



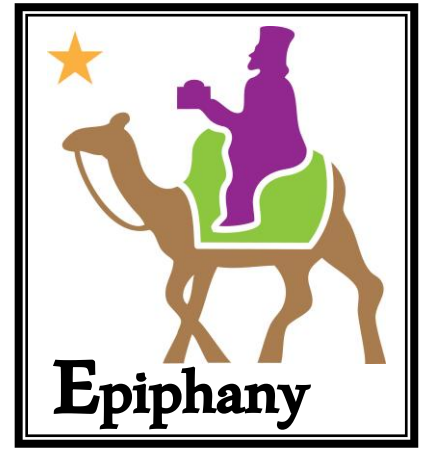
# The Epistle

Unity Lutheran Parish ~ January 2026

Jan. 14 – Annual Reports in to Sarah.

Jan. 18 – WLC Annual meeting.

Jan. 25 – MLC Annual meeting.



## From the Pastor

### *New calendar year, moving on ahead.*

Yes, over the years we begin a new calendar year. I have gone from making resolutions to not making them, and this year making them. Who knows what next year will bring.

First resolution, continue to stay close to God. And that is an everyday necessity for me. I cannot live without Jesus in my life.

Second, first a backstory which leads to this.

A month or so ago on family “Zoom” time, Hanna mentioned she was on book 45 in her goal of reading a book a week. I wish I had the “mind blown” emoji for my computer.

She had me thinking about many years ago we had a book discussion group at Malta Lutheran (really anyone in Unity Lutheran Parish could join).

I am challenging myself to read one book a month.

In years past, I read a book about “World Famous Pike Place Fish Market” in Seattle, WA. That’s where they throw the fish to the counter to ring up a sale. The title of the book is *Fish!* When I first read it, I thought, “this is the way the church should be”. I loved it so much I kept giving away my copies of the book and had to buy more copies. It helped me before and reading again was helpful.

There are four basics that made “World Famous Pike Place Fish Market”, world famous.

**Choose your Attitude** – the attitude you go to work, school, or wherever you are going is the attitude you chose. We do have control over how we approach life and situations that come up.

**Play** – it is an attitude of joy that you can carry with you. At the fish market with a physical and smelly job, they want to play, enjoy what is a difficult job.

**Make their day** – as a business you try to meet the customer’s needs. But as believers in Jesus, we are called to love and serve our neighbor. I have found that in my life when I try to “make someone’s day” I brighten up my own day. The degree of happiness may vary, but it happens.

**Be present** – at the fish market it is busy, loud, and many things to distract you. But as they are selling fish, talking to customers, or just answering questions, they give their full attention to the person at the time. Not distracted. We need to be present in the world, not part of it, but present for our neighbor.

<sup>15</sup> “...choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your ancestors served in the region beyond the River or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living, **but as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord.**” Joshua 24:15

Let’s continue to serve the Lord.

Pastor Bob

## **Confirmation Class News!!!** **Class schedule for January 2026.**

### **MALTA**

**January 7** – Class

**January 14** – Class (have mentors chosen)

**January 21** – Class

**January 28** – Class

**Malta** - The youth night meal is at 6pm with classes starting at 6:30. We will be finished each evening at about 7:15.

**WHITEWATER** – We meet after school at Whitewater Lutheran Church.

**January 7** – Class

**January 3** – Class

### **Scripture Discovery**

We meet at **10 am on Monday mornings**. This month we will look at the upcoming Sunday morning readings. Bring a friend. Please join us; there is always room for one more, invite a friend.

#### **January 2026 schedule:**

**January 5** – Scripture Discovery

**January 12** – Scripture Discovery

**January 19** – Scripture Discovery

**January 26** – Scripture Discovery

*If there is interest in an evening Bible Study, please let me know.*

Pastor Bob

### **Prayer Time throughout the month**

Pray for peace.

Pray that God will reform, realign us in growing in our relationship with our Creator  
Pray for the world leaders.

*Challenge for us all – to live out God's love for the world.*

### **I – Liners**

- I just went and gave the gym *my too weak notice*.
- I ordered a chicken and an egg online. *I'll let you know what comes first.*
- I'm reading a book about anti-gravity. *I can't put it down.*
- I accidentally called it a "book on tape," instead of "audiobook."  
*I am in time-out with my kids.*

### **Faith Fillers**

**I think I've discovered the secret of life – you just hang around until you get used to it.**

— Charles Schulz

## **Correspondence**

### **Greetings from the Milk River Gospel Jamboree**

As we enter this season of the year, we are reminded of how we are to be always thankful for the greatest 'gift of all' God's Son sent into this world to redeem us from sin. That alone should make our heart sing.

We at the MRGJ also know that 'it's a good thing to sing praise to our God' Psalm 147:7. For 23 years we have been privileged to be able to bring good, Godly, family friendly, music to our community each June. We are making plans to do this once again June 26-28, 2026. However, we are faced with a dilemma. We, the people behind the music are needing help. Not just the financial kind, because many of you support us year after year, but we need fresh ideas, new faces around the table and new members willing to say "I will help out". Some of our members have been involved for most or all of those 23 years and although our hearts are still in it, we need new strength to make it happen. That is where you may come in. We will be holding our annual meeting January 20, 2026 at the Elim Lutheran Church, downstairs at 7:00pm and would love to see new faces there. The Jamboree takes the efforts of many to put on. Please make it a matter of prayer and we hope to see you January 20<sup>th</sup> at Elim Lutheran.

Yours in Christ,

The members of the MRGJ

*P.S.* We are hosting a Mini-Jamboree featuring mostly local talent on Sunday January 11, 2026 to begin at 3:00pm in the Malta High School auditorium. We are asking each church to bring pies, for a pie and ice cream social to follow. Please plan on attending and enjoying the afternoon of good gospel music and fellowship.

*reprinted with permission JoyfulNoiseletter.com*

## ***It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year!***

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year! The **2025 Annual Reports** will soon need to be written and handed in to the Parish Secretary. Last year they were due by the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday in January. ***Please all Ministry members have reports in by Wednesday, January 14, 2026.***

This may seem early, but it isn't since booklets need to be ready in time for the Whitewater annual meeting usually held the week before the Malta annual meeting on **Sunday, January 25, 2026.**

Hand in directly, mail to PO Box 1379, Malta 59538

email [unity@itstriangle.com](mailto:unity@itstriangle.com)

I thank you for all assistance,  
Parish Secretary, Sarah Osmundson.

**The cost is \$50 to sponsor a Sunday morning KMMR Radio Broadcast:**

**contact Parish Office by mail:**

**POB 1379, Malta, MT 59538**

**Phone: 406-654-1434**

**leave message**

**Email: [unity@itstriangle.com](mailto:unity@itstriangle.com)**

**Thank you for your donation!**



**Secretary Note:** reminder  
the annual reports are due  
Wed. Jan. 14<sup>th</sup> for meetings!  
Thanks SO

***Do you have a February birthday to add?***

**HAPPY JANUARY BIRTHDAYS!**



4 - Tate Knudsen  
16 - Gary Knudsen  
17 - Scott Meneely  
19 - Zachery Drabbs  
27 - Bum Petrie

**Newsletter Lifeline:** Monday, Jan. 26<sup>th</sup> for  
February 2026. Thanks SO

## **WELCA BOARD MEETING**

The Malta WELCA no-host luncheon on Wednesday, December 10, 2025 at noon at the GN Lodge room with ten ladies present; Elaine Enerson, Rosemary S. Veseth, Marlene Holman, Peggy Salois, Diane Mastel, Sharon Kindle, Carol Schumacher, Sarah Osmundson, Sharon Kienenberger & Jan Kirkwood, also attending Pastor Bob Nagy and LMA Rick Mikkelsen.

Jan Kirkwood welcomed everyone and read out of the Advent booklet 'Come, Lord Jesus Be Our Guest'. *As we invite Jesus into our home during Advent, we remember not only his birth in Bethlehem long ago, but his coming in glory at the end of time.*

A discussion for ideas about having a Bake-less Bake Sale Fundraiser instead of having the Fall Bazaar. It's been harder to get workers for the bazaar. An article in the December Epistle newsletter explains about the fundraiser. It's a different approach in raising money for the community donations and scholarships for 2026. WELCA would appreciate all your suggestions about this change. Call: Jan Kirkwood (406) 654-2430 or leave your notes in the Parish office. Thank you!

We sang Happy Birthday to Diane Mastel (Dec. 21<sup>st</sup> her 77<sup>th</sup>) and presented her with a signed group Birthday card & gift card. Two kinds of mini cupcakes were enjoyed by all.

**Next Board Meeting: January 8, 2026,**  
**Happy New Year!**

1:00pm meeting & 2:00pm Bible Study.

**Faithfully submitted by:** Jan Kirkwood

***Do you like to organize &  
be a team leader?***

WELCA would like a volunteer Group #1 Chairperson. Please contact Jan Kirkwood



Thank you very much to the  
Unity Lutheran Parish and  
WELCA for your kind gifts and  
support throughout the year.

Sarah Osmundson



# MLC Children's Christmas Program

## Sunday December 14<sup>th</sup>



The 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent was certainly JOY! Several MLC youth performed (*not all pictured*) and what an outstanding job.

*Pictured starting left and counter clockwise; Scarlett Marino on sax and Archer James on trumpet played a 'Christmas March', Vienna Stiles sang 'Have a Holly Jolly Christmas', the grade school sang 'Go Tell It on the Mountain' and 'Jesus Jingle Bells' ringing red bells, mom Avery Sorenson looks on as Remi Sorenson played & sang 'Go Tell It on the Mountain' on piano, Macey & Tenley Lien sang 'Silent Night', and Emmet Harms played 'Jingle Bells' on guitar.*



Thank you all who read the scripture, played and sang, it was a JOY!





**WLC Children's Christmas Program**  
**Sunday December 21<sup>st</sup>**



**Gray Simanton played piano and sang  
'Away in a Manger'.**



**CHURCH** - A wonderful service was enjoyed by all at the Whitewater Lutheran Church on Sunday, Dec. 21<sup>st</sup> for the Children's Christmas program.

**SHENANIGANS** - Afterward the 4H had tractor hayrides (*pic next page*). The North 40 had chili & taco soup (*free will offering*) to warm everyone up. Several braved Reindeer Games with the notorious Grinch. The Grinch's heart must have grown 3 sizes that day after learning the true meaning of Christmas! Transforming from selfish to joyful & compassionate, a pivotal moment even if he lost at Dominos.



**Trax Simanton played trumpet performing  
'We Three Kings' & 'Hark the Harold Angels Sing'**



Dec. 21<sup>st</sup> Whitewater 4H  
tractor hayride joy!



Dec. 22<sup>nd</sup> Lathan Crossland of  
Lathan's Handyman Service  
measures for the new basement  
wainscoting.

Dec. 22<sup>nd</sup> Elijah Faaborg braves the ice and  
cold cutting the wainscoting.

