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Northern Great Lakes Synod Youth Ministry Spotlight

Inspired to Share Faith - a story about Maggie

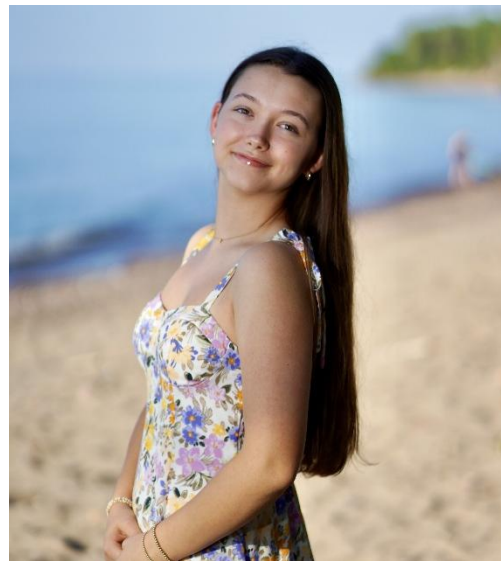
When Maggie Henquinet returned home from spending a week at Fortune Lake Lutheran Camp in the summer of 2022, she felt inspired and motivated to share her faith with others. She noticed that the Sunday School program at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Houghton, MI had not started back up since the Covid pandemic brought it to a halt in 2020, and asked how she could help. Maggie soon started cleaning out the Sunday School room that had turned into a storage space and got ready to welcome the youngest members of Good Shepherd to learn about God's love for all people.

Using fond memories of her own Sunday School experience, Maggie began developing a curriculum to use with her new group of learners. Maggie's primary goal was to show the kids at Good Shepherd the same type of welcome and acceptance she experienced at Fortune Lake, so they could feel supported to explore their own faith. Now on Sunday mornings and throughout the week, kids who know Maggie from Sunday School run up to greet her at church and when they recognize her out in the community.

Teaching Sunday School helped Maggie learn patience and empathy, which will help her as she pursues a medical degree. It has also provided a way for her to connect with older generations in the church. Occasionally the Sunday School

kids make cards, which Maggie delivers to congregation members in a local nursing home.

In addition to leading Good Shepherd's Sunday School program, Maggie participates in youth group activities within the Copper Country Conference. Highlights for her include experiencing the 2024 ELCA Youth Gathering in New Orleans, participating in a service-learning trip to Niagara Falls, and backpacking in the mountains through a program at Christikon Lutheran Bible Camp in Montana. Above all, the friendships and community building with other Christians stand out as the most memorable parts of the trips.



Over the past few years, the Sunday School program at Good Shepherd has grown under the leadership of Maggie and inspired a new group of young leaders. As Maggie prepares to enter her freshman year at St. Olaf College, she is confident in the middle and high school leaders that she has trained to continue running the Sunday School program at Good Shepherd. And we are confident that wherever Maggie ends up, she will continue to share God's love and radical welcome with everyone she meets!