



Allen AveNews

Allen Avenue Christian Reformed Church, Pastor Mark Hofman
695 Allen Avenue, Muskegon, MI 49442



March 8
Daylight Savings Time Begins



March 17
St. Patrick's Dy



April 3
Good Friday



April 5
Easter Sunday



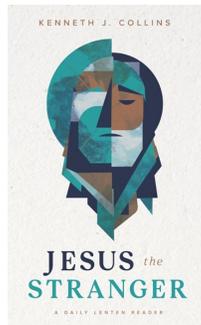
April 26
GEMS Sunday

Special Collections



March 8
Muskegon Christian
April 12
Resonate
April 26
GEMS

"A Discipline of Dismay"



Oswald Chambers, in his beloved *My Utmost For His Highest*, titles one devotional entry, "a discipline of dismay." He meditates on Mark 10:32 – "they followed, and they were afraid (amazed)."

Chambers writes, "There is an aspect of Jesus that chills even a disciple's heart to its depth and makes his entire spiritual life gasp for air. This unusual Person with His face set 'like a flint' (Isaiah 50:7) is walking with great determination ahead of me, and He strikes terror right through me. He no longer seems to be my Counselor and Friend and has a point of view about which I know nothing. All I can do is stand and stare at Him in amazement."

Chambers desires that his readers would take the time to become *unfamiliar* with Jesus. That they would see how Jesus, "had to understand fully every sin and sorrow that human beings could experience." We must all admit that we turn Jesus in the Gospels into a gentler or harsher, a more jagged or smooth-edged caricature, instead of receiving him as he really, truly is: the Son of God who came as the Son of Man.

During Lent at Allen Avenue, we'll be reading stories of Jesus in the Gospels where he encounters disciples, family members, fellow Jews and religious leaders who all fail to understand who he really, truly is – the Messiah. We'll be reminded that to follow him takes a willingness to bear our cross; to put to death the sin in our flesh (Romans 8:13). We will be invited to once again be led toward the grace and power of Jesus' death and resurrection on Good Friday and Easter. And when we encounter Jesus in his resurrection appearances, we will meet him once again as the God who makes himself known in Jesus' face (2 Cor. 4:6).

Some inspiration for our sermon series includes the above-pictured devotional, *Jesus the Stranger*, by Kenneth J. Collins. This daily reader would make a great companion for your times of encountering Christ again during this Lenten season.

Let us walk the journey of Lent together to meet Jesus the Stranger, so that he may draw us ever nearer to himself. He is the one who knows us better than we know ourselves (Psalm 139) and he turns us from aliens and enemies into unblemished and acquitted servants (Col. 1:21-23)

Come and meet Jesus the Stranger again and find "the ability to follow Jesus truly, which brings inexpressibly wonderful joy." (Chambers, *A Discipline of Dismay*)

—Pastor Mark



Note: If you exchange assignments with someone, let Susan Vanderlaan know so she can have it right in the bulletin.
 susan.vanderlaan@allenavechurch.org or 231.722.6411



Coffee Schedule

March	1	Carolyn & Justin Wilson
	8	Amber & Dean Johnson
	15	Becki & Randy Fisher
	22	
	29	Sandy Volkers, Ron Friday
April	5	Easter Congregational Life
	12	Laurie & Jack DeJonge
	19	
	26	Toni & Scott Schuitema

Nursery Schedule

March	1	Susan Vanderlaan, Tayla Vlasma
	8	Nancy Rop, Mary Maat
	15	Beth VanRees, Aethan Hofman
	22	Laurie DeJonge, Melisa Vlasma
	29	Amber Johnson, Maelin Vlasma
April	5	Laurie DeJonge, Beth VanRees
	12	Sue Sytsema, Tayla Vlasma
	19	Carol Peterman, Melisa Vlasma
	26	Amber Johnson, Maelin Vlasma

CONNECT GROUP

We begin our new year meeting February 15 and then every other week in the lounge off the kitchen from 11:30-12:30.

This will be a soft start and we will move back into the Fellowship Hall Sundays from 4-6 again as we grow our new group.

Connect is a unique relationship Bible study. We are your first step in connecting with each other within a very small group setting. It is a come as you are—no judgements atmosphere.

Our first series will be “Changing from the Inside Out (Matthew 5).

Questions? See Charry Snyder or Denise Koetje.



Notes From the Deacons and Finance Committee

Allen Avenue CRC has a strong history of faithful support of our local church, our denomination and our Christian Schools. While there is no “wrong” way to give, the Deacons and Finance Committee want you to know that there are options to maximize your stewardship by taking advantage of tax savings while benefiting the kingdom of God.

Many of us are familiar and comfortable with the long-standing method of making a tithe or offering to church. That is traditionally done with either cash or a check in the collection plate.

While this is an acceptable way of giving, there are other options that members of Allen Avenue are already using. These options include:

Church Center/Planning Center. This is the online resource our church uses to accept secure online gifts and to record all giving. Benefits of giving through Church Center include 1) ease and convenience since giving can be done anytime, anyplace, 2) ability to set up recurring gifts, 3) recording of special offering gifts.

Donor Advised Funds. Generally set up through major financial companies such as Vanguard and Fidelity or through the Barnabas Foundation, these donor advised funds are a great way to gift appreciated assets such as stocks, bonds and mutual funds. Benefits of giving through DAF include 1) gifting this way may eliminate the capital gains tax on the appreciated asset, 2) once the fund is established, the fund owner can give to any qualified charitable entity on a schedule that meets their wishes and timelines. (A Barnabas brochure is available in the racks by the doors.)

IRA Qualified Charitable Distributions. A qualified charitable distribution (QCD) allows individuals who are 70½ years old or older to donate to one or more charities directly from a taxable IRA (non-Roth IRA) instead of taking those dollars in their required minimum distributions. Benefits of QCDs include 1) donors may avoid being pushed into higher income tax brackets, 2) no federal, state or local income tax is due on any of the withdrawal. Qualified charitable distributions reduce your taxable income. This benefits you *even if you don't itemize deductions on your tax returns*. (There is an information sheet available in the racks by the doors.)

NEW IN 2026 – New federal tax laws include a charitable deduction for those who do not itemize. This deduction, worth up to \$1,000 for single filers and \$2,000 for joint filers, is subtracted from your Adjusted Gross Income (AGI), thus lowering your taxable income. With proper receipting for cash or personal check gifts, tax filers can utilize this deduction along with the standard deduction.

If you have any questions about giving options, contact any member of the Finance Committee. (Amber, Karen, Jean, Scott, Randy) Keep in mind that none of this is being offered as financial advice. Please consult with your own tax and finance professionals.

Committee Goals

On January 10, all the church committees met for breakfast to decide goals for the year.



EDUCATION

- MAINTAIN OUR PROGRAMS • GROW THEM
- CADETS
- MEN'S BIBLE STUDY
- WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY
- KING'S KIDS
- Church Council & Caretaker
- Small Group
- Counselor Group
- Children's Ministry
- New Members Class

• PRAY FOR THE EDUCATION OF THE CHURCH • PRAY UP AN HOUR
The exact hour and keep yourself prepared to be able to handle the
the subsequent volunteers we have that we can help



BUILDING

- Revisit AC Proposal
- Investigate water intrusion SW corner
- Paint Parsonage Porch (PPP)
- Spring cleanup
- Clean & wax Fellowship Room floor
- Acoustic panels in Lounge

Finance Goals

1. Investigate procedural review - financial systems
2. Review check requisition process with all committees
3. Work with committees at planning time to get better input for budgeting & LRP.

Outreach Committee 2026
(Our-teach)

1. Foster Faith Growth
2. Mailing our neighbors bi-monthly
3. Encourage the missionary

CONGREGATIONAL LIFE 2026

FEB 1, 8 HOT CHOCOLATE BAR
APRIL 5 EASTER BREAKFAST
SUMMER CHURCH PICNIC
END OF SUMMER APPRECIATION COOK-OUT FOR COUNCIL
OCTOBER SOUP/SALAD AFTER CHURCH
LATE FALL CHRISTMAS CHAS

WORSHIP

Review congregational surveys and follow up

1. Continue regular readers for Scripture
3. Incorporate more vocal groups, duets, solos, etc.
4. More in depth (and can be longer) messages. Include questions?
5. Invite more people across the generations to participate in worship leadership.
6. Revamp the front of the sanctuary - more space for worship teams/instrumentals
7. Combined worship - revivals? with other area churches



Emergency Response

- Think (Keep us safe) Shiny.
- 1) CRR training update
 - Coordinate every 2 years
 - Coordinate w/ MCS
- 2) Background checks for Volunteers
 - Note w/ MCS
 - Report back to Council
- 3) Camera Coverage turned on to Tech. Committee.
- 4) Protect Young Eyes
 - Coordinate w/ UMC in March
- 5) Medical Supply update
- 6) Safety walk through w/ MPD



Technology Goals

- 1) Move the cameras on south side of church to N: E sides of parsonage. Convert to run from external power.
- 2) Upgrade 1 or 2 of the Network Area Storage drives.
- 3) Rewire sanctuary lights so they can be controlled from the south booth.
- 4) Purchase 1 or 2 new wireless microphones.

Lumberjacks Hockey Game

On January 17, the cadets attended a hockey game. Many of the congregation joined them. Dinner was pizza at church before the game. The game was a nail biter with the lumberjacks losing in overtime.



Cadet Sunday



Pond Hockey

Sunday, February 8 GEMs and Cadets got together at Dale Johnson's to play Pond Hockey. It was a beautiful day- many ice skated and played hockey for the first time- a phenomenal time was had by all. Thanks Dale for having us.



Craft Lab

Thank you, Laurie Slorf for a great time and a wonderful craft!!!





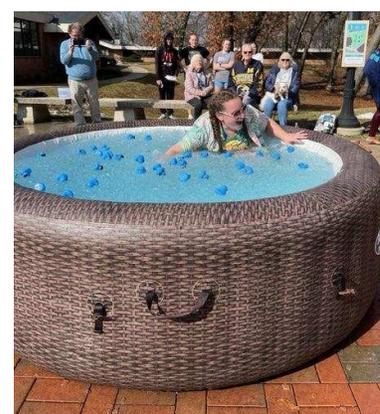
Congratulations to Devin and Annabell on the birth of your beautiful baby girl, Alkinna Marigold Laylani Snyder, on February 14, 2026



Tayla Vlasma played volleyball for WMC



Maelin Vlasma participated in Cheer for Western Michigan during her junior year. She even was at the top of the pyramid.



Emily Snyder, with the help of Allen Avenue, raised over \$2,400 toward her tuition at Grace Christian College. BRR!!

BIBLE WORD SEARCH

I G G R B O O O T F Q G K H Q F U U J H B E V R
 Y L S E T S A I S E L C C E X I T A E A I Y W Z
 E R A B K I S S F R E V E L A T I O N I J E F T
 Q K O G R Q J A Q W V O O B S E P O C A O J S O
 L J H Q A J T H M M R O X O O U B F Y S S R V D
 E Z N J M I B A M U E W A D M O O S X I H Z S Y
 I G K Y A J K I W M E V W N A M R P S D U R L K
 N U K G A L X M J O U L L H H E K E M T A O E S
 A G G B M E C E A V H K A U B E G K A T C M O P
 D A I T U V W R C J I N E M H E R Y E H Q A J E
 H Z U Z H I L E D N O Y U T K B M H X A D N I S
 X K N Y A T Y J G J Y N U U A O J F U C D S I U
 R D F H N C B S Z M R R L G N O U B D I Y V B T
 S E N A N U K W J Y J X C O M D B Q O M T R Q I
 I U U E H S I U P L S H R E H M A L A C H I U T
 I G S C O U D L R F S E N M V H P Q W I U P F U
 T Y E E J E H J O T T B W B U T X S V F T Y O U
 E P C F J M R Z V U O R X P J U D G E S C E S Y
 U Z D D V S E W E Y R E C S Q W N V Q I Q B C Q
 E C R Z W X E D B H Y W U A F E A Z H O S E A B
 K D P A O Q Z S S R L S B L H H A I M E H E N I
 D M G D Z V E Z E K I E L M H A C P M T R D L B
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 O S W E H T T A M S I S E N E G G P K U X D I E

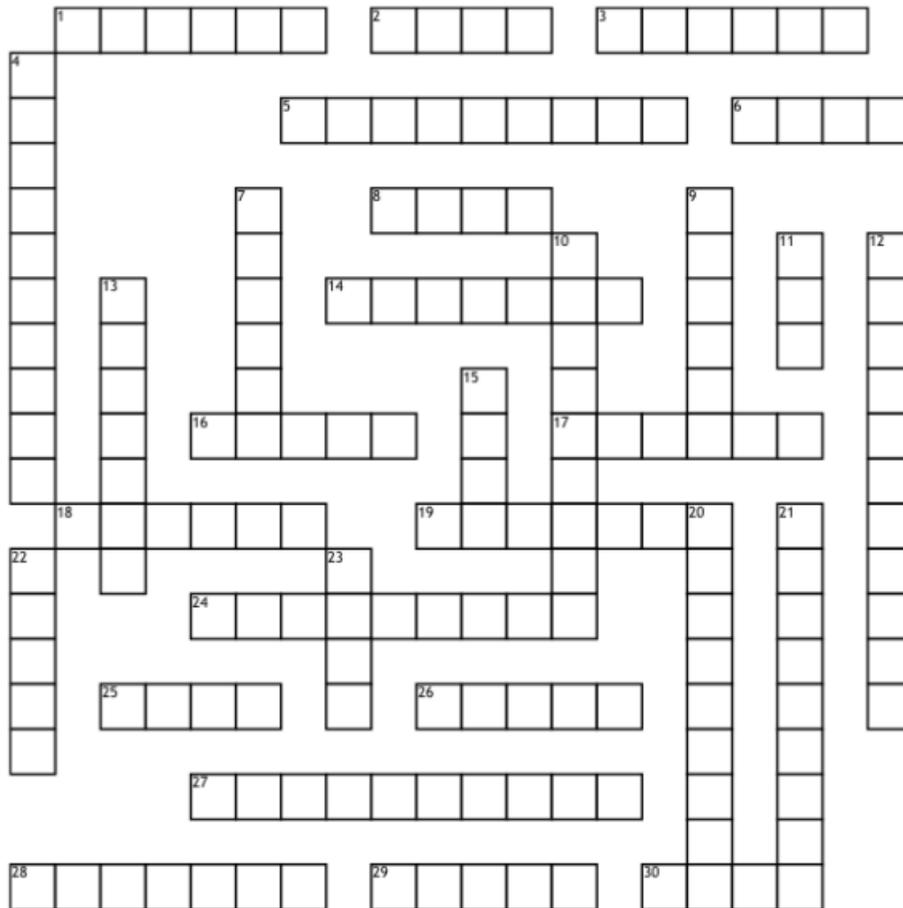
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|--------------|----------|------------|----------|--------|-------------|
| ISAIAH | KINGS | JEREMIAH | MICAH | AMOS | PROVEBS |
| JOB | PSALMS | REVELATION | JUDE | JONAH | HOSEA |
| JUDGES | HEBREWS | TITUS | SAMUEL | JOSHUA | DEUTERONOMY |
| ECCLESIASTES | LEVITCUS | NAHUM | MALACHI | HAGGAI | EZEKIEL |
| EZRA | JOEL | DANIEL | NEHEMIAH | RUTH | NUMBERS |
| ACTS | EXODUS | GENESIS | ROMANS | JESUS | JOHN |
| | LUKE | MARK | MATTHEW | BIBLE | |



CREATIVE COLOR LAB.COM



The bible crossword



Across

- 1. Ezekiel 16:47 (9)
- 2. 1 Samuel 18:21 (21)
- 3. Isaiah 37:16 (11)
- 5. Isaiah 65:7 (19)
- 6. Ruth 1:5 (5)
- 8. Job 42:6 (4)
- 14. Isaiah 65:7 (22)
- 16. Titus 3:2 (4)
- 17. Job 42:6 (15)
- 18. Ezra 5:9 (17)

- 19. Jeremiah 1:11 (22)
 - 24. Proverbs 3:25 (7)
 - 25. Amos 2:5 (5)
 - 26. Isaiah 37:33 (15)
 - 27. 1 Esdras 6:29 (35)
 - 28. Judges 9:2 (10)
 - 29. 2 Maccabees 3:1 (19)
 - 30. Jonah 2:2 (23)
- Down**
- 4. Ezekiel 16:47 (16)
 - 7. Ruth 3:2 (7)

- 9. Matthew 5:21 (10)
- 10. Zechariah 1:5 (4)
- 11. Genesis 37:2 (42)
- 12. Daniel 11:30 (14)
- 13. Judges 6:34 (15)
- 15. 2 Maccabees 3:1 (20)
- 20. Sirach 35:10 (15)?
- 21. Isaiah 37:12 (6)
- 22. Ruth 1:1-2 (4)
- 23. Judges 7:19 (16)



March 2026



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3 Melanie Fisher	4 Kyle Morris	5 Deb Anderson Carla Kieft Trevor Schelske	6	7
8	9 Axel Johnson	10	11 Joel Stephanits Nancy Rop	12	13 Laurie DeJonge	14 Lis Miedema
15	16 David Miedema	17	18	19 Stephanie Hofman	20	21 Sally Mokma
22	23	24 Marijean Smith	25 Jack Wolffis	26 Devin Snyder	27	28
29	30 Travis Snyder	31				



April 2026



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 Joanne Bishop	2	3	4 Kelly Dauser Elaine Holwerda
5	6	7	8	9	10	11 Renee Vlasma
12	13 Bob Holwerda	14 Taylor Johnson	15 Dan Zuidema	16	17	18
19 Bob Workman Ron Vlasma	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27 Dave Johnson	28 Mike Fongers	29	30		