



Thanking God for The New Year 2026

Let me take this opportunity to invite you all to the new year 2026. As Methodists, we have a tradition of making and renewing our covenant with God. As we know, the Christian life, to which we are called, is a life in Christ, redeemed from sin by Christ, and consecrated to God through Christ. We have entered upon this life, having been admitted into that new covenant of which our Lord Jesus Christ is mediator, and which Jesus sealed with his own blood, that it might stand forever.

On one side of the covenant is God's promise to fulfill, in and through us, all that God declared in Jesus Christ, who is the author and perfecter of our faith. We are sure that this promise still stands, for we have known God's goodness and proved God's grace in our own lives day by day.

On the other side, we promise to live no more for ourselves, but for Christ, who loved us even to death. He called us to serve God so that the purposes of Christ's coming would be fulfilled.

From time to time, we renew our vows of condemnation, especially when we gather at the Lord's Table. But this we have met expressly, as generations of our ancestors have met, to joyfully and solemnly renew the covenant which bound them and binds us to God.

Thanking God for another year is a heartfelt expression of gratitude for life, blessings, guidance, and protection, often shared on birthdays or New Year's, focusing on His faithfulness, seeking wisdom for the future, and praying for more joy, strength, and purpose in the year ahead. People often share prayers of thanksgiving, acknowledge answered prayers, and look forward to new opportunities to grow and serve.

Few moments feel as full of possibility as the turning of the calendar. A new year invites reflection, renewal, and the hope that something good is waiting just ahead. That's why many people set New Year's resolutions. As 2026 begins, you

may be carrying goals for your health, your finances, or the relationships that matter most to you. Whatever you're hoping for, there's no better place to begin than in prayer—because no matter your own plan for the year, God's plan is better!

That's why this thoughtful collection of New Year prayers is gathered to help you step into the year with faith, trust, and hope in His guidance for you. Whether your New Year's activities included welcoming the year quietly at home or surrounded by loved ones, these prayers create space to pause, reflect, and invite God into every part of 2026.

On this list, you'll find meaningful prayers and uplifting New Year quotes meant to inspire gratitude, bring peace, and strengthen your spirit as a new chapter unfolds. Some are perfect for sharing as New Year blessings or New Year wishes with family and friends, while others are best read slowly, perhaps during a moment of journaling or quiet reflection. They may even become a New Year's tradition you return to year after year. As you go through, let them guide your heart, shape your intentions, and help you faithfully welcome the year.

1. A Prayer for Trust in God's Plan

Heavenly Father,

At midnight, when the old year dies, and the new comes bounding in, I am drawing strength from knowing that in the next twelve months

The snow will go. The buds will burst. The heat will rise, the leaves will fly, and all these things will happen according to your schedule and in your time, so that there is order in your universe,

And that I am part of it.

—Van Varner

2. A Prayer for New Days

Heavenly Father,

Thank You for making all things new! As another new year begins, help me live each day for You. May I continually have a new song in my heart to sing to You, no matter what comes my way. I trust in You because I know that Your mercies are new every morning, and nothing ahead of me will take You by surprise. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Joan Walker Hahn

3. A Prayer for Continuing the Work of Christmas

When the carols have been stilled, when the star-topped tree is taken down, when family and friends are gone home, when we are back to our schedules.

The work of Christmas begins: To welcome the refugees, to heal a broken planet, to feed the hungry, to build bridges of trust, not walls of fear, to share our gifts, to seek justice and peace for all people, to bring Christ's light to the world.

—Michael Dougherty

4. A Prayer for Surrender in God

Father, I abandon myself in your hands.

Do with me whatever you will. Whatever you may do, I thank you. I am ready for all, I accept all. Let only your will be done in me, and to all your creatures.

Into your hands I commend my spirit. I offer it to you with all the love that is in my heart.

For I love you, Lord, and so want to give myself, to surrender myself into your hands, without reserve and with boundless confidence, for you are my father. Amen.

—Charles de Foucauld

5. A Prayer for Love

O God of steadfast love, trusting you, we devote our hearts to learning and our lives to walking. Teach us truth, that we may walk with courage. Teach us mercy, that we may walk with humility. Teach us forgiveness, that we may walk with compassion

Teach us grace, that we may walk with strength. Teach us wonder, that we may walk with praise. Teach us goodness, that we may walk with those in need.

O God of steadfast love, learning from you, may we walk well. Amen.

—J. Bradley Wigger

6. A Prayer for New Opportunities

Today's a new day, a chance for a new start. Yesterday is gone, and with it, any regrets, mistakes, or failures I may have experienced. It's a good day to be glad and give thanks, and I do, Lord. Thank you for today, a new opportunity to love, give, and be all that you want me to be.

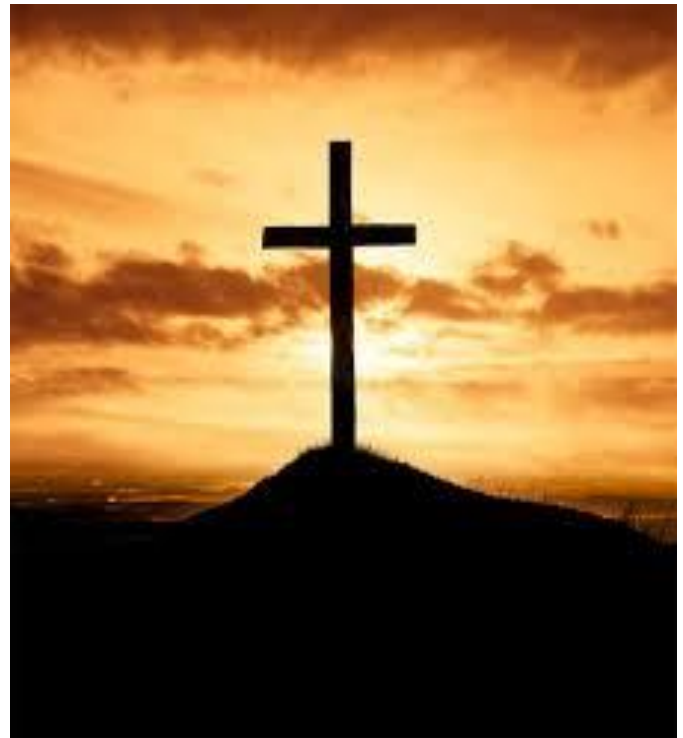
—Rebecca Barlow Jordan

Finally, my beloved friends, let us bind ourselves with willing bonds to our covenant God, and take the yoke of Christ upon us. This means that we are heartily content that Christ appoints us to our place and work, and that Christ alone will be our reward.

Christ has many services to be done for this year, 2026. Some are easy, others are difficult; some bring honor, others bring reproach; some are suitable to our natural inclinations and temporal interests, others are contrary to both. In some, we may please Christ and please ourselves; in others, we cannot please Christ except by denying ourselves. Yet the power to do all these things is assuredly given us in Christ, who strengthens us.

I wish you a happy New Year 2026, full of God's blessing

From Rev. Dr. Douglas Obwoye, PhD



Prayers for . . .

A Prayer for Trust in God's Plan

A Prayer for New Days

A Prayer for Continuing the Work of Christmas

A Prayer for Surrender in God

A Prayer for Love

A Prayer for New Opportunities



United
Women
in Faith

We currently have \$4,643.67 in our accounts.
Thank you so much for supporting our fundraising efforts!

NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER ACTIVITIES

November 12 Meeting

FUNDRAISERS AND MISSION SUPPORT

For the past several years, we have participated in three major fundraisers so that we can give back to various missions within our state, nation, and across the world. Here are the monetary results of our 2025 fundraisers:

1. Harvest Supper – September 25: \$1293 (We served 90 people with 40 take-outs.)
2. Craft Show at Mancelona Elementary School – November 22: \$900
3. Bake Sale at Family Fare – December 6: \$433

At our February 11, 2026, meeting we will be selecting mission programs to donate to and we welcome your suggestions.

Last year we donated a total of \$4,100 to following organizations:

1. International Giving – Kenya Mission, Masango - \$700
2. National/State Giving - \$900
 - a. Henderson House - \$300
 - b. Spring Forth Deaf Church - \$300
 - c. United Methodist Community House in Grand Rapids - \$300
3. Local Giving - \$2,000
 - a. Au Sable Institute - \$500
 - b. Communities in Schools (CIS) for College Admission Fees - \$300
 - c. Community Meal - \$500
 - d. Mancelona Baby Pantry - \$300
 - e. Mancelona Food Pantry & Resale Shop - \$300
 - f. MEF Auction - \$100
4. Northern Skies District UWF Contribution - \$500



a. Christmas Card Addressing – We sent out over 30 Christmas cards with a letter from Pastor Douglas in each one. These cards are sent to families that have moved away, snow birds, or are unable to attend church services on a regular basis.

b. Jackie Bates led our program on the World Thank Offering. She suggested that in addition to our UWF members making a donation to this offering that we also offer a Thanks “Giving” for our congregation to participate in and brought in a “Penny the Piggy Bank” that will be in the church sanctuary for people to empty their pocket change to go toward missions throughout the coming year. Every penny counts!

December 10 Soup & Salad Luncheon

In lieu of a regular meeting, we held our annual Soup and Salad Luncheon for our church and community. Invitations were sent out for staff at Mancelona Public Schools, Village Offices and Police Department, and Boyne Falls Church. We also invited those who attend our Community Meal. Delicious homemade soups, various salads, rolls, and desserts were provided by our UWF members. There were lots of happy smiles and full bellies!

UPCOMING MEETINGS

January 14, 2026 – 1:00 pm in the Fellowship Hall

February 11, 2026 – 1:00 pm in the Fellowship Hall

Submitted by Ellen Whitehead, UWF Secretary



MUSINGS FROM THE CHURCH MOUSE

Thanks for all the beautiful Christmas decorations and music --I enjoyed it, too! The Christmas Eve service was especially bright; a few new faces this year. I was trying to be as "quiet as a mouse"—you probably didn't even see me but, I saw you!

A big "squeak-out" to Lou for her extra care of God's house; and to others of you who help in various ways to care for what God has provided for us—THANK YOU!!!

Happy New Year to All! Like I hear Pastor Douglas say, "God is good—All the time, God is good!"

--Musings from Charlie



Give Thanks!

At our November UWF meeting we celebrated Give Thanks Day to help local and national women in need by taking up a donation of \$39.00. *In my heart, I want do more.* Every penny helps when it comes to helping others. I introduced Penny. She is our UWF piggy bank for the next year. I have pledged to empty my purse of all change every time I enter the church. I realize we all have different charities and challenges in life. However, change adds up. For December we deposited \$43.63 from penny into the bank. Also, I am especially concerned for your health. All that extra change makes your pockets and purse way to heavy. 😊

Thanks so much for your help in the coming year!

Jackie Bates, Chair, Nurture and Outreach



NEW YEAR ADULT BIBLE STUDY

Amos, The Old Testament

Two opportunities

Meet in Conference Room

1. First Sunday, monthly, following Worship
2. First Thursday, monthly, 1:00 p.m.

WHO WAS AMOS?

Here's a little information to pique your interest. Amos was a farmer (shepherd) from a very poor village in the Judean wilderness, south of Jerusalem. God chose him to speak to the people of the injustices and materialism of the day. His favorite title for God was "The Sovereign Lord" used 21 times through the Book of Amos. He prophesied "the days are coming..." Join us and LEARN together.

You are invited to attend one of our Adult Bible Studies, either on the first Sunday, following worship or the first Thursday, monthly at 1 p.m. in the Conference Room.

Women's Christian Book Study

Having a Mary Heart in a Martha World

(Study Guide pages 220-224)

Second Wednesdays, monthly, at 2:30 p.m. You are invited to join the UWF meeting at 1:00, snacks following, then stay for the book study in the Conference Room.

Looking Ahead:

Jan 14, Chapter 8 - Lessons from Lazarus
 Feb 11, Chapter 9 - Martha's Teachable Heart
 Mar 11, Chapter 10 - Mary's Extravagant Love
 April 8, Chapter 11 - Balancing Work and Worship
 May 13, Chapter 12 - COMPLETED!

Taking a summer break.

Is something new coming???

Community Meal



November and December continued to offer some outstanding meals for our guests. Pathways under “head chef,” Bob Barr, prepared a wonderful Thanksgiving dinner with all the trimmings! They served roast turkey breasts, mashed potatoes, gravy, dressing, salad, green bean casserole, bread, cranberry sauce, pumpkin pies with whipped topping. Sounds like home, doesn’t it! Forty-one guests enjoyed this delicious meal! Yes, there were 9 seconds and 18 takeouts for a total of 68 meals. We need to feel blessed that we can offer our Fellowship Hall and have so many volunteers who share their time and talents! Don’t forget the folks who shovel the snow on Tuesdays and see that the parking lot is clear!

Even with some icy nights, attendance at Community Meal was still good in November and December! As in past years, Community Meal closed the Tuesday of Thanksgiving week and the Tuesdays before Christmas and New Year’s Day to give our volunteers an opportunity to be with family and friends.

Also, remember if you attend Community Meal or know of friends and neighbors who do, that when Mancelona Schools are closed due to inclement weather, Community Meal will be closed.

We are excited that Community Meal will be able to offer some food items that may not have been possible due to a grant we recently received.

In November, Sandy, Carol, and Rhonda worked together to apply for a \$1000 grant from The Immediate Needs Relief Fund. This was a new fund created by the Northwest Food Coalition. At the end of November, the Immediate Needs Relief Fund had around \$145,000 in the account. Of that amount \$75,000 came from the Oleson’s Foundation and the remainder came from other private donors and foundations.

Sandy, Brenda, and Carol will meet soon to organize our list. The \$1000 must be spent by January 31, 2026. We must send copies of receipts for the funds spent within 14 days of spending to the coordinator. There is a possibility that we may be able to get an extension on the purchasing

deadline. This \$1000 is good for food as defined by USDA SNAP (includes baby formula) Any unused funds are due back to the Coalition by January 31, 2026.

At the December Food Coalition meeting which Sandy attended via Zoom, Food Rescue reported an overall 19% increase in total food distributed over the last year. This is a result of yet another record setting month in November as reported by Rachael Coughler DeVriendt, Northwest Food Coalition Coordinator.

Brenda Lockman tracks our monthly totals which must be sent to the Northwest Food Coalition. Following you will find Brenda’s report which notes our totals for 2025. We served a total of 1746 meals with 812 take outs. Take outs are generally received by those attending the meal. Thus, we feel so good that our guests will have another additional healthy meal. Sometimes, we have take outs for folks who cannot make it to the meal, and the food is picked up by a spouse or friend.

Maybe if we just throw ourselves into doing the right things and checking off the right boxes and spending enough time helping people, maybe that will give us true life. Source: Pastor Douglas’s message on January 4, 2026.

Submitted by Sandy Neumann and Carol Kingsley
Community Meal Co-Chairs

2025 Monthly Totals of Community Meals Mancelona United Methodist Church

Month	Served	Seconds	Take-Out
January	53	1	30
February	123	19	55
March	147	1	58
April	185	4	90
May	162	4	55
June	154	2	57
July	212		98
August	152		72
September	184	2	99
October	174	2	83
November	103	9	55
December	97	6	60
Totals	1746	50	812

What's Happening



Each week (usually Monday) an email is sent noting prayers, praises, and announcements, that have been shared in our service on Sunday, and it will include Rev. Douglas's Gospel Lesson, Music, and Message for the week which is posted on Facebook. If you wish to be on that email list, send an email request to carolkingsley62@gmail.com text or call 231.360.9029

Mancelona

January 26th – Dave & Robin Fisher

February 13th – Michael & Laurie Allison

Sunday, January 11 - Potluck in Fellowship Hall

Monday, January 12 – 4:00 Ad Council

Tuesday, January 13 – Community Meal

Wednesday, January 14 – 1:00 UWF meeting

Wednesday, January 14 – 2:30 Women's Book Study

Tuesday, January 20 - Community Meal

Sunday, January 25 - Snacks and Chat

Tuesday, January 27 - Community Meal

Sunday, February 1 – Adult Bible Study

Tuesday, February 3 - Community Meal

Thursday, February 5 – 1:00 pm Adult Bible Study

Sunday, February 8 - Potluck in the Fellowship Hall.

Tuesday, February 10 - Community Meal

Wednesday, February 11 – 1:00 UWF meeting

Wednesday, February 11– 2:30 Women's Book Study

Tuesday, February 17 - Community Meal

Sunday, February 22 - Snacks and Chat

Tuesday, February 24 - Community Meal



Boyne Falls UWF is holding their Sub Sandwich Sale. Order forms will be on the round table in the Welcome Center. Deadline to order is **Sunday, February 1.**

Kindness is like snow. It
beautifies everything it covers.

Kahlil Gibran



Not much to report from the Trustees. Snow shoveling is taken care of through February. Robin Fisher and I have January, Lori and Chris Derrer have signed up for February. Maybe we won't get much snow in March, but sometimes that's when we get a lot of heavy wet snow. Thank you to Doug Derrer for shoveling in December. Enjoy Florida, see you in April.

Dan Williams is doing a good job plowing the parking lot. Thank you, Dan.

Submitted by Laurie Allison- Trustee Chair



January

- 1st – Kathy Rick
- 3rd – Barbara Castle
- 4th – Marv Kingsley
- 7th – Pat Derrer
- 7th – Kathy Johnson
- 8th – Kathy VanBruggen
- 10th – Ron Aldrich
- 10th – Braedon Moeke
- 16th - Burt Thompson
- 24th – Diane Lirones
- 27th – Carol Kingsley
- 31st – Julia Kirby

February

- 6th – Carolyn Grody
- 8th – Denise Nixon
- 9th – Michael Allison
- 18th – Lynn Cummings
- 18th – Gage Johnson
- 25th – Garret Derrer
- 25th – Cody Derrer
- 25th – Rae Ann Thompson



Mancelona United Methodist Church
PO Box 301
117 E. Hinman Street
Mancelona, MI 49659
231.587.8461
Sunday Service @ 11:00am

**Ad Council Meeting - 2nd Monday of month/Odd
Months at 4PM**

Boyne Falls UMC
3057 Mill St
Boyne Falls, MI

Sunday Service @ 9:30 am

