

JANUARY	Quilting	JULY	Backpacks
16	5-7pm Visitation for Wendy Shalifoe		Smorgasbord
17	11am funeral for Wendy Shalifoe		Swim Lessons start
17	6-8pm Pinewood Derby set-up	19	Childrens concert with White Lake Music Society
18	1pm Pinewood Derby	23	Concert White Lake Music Society
24	Sleigh Ride @ Country Dairy		
25	Annual Meeting / Potluck		
		AUGUST	Living Lutheran
			Backpack event
FEBRUARY	Kids Klub		
7	8-12 Kids Hooked on Fishing		
18	Ash Wednesday Worship		
	Care Kits for Samaritas		
25	Evening Prayer / Potlucks	7	Labor Day weekend
		19	Look for Ragnar Relay
MARCH	GOOD GIFTS for our Anniversary Gift	OCTOBER	Samaritas
3,10,17	Evening Prayer / Potlucks		Hayride
29	Palm Sunday	25	Reformation Day worship
APRIL	GOOD GIFTS	NOVEMBER	Worship
5	Easter	1	All Saints Worship
12	Orthodox Easter	3	Election Day
		11	Wednesday Veteran's Day
		29	First Sunday in Advent
MAY	Synod Benevolence	DECEMBER	Music
3	Pentecost	2,9,16	Advent Evening Vespers
10	Mother's Day	4 (TBD)	White Lake Tree Lighting
16-17	Synod Assembly / Portage	4	Scouts Yule Go Nuts weekend
25	Memorial Day	5	Breakfast with Santa by NHS
		5	Christmas Parade
JUNE	Swim Lessons	24	Christmas Eve Worship
7	Anniversary Gift ELCA		
	World Hunger "Good Gifts"		
14	AED coffee hour session	JANUARY 2027	
21	Father's Day	24	Annual Meeting

2025 ANNUAL REPORT

ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2025

JANUARY 25, 2026

Lebanon Lutheran Church
1101 South Mears Church
Whitehall, Michigan 49461

231-893-5745

www.lebanonlutheranchurch.com

YouTube: Lebanon Lutheran Church

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/LebanonLutheranChurch/>

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/251594500110/?ref=share>

Lebanon Lutheran Church

Sunday, January 25, 2026

Welcome, establishment of Quorum

Opening Prayer

Approval of minutes from Annual Minutes 2025

Ballot for Elected positions distributed

Special thanks to Nominating Committee:

Review of 2025

2025 Financial Reports

2026 Proposed Budget

Looking Forward – Ministry Reports reviewed and approved

Prayer

Closing

Praise God from whom all blessings flow

Praise him all creatures here below

Praise him above you heavenly hosts

Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost Amen.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Annual Meeting Business

2025 Annual Meeting Minutes ~ Pages 21, 22, 23

Staff Reports

Pastor Douglas M. Ogden ~ Page 5,6

Congregational Statistics ~ Page 20

Office Administrators ~ Page 6, 7

Reports

Altar Guild ~	Page 15
Backpack	Page 14
Choir	Page 9
Christian Education	Page 18
Endowment Committee	Page 16
Financial Compliance Review	Page 8
Finance Reports	Pages 31~
Food Pantry	Pages 10,11,12
Good Gifts	Page 9
Historical Committee	Page 16
Kids Klub	Page 17
Memorial Report	Page 8
Property	Page 19
Quilting	Page 13

Regularly Scheduled Events

Finance Committee.....	2 nd Tuesday @ 6pm
Executive Board.....	2 nd Tuesday @ 7pm
Church Council.....	3rd Tuesday @ 6pm
Bible Study	Thursdays via Zoom @ 7pm
Food Pantry.....	Every Wednesday@ 9:30am-10:30a (drive-thru only)
Troop 1048	Sundays @ 5pm
Pack 4048	2 nd Monday @ 7:00pm

STAFF REPORTS

PASTOR

The outbreak of COVID 19 was more than five years ago; the time after for organizations like churches has brought new challenges and new opportunities.

Worship has changed, with more opportunities for people to be “up front.” Worship on YouTube was something churches talked about for years, and now we are doing it, and it is here to stay.

We get about 50 views a week, some from friends far away, some from home-bound members, some from members away for a weekend who still check in.

We have an ambitious schedule of regularly occurring events to look forward to, such as the Backpack event, swim lessons, assembling personal care kits in Lent and Thrivent Cause kits we are doing right now, the hayride and sleighride, smorgasbord, and a monetary gift in honor of our congregation’s anniversary to “Good Gifts,” part of the ELCA World Hunger.

These kinds of events are exciting, but usually have a life cycle, and shouldn’t be expected to last forever. Sometimes old ministries must give way to new opportunities.

We do not know how things will go with the Summer Slovak program; we are still making ourselves available, but there are fewer students in the Bratislava seminary. We know that Samaritas has gotten out of the Assisted living housing ministry, so our Color Tour has come to an end in the way we have done it for 50 years. Sunday School has given way to Kids Club even while Faith Formation materials are being sent out to kids all over the world who are connected to Lebanon.

You will see the White Lake food pantry at Lebanon has grown and changed dramatically,

with at least 30 volunteers and over a hundred client families every week. Instead of breakfast, I try to make personal contact as much as possible with each “through the window”.

COVID was hard on Scouting, with three full years without recruitment for youth and for adult leadership. We are re-building, and since the Pastor is the Organizational Head, I have taken a more active role in recruiting scout and developing leaders. Boy Scouts is now Scouting America, with active participation of both girls and boys in the same Pack and Troop and Crew, just like nearly every other nation’s Scouting program.

We continue to hold to the idea that we want to involve as many community members in what we do; it’s how we influence the world with the things we care about. People tend to join if they like what we do and they decide we are the people they want to do it with. We have welcomed members, and made good friends.

When Jesus Christ was “given over to betrayal and death” (so our liturgy goes), we were given a permanent marker of the world’s brokenness, wrong-headedness, and a reflection of our own capacity for self-serving and failure to live up to our own dreams and hopes. But in that same event comes God’s defiant “No!” to betrayal, death, violence, compromises. And what follows is a life of returning to the vision God has for us, and the power to live for it again.

When you are baptized, you take on that redirection, and bear the signs that God’s love and forgiveness and resurrected promises are for you. But even more when you are baptized, you not only have the sign, you become the sign that God so loves the world and calls out a better way.

God resurrects Christ Jesus from the grave, resurrects our hopes and dreams from whatever failures have brought them down, and set our feet onto the way of peace. Words like compassion, service, empathy, ministry, generosity, forgiveness, and encouragement flow to us and from us as the Way of Jesus Christ.

Pastor Ogden



OFFICE ADMINISTRATORS

2025 continued to be a busy time at Lebanon Lutheran.

Each group meeting at Lebanon is responsible for making sure the areas they meet are cleaned up and lights off, doors locked. They are asked to text Pastor when they leave the building and all tasks are done. The use of sanitizer and masks is by personal preference at this time.

Pastor Ogden, Mike Schmalz continue to record our worship for those who wish to view from home.

We have members and non-members viewing across the globe!

The weekly yellow bulletin is printed and available on Sundays and via our website. Meg Eaton continues to send our weekly news updates and the yellow pages are included.

If you are not receiving this weekly update, please contact the church office and let us know your email address so that we may add you to the list.

Sue continues to make her calls from home and keeps me posted on any member changes or concerns. I appreciate her assistance in whatever tasks I require help with.

Donations or church business can be done during normal business hours – Monday – Thursday, 9am-1pm

I continue to keep Food Pantry records and assist with any Food Pantry needs.

Meg Eaton continues to publish “The Light” and has now instituted a new format which in the end will save on postage and allow our members to more easily read the print.

I thank the church council and Pastor Ogden for allowing me the opportunity to continue to work, but also, the opportunity to plan more visits with my Georgia family and travel.

**Submitted by Margaret Everling,
Office Manager**

NIGHT OFFICE STAFF

I am privileged to work from my home on Wednesday and Thursday evenings, 6:30 to 9:00 p.m.

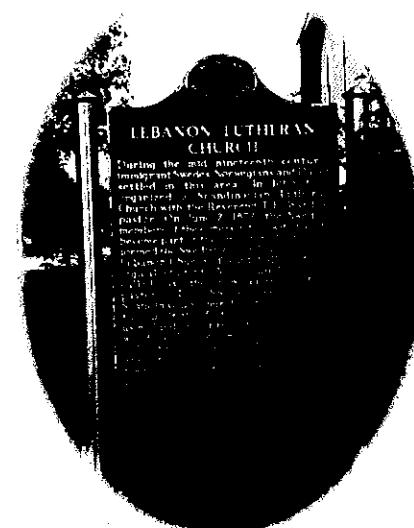
I continue to call our homebound members letting them know we are thinking of them, checking on their well-being as well as keeping them in our prayers and preparing notes for Pastor so he knows how they are doing. They appreciate the calls and all the time and effort put into bringing the online service to them. I also check on members who are ill or having surgery. I enjoy calling on birthdays, too.

We packed and delivered 22 Christmas baskets this year to our homebound members. Thank you to John & Irene Parks, Mary Beekman, Barb

Aardema, Donna Stacy, Deb Peabody, Mary Koenen, Carol Norwick, Meg Eaton, and Wayne Roesler. Thanks to all who donated "goodies" and Scott & Kathy Keller and Barb Aardema for making the jam.

Thank you to Margaret who does so much so efficiently, but most of all, thank all of you and Pastor Ogden who make my job so enjoyable.

Respectfully submitted by Sue Roesler



COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE REPORT

Financial Compliance Review

The annual audit of the church books was held at 9:00 AM Friday, December 5th, 2025.

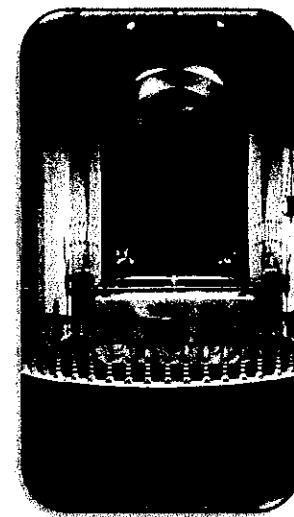
PRESENT: Curt Crouch, Cheri Crouch, Terry Beekman, Terry Vanderleest, Bill Baxter, Dave Dusenberry, and Don Nelson (chair).

PROCESS: We reviewed the finances for the months of April and August, 2025. This included incoming revenue and outgoing expenses. Revenue was checked against bank accounts and expenses against receipts along with approved check requests.

CONCLUSION: All was in good order and approved. No new recommendations for improvements needed at this time.

Meeting was adjourned at 10:05 AM.

Sincerely submitted by, Don Nelson



MEMORIALS

Six memorials were established in 2025 in honor of the following:

Helen Bartlett	Mitch Johnson
Mary Bernhardt	Barb Smith
Karl Glass	
Ronald Scott Funderburg	

Memorial disbursements were applied to the following needs in 2025:

Lounge Furniture – **Barb Gelvin, Nancy Miller, Nancy Peterson, Donna Will, Marlene Windbacher**

Lounge TV – **Ken Bernhardt, Pat Courneya**

Church Ad in Beacon – **Frank & Gregg Smith**

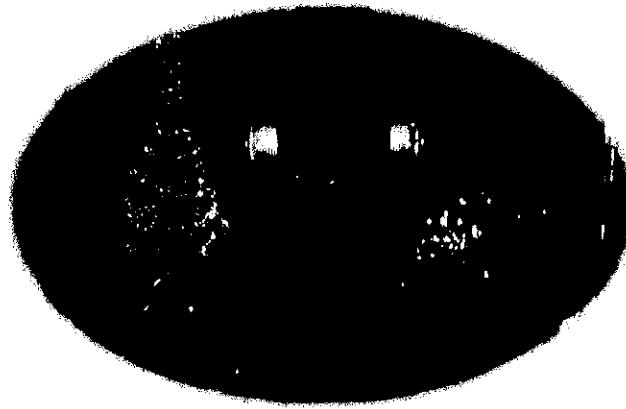
Lebanon Lutheran Church's Memorial Fund account balance at 12-31-25 is **\$12,938.12**

Respectfully submitted,
Sue Roesler, Memorial Secretary



CHOIR

We have had fun this year presenting both new music and old. It can be a challenge working out what we have the ranges for and I am thrilled that the supporting voices of the choir are outstanding. That



being said, we are in desperate need of additional soprano voices (melody) as the lack of depth in this range is affecting the music we can present. I look ahead to offering worship supporting music in the new year. Remember: "Those who sing pray twice" and "Make a joyful noise unto the Lord".

Diane Eastman Choir Director



Good Gifts

Through the generosity of our congregation, our Lebanon Lutheran collected \$1,230 for our 153rd anniversary!

With that money we were able to send a gift from the Good Gifts Catalog to the ELCA World Hunger initiative. We bought the farm!

The family farm includes: 1 cow; 2 goats; 2 pigs; 12 chicks; tools, seeds, and agricultural training.

We also purchased one goat, one rooster, ten chicks and the combo of honeybees and community garden.

These gifts, as well as the other gifts in the Good Gifts Catalog, will provide long-term benefits to communities and families in developing countries.

Submitted by,

Wietse Schaafsma

FOOD PANTRY COORDINATOR

Over the past year Lebanon Lutheran Church has continued serving the residents of the area through the operation of the White Lake Area Food Pantry. Each week our dedicated group of volunteers fill and distribute boxes full of nutritious food items to our clients. The number of clients we serve has continued to grow. On average we distribute over 100 food boxes each week.

This fall, our numbers of weekly clients increased substantially due to general economic conditions and the lengthy government shutdown; for each of several weeks in October and November we distributed 120 to nearly 160 food boxes. It was a challenging time for the pantry, because at the same time demand and need was rising, key government programs were suspended and or cut back, making it ever more challenging to procure enough food at affordable prices to meet the needs of our clients.

Fortunately, we were able to meet this need through the dedicated efforts of our team of volunteers, the generosity of White Lake area community members and contributions from new and existing business and philanthropic partners.

During the past year, our volunteer team has grown substantially. Although a number of long-time volunteers have stepped back from their involvement in our operations, we have been truly fortunate to have had numerous new volunteers join our group. We now have task groups organized who help with weekly functions, including:

- Food distributors who pass out the food offerings every Wednesday morning.
- Food box fillers who work to package the food into boxes for distribution.
- Transport teams who drive weekly to our various suppliers to pick up food items to add to our inventory.
- A team that meets at the church regularly to unload food supplies as they come in.

- Warehouse helpers who help date check food donations and stock the shelves and coolers with perishable and non-perishable food inventory.
- Shoppers who go to local stores to procure food items, as needed.
- And the ongoing efforts of Margaret Everling, LLC's office manager, who provides organizational support, record keeping and reporting, and who registers clients each Wednesday as they come in to pickup their food.

The Pantry continues to rely on a variety of sources to help keep our shelves stocked with food and non-food items. These include:

- Generous financial contributions from local individual and business donors
- No cost food donations from local contributors such as businesses, schools, churches, civic groups and of course individual, all at no cost
- Purchases, as needed, from local businesses, some at significant discounts;
- Purchases (and donated food) from Feeding America West Michigan at discounted prices.

Significant organizational contributors include: WESCO; The Mid-Michigan Community Action Agency, in Farwell, MI; MasterTag; Montague Foods; Twin Cities Auto Parts and Repair; Country Dairy; The Homestead Restaurant in Whitehall; Electric Forest; Whitehall and Montague Schools; Blue Lake Fine Arts Camp, Quilted Memories of Montague; and Stu Scholl of Scholl Farms. Also Laughing Tree Bakery, Hart.

We have also developed new relationships with several area partners, including:

- The new ALDI store in Whitehall, which provides overstock food items to us weekly, at no cost. This has greatly expanded our ability to offer fresh vegetables, fresh fruit, milk and frozen items to our clients.

- The Ludington Food Club warehouse in Hart, MI, which donates pallets full of bread, dessert items, fresh veggies and fruit, and milk to the pantry on a weekly basis.
- The Greater Muskegon Support Services organization, which provides food donations and logistical transport assistance for food pick-ups.

Our sincerest thanks go out to these local partners for their help.

Our food box contents vary week-to-week. Depending on availability, each box generally contains 2 cans of soup; two cans of a variety of vegetables plus a canned bean product; a can or 2 of preserved meat; a container of cereal; a pasta or rice side dish; a pasta main dish such as noodles with a can of sauce; instant or occasionally fresh potatoes; a can or other package of fruit; a gallon of fresh milk or shelf-stable milk products; and other items, as available, such as peanut butter and jam, flour or baking mix, shelf-stable yogurt, fruit juice and other miscellaneous foods. WE also distribute one package of frozen meat to our clients each week along with newly added items including bread, dessert items, and a wide array of fresh fruits and vegetables.

All the pantry volunteers what to thank Lebanon Lutheran Congregation members for their thoughtful donations of money, food, space and effort that make it possible to help meet the nutritional needs of the Greater White Lake area families. Through that continued support, we hope to be able to serve our community in the months and years ahead.

If you have questions about how you can support the pantry, please contact Margaret Everling or Pastor Ogden to discuss who to make financial or food donations or for more information on how to become a volunteer to work in this much-needed ministry.

Greater White Lake area families. Through that continued support, we hope to be able to serve our community in the months and years ahead.

If you have questions about how you can support the pantry, please contact Margaret Everling or Pastor Ogden to discuss how to make financial or food donations or for more information on how to become a volunteer to work in this much-needed ministry.

Submitted by Paul Collins, Inventory Coordinator



MISSION STATEMENT

The White Lake Area Food Pantry at Lebanon Lutheran Church serves to help a wide variety of hungry people representing the unemployed, the working poor, senior citizens, at-risk children, pregnant teens, and domestic violence victims and more. We offer fellowship, food and other household items that are donated by members of the community and Feeding America West Michigan Food Bank, as well as Mid Michigan Community Action program.

The pantry continues operating as a Drive-Thru only.

The Pantry served 5,400 families in 2025, (up from 4,464 in '24) or approximately 11,587 individuals. The breakdown is as follows: 2,803 children representing 24% and 4,126 senior citizens representing 36% and 491 Veterans representing 4%. The remainder do not fall under the above-mentioned categories.

Over 40% of the food is purchased through Feeding America West Michigan Food Bank, in Comstock Park at a minimal cost of 16 cents per pound. We have sourced food items from Mid Michigan Community Action thanks to the pantry coordinator Paul Collins as well as The Food Club (Hart), Aldi Whitehall and the new Costco in Fruitport Twp. The balance of our food is donated at no cost to us by area businesses, schools and churches. The Pantry welcomes food donations from area food drives, local farmers and summer visitors.

Because the Food Pantry is not a budgeted program of the church, it is entirely dependent upon the generosity of Lebanon Lutheran members, and other churches in the White Lake Community. Community organizations, philanthropic businesses and individuals are very important to enable the Food Pantry to continue to provide nutritious food for hungry families in our area. We receive a discounted rate for our U Haul rental from Twin Cities. The Food Pantry has received generous grants from Thrivent Financial, private matching grants, Women's Division of the Chamber of Commerce (Dancing with the Local Stars) and annual food contributions from Quilted Memories, HarborLight Credit Union, Waterdog Outfitters, as well as numerous anonymous donations.

The pantry served White Lake Families approximately 47 weeks.

We have gone to a Drive-thru only capacity, each Wednesday from 9:30am to 10:30am.

Record keeping is still mandatory and we report our information to Feeding America monthly.

We are still utilizing boxes which are generously donated by MasterTag in Montague. We do also get some clients returning the boxes.

Thank you to Pastor Ogden, Sandy Robbins, Paul Collins, Susan Newhof, Cindy Lipka, Brenden Byl, Jan Kclo, Al & Michele Wheeler, Wietse Schaafsma, Mary Koenen, Barb Reece, Curt & Cheri Crouch, Tony DeNicolo and many more who volunteer their time to volunteer for our weekly pantry.

Submitted by, Margaret Everling