

The Concordia Chimes

January 2026



The Reverend Maria Hammons
Associate to the Bishop
Congregational Council Contact Pastor

☎ (860) 649-5311

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Parish Administrator

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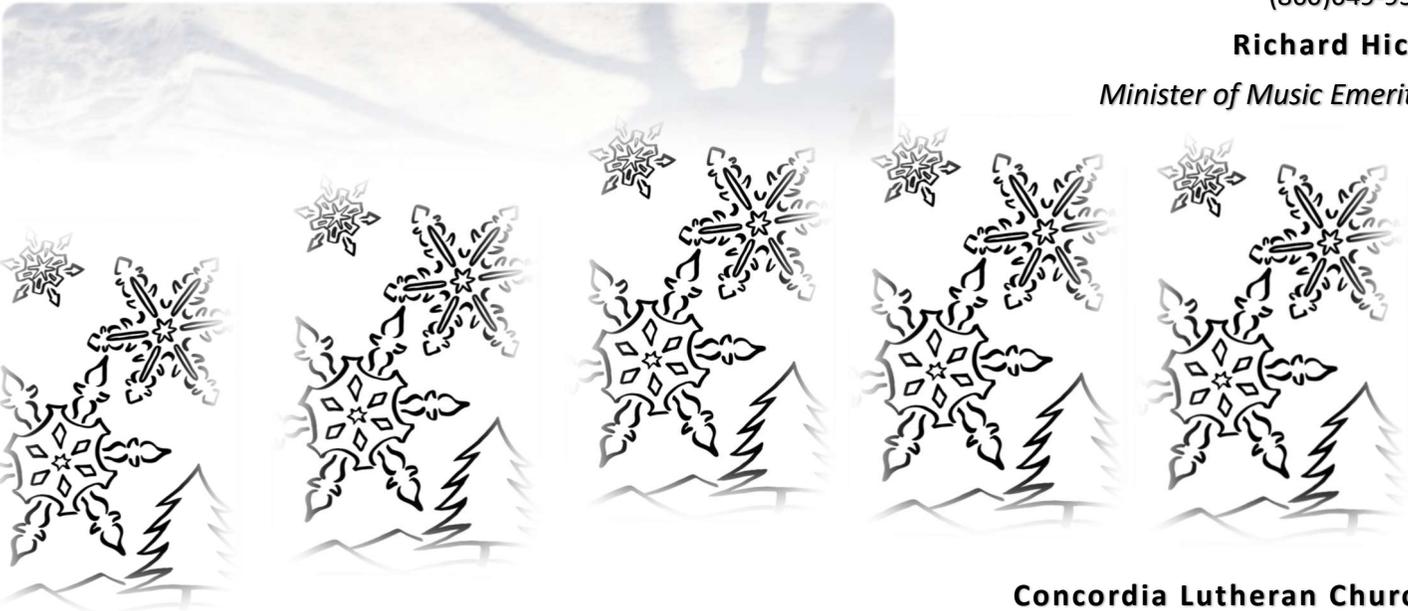
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Richard Hicks
Minister of Music Emeritus



Concordia's WHY | Purpose Statement

To be a welcoming and inviting community empowered by the Word of God; so that we may work for social justice and exhibit compassion for all.

Concordia Lutheran Church

40 Pitkin Street, Manchester, CT 06040

Office Hours:

Monday – Thursday, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

****closed on all Federal Holidays****

SUNDAY SERVICE | 10:00 A.M.

office@concordiamanchester.org

www.concordiamanchester.org

Phone: (860) 649-5311 | Fax: (860) 432-9972

The deadline for submitting articles or contents for *The Chimes* is the 25th of each month, or as communicated.

Note from Pastor Rolf Hedberg:

Dear Friends in Christ,

This doesn't qualify for a Christmas Article as it really is a thank you note from me and Lois. Up front we thank you for the generous gift you gave us at that wonderful catered luncheon. Your kind words and well wishes are incredibly etched on our hearts. But beyond all this, thank you for being the Church in this place and in this time. And what a gift it has been for us these past 4 years plus to be welcomed into this faith community. Your warmth and love have surrounded us and your deep appreciation for the call of the gospel to worship and to reach out to those in need have been inspirational. So as we move forward in retirement (and that is something I have yet to get right!) we will remember this congregation with gratitude and love.

Peace to You All in the Holy Season,

Rolf and Lois



Holy Closure Update

Real Estate

The Real Estate Team (Joel, Sandy and Zach Baranowski, David Beauregard, Carol Stoneman, Lisa Taylor and Mark Winzler) did great work under Joel's leadership! Their charge was to bring forward recommendations to the Council for a Realtor and Real Estate Attorney. The Council accept both recommendations (Keith Kumnick of Colliers as Realtor and Williams Golske as Real Estate Attorney). With these people in place, the work of the Real Estate Team has been completed. A communication has been sent to team members thanking them for their diligence in their work and informed them that the Real Estate Team has been disbanded.

Matters of Real Estate now shift to the Congregation Council. The congregation, at one of our specially-called congregational meetings last spring, authorized the Congregation Council to negotiate on the behalf of the congregation once the property was listed by the Realtor and offers received. With the property listed etc. we are moving now in that direction.

IMPORTANT: Up until this point, we have been sharing openly with all members of Concordia about all which has been taking place in all aspects of the Holy Closure Process related to Real Estate verbally and in written communications.

While Council will continue to communicate **generically** with you regarding Real Estate, **the specifics related to Real Estate** (who has submitted an offer, how much, the names of groups who have toured or shown interest etc.) **will now no longer be able to be shared with the congregation.** Those need to be confidential in order to protect those who have made offers and protect us as a congregation also.

As stated, we are now moving into a time when offers to buy the building will be coming forward. In both the private and public sectors, Real Estate discussions relating to possible/specific offers and the ensuing negotiations of offers, are held in **Executive Session.** This will also be the case with us at Concordia. This is done in order to ensure a safe, secure and confidential process. Nothing discussed in executive session can or will be released.

Executive Sessions are open to Council members only. The Council will be inviting Realtor Keith Kumnick and Joel Baranowski into part/all of an Executive Session related to Real Estate. It should be noted that anything discussed in Executive Session cannot and will not be shared. Council members are forbidden to share executive session discussions with spouses, children, friends etc. No minutes are taken.

This is not meant to be secretive or underhanded. We need to ensure that information (about who makes an offer and for how much, negotiating strategies etc.) remains confidential. Additionally, we need to make sure that one group making an offer does not know about another group doing so. (They may hear about or talk to each other, but that information cannot come from us!)

It should be noted that no votes are ever taken in Executive Session. All votes must be in open (regular) session. Votes taken in open (regular) session will be shared with and reported to the congregation in the meeting minutes.

As it is not practical to get 12 Council members together with the Realtor for negotiation purposes each time it is needed, the Council designated a **Negotiating Team consisting of Executive Committee members** (Mark Winzler, David Smith, Susan Bourret and Carol Stoneman) **and Joel Baranowski.**

The Negotiating Team will continue to provide the full Council with timely information along the way (always in Executive Session).

In the February Chimes, detail about the process from the point of when the Negotiating Team makes a recommendation to the Council etc. will be provided. We are not yet at that point.

Pastoral Coverage

Concordia is fortunate to have a team of dedicated Pastors whom Concordia members know, who will be providing pastoral coverage and care for the next six months:

- **Associate to the Bishop Pastor Maria Hammons** will be covering meetings of the Congregation Council and all meetings of the congregation.
- **Pastors Rebecca Bourret and Ann Lovejoy Johnson** will preside/preach at our Sunday and other liturgies (Holy Week) with assistance **from Pastors Gloria Connery and Sara Anderson** when neither of them is available.
- **Pastor Ann** will be the primary contact for anyone in need of pastoral care with **Pastor Rebecca** serving as the back-up.

We will be well cared for during our last six months!

As there will be no pastoral presence in the building outside of Sunday mornings, if there are any pastoral care needs or concerns, please be sure to contact **Margie** in the office 860-649-5311 (Mondays through Thursdays 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.) **or Mark Winzler** (any other time 860-643-1913-home or cell 860-690-8651).

Upcoming

January 18	Quercus String Quartet Concert at 4:00 p.m. <i>(See information in this Chimes)</i>
January 25	Semi-Annual Meeting (Finance) 11:30 a.m.
February 15	Fastnacht <i>(See information in this Chimes)</i>
February 18	Ash Wednesday Eucharist (at Emanuel) - 7:00 p.m.
March 15	Congregational Meeting with Pastor Maria Hammons

**Final Luncheon/Banquet
Sunday, June 28, 2026**

**A Villa Louisa
(in Bolton)
12 Noon-3:00 p.m.**

Following our "Leave-taking Worship" Concordia members will gather for one last meal together. Further information will be forthcoming, but for now, please mark this date down on your calendars. This is only for present members of Concordia.

Reminders

- **Prayers** - We are looking for people to write prayer petitions for Sunday morning worship and to be included in the Chimes. Holy Closure Team members will write prayers for meetings. Interested? Contact Margie or Mark.
- **Reflections/Stories/Memories** - We are looking for people to share these. We would like to include at least one each month in the Chimes, although they may be other means by which we can share as well as we move forward. Interested? Contact Margie or Mark.

On Behalf of the Council and Holy Closure Team,

Mark Winzler

Pastoral Care

Pastor Ann Lovejoy Johnson will be the primary contact to provide pastoral care for those in need. Pastor Rebecca Bourret will do so, if Pastor Ann is not available.

If you or a loved one is in need of pastoral care, please call the Margie (Monday-Thursday 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.).

If outside of these times, please contact Mark Winzler at 860-643-1913 (home) or 860-690-8651 (cell).

Note: There will be no pastoral presence on site except for Sunday mornings. Please call either Margie or Mark with any needs or questions.

Farewell and Godspeed at the Conclusion of a Covenant

Note: This rite was used at the end of the December 21, 2025 liturgy, Pastor and Lois Hedberg's last Sunday at Concordia.

Associate to the Bishop Pastor Maria Hammons:

Rolf and Lois, as you leave Concordia, this congregation wishes to bid you farewell.

When you came to Concordia, members rejoiced to welcome you into the mission all share as the people of God. In this community you have come to know and to share in God's loving purpose for you and for all creation. God has blessed you in this community, and God has blessed Concordia's members through you.

A reading from John: Jesus said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life." (John 8:12)

Mark Winzler:

Pastor Hedberg, in September, 2021, the Congregation Council of Concordia Lutheran Church signed a covenant with you to serve as Transition Pastor: to proclaim God's word, to baptize and teach, to announce God's forgiveness, and to preside at the Lord's Table. With the gospel you have comforted us in times of sickness and trouble, and at the death of our loved ones.

You have been a steady, unwavering presence for us as we moved through the lengthy transition process and made the painful decision to enter into the Holy Closure process. Sharing our joys and sorrows, Lois and you have been important to our life together in the church of Jesus Christ, in our service to this community, and in God's mission to the whole world. As you leave this community of faith, we say farewell, and we pray for God's blessing.

Pastor Maria:

People of God, members of Concordia Lutheran Church, do you release Pastor Hedberg from service as your transition pastor?

Congregation:

We do, and we give thanks to God for our ministry together.

Pastor Maria:

Rolf, do you recognize and accept the completion of your ministry with Concordia Lutheran Church?

Pastor Hedberg:

I do, and I give thanks to God for our ministry together.



Pastor Maria:

Almighty God, through your Son Jesus Christ

You gave the holy apostles many gifts and commanded them to feed your flock.

You equip your people with abilities that differ according to the grace given to them, and you call them to various avenues of service. We give you thanks for Rolf's ministry among the people of God in this place.

You watch over our going out and our coming in: bless this time of ending and beginning. You surround your people in every time and place: keep all close in your love. You accompany your people in times of joy and times of trial: prosper all that has been done to your glory in this time together; heal and forgive all that has fallen short of your will for all. Help Rolf and Lois and all members of Concordia to live with courage and gladness in the future you give to us.

Eternal God, we thank you for the work and witness of Rolf and Lois who have enriched Concordia.

As they have been a blessing to this community of faith, so now send them forth to be a blessing to others; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

Your sisters and brothers in the New England Synod and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America give thanks to God, Rolf, for the ministry you have shared. We promise you our continued support and prayer.

Rejoicing in the blessings of God at Concordia and in Rolf's ministry among and with you, with hope in God's abundant grace in years to come, I announce that Pastor Rolf Hedberg's service as Transition Pastor of Concordia Lutheran Church will conclude on December 24, 2025.

Pastor Hedberg:

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy.

The Lord look upon you with favor and ✝ give you peace.

Amen.



Farewell to Transition Pastor, the Rev. Dr. Rolf Hedberg

These remarks were delivered by Mark Winzler at the Farewell Luncheon for Pastor and Lois Hedberg on Sunday, December 21, 2025

*“The ability to be truly loving people is the greatest gift of all.
It is that gift which most of us appear to possess in such small measure.
We talk a good deal about it; we make grand statements concerning it.
But when the chips are down, we usually find our vaunted love in short supply.
We have little difficulty in loving those who love us or in showing some concern for those who will respond favorably to our investment in them. If the time and place are right, we are even capable of risking our lives and possessions on behalf of a brother or sister who is in trouble. Whatever the reason—chivalry, honor, pride or simple reflex action—our world harbors many heroes. True lovers, however, are few and far between.
The true lovers are the people who are empowered and motivated by the love of God. Theirs is a selfless, truth-seeking, all-enduring love. They love in the measure that they acknowledge and experience God’s love for them. They discover that their response to divine love must be demonstrated to their relationship to humanity about them.
Most of the fantastic gifts that appeal to the masses are temporal and terminal.
Love, authentic love, is eternal and propagates and perpetuates love.
The ability to love is truly the supreme gift—the gift to which we all should aspire.”*

Epistles Now-Contemporary Restatements of the New Testament Letters

Though written over fifty years ago, this “modern” version of the first part of Chapter Thirteen of Paul’s Letter to the Church at Corinth. (We know it best as “Love is patient, Love is kind...”). This describes the very fiber of the being of Pastor Rolf Hedberg: He is the “true lover” described in this “translation”, the person who is empowered and motivated by the love of God.

His love is indeed a selfless, truth-seeking, all enduring love. All of us at Concordia have felt that. It doesn’t matter who we are. Pastor Hedberg loved all of us equally and this has not stopped. His response to divine love was indeed demonstrated by his relationship to and with all of us.

And so, we come together to not only to say “thanks”, but more importantly to show that we too love Pastor Hedberg (Lois too!). He has indeed taught us, in affirming and respectful ways that indeed love is truly the supreme gift.....the one to which we should all aspire each and every day. And so, Pastor Hedberg, we give thanks for you and your ministry among us over those past four plus years (and for the first time you were here eleven years ago as well).

As I noted during the “Farewell and Godspeed” at the end of our liturgy, you have been a steady, unwavering presence among us....allowing us to work with you in God’s kingdom even as we struggled to come to grips with the reality of our Concordia’s ability to sustain itself. Your beautiful words in your sermons, in meetings and in conversations all have spoken to us in many and various ways.

We thank you for “sticking with us” as we wrestled over the past four years with our missional sustainability.....and as we grappled with different possibilities. You supported us with your presence and allowed us to come to conclusions on our own, although you were unafraid to speak truths to all of us. That said, you knew that this needed to be our decision, not yours.

We thank God for sharing you with us again.....to walk with us through both good and trying times. We felt your love for us a hundred fold.

Your leaving is yet a second visible sign (after the decommissioning of the Memorial Garden in November) that we are moving ever so close to the end of our time as Concordia Lutheran Church. Needless to say we do not want you to go, but you would be the first to remind us that it is not you who is leading us, but rather Godand God is still here among us and will not leave us. On that solid rock we stand.

On behalf of the congregation, thank you for all that you have done and for all that you have been to and for us over these years.

There is an old saying which says that *“Meeting is just the beginning of parting.....but when you meet someone one, that person takes a part of you with them and you take a part of that person with you.”*

And so, as you leave, a part of you remains with us....in our hearts. The love which I read about at the beginning and you exhibited and you taught us to share with others remains.

I close with this, which we pray at the end of Council meetings, (which is personalized for both Lois and you):

And now as you go your way, may Christ go with you.....

May he go before you to show you the way.....

May he go behind you to encourage you.....

Beside you to befriend you.....

Above you to watch over you.....

Within you to give you peace.

On behalf of all members of Concordia,

Mark Winzler





Highlights of the November 2025 Treasurer's Report

Summary

The November envelope and other funding was 39% below the monthly budgeted amount, the year-to-date giving has consistently been 3% over the YTD budget. We have started to incur expenses related to our closing such as the organ concert reception and the monument and interment at East Cemetery. Please see the detailed information below regarding these expenditures.

Report Details

The below information represents the envelope and stretch giving for the month of November as well as the percentage against the monthly and yearly budget amounts.

Month	Actual Recd. (Envelope & Other Funding (Stretch))	Monthly Budget	Percent Received Against Monthly Budget	Received Year to Date	Year to Date Budget	Percent Received Against Year-to-Date Budget
November	\$8,130.27	\$13,416.67	61%	\$151,775.44	\$147,583.37	103%

Additional November Revenue

Open Offering:	\$100.00
Festival Offering:	\$195.00
Church Service:	\$970.00
Miscellaneous Gifts:	\$2,735.00
Utilities Assistance:	\$210.00
Snow Removal Assistance:	\$170.00
Holy Closure Funds:	\$16,035.65
<u>Miscellaneous Income Non Budgeted</u>	<u>\$23.23</u>
Total:	\$20,438.88

TOTAL NOVEMBER OPERATING REVENUES: \$28,569.15

November Non-Operating Revenue

<u>World Hunger Gifts:</u>	<u>\$70.00</u>
Total:	\$70.00

Expenses

1. Utilities:

Vendor	NOVEMBER 2025	NOVEMBER 2024
CNG	\$354.91	\$328.58
Eversource/Earthlight	\$693.58 (\$80.88/\$612.70)	\$799.54 (\$119.74/\$679.80)
Cox	\$480.63	\$472.91
Sewer & Water	\$215.57	\$209.23
TOTAL	\$1,744.69	\$1,810.26



Highlights of the November 2025 Treasurer's Report

Additional November Expenses:

Staff Salaries:	\$7,568.94
Fringe Benefits:	\$517.80
Program Expenses:	\$1,244.23
Program Support Expenses:	\$1,349.85
Facility Maintenance:	\$3,134.76
Seasonal Sharing:	\$305.00
Worship & Memorial Garden:	\$3,000.00
Holy Closure Expenses:	\$23,850.00
TOTAL:	\$40,970.58

TOTAL NOVEMBER EXPENSES: \$42,715.27

Bank Account as of 11/30/2025 (ACS)

Beginning Balance:	\$25,806.07
Total Revenue:	\$31,586.65 (Includes pass-through revenue from Synod (MNC) & CNS Taxes)
Total Expenditures:	\$46,784.67 (Includes MNC & Tax expenditures)
Current Balance:	\$10,607.75
Monthly Cash Flow:	-\$15,198.02 (Revenue less Expenditures)

Special Funds (as of November 30, 2025)

Fund	Previous Month Market Value (Oct. 2025)	Current Market Value	Current Month Gain/Loss (includes withdrawals)	YTD Gain/Loss (includes withdrawals)
Thrivent				
Scholarship	\$34,455.53	\$34,795.61	\$340.08	-\$14,723.33
Fidelity				
Community Cares	\$69,406.41	\$69,550.67	\$144.27	\$1,467.68
Legacy for Ministry	\$1,128,701.75	\$1,131,047.87	\$2,346.11	\$164,906.51
Total Fidelity	\$1,198,108.16	\$1,200,598.54	\$2,490.38	\$166,374.19

May withdrawals: \$6,000 from Scholarship Fund for CNS assistance. **April withdrawals:** \$3,500 from Community Cares for GHIAA and \$5,300 from Legacy for Ministry for MACC benevolence. **September withdrawals:** \$5,300 from Legacy for Ministry for CNS Scholarship Assistance. **October withdrawals:** \$14,000 from Scholarship (Seminary scholarships for Heinrich and Luciano; financial assistance to CNS)



Highlights of the November 2025 Treasurer's Report

Memorial & Tributes Savings Account (as of November 30, 2025)

Previous Month's Balance (Oct. 2025)	Deposit	Withdrawals	Current Month Balance
\$29,130.09	\$680.00	\$0.00	\$29,810.09

Holy Closure Fund (as of November 30, 2025) (Note: Although the Holy Closure Funds are held in the Memorial & Tributes Savings Account, they are not reflected in the above M&T table)

Oct. 31, 2025 Balance	Deposits	Withdrawals	Comments	Current Balance as of November 30, 2025
\$104,267.15	\$14,001.23	\$16,035.65	Deposits: \$14,000 Repayment of scholarships from Scholarship Fund; \$1.23 - Interest Withdrawals: \$2,565.65 – Organ concert expenses \$13,470.00 – W&M Garden monument and interment costs	\$102,232.73

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.
Thank you. Carol Stoneman, Treasurer



**Approved Minutes of the Concordia Lutheran Church
Congregational Council Meeting**

Monday, November 9, 2025, in person

Present:

Mark Winzler – President
David Smith – Vice President
Carol Stoneman - Treasurer
Susan Bourret – Secretary
Rebekka Almond
Pastor Hedberg
Ruth Sprong-Heyden
Nancy Lynn Knauff
Ruthie Lynch
Bobby McKinney
Randy Olson
Tina Ruggerio

Excused:

Sandra Baranowski

Call to Order – Mark Winzler @ 11:40 AM

Devotions: Pastor Hedberg

Approval of Agenda The agenda was approved as written.

Holy Closure Items:

Additional transition team member attending: Jan McGarity

Holy Closure: Team Updates were given, progress is being made

Inventory is progressing and disposition of items are being determined

A Real Estate brochure was developed, an engineering report was received and the building is being shown to potential buyers

The Garden ceremony and decommissioning is set.

The search for a restaurant for the June banquet continues.

Approval of Minutes The minutes from the October 12 2025 council meetings were approved as written.

Pastor's Report

Pastor Hedberg continues to support us during our transition with Sunday Services, office hours, meetings, hospital visits, conversations and contacts with parishioners.

President's Report

Mark continues to focus his council activities on Holy Closure tasks and communication.

Treasurer's Report

The October 2025 treasurer's report was presented and received. We continue to meet our obligations although monthly percentage against the budget 70% our year to date covers our commitments.

Old Business

The Scouts Leaf clean-up is scheduled for November 15th.

Seasonal Sharing – MACC Thanksgiving cards were distributed. Christmas MACC gift cards of \$35 and food of \$25 per person are being collected for 10 families.

Highland Park School is looking for \$35 gift cards.

New Business

No new items outside of Holy Closure

No new motions brought before council this week.

Adjournment: 12:46 PM



Concordia Lutheran Church invites you to..



A Journey through American Music



**featuring Antonín Dvořák's 'American' String Quartet and other music
inspired by and written in the United States**

Performed by the



Quercus String Quartet

Rebekka Almond and Monika Kinstler, *Violin*

Colleen Chen, *Viola*

Claire Esterman, *Cello*

(Members of the Manchester Symphony Orchestra)



Sunday, January 18 at 4 PM

RECEPTION WILL FOLLOW AFTER CONCERT IN KAISER HALL



Concordia Lutheran Church 40 Pitkin St., Manchester, CT



Free admission — all are welcome! Join us for an afternoon of music inspired by the landscapes, spirit, and stories of America.



Fastnacht Dinner

With Traditional German Fare

Save the Date!

Sunday February 15, 2026
Concordia Lutheran Church

Social hour 11:15-12:30

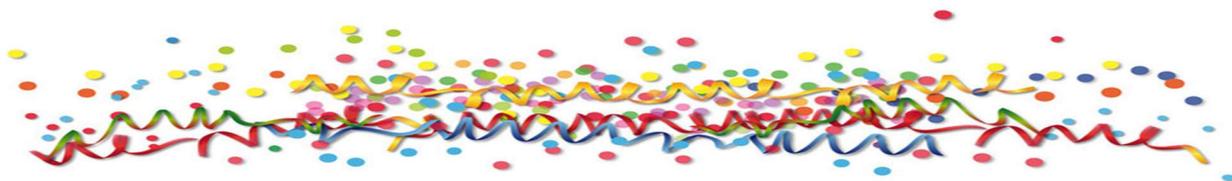
Cheese/crackers
Beer and wine

Dinner 12:30

Roast Pork, German Potato Salad,
Red Cabbage, Green Beans and Mushrooms,
Salad, Applesauce

Please Join Us!

Suggested Donation \$15.00 per person



Name: _____

Total Number Attending _____ I can bring a dessert _____

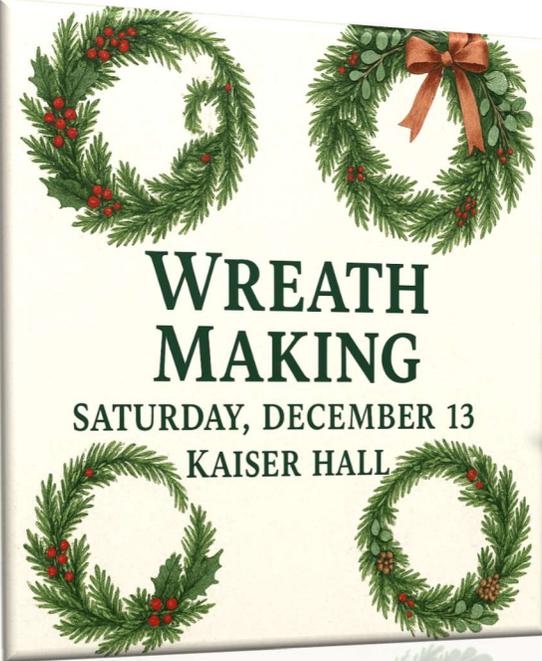
Please submit this reservation form by February 8, 2026

Member Care ❤️



To Janet, Jan S, Nancy and Rebecca. I can not express the joy, happiness and love you brought to me and Eunn today. With your fun attitude and cute hats and of course your beautiful voices. Singing all the wonderful Christmas carols. And of course the beautiful tasting Christmas cookies ! Oh, they are so,so good. Thank you to all Santa's helpers. Merry Christmas to each of you !! And may your New Year be healthy and bright !





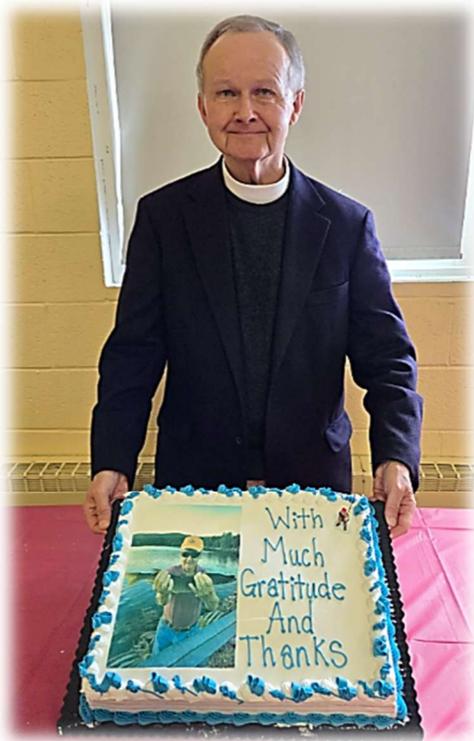
KEHL'S KITCHEN

This is what our instructor makes in her spare time!



Pastor Rolf Hedberg's Retirement Luncheon

Sunday, December 21, 2025



Advent/Christmas at Concordia



Advent/Christmas at Concordia



rooted



In God's Grace

“Then the father said to him,
‘You are always with me,
and all that is mine is yours.’”
(Luke 15.31)

We are full of gratitude for the generosity of this congregation! We have experienced a good response in estimates of giving for the upcoming year, thanks in large measure to your faith and generosity.

Thank you to everyone who brought their pledges with them to our Stewardship Sunday service on November 9th and to those who dropped off their pledges since. Your generosity enables us to continue the ministries of Concordia Lutheran Church in the coming year. Worshiping at Concordia is so important in our lives and keeps us **Rooted in God's Grace**.

God's Blessings,

David Smith, for the Stewardship Committee



Concordia Nursery School

December has been a very busy month at the nursery school. Our curriculum has been centered around the **Christmas** holiday and **Advent**. The children have been eagerly awaiting the magic that Christmas brings while learning the true reason for celebration. A key highlight of our celebrations included an advent wreath lighting ceremony with our families. We learned that the wreath can be like a clock and helps us to count down the time left until **Christmas**, with each candle reminding us of the special lessons that Jesus taught us.



On *December 12*, we joined many other businesses and schools in Connecticut and participated in CCMC PJ Day for the kids. This is an annual tradition in Connecticut to help raise funds for children battling cancer. Lastly, in partnership with our community, we collected new hats, mittens, gloves and warm socks for families in need this winter.



Reflections | Memories | Stories

We asked people to share Concordia reflections/memories/stories in the Chimes.

This is Candace Wilson's Memories and Reflection....

As I joyfully share my Concordia memories with my "Concordia Family," I must admit that I'm doing this for myself, as well, as I just can't simply say "goodbye" to my beloved church without taking time to reminisce -- of the nearly 35 years Mark and I have been members. I purposely waited until after the Christmas Eve service last week, our last at Concordia, to write this, because it was on a magical Christmas Eve service so many years ago that we "just knew" Concordia was going to be our new church home.

We had been members of St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church in New Britain during our early married years when we lived in East Hartford. (Mark was baptized at St. John's and it was his family's church. I joined St. John's prior to us marrying there, with Pastor Joe Bourret officiating.) Once we moved to South Windsor we knew we needed to find and join a church closer to home. We visited a few churches, and it was on Christmas Eve that we visited Concordia, at Concordia's late service, which at the time was 10:00 pm. The pews were filled, and Grace Agnew welcomed us with a smile. Of course we were impressed with the music, among other things. (Pastor Kim-Eric Williams was the pastor at the time.) During the service it had begun snowing quite heavily and after the service, driving home, it felt like we were driving through "Bedford Falls" towards the end of the movie "It's A Wonderful Life," when it was snowing. That "sealed the deal." It couldn't have been more perfect -- a perfect ending to a perfect evening. I soon called Nancy Gutreich, Concordia's secretary at the time, to be added to Concordia's mailing list. We received the latest edition of *The Chimes* and soon became

members (the Strands were our sponsors). Early on, Eddie and Tessie Kehl welcomed us into their home for a delicious traditional German meal, and other meals after. (I've never had sauerbraten as good as hers.) They became dear friends of ours, and eventually, after we became parents, they treated Chelsea and Liana like their own grandchildren. They welcomed my parents, Ben and Angela Prasser, with open arms as well, when they became members of Concordia a few years later (Charlie and Elsie Cone were their sponsors.) Eddie always shook my father's hand walking back to his pew after communion. And after many decades, my mother reconnected with her old neighbor from childhood, Ernie Scott. There are so many people who showed kindness to us when we were new members. During the years I was a stay-at-home mom, I was as active as possible. I became a Deacon, I eventually joined the Worship & Memorial Garden Committee (Al Lange loved to tease me), I helped Gert Waters at funeral luncheons, and I helped Patti Herdic during many summers of Vacation Bible School. For a short time Concordia had a very early morning women's bible study-prayer group, which included

Sandy Baranowski and myself. When I was expecting Liana, they surprised me with an early morning baby shower. One year I was on the Call Committee with Jon Stechholz and Marlene Blake, among others. Also with Marlene, we often helped transport Youth Group members to various events. For a number of years I was the liaison between Concordia and Covenant to Care, an organization providing essential goods to children in need. (The annual back-to-school backpack and school supply drive was my favorite.) For a time, Mark and I helped Danny and Ellen, the sister and brother team, who ran the childcare service downstairs during church services. I miss the Fastnachts of years past. (Twice I threw "caution to the wind" and performed in two Fastnacht plays, written by Bill Salvatore.) My mother and I loved the annual Advent Craft Workshops. (Most years we were stationed at the pinecone-peanut butter-bird seed table.) When our girls attended Sunday school and then Youth Group, how lucky they were to have such wonderful teachers and mentors, including Lillian ("Mrs. G.") Gankofskie, Helen Wittkofske, Kathy Mathewson, Carol Burnett, Lisa Taylor, Ruth Sprong, Warren Schimmel, and John Haid. How I miss the Sunday School Christmas pageants, as well as the children's Easter "Parade of Balloons." (One very early Easter morning -- extra early because the clocks changed that day -- I drove to church before dawn to help blow up balloons.) Every Easter, my mother, as well as I, loved taking home our little pot of pansies. And who can forget the annual Easter Egg Hunt! Our girls were so blessed to be part of a full and active Sunday School. When they were confirmed, their sponsors were Kathy Noyes (Chelsea) and Susan Bourret (Liana.) Over the years Concordia members

have been there for each other during happy times and sad times. For example, with joy I remember attending David and Kathy Smith's wedding, and the renewal of marriage vows of Ruth and Gene Sprong. Sadly, there were many times we've had to say goodbye to beloved members of Concordia (too many to list) and loved ones of members, now saints in Heaven, together glorifying God in perfect unity and joy. How I miss the beloved friends I made over the years who are no longer with us. I also miss members who have moved and who no longer worship at Concordia. All of them remain in my heart. When my mother was ill, Jane Casserly, Irma Vincens, and the Member Care Committee were so kind to her, as was all of my Concordia Family when my parents died. Once the girls got older I decided to return to work, and who better to offer me advice than Mark Winzler, since I wanted to work in education, which I have been, for twenty-five years. Since returning to work I haven't done as much church work as I previously had. As I approach retirement, it's been my hope to become more involved again in church work. Now, rather than at Concordia, it will have to be at a new church home. Until then, I will cherish every moment of my time inside my beautiful church, with the people I love and respect -- fellow deacons, church leaders, choir, council and committee members, and....every single one of you, including those not mentioned above by name, all part of my "Concordia Family." In closing, it is my hope and prayer that as the remaining time we all have together goes by, we embrace every moment with joy and pride, and we look forward to the future, knowing that God will be with us every step of the way with His constant and loving presence.

Gratitude and Appreciation..



Thank You to Concordia Lutheran Church:

Thank you so much for the Christmas cheer! The flowers are so exquisite, and will decorate our home all season long. **To my friends at Concordia:** My heart is full of thankfulness for each one of you!

Linda Hilliard

I want to say **Thank You** to everyone who participated in this year's Christmas service. It was an amazing service, true to form for Concordia. I'm not sure any

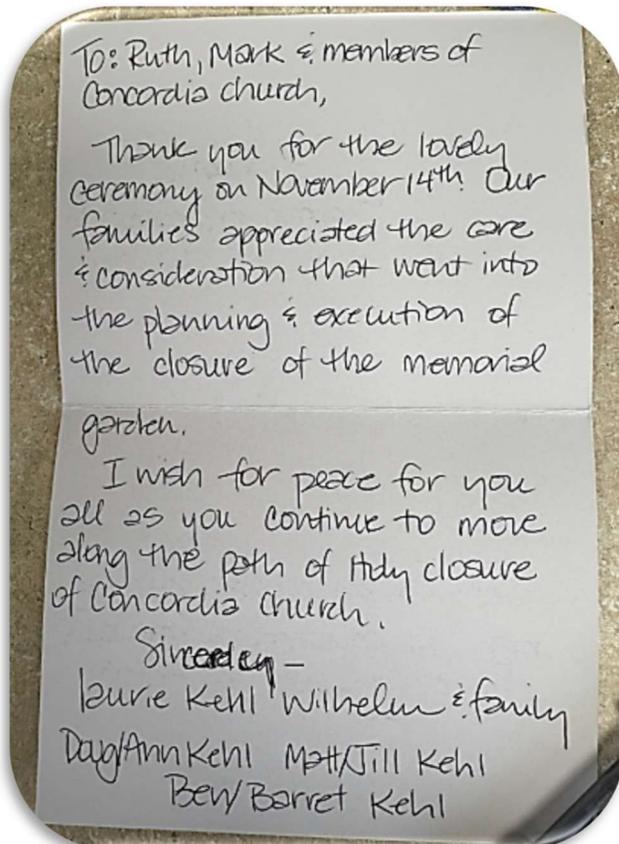


other church we ever go to will do quite as well. I have had many happy Christmas memories at Concordia over the years, and this year's service, perhaps because it will be our last, brought all those former memories back for me. Normally, I would be sad under the circumstances, but it filled me with a sense of love and a sense of the spirit that will live on.

I hope everyone had a very **Merry Christmas** and has a **very Happy New Year!**

God's Blessings to you,

David Smith



12-13-25

Thank you to the people of Concordia Lutheran Church! We want to express our sincere gratitude for renting Kaiser Hall to our family for Campfield and Noelle's wedding reception on 12/5. We really appreciated the church's flexibility in rearranging events in Kaiser Hall so that we could have access to it for the entire week leading up to the wedding. So we were able to fulfill Campfield and Noelle's vision for a beautiful reception!

With deep gratitude for the wonderful community of folks at Concordia -

The Heinrich Family
Eric, Anne, Campfield, Paxton
and Noelle ☺

Christmas Eve Service – Poinsettias, Music & Ministries

Poinsettias have been Given in Memory Of:

Given By:

Daughter Kimberly Fournier

David Stoneman

Florence and Harold Slater, Eva and Romual Roman

James Casserly.....

James Noyes Sr, Deborah Theriault, Edward, and Catherine Latham

Loved Ones

Marie Roy

Michael and Clara Sibrinsz

My parents Katherine and Fred; my brother, Fred; My aunts Mary, Kate, and Dorothy; my grandparents, Katherine and John

My Sister, Viola Stenger

Ralph Sullivan

Russell Turner, George and Louisa Johnson, Ray and Mary LeFrancios

To all I have loved and lost

Ed and Gail Adams

Dan and Carol Burnett

Donald, Marian, and Eric Slater

Jane Casserly

Kathy Noyes

Joel and Sandra Baranowski

Patsy Sheehan

Karen Schauster

Mark Winzler

Irene Schack

Laura Hart

Lanie Turner

Lisa Taylor



Poinsettias have been Given in Honor Of:

Given By:

and gratitude for the people of Concordia Lutheran Church .. Rolf and Lois Hedberg
 Erich, Meghan and Tiernan and Sean and Nicole Carol and Phil Stoneman
 Mark Winzler Kay and John Corl
 Member Care Team Irene Schack
 Our children and Grandchildren Dan and Carol Burnett
 Our Children, Grandchildren and Great Grandchildren Ed and Gail Adams
 Pastor Rolf and Lois Hedberg Mark Winzler

Gifts Given Toward Music in Memory Of:

Given By:

George & Gertrude Stoneman, David Stoneman,
 Paul C. Stoneman and Bill Mansfield..... Carol & Phil Stoneman
 Karen Beauregard David Beauregard
 Karen Miller..... Jane Casserly
 My brother Fred and my mother, Katherine; Pastor Burt,
 Beverly and Luke Strand; Pastor Joe Bourret; Barbara E. Baker;
 Eddie & Tessie Kehl; Marlene Blake; Gert Waters..... Mark Winzler
 Our parents & brothers Jan & Bill Salvatore
 Our parents, Ben & Angela Prasser, and Frank Wilson Mark & Candace Wilson
 Ronald O. Schack & Zander Schack..... Irene Schack
 Russell Turner..... Lanie Turner
 Barbara E. Baker Joel & Sandra Baranowski



Gifts Given Toward Music in Honor Of:

Given By:

<i>Family & Friends</i>	<i>Elaine & Donald Briggmann</i>
<i>John Anderson & Rebekka Almond</i>	<i>Kay & John Corl</i>
<i>John Anderson, Linda Hilliard, Rebekka Almond and the Choir</i>	<i>Carol & Phil Stoneman</i>
<i>My fellow members of the Congregation Council and Holy Closure Teams</i>	<i>Mark Winzler</i>
<i>Pastor Rolf Hedberg</i>	<i>Irene Schack</i>
<i>Susan Bourret</i>	<i>Ruth Sprong Heyden</i>

<i>A Gift toward Music Given By</i>	<i>Robert Copeland, Jr.</i>
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Gifts in Support of Concordia's Ministries:

In Memory Of:

Given By:

<i>Bing Bowen, Tom Donagher, Sr. Loved Ones</i>	<i>Wendy Donagher</i>
<i>Ed & Tess Kehl; George & Alice Gongwer.....</i>	<i>Doug Kehl and Ann Kehl (Nee Gongwer)</i>
<i>My Parents Samuel & Anna Kotsch.....</i>	<i>Irene Schack</i>

In Honor Of:

<i>Family members, Congregation and Concordia Lutheran Church.....</i>	<i>Wendy Donagher</i>
<i>My children and grandchildren.....</i>	<i>Irene Schack</i>
<i>Pastor Rolf & Lois Hedberg.....</i>	<i>Joel & Sandra Baranowski</i>
<i>The Congregation Council, Transition and Holy Closure Teams.....</i>	<i>Carol & Phil Stoneman</i>
<i>The Pop-Up Shop Gals: Ruth, Carol B, Carol S., Bobby, Rebekka, Pam, Lanie</i>	<i>Lanie Turner</i>

<i>A Gift in Support of Concordia's Ministries By</i>	<i>Randy and Pam Olson</i>
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The front and office door wreaths have been given in honor of Concordia Lutheran Church by Mark Winzler.

The Staff of Concordia Lutheran Church and their Families

Thank you for your good wishes, sweet gifts, willing hands, beautiful voices, and generous kindness this season.

Merry Christmas!

*Pastor Rolf Hedberg
Margie Gallagher*



This Christmas, sincere thanks are given to...



- ★ **Members of Concordia** for their faithfulness in giving of their time, talents and treasures.....especially for the Pop-Up Shop, during Seasonal Sharing and for their ongoing support and contributions for the students and families of Highland Park School and MACC
- ★ **Pastor Hedberg** for his service as Concordia's Transition Pastor, for his guidance and direction and most of all, his pastoral presence
- ★ **Members of the Holy Closure Teams** (Real Estate, Property/Inventory, Archive and Finance) for the diligence in their work.
- ★ **Pastors Rebecca Bourret, Gloria Connery, Ann Lovejoy Johnson and Bruce Steinway** who have served as supply pastor when Pastor Hedberg has been away.
- ★ **Margie Gallagher** for her dedication, enthusiasm, talent and gifts she brings to her role as Parish Administrator
- ★ **John Anderson** for continued willingness, faithfulness and dedication serving Concordia as supply organist and especially for the magnificent organ concert in October.
- ★ **Linda Hilliard** for serving as supply organist when John is away and for leading our choir so masterfully and creatively especially for the organ concert/evening prayer in October.

- ★ **Worship Assistants Sandy Baranowski, Jeanine Barber, Wendy Donagher, David Smith, Bea Santiago. Candace Wilson, and Mark Winzler**
- ★ **John Corl and Carol Stoneman** for picking out the hymns
- ★ **John Haid** for serving as our Sound Technician
- ★ **Rebekka Almond** for tuning the piano, selecting choir anthems to be sung and rehearsing with/directing the choir on Christmas Eve.
- ★ **Concordia Choir members (Jan Bellino, John Corl, Wendy Donagher, Nancy Lynn Knauff, David Smith and Carol Stoneman)** for their ongoing leadership during worship
- ★ **Carol Stoneman, Susan Bourret and Ruth Sprong Heyden** for countless hours spent on matters related to their roles as Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer and Financial Secretary.
- ★ **Bryan Jaworski** for his faithfulness in working in the Memorial Garden and removing and delivering pathway stones to families.
- ★ **Offering Counters Gail Adams, Jane Casserly, Gail Feder, Nancy Lynn Knauff, John Haid, Ruth Sprong Heyden**
- ★ **Ruth Sprong Heyden** for leading efforts for Highland Park School.
- ★ Those who oversee the Pop-Up Shop: **Ruth Sprong Heyden, Carol Burnett, Jan McGarity, Bobby McKinney, Rebekka Almond, Nancy Lynn Knauff, Bea Santiago, Pam Olson, and Carol Stoneman**
- ★ **Member Care (Jan Bellino, Jan Salvatore, Jane Casserly, Ruth Sprong Heyden, Carol Burnett)** for their remembrance of and deliveries to our homebound members
- ★ **Bea Santiago** for leading Bible Study
- ★ **Mark Winzler** for making sure the church is set-up for worship every Sunday and securing supply pastors in Pastor Hedberg's absence
- ★ **Joel Baranowski and members of the Property Team and Lawn Mowers (Phil Stoneman, David Beauregard, John Corl, Randy Olson, Don Slater, Zach Baranowski)** for ensuring that our building and grounds are kept in pristine condition.
- ★ **Don Slater** for delivering the donations to MACC
- ★ **Ruth Sprong Heyden, and Susan Bourret** for leading the effort which led to the moving of those interred in the Memorial Garden to East Cemetery and the decommissioning of the Memorial Garden

- ★ **Ushers Jan Salvatore, Don and Marian Slater, Tina Ruggerio, Phil Stoneman, John Jaworski, Tom Taylor, Carol Burnett, and Paul Goodrich**
- ★ **Susan Bourret and Carol Stoneman** for keeping Coffee Hour “alive”, those who donate food for Coffee Hour and those who clean up and prepare: **Pam Olson, Bobby McKinney, Lois Hedberg, Rebekka Almond, Jeanine Barber, Tina Ruggiero, Jan Salvatore**



- ★ **All those** who responded to requests for assistance to set-up, bake, assist in the kitchen and break-down after the several events at Concordia during the year such as Fastnacht, Easter breakfast, Oktoberfest, the organ concert, and Pastor Hedberg’s luncheon.
- ★ Those who cut down, delivered and decorated the Christmas Tree in our chancel: **Kay and John Corl, Ruthie and Peter Lynch, Randy and Pam Olson Carol and Phil Stoneman**
- ★ **Carol Burnett and Carol Stoneman** for preparing the Advent Wreath
- ★ **Susan Bourret and Jeanine Barber** who (behind the scenes) change the color of the paraments/altar frontal to meet the season and put up/take down banners
- ★ **Susan Bourret, Carol Stoneman, Jeanine Barber and Mark Winzler** for transforming the sanctuary/chancel into Christmas
- ★ **David Beauregard** for taking care of the Christmas lights on the front bushes
- ★ Members of the Congregation Council (C) and Holy Closure Team (T) for their leadership during this past year of discernment and leadership during the Holy Closure Process: **Sandy Baranowski (C), Jeanine Barber (T), Susan Bourret (C), John Corl (T), Pastor Hedberg © Ruth Sprong Heyden (C), Nancy Lynn Knauff (C), Ruthie Lynch (C), Jan McGarity (T), Bobby McKinney (C), Randy Olson (C), Tina Ruggerio (C), David Smith (C), Carol Stoneman (C), Mark Winzler (C),**
- ★ **Pastor Maria Hammons** for her leadership in our discernment about our future and the Holy Closure Process.
- ★ **GOD** for all that we are and that we have so we can share with others!

January | February | March



B i r t h d a y s

January

Rebekka Almond (2)
Philip Stoneman (6)
Eric Slater (8)
Bryan Jaworski (8)
Dana Donagher (9)
John Corl (11)
Kathy Smith(25)

February

Jan McGarity (9)
Ryan Adams (13)
Robert Copeland Jr. (17)
Ann Kehl (24)

March

Laura McKay (4)
Kristin Link (5)
John Haid (6)
Rachel Adams (18)
Sandra Baranowski (19)
Gail Adams(25)
Joanne Murphy (26)
Tom Taylor(27)
Cynthia Goodrich(30)
Irene Schack (30)

★HAPPY★
BIRTHDAY!





MACC EMERGENCY BAGS OF FOOD

As announced at the November 2nd church service, MACC is asking local congregations to join them in **EMERGENCY BAGS OF FOOD** to assist individuals who are not registered clients of MACC but impacted by the unavailable SNAP benefits due to the government shutdown.

The items MACC is requesting for the bags include:

- Peanut Butter & jelly
- Canned Tuna & mayonnaise
- Pasta and pasta sauce
- Mac and cheese
- Crackers
- Nutri-Grain or Granola bars
- Boxed cereal



You can fill your own bag(s) with the items and drop them off at Concordia and we will deliver them to MACC or you can bring items you have purchased and place them in the baskets in the back of the sanctuary.

Thanking you in advance for your generosity and response to this request. If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to Carol Stoneman.

Peace and thanksgiving,
The Outreach Team



Prayers of the Community

Contact parish office for prayer requests. Names will be held in prayer for one month, *unless otherwise requested.*



Date Requested	Praying For (Person/Family)	Prayers For	Requested By
12/29/2025	Martha Pederson (Lanie Turner's Cousin's daughter)	Comfort and healing	Lanie Turner
12/17/2025	Joanne Murphy	Comfort and Healing	Mark Winzler
12/15/2025	Ed Adams	Comfort & Healing	Gail Adams
12/11/2025	Family of Elmo Zaccardelli	Strength as they grieve Elmo's passing	Lanie Turner
11/3/2025	Lois Johnson (Mother of Ann Lovejoy Johnson)	Comfort and strength while in Hospice Care	Lanie Turner
10/12/2025	Kimberly Morrill	Cancer diagnosis	Elaine Briggmann
9/7/2025	Michael Jaworski	Comfort and healing from Cancer surgery	Sharon & John Jaworski
8/17/2025	Dan Burnett	Comfort and healing	Tina Sollinger-Ruggerio
6/18/2025	Laura McKay	Comfort, strength and healing	Sandy Baranowski

The Intentions of this Community:

- † Concordia Nursery School Students and their families
- † The work of Manchester Area Conference of Churches (MACC)
- † The work of the Greater Hartford Interfaith Action Alliance (GHIAA)
- † For our Cub Scout Pack and Scout Troop
- † For Licensed Lay Minister Beatrice Luciano and Ministerio Nueva Creacion
- † For our Friends at Emanuel Lutheran and former members of St. Mary's now merged with St. John's Episcopal Church (Vernon)



Concordia Lutheran Church

Mrs. Margie Gallagher | Parish Administrator

✉ 40 Pitkin Street | Manchester | Connecticut | 06040

☎ (860)649-5311 | ✉ office@concordiamanchester.org | 🌐 www.concordiamanchester.org

Ministerio Nueva Creacion

SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICE
12PM
JANUARY 4TH 2026.

THREE KINGS SERVICE
LUNCH TO FOLLOW



CHAPEL ENTRANCE
60 CHURCH ST
MANCHESTER CT

JOIN US

LIVE STREAMED IN FACEBOOK

★ **M.L.A.C. Manchester Latin Affairs Council Presents** ★



Three Kings Day Celebration!!

Join us For our 3rd Annual Celebration

Saturday, January 10th

3:30pm to 5:30pm

6:00pm to 8:00pm

Concordia Lutheran Church
40 Pitkin Street Manchester CT 06040

To register for this event please Scan the QR Code Below.

Registration ends January 8th 2026

please choose only one time slot

SCAN ME



There will be Dinner, Music
and a presentation of Gifts from The Three Kings

For more information please contact

Dr. Maria Cruz Director of M.L.A.C at directors.of.mlac@gmail.com or Pastor

Bea Santiago at MNCnuevacreacion@gmail.com / 203.361.0551



Concordia's WHY/Purpose Statement

To be a welcoming and inviting community empowered by the Word of God;

So that we may work for social justice and exhibit compassion for all.

CONCORDIA LUTHERAN CHURCH
40 Pitkin Street
Manchester, CT 06040

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED