



**PORTAGE
LAKE
UNITED
CHURCH**

PLUC

United Church of Christ & Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

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December 2025

Consistory Highlights

Discussion of Consent Agenda items:

Pastor Report:

1. Elder B. Lowther assisted with November communion. Pastor Norland will ask standing Elder Bobbie Dalquist to assist with communion in December.
2. Pastor Peter thanked all those who helped with the services on November 16 and 23, 2025 while he was on vacation.

Old Business: Pastor Peter thanked Elder R. Middlemis-Brown, who is a member of the Budget Committee, for presenting the budget information for 2025 and the proposed 2026 budget. Elder B. Smock addressed a concern from the congregation about amounts received from the groups that use the PLUC building. Smock stated that we do not charge for the use of the building but do include a recommendation in the Building Use form for help with utilities, etc. Almost all of our guests do give to the church what they can. We also receive other gifts such as the piano tuned twice a year

when PMMF or Keweenaw Symphony hold concerts.

Nominating Committee: Elder B. Smock reported that Michelle Jarvie-Eggart and Lois Jambekar have agreed to serve as members of Consistory beginning in June. Carl Vilmann said he could serve as a back-up if another member cannot be found.

Membership List: Consistory reviewed the 2025 PLUC Membership List. As Lianne Novak no longer lives in the area, Elder S. Middlemis-Brown moved (second by Elder R. Middlemis-Brown) to move Lianne from active to inactive member. The final list indicates that during 2025 1 member was moved to inactive and 3 members died. The PLUC List of Members began 2025 with 40 members, ending with 36.

New Business: Consistory authorized Budget Committee members Bobbie Dalquist and Terry Monson plus Treasurer Ed Lowther to sign checks for Superior National Bank Portage Lake United Church accounts, Vanguard and Keweenaw Community Foundations.

Highlights of the Portage Lake United Church Congregation Annual Meeting

Pastor's Report: Pastor Peter updated the congregation on the upgrades that have been made to the church building in the last year, including the heating system, the fire safety system, and cleaning and tuckpointing the chimney. Upcoming upgrades include the hearing system, door locks (possibly going to a key pad system) and church signage.

Pastor Peter also invited people who attend regularly but have not yet officially joined PLUC to speak with him about doing so.

When Clerk Rob Middlemis-Brown attended the annual Presbytery review of our books there was a question about the need for PLUC to conduct the short Corporation meeting after our Congregational Meetings. This is not required. A decision about continuing this practice is forthcoming.

Nominating Committee: Beth Smock reported that she, Lois Jambekar, and Michelle Jarvie-Eggart are serving as the Nominating Committee. She asked people who are interested in being on Consistory to speak to one of the committee members.

Budget: Rob Middlemis-Brown, a member of the Finance Committee, presented the proposed 2026 budget to the congregation. This proposal has been reviewed by Consistory and recommended to the Congregation. The final budget will be presented for approval at the February Meeting of the Congregation after the completion of the stewardship drive. Rob shared the projected 2026 income (from all sources) of \$99,500.00, which includes a 2.8% COLA increase in salaries) and the 2026 projected expenses of \$110,694.00 which showed a deficit of approximately \$11,000.00) The budget committee is recommending an 5% increase in pledges to

help offset this deficit. The Congregation accepted the proposed 2026 Portage Lake United Church budget.

Financial Report

Received in November

Pledge	\$9,941.00
Unpledged	\$1201.44
Loose Plate	\$5.00

Christmas Eve Service



December 24, 2025
5:30 pm

Fellowship with cookies and punch
following service



In Other News

Mark Your Calendar

**“Greening” of the Church
Sunday, December 7, 2025
Immediately following worship**

**Please join us for good fun while we
decorate the church for the season.**



Holiday Sale with a Side of Rummage

There was a little concern in October that we might have a little lighter inventory for our annual Holiday Sale, so a decision was made to add “A Side of Rummage.” Well, if you helped or stopped by on November 8th, you know we had plenty to sell. PLUC took in \$1218.50, a portion of which, will be donated to Angel Mission.

Thank you, once again, to Bobbie Dalquist for taking the lead in this effort and all those who helped with pricing, setting up, working during the sale, and cleaning up. And, of course, thanks to all who donated things (and then turned around and bought other people’s things).

Christmas Joy/Fund

submitted by Beth Smock, Office Manager

PLUC will be taking our “official” Christmas Joy/Fund offering on December 21st but gifts may be given at any time during December.

The following is information taken from the PC(USA) website.

Each year during the Advent and Christmas season, we lift up past, present, and future leaders of the church. God has blessed the church with incredible leadership in every time and place, but those leaders often need to be supported by their communities **as well**. This Offering provides support for Presbyterian church workers and their families in their time of need and leadership development and education for communities of color at Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color.

As always, Christmas Joy/Fund gifts will be divided equally between the UCC and Presbyterian (USA) denominations. Thank you for your thoughtful gifts.

2026 Stewardship Drive

The 2026 PLUC Stewardship Drive is almost over. Members and friends of PLUC have, as always, been generous in their support of the church and its mission. If you have not yet sent in your pledge for next year, please get it to the office by December 7, 2025. The Finance Committee will use the information regarding pledges for 2026 to finalize the 2026 budget which will be presented to the congregation at the February Congregational Meeting.

To All Fellowship Guild Members

Submitted by Judy Albee

Our weather belies the fact that we are already into the holiday season (Editor's Note: This was written prior to the blizzard.) However, if you've been out and about, the music, displays, and advertised sales can't be ignored.

As you turn the page on your calendar, be aware that we plan to continue with some of our usual activities and count on support for and from all PLUC members and friends.

The first scheduled activity for fellowship, besides Sunday services, is Tuesday, December 9th. We will meet in the private dining room in the Bluffs at 12:00 pm. Our task will be to fill holiday baskets for dedicated staff and friends/members we haven't seen for some time. There will be a list of basket suggestions for sign up on Sunday, December 7th.

It's a great way to share/get in the spirit!

Angel Mission

submitted by Sherry Middlemis-Brown

While Coat the Copper Country gears down a little (it continues with a dedicated rack in the store and response to school requests) and the main distribution days done, Angel Tree and Giving Tuesday are in full swing.

We receive half of our funding through donations given during Copper Shores Community Health Foundation's Giving Tuesday event that they call #GiveCopperCountry. Donations given to Copper Shores for Copper Country Angel Mission during the November 11 – December 2 event are "amplified" by the foundation through their special fund for this purpose. In prior years, the gifts that donors have given were augmented by about 40% through this match. Donations can be done

online at

<https://www.coppershores.org/giving-tuesday> or by check to Copper Shores with CC Angel Mission in the memo line or cash delivered to 400 Quincy Street, 5th floor, Hancock, MI 49930.

Generous people of the area are signing up to sponsor children as part of Angel Tree. We have about half of the expected children signed up as of mid-November, but we expect a surge in registrations during Thanksgiving week as parents start thinking about Christmas. We have nearly 100 children paired with sponsors already. The church has offered to sponsor several children, but if you wish to sponsor individually, please go to ccangelmission.org and select the sponsor link. We will take sponsors until we have all children paired with a sponsor, probably by December 6.

As the year comes to an end, everyone at Angel Mission is thankful for the huge support that we get from the church and its members. August until Christmas is a nearly overwhelming period of activities in our seasonal programs, but we also keep the free store and food pantry running throughout with the many volunteers that offer their time and talents. Please keep us all in your prayers as we work to provide for the needs of our community.

Angel Mission Tree

Submitted by Lois Jambekar

The Angel Mission has been a busy place this fall with the Coat the Copper Country Project just completed and the Christmas Angel Tree Project in full swing now. Last year over 200 children were helped by this project. Our church has been participating in this program for about 15 years, and our members have been generous in purchasing gifts for the children we support for this program. This year we are signed up to

support a family with four children and a family with one child. Please look over the list of items requested below and email me, Lois (loisjambekar@mail.com) what item(s) you would like provide for the project. There is also a sign up sheet on the table in the church lounge. Thanks for your support for this important project.

Age: 3 Two Wants: Gender: Male Painting or coloring supplies Toy cooking set
Two Needs: Any 3-4t clothes N/A Sizing Group: Toddlers 4T Footwear, Child
Additional information: He loves guitars, any books, cooking, his favorite color is blue, he likes any outdoor activities, he loves reptiles, dogs, and cats. He loves to paint or any arts and crafts.

Age: 16 Gender: Female Two Wants: All in one makeup kit Fake eyelash kit
Two Needs: Twin bedding set Skin care set Sizing Group: Ladies large Additional information:.. Footwear,

Age: 7 Gender: Female Two Wants: Art Set Bedroom decorations
Two Needs: Warm, waterproof mittens Twin size bedding Sizing Group: Child/Youth size L 10/12 Additional information:

Helping Hands

submitted by Beth Smock

We are about finished with another year of Helping Hands. All of your generous donations to this mission are greatly appreciated. We started the year with quite a few requests, mostly for gas. Toward the end we received more requests for help with food. I was a little worried about what would happen when SNAP benefits were delayed during the government shutdown but we only received one request that was

specifically due to SNAP. This person sent us a thank you card for the help we provided for her.

We have an unknown angel. Three times this year I have come in to work to find an envelop filled with 19 \$20.00 bills (\$480.00). There is no return address or name on the envelop but whoever you are, know you are an answer to prayers.

Beth's Buzz

Well, I have been thinking for awhile now about what I was going to write this year for my last "End of the Year" Beth's Buzz. As most of you know, I have decided to retire for good this time. I will be leaving my position here at the church in late May. I will also be leaving the Copper Country as I move back home.

This is be a major transition for me as I left Indiana in 1988. After stops in at the University of Nebraska at Kearney and the University of New York at Buffalo, I came to Suomi College in 1993, with 9 more years spent at Michigan Tech. The thirty-two years I have lived in Hancock or Houghton is the longest I have lived anywhere in my life. I have made many friends and had wonderful experiences in those years but now it is time for me to go home and spend some time with my family.

I know the next 6 months are going to go quickly but I look forward to saying goodbye to each and every one of you.

Very Bad Christmas Puns I Have Space to Use Up

Elves use what kind of money?
Jingle bills.

What did the wise men say after they offered up their gifts of gold and frankincense? Wait, there's myrrh

Chirstmas

Bible Triva



1. Where was Jesus born?

2. Who was Jesus' mother?

3. Who told Mary she would have a baby?

4. What were the gifts the Wise Men brought to Jesus?

5. Where did Jesus grow up?

6. Who baptized Jesus?

7. How many disciples did Jesus have?

8. What miracle did Jesus perform at the wedding in Cana?

9. What did Jesus use to feed 5,000 people?

10. What did Jesus do after He was crucified?

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 Church (USA)
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 49931
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 E-mail: office@pluc.org
 Website: www.pluc.org
 Pastor: Rev. Peter Norland
 Office Manager: Beth Smock

General Office Hours:
 8:30 AM – 11:00 AM – Mon-Fri

Pastor Office Hours:
 9:30 AM - 12:00 Noon or by appointment

December Volunteer Schedule				
<u>Date</u>	<u>Greeter</u>	<u>Reader</u>	<u>Prayer Writer</u>	<u>Coffee Fellowship</u>
12/07	Marla & David	Elizabeth	Carl	Mary & Lois
12/14	Lois	Nancy	Greg	Bobby & Sze Wenn
12/21	Beth	Ann	Jim	TBD
12/28	Judy	Dianne	Lois	TBD