



Magnolia Presbyterian Church

The UpLook

JANUARY 2026

WORSHIP SERVICE - Sundays @ 10:00am - in person and online
COMMUNION & DEACON OFFERING - Jan. 4th - 1st Sunday of the mo.
TWO-CAN SUNDAY - Jan. 11th - Food Donations for LSS
CROSSWAYS BIBLE STUDY - Meeting online Thursdays 7pm-8:45pm



PASTOR'S PONDERINGS

I am actually not a fan of New Year's resolutions. It might be because by March, I have failed every single one of them. It might be a psychological thing: if you know you're going to fail, why try? It's probably because I can't say no to white rice, football, or technology (the most often used subjects of my resolutions). So when it comes to New Year's resolutions, I just don't employ them.

While I am not a fan of New Year's resolutions, I am okay with the Spirit setting an intention for me for the year and we have a tradition of using star words. At the January 4 worship service, we will be invited to choose a star that has a word on it. We can contemplate the word that we choose, or that chooses us; pray about the word and converse with God, and at the end of the year, reflect on the ways that the word has manifested itself in our lives.

If you cannot be present at the January 4th worship service, you can pick up a star word in the weeks that follow.

"On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh." ~Matthew 2:11

These Star Words are a gift to us, like the gifts the Magi brought to Jesus and his family: unexpected, meaningful, and special. Will you embrace this gift?

Your not doing a New Year's resolution but embracing a star-word Pastor,
Paul
PS - Happy New Year!

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

January 2026



Please join me in thanking our Elders who are going off Session—Jeanette Prescott, and David King. Over the last three/six years respectively, they have given their time, talent, and energy in their ministry as Elders. As we greet the new year, we welcome back Laurie Ludwig, and Heather Dickenson for second terms on Session, Kathy Cohen and Brenda Wynsma for second terms after a few years off, and Lauren Rogers for her first term. Read on to find out more about our three new in-coming Elders:

Kathy Gilliland Cohen is serving her second term on Session and has been a member of Magnolia for 20+ years. She will be married to Neil for 50 years this August, and has two sons, Aaron (Deanna) with grandchildren Kierstyn, Caitlyn and Parker, and Zach (Alana) who live in Nashville. She is retired from 32 years as a school teacher with RUSD. Her hobbies include reading, traveling, spending time with family, and watching arena soccer. Kathy's favorite vacation destination is Kauai. If she had not been a teacher, she would have pursued a career in nursing. Kathy shares that she does not have a favorite book of the Bible and is "loving Crossways Bible Study." Her favorite thing about Magnolia is the sense of belonging and family. Kathy answered the call to be an Elder because "it seemed like the right time. I wanted to be involved with decisions with the church re-build and the future of MagPres." It is Kathy's hope that the congregation grows and says "I believe this can happen with a vital youth program."

Brenda Wynsma is serving her second term on Session after a few years in between, and has been a member of Magnolia for 50 years!! She has one son, Lucas who is 28. She is on the UPS Corporate Training Team. If not in this career, she would have loved to have been a Physical Therapist. Brenda's hobbies include dogs, traveling, hiking, camping, and foodie.

Session Highlights continued from page 2...

Her favorite vacation destinations are new places and she's looking forward to visiting the Smoky Mountains this summer. She is also looking forward to finishing visits to all 50 states, and then starting on Europe. She loves all stories of the important women in the Bible. When asked what her favorite thing about Magnolia, she says "Church family and music." She has served on the Worship Committee and has played the drums with the choir for decades!

She answered the call to serve on Session because "I want to see the church grow and be/stay relevant." She would like to see the empty church space built and occupied by people in the Family Promise (or similar) programs. "Low rental cost for them-a revenue stream for us – Win Win!!"

Lauren Rogers has been a member of Magnolia for 2 years and this is her first term on Session. She and her husband, Tom, recently celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary. They have two grown children and 3 grandsons. Lauren was born in Chicago and spent the last 20 years in Florida. Lauren is a retired RN manager. Had she not been in this career, she would have been a medical doctor, Bible teacher or small farm manager/owner. Lauren's hobbies include taking classes, crocheting baby blankets and scarves, meeting new people, working out outdoors (hiking, biking, swimming, and gardening). Her favorite vacation destinations are London, Paris and Big Sky Montana. Her favorite go-to book for prayer and adoration is Psalms, especially Psalm 91 verses 14-16. When asked what her favorite thing about Magnolia is, she says "the pastor and his sermons and the brothers and sisters in Christ who show so much genuine love for each other and the community. She sings in the choir, donates to and cooks for Family Promise, and participates in worship as liturgist. Lauren answered the call to serve on Session "I felt God was allowing me to spread my wings. I felt His trust and was encouraged by that." Her hope and vision for Magnolia's future is "for this church to grow, and focuses on aesthetics in an effort to reach out and grab the attention of passerby's and visitors in the community by improving the way the grounds and buildings look.

Melanie Nelson
Clerk of Session



CELEBRATING MEMBERSHIP MILESTONES 2026

Thirteen years ago, I started a yearly recognition of our long-time members celebrating milestone years (in five year spans), starting at 40 or more.

Please join me, as this tradition continues, in wishing these special members “well done good and faithful servant” for their priceless, loyal and unwavering contributions to our Magnolia family.

*Melanie Nelson
Clerk of Session*

*“Magnolia’s milestone members for 2026”
and their date of membership:*

<i>Lou Walker</i>	<i>60 years</i>	<i>September 25, 1966</i>
<i>Sharon DeLeal</i>	<i>50 years</i>	<i>November 28, 1976</i>
<i>Laurie Ludwig</i>	<i>45 years</i>	<i>May 31, 1981</i>
<i>Jody MacDonald</i>	<i>45 years</i>	<i>May 31, 1981</i>
<i>Kris Shea</i>	<i>45 years</i>	<i>May 31, 1981</i>
<i>Marshall Lee</i>	<i>40 years</i>	<i>March 2, 1986</i>
<i>Mary Lee</i>	<i>40 years</i>	<i>March 2, 1986</i>



Deacons Desk

I recently began the 2 year Crossways Bible study group. As we read through the Bible and study the lessons each week, I have been reminded often of God's plan for us and how He wants us to live.

One passage that struck me was this. " God made people to reflect His behavior pattern, to be "in His image," to be creatures who love. Their love is to flow out of God and to others. Love of God expresses itself in service to others."

Another passage talked about the covenant that God made with Israel at Mt. Sinai. "Although the covenant summoned each Israelite to a personal faith, it also summoned that person to a community responsibility. Each person was to live to serve God by serving others."

When we make time in our lives to serve others, we are drawn closer to God. We also live out God's plan for what He created us to do. Serving others is not meant to be just an occasional event in our lives, but rather woven into the fabric of our being for what we are called by God to do.

Serving others in both our church and in our community can take many forms. Serving others means living out our faith and doing what God intends for us as an act of love and obedience toward Him. It can take the form of many practical and even small acts. Donating food to a food pantry, working with young people, or helping to clean up on a Saturday at our church all reflect Christ's example and honor God. We each have the ability to meet the needs of those around us in tangible ways with humility and joy. Doing so shifts the focus from ourselves to others and allows opportunities to build relationships, strengthen our faith, and bring hope to the world.

Why it Matters (Biblical Basis)

Jesus' Example: Jesus came to serve, not be served (Matthew 20:28).

- Living Out Faith: It's a tangible way to live out the Gospel, not just worship on Sundays (1 Peter 4:10, Acts 20:35).
- Honoring God: Serving the "least of these" is serving Jesus (Matthew 25:40).
- Spiritual Growth: It fosters humility, empathy, joy, and a deeper connection to God (Philippians 2:3-4)

As we move into the New Year of 2026, let each of us strive to be more intentional with how we live each day and be empowered to serve others both in our church and our community.

Doing so enriches our lives and reflects God's love in the world.

Happy New Year to all. May the year ahead be one full of joy and love shared with those around us.

~ Beth Zarecki- Deacon

SUNDAY SCHOOL

for children in grades Kindergarten through 5th grade is offered In-Person and via Zoom during our 10:00 a.m. worship service. In-person children will meet in Rm 8 and Nursery in Rm 9 at 10:20 a.m. To join the fun via Zoom simply sign in to Zoom and use the Meeting ID: 259885602 and the Password 7200



Sunday School includes: Bible lessons, Songs, crafts, and play time.

JANUARY MEMORY VERSE: JOHN 3:16

God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him won't perish but will have eternal life.

SHORTENED PASSAGE:

God so loved the world that he gave his only Son.



MAGPRES YOUTH 2025

RISE AGAINST HUNGER - MEAL DELIVERY UPDATE

Hello fellow meal packers! I have received the good news that the 10,000 meals that we all packed in September have shipped to Timor-Leste which is located on the eastern half of the Timor island, just north of Australia, and is made up of 14 municipalities. The World Food Program identifies Timor-Leste as a hunger hotspot due to climate related impacts on agricultural production. The Global Hunger Index, which assesses food insecurity based on indicators that measure undernourishment and undernutrition, categorizes Timor-Leste as having a "serious" level of hunger. The meals we packaged will ensure that 47 school children have access to the consistent nourishment they need to live healthy lives in 2026, while also supporting the opportunity to receive an education that will serve their families for years to come.

~ Heather Dickenson, FOM

REGULAR MEETINGS OF THE CHURCH



CHILDREN / YOUTH PERMISSION FORMS

Do you have a child/youth? We are accepting updated Student Permission forms for the 2025-2026 school year. To download a form please visit www.magpres.com/permission

Contact Michelle Knopf or Jason Robinson if you have any questions

CHOIR PRACTICE: Meets Wednesdays at 7:00pm in the choir room

SCOUT TROOP 16: Meets Monday nights at 6:45pm in the Fireside Room. Our Charter Organization Rep is Tim Lewis (webelewis@gmail.com).

YOUTH GROUP: meets on Sunday from 11:30-1:30 in the Youth Room.

SUNDAY SCHOOL: Sunday School for children in grades Kindergarten thru 5th grade is offered during our 10am worship service in-person in Room 8 and via Zoom. Nursery is in Room 9. If you would like to connect on zoom, please use this link: **Meeting ID 559885602 Password:7200**

ACCESS WORSHIP ONLINE: You can participate in worship by going to magpres.com/watch or visiting our Facebook page (facebook.com/magpres). *Services are archived for you to watch later (or again!)*

STANDING ANNOUNCEMENTS

TWO-CAN SUNDAY: On every 2nd Sunday of the month, we bring 2 Cans or Boxes of food to be donated to Lutheran Social Services of Southern California to help feed hungry neighbors in our community. Keep up the good work as we continue loving our neighbors who are hungry!

STATER BROS. GIFT CARDS: Gift cards in the amounts of \$25, \$50, and \$100 are available to purchase in the church office. Monday - Thursday, 9:00am - 3:00pm (closed 12-1pm). Whether you are buying as a gift or to do your weekly grocery shopping, the church receives 5% of every sale! How nice--give twice!

CHURCH DIRECTORIES: Instructions on downloading the app to our "Instant Church Directory" (great way to keep up with birthdays and anniversaries in our church family!)

As always - if your address, phone, or email changes, let us know at church@magpres.com

DEACONS OFFERING: The first Sunday of every month, we collect the DEACONS OFFERING. This is a dedicated offering to help friends and family of MagPres members experiencing hardship. Your gift, large or small, is a gift of kindness.

COMMUNION: First Sunday of every month, communion is served as a part of the worship service. For those worshipping via Zoom, feel free to gather your own "bread & cup" elements at home and join in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper with the whole congregation.

DAILY DEVOTIONAL: *Our Daily Bread* quarterly booklets are available in the Worship Center foyer (on the Welcome Table) and in the church office. Pick one up for yourself and for a friend or neighbor.

...making fully formed followers of Jesus Christ

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

7200 Magnolia Avenue
Riverside, CA 92504-3829
Phone: 951-684-7200
Email: church@magpres.com
Website: www.magpres.com
Worship Service 10am Sun.
Church Office Hours
Mon-Thurs 9:00am-3:00pm
Closed 12-1pm Lunch
Closed Friday



**Magnolia Presbyterian
Church Staff**

The Rev. Paul Knopf
Pastor

Lisa Gulino
Administrative Assistant

John Wright
Choral Director

Cynthia Wright
Pianist/Accompanist

Allison Robinson
Nursery Attendant

Jaeson Robinson
Youth Leader

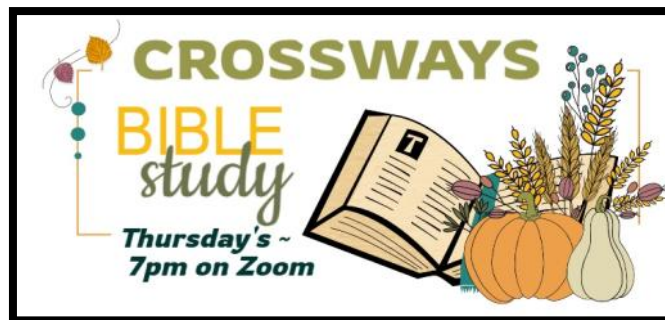
Robbie Yates,
Audio-Video Tech

Nicholas French,
Musician

Anna Tran,
Musician

Michelle Knopf,
CE Leader

Happy New Year Happy New Year Happy New Year



SUNDAY ~ JANUARY 11th

Every 2nd Sunday of the month MagPres collects non-perishable food donations for Lutheran Social Services local food distribution.

*We donated 835 items in December!
Thank you all for your generosity!*



Donations may be dropped off during Sunday Service or during the church office hours Mon-Thur.

MagPres January 2026 Calendar

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
28	29	30	31	1	2	3
10am - Worship Service 10:15am - Sunday School	Pastor Paul Off 6:45pm - Scouts - Troop 16		Office Closed-New Year's Eve	Office Closed-New Year's Day	Office Closed 5pm - EEEAC	9:30am - EEEAC
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
10am - Communion Sunday 10am - Deacon Offering 10am - Worship Service 10:15am - Sunday School	6:45pm - Scouts - Troop 16	6pm - CE Cmte. 6:30pm - FOM Cmte. 7pm - BaG Cmte. 7pm - Mission Cmte.	7pm - Choir Rehearsal	7pm - Crossways Bible Study	Office Closed 5pm - EEEAC	9:30am - EEEAC 4pm - Path of Life Meal Prep
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
10am - TWO-CAN Sunday 10am - Worship Service 10:15am - Sunday School	6:45pm - Scouts - Troop 16	6pm - Worship Cmte 7pm - Stew_Fin Cmte	7pm - Choir Rehearsal	9am UpLook Mat'ls Due 7pm - Crossways Bible Study	Office Closed 5pm - EEEAC	9:30am - EEEAC
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
10am - Worship Service 10:15am - Sunday School	6:45pm - Scouts - Troop 16	7pm - Deacon Meeting	Session Mat'ls Due 9am 7pm - Choir Rehearsal	7pm - Crossways Bible Study	Office Closed 5pm - EEEAC	9:30am - EEEAC
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
10am - Worship Service 10:15am - Sunday School	6:45pm - Scouts - Troop 16	7pm - Session Meeting	7pm - Choir Rehearsal	7pm - Crossways Bible Study	Office Closed 5pm - EEEAC	9:30am - EEEAC

JANUARY PRAYER CALENDAR

SUN MON TUE WED THUR FRI SAT



				1 The Gold Family	2 The Gonzalez Family	3 The Goulet- Perez Family
4 Riverside Fire Dept.	5 Ilene Gradney	6 Gary & Edith Grant	7 Kam & Suzanne Griffen	8 Everal Hathaway	9 Tom & Marti Hendrix	10 Patty Hernandez
11 Worship Committee	12 The Holden/ Campos Family	13 Richard & Jeanne Hood	14 Tom & Julie Hutchinson	15 John & Connie Jackson	16 Barbara Johnson	17 Dave & Mary Josselyn
18 Victoria Presby. Church	19 The Keovilay Family	20 David & Claudia King	21 Dick & Bonnie Kirby	22 The Knopf Family	23 The Lacy Family	24 James & Ann Laudermilk
25 Path of Life	26 Michelle Laudermilk	27 Ryan Laudermilk	28 Ben Lee	29 Marshall & Mary Lee	30 Sam Lee	31 Bob & Lee Lewis

BIRTHDAYS

1st: Flora Livingstone
 2nd: Margie Watson I
 4th: James Walters / Krysten Stiffler
 6th Precious Mabena
 8th Bethany Na / Chris Nettles /
 Cynthia Spring-Pearson
 13th Clarke Prescott
 14th Steve McKee / Wayne Andrew
 Anna Brandenberger / Leah French
 15th James, Michlle, Ryan Laudermilk
 17th Maddy Gipson / Arlo Sachs

18th Lance Alford
 19th Deanna Lacy
 20th Lowell Lacy / Makenzie Nelson
 22nd Sherry Nettles
 23rd Donna Nelson
 28th Zach Ni
 29th Laurie Ludwig / Tammy Duncan
 30th Rick Allert

ANNIVERSARIES

15th Thomas & Cherylyn Thornton
 17th Mel & Rhonda Rehnke