpose. The deep, quiet darkness of these winter mornings can remind us of the uncertainties that lie ahead. Yet, it is precisely in this season that we are invited to remember the profound proclamation of John's Gospel: that in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. This Word, John tells us, became flesh and dwelt among us in the person of Jesus Christ, the true light that gives light to everyone. He is the dawn that scatters every shadow, offering a clarity and hope that can frame our entire year.

This foundational Light, Jesus, is most fully understood in His gracious presence among us. We see this illustrated powerfully at the Jordan River, where Jesus—though without sin—humbly submits to baptism. In this act, the heavens open, and the Father's voice affirms His beloved Son. Here, we see that true, divine power is revealed in humble solidarity and loving presence. Jesus meets us in our ordinary moments, sanctifies our new beginnings, and demonstrates that God's ultimate power is expressed through identification and love, setting a pattern for how we are to be present with one another.

Such a calling naturally propels us outward with purpose. The prophet Isaiah echoes this mission, speaking of a servant called not only to restore Israel but to be “a light for the Gentiles,” to bring God's salvation “to the ends of the earth.” This is the justice the Light brings: a comprehensive healing that lifts up the broken and reaches the forgotten. In Jesus, this prophecy

finds its fulfillment. As His followers, we are now enlisted in this work of restorative justice—to be reflectors of His light that pushes back darkness in all its forms, offering hope, dignity, and God’s shalom to a waiting world.

So, as this January unfolds, let our collective resolution be this: to consciously carry the light of Christ. Let us seek, as the Psalmist did, to dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of our lives, to gaze on His beauty, and to find our strength and courage in His faithful presence. In the coming year, may we be a community that looks to Jesus, the morning star, in each new dawn. May we embody His gracious presence with one another, and actively share the light of His justice and love. For the Lord, revealed to us in Jesus, is our light and our salvation—whom shall we fear? Wishing you a year illuminated by His hope, purpose, and peace.

With love and blessings,

Pastor Mark Schlasner

Annandale UMC Giving and Attendance

Giving –Dec. 2025 Attendance –Dec. 2025

Dec. 7, 2025	\$3,520.50	31– in-person 74 – online
1\$50.00 Share Your Christmas Fund		
\$20.00 Memorial Fund – Marlin Grant Memorial		
Dec. 14, 2025	\$2,605.00	21 – in-person 90 – online
\$120.00 December Mission March – Share Your Christmas Fund		
\$25.00 Apportionment Fund		
Dec. 21, 2025	\$1,1,160.50	27 – in-person 51 – online
\$70.00 December Mission March – Share Your Christmas Fund		
Dec. 24, 2025	\$445.00	24 – in-person
Christmas Eve Offering Fund		
Dec. 28, 2025	\$13,360.00	15– in-person 77 – online
\$20.00 Christmas Eve Offering Fund		

General funds needed each week: \$2,638.78

December income as of 12/21/25: \$10,257.80

December expenses as of 12/21/25: \$8,930.03

2025 apportionments = \$11,690.00

Apportionments paid YTD = \$2,532.00



January Worship Themes

January 4, 2026 “Seeing the Light”
Scripture Reading: John 1:1-18

January 11, 2026 “Power of Presence”
Scripture Reading: Matthew 3:13-17

January 18, 2026 “Give You as a Light”
Scripture Reading: Isaiah 49:1-7

January 25, 2026 “Carrying the Light”
Scripture Reading: Psalm 27:1, 4-9



Our January Mission March, which will be taken during the first hymn on Sunday January 11, 2026, will go to apportionments. Apportionments are the share each annual conference or local church pays to support international, national, and local missions.

Blood Drive



Blood Drive - Friday, January 23, 2026

The next Red Cross Blood Drive will be held at our church on Friday, January 23 from 10:00am – 4:00pm.

Donors can schedule an appointment now by using the Red Cross Blood Donor App, visiting [RedCrossBlood.org](https://www.RedCrossBlood.org), or calling 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767).



Coffee Fellowship Serving Groups

January 4, 2026: Steve & Laurie Dick

January 11, 2026: Barb McNellis and Betsy Gridley

January 18, 2026: Gerry & Ruth Bahe

January 25, 2026: Sally Smith



Usher Schedule

January 4, 2026: Dave Heberling

January 11, 2026: Need

January 18, 2026: Need

January 25, 2026: Shelly Anderson



January Birthdays

January 7	Nola Walberg
January 18	Laurie Dick
January 19	Ashley Gillham
January 31	Kyle Bahe



- Michelle Picken Howard who is recovering from her recent cancer surgery.
- Kodie Sickmann, friend of LeRoy Roller, whose brain tumor is back after seven years.
- Mike Sommers' brother, Dan, who is in Hospice Care.



Our Breakfast Book Club "The Alchemist" by Paulo Coelho

We invite you to breakfast and a thoughtful discussion of Paulo Coelho's *The Alchemist* on **Saturday, January 24th at 10:00 AM at McDonald's**. We'll enjoy some breakfast as we explore this inspiring story about destiny and personal treasure. All are welcome. Come for the fellowship and a meaningful conversation!

Books are still available for you to check out on the table outside of the church office.

Annandale UMC
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