

The Messenger

February 2024



MESSIAH
LUTHERAN CHURCH

Our Vision: To forever change lives through the Gospel of Jesus by becoming an equipping, empowering, and mobilizing church in our community that displays the love of Christ and connects with people of all walks of life through worship, communion, service, fellowship, and compassion, led by the Holy Spirit and focused on the Great Commission (Mt 28.18-20).

Messiah Lutheran Church

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Our Mission

To help people grow a faith in Jesus Christ that works in real life.

Our Vision

To forever change lives through the Gospel of Jesus by becoming an equipping, empowering, and mobilizing church in our community that displays the love of Christ and connects with people of all walks of life through worship, communion, service, fellowship, and compassion, led by the Holy Spirit and focused on the Great Commission (Mt 28.18-20).

Our Values for Ministry

- To lift high in prayer the name of Jesus Christ in all we say and do;
- to enable all persons to experience a worshipful relationship with Jesus Christ;
- to nurture and empower all persons to be disciples through a small group centered ministry that includes learning, service, fellowship, and spiritual growth;
- to help every Christian discover her/his spiritual gifts for ministry;
- to assist in the care of a hurting world.

CONGREGATIONAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Sunday, February 4: Epiphany 5

9:00 AM – Traditional w/Communion

10:30 AM – Contemporary w/Communion

Sunday, February 11: Transfiguration of our Lord

9:00 AM – Traditional w/Communion

10:30 AM – Contemporary w/Communion

Wednesday, February 14, Ash Wednesday

6:00-10:00 AM – Drive Thru Ashes

6:00 PM – Pasta Dinner in Satre Hall (gym)

7:00 PM – Worship w/Ashes and Communion

Sunday, February 18: Lent 1

9:00 AM – Traditional w/Communion

10:30 AM – Contemporary w/Communion

Wednesday, February 21

6:00-6:45 PM – Soup Supper

6:45-8:00 PM – Group

Sunday, February 25: Lent 2

9:00 AM – Traditional w/Communion

10:30 AM – Contemporary w/Communion

Wednesday, February 28th

Addison Agen Concert 7:00 PM



Pr. Tim's News

MEMBERSHIP – What does church membership mean? Does it even matter?

In light of the decline of Christianity in the United States, and the emergence of spirituality minus church (i.e. nature worship), membership questions have been asked a lot lately. Jesus doesn't say anything about church membership! In fact, the Bible doesn't speak directly to it at all. So, what's the big deal?

Did you know that in the ELCA, there are five, yes FIVE (5) types of membership? They're not all the same either. 1) baptized members, 2) confirmed members, 3) voting members, 4) associate members, and 5) seasonal members?

Legally speaking, voting membership is critical because decisions we make as a congregation or as a synod or national church are lawfully binding as a state-chartered organization. Messiah Lutheran Church's constitution, which mimics (by requirement) the ELCA constitution, defines voting membership as: "confirmed members, that during the current or preceding calendar year, shall have communed in this congregation and shall have made a contribution of record to this congregation."

That means in addition to receiving communion once in the past calendar year, one must also make a monetary contribution directly to Messiah, no amount stipulated, with your name attached to the donation...either in an envelope, a check, or an online or digitally trackable donation, etc. Not that challenging or difficult, right?

Way back in the 90's and early 00's, there was an upwelling around the idea of "membership vs. discipleship."

In the past, "*good church members*" could be defined as those who:

Attend regularly (every week).

Serve in some capacity.

Give consistently and sacrificially.

And the really committed ones lead in some way.

Church membership was essentially compared to a "club" membership. Membership implies obligation. Members are "obligated" to pay dues (offerings), which results in the

members expecting services at their disposal and the right to demand what happens at the club. Because they pay their dues, the staff works for them, and the clergy role is to meet the needs and demands of the members. When the “preferences” of church members become more important than the passion for sharing the gospel, the church has become more like a “club.” Today we might call it a church “consumerism.”

Thom S. Rainer, founder and CEO of Church Answers, offers the following list of statements that are warning signs a church is becoming a country club. (You can find the full article here: <https://churchanswers.com/blog/ten-signs-that-your-church-members-think-the-church-is-a-country-club/>).

1. “I am not getting fed.” 2. “I am not getting my needs met.” 3. “I pay the bills of the church.” 4. “I don’t like the way our church budget is spent.” 5. “I don’t like the music style.” 6. “I don’t like the order of worship.” 7. “I am leaving the church because I want a better youth/children’s program for my children.” 8. “I am mad because I didn’t get to vote on it.” 9. “I think the pastor makes too much.” 10. “I don’t like the changes these new members are bringing.”

On the other hand, “*discipleship*” is described as following Jesus. Disciple literally means being a student or learner, but being a disciple of Christ figuratively means becoming more Christ-like...denying ourselves, picking up our cross, and following Jesus (Mk 8.34). Loving like Jesus (Jn 14.34-5). Giving of our whole being and our whole selves like Jesus (the cross).

Disciples usually do some of the same things *as good church members*... serve, attend, and give. However, those things are **secondary** to their life in Christ, not primary. The difference is that these actions flow out of their discipleship to Jesus, not their commitment to a church or a pastor, and certainly not because they “have” to.

Another way of saying this is that discipleship is a “way of life.” It’s more than just one hour of worship on Sunday morning. It should affect the other 167 hours of the week in our lives. Our lives should flow from that worship.

It’s also more than just living “good” lives or being “good” people. Jesus doesn’t want good people! Yes, I said and believe that! The church is a group of people (sinners) saved by grace (a gift). Church is a community of disciples (followers) who are intent on making a difference in the community. If faith really matters, then we should make a difference in our community and in peoples’ lives!

continued on next page

Pr Tim continued

So, what do you think? What is a church member to you? Does it matter? How do you feel about the distinction made between membership vs discipleship? What questions does this discussion raise for you?

More importantly, what can our community of faith learn and how can we grow from this conversation to improve the work of our mission to help people grow a faith in Jesus Christ that works in real life?" I look forward to hearing responses.

May God's Spirit continue to guide Messiah Lutheran Church as we look to help people grow a faith in Jesus Christ that works in real life, in our community and around the world.

In Christ's love, Pr. Tim Graham



Pr. Brian

I remember stepping into Messiah for the first time a few years ago. It was a week after I finished my last pastorate. And I really thought it was my last. All I've ever wanted to do is be a pastor. My hero growing up was my Episcopal Priest. In the, "What do you want to be when you grow up?" conversations, I always answered, "Pastor." Sometimes I also said professional baseball player, but I don't think I'm well-suited for

that job. I'm ridiculously slow, and I could never hit the curve. Yes, being a pastor fits me much better. But I thought I was done. I loved my work as a hospital chaplain but grieved the loss of my dream. Being a pastor hasn't been an easy road for me, but I still grieved, longing to walk alongside a congregation again and learn to follow Jesus together. I think God just knew I needed some time to heal.

All my emotions swelled as I looked across the congregation who gathered Sunday afternoon to offer my thanks and the benediction at the installation service. I could barely get the words out. It was like all I ever dreamed about came rushing toward me at once, and God's loving presence overwhelmed me. So I just let the tears come, and it was so healing. I'm not sure I have words adequate to express what a gift that service was. Thank you. I am honored and grateful for the opportunity to serve alongside you, the people of Messiah Lutheran Church.

Thank you for entrusting me with this call to serve you as pastor. Thank you for your immeasurable welcome to my family and me.

I look forward to many years of following Jesus together ahead.

Thank you.

PASTOR BRIAN



WORSHIP & MUSIC

A Springtime Journey

This month we begin the season of Lent. The word ‘Lent’ comes from the Middle English word ‘lente’, meaning “springtime,” which descends from the Old English ‘lencten’. The early church used the seven weeks preceding Easter as a time of instruction for those converts preparing for baptism, and previously-baptized Christians were called to share this springtime (“Lenten”) journey with them by increased fasting and prayer.

Hymnwriter Sylvia G. Dunstan describes this journey as “the road where faith is found.” May this hymn be our prayer in our journey through Lent.

Bless now, O God, the journey that all your children make,
the path through noise and silence, the way of give and take.
The trail is found in desert and winds the mountain round,
then leads beside still waters, the road where faith is found.

Bless sojourners and pilgrims who share this winding way;
your hope burns through the terrors, your love sustains the day.
We yearn for holy freedom while often we are bound;
together we are seeking the road where faith is found.

Divine eternal lover, you meet us on the road.
We wait for lands of promise where milk and honey flow,
but waiting not for places, you meet us all around.
Our covenant is written on roads, as faith is found.

We have two special holy days in our worship this month. The first one falls on Sunday, February 11, when we recall the transfiguration of Jesus on the mountain before his journey to Jerusalem and the cross. Services are at 9:00 and 10:30 a.m.

Our second special holy day is Ash Wednesday on Valentine’s Day, February 14. Please join us that evening at 7:00 for our service that includes prayers of repentance, imposition of ashes, and Holy Communion. We pray that this first step in your lenten journey may lead you on to deeper experiences on the road where faith is found.

Peace be with you, and blessings to all in your lenten journey.

Soli Deo gloria!—Glory to God alone! *Stan Engle*

WORSHIP

Ash Wednesday & Other Wednesdays in Lent

Ash Wednesdays begins our Lenten journey to Easter...40 days, not including Sundays, until we celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ. And so much happens in that time.

We need reservations for:

Ash Wednesday Supper to plan for food properly

Attendance at the Lenten studies to prepare enough materials in advance.

Ash Wednesday, February 14th

Pasta Supper 6:00 PM – Ziano's Mostaccioli, Salad, Bread sticks, Brownies
(Please **RSVP** so we can plan for food properly)

Worship 7:00 PM – Imposition of Ashes and Communion

Wednesday in Lent 1, February 21st

Soup Supper 6:00 PM – Variety of soups, salad, bread sticks

Group Discussion 6:45 PM

Wednesday in Lent 2, February 28th – Addison Agen Concert, 7:00 PM

NO Soup Supper or Group Discussion

Wednesday in Lent 3, March 6th

Soup Supper 6:00 PM – Variety of soups, salad, bread sticks

Group Discussion 6:45 PM

Wednesday in Lent 4, March 13th

Soup Supper 6:00 PM – Variety of soups, salad, bread sticks

Group Discussion 6:45 PM

Wednesday in Lent 5, March 20th

Soup Supper 6:00 PM – Variety of soups, salad, bread sticks

Group Discussion 6:45 PM

GROWTH & LEARNING

Journey At Messiah (JAM)

The Journey is Messiah's children's ministry and JAM Time is our Sunday School for ages 3 through 6th grade. Journey meets Sunday mornings during the 10:30 worship service in Childcare Rooms 6, 7, and 8 in the West Childcare hallway.

In January the Journey learned about the Wedding at Cana and began our unit on the Good Samaritan/Greatest Commandment. In February we will finish our lessons on the Good Samaritan/Greatest Commandment, then talk about the Beatitudes and Lazarus.

EDGE

- EDGE Bible Study will meet on Sundays at 10:30 AM in the Library.
- EDGE/CIA will meet for pizza lunch and hangout on Sunday, February 11, for a Super-bowl Party.

CIA

- EDGE/CIA will meet for pizza lunch and hangout on Sunday, February 11, for a Super-bowl Party.
- Confirmation Class (CIA only) Sunday, February 18, after the 10:30 service until 3:00 PM.
- CIA/PULSE LOMIK Toboggan Retreat Saturday, February 24 – Sunday, February 25.

PULSE

- PULSE meets Sundays, February 4 and 18, 4:00-6:00 PM.
- CIA/PULSE LOMIK Toboggan Retreat Saturday, February 24 – Sunday, February 25.

Chili Cook-off on Sunday, February 4

Messiah's Chili Cook-off is back on Sunday, February 4! Beginning at noon we will be tasting different chilis, made by many of Messiah's friends and family, who shall remain unknown until the time of the results! While we are tasting and enjoying fellowship, we will also be playing a little bingo...for prizes! All funds raised will help offset families' costs for upcoming CIA mission trip to Kenosha and our high school group attending the ELCA

Youth Gathering in New Orleans. In order for this to be a success we need chilis! If you have a good recipe and are willing to make a crockpot full of your world-famous chili, it would be appreciated. Please contact Heidi with any questions at heidi@messiahlc.com.



Sign your chili up at the following link: <https://forms.gle/Wh6sx7FPg8PcQCGq8> or use the QR code.

Sunday, February 11 - Noisy Offering

Noisy Offering will be on Sunday, February 11, at both services. Monies from Noisy Offering will be going towards helping offset students' travel costs for the 2024 CIA Mission Trip to Kenosha and to the ELCA Youth Gathering.

WinterJAM 2024 Thursday, February 15

Youth grades 7 and up - meet us at the Coliseum on Thursday, February 15, for Winter-JAM! No tickets required, just a \$15 (cash only) donation at the door. Doors open at 6:00 PM. Please let Heidi know at heidi@messiahlc.com if your student is coming.

Sunday, February 18 - Donut Sunday

As part of our fundraising efforts for the ELCA Gathering in July 2024, we will have Donut Sunday on February 18. Meet us in the Narthex to grab some coffee and some breakfast, before or after service. And stay and visit with us! Thanks to a Thrivent Action Team, 100% of all donations will go towards offsetting students' travel costs.

CIA & PULSE Toboggan Weekend Retreat February 24-25

CIA and PULSE youth groups will be going on a Lutherwald Toboggan Retreat! We'll leave Messiah and head up to Camp Lutherwald on Saturday, February 24, at 11:00 AM. Their staff will have some activities in the afternoon for us then we'll head to Pokagon State Park for the rest of the afternoon. We'll return to Lutherwald for dinner and more activities. Sunday morning we'll have devotions and breakfast then head home. We should get back to church around 10:30 or 11:00 AM. There will be no Youth House for EDGE, CIA, or

GROWTH & LEARNING (*cont*)

PULSE that Sunday (the adults will need to recoup! LOL!). I need to reserve our spots by February 15 so please RSVP by February 14.

Student Ministries Spring Rummage Sale in April!

More information coming soon! Tell your friends & neighbors ... start going through your closets and saving your "stuff" for the Rummage Sale! All proceeds will go towards the summer trips for the youth.

VBS 2024 Save the Date!!

Jesus gives us the most amazing reason to party! That's why we believe the Gospel of Jesus is the best news ever. Celebrate the good news of Jesus joining us in this summer 's VBS Start the Party! We'll learn about friendship, belonging, forgiveness, abundant life, and purpose through worship, games, crafts, dancing, and lots and lots of fun! Save the date for VBS this summer for the week of June 3, 6:00-8:00 PM!

Messiah Student Ministries

Watch emails and Messenger for student ministry information. If you know a student who would like to participate in EDGE, CIA, or PULSE, please let Heidi know. Weekly correspondence throughout the year is done through emails also.

Youth Events in January

Pulse

PULSE is our youth group for those currently in grades 9-12.

- Sunday, February 4 –
Chili Cook-off, noon -2:00 PM Satre Hall (gym)
PULSE Youth House, 4:00-6:00 PM
- Sunday, February 11 – NO PULSE (Superbowl Sunday)

- Thursday, February 15 – WinterJAM, 6:00 PM
- Sunday, February 18 – Youth House, 4:00-6:00 PM
- Saturday, February 24 - Sunday February 25 – LOMIK Toboggan Retreat (CIA/PULSE)
- Sunday, February 26 – No PULSE
- Sunday, March 3 – PULSE Youth House, 4:00-6:00 PM

CIA

CIA is our youth group for those currently in grades 7 and 8. CIA stands for Confirmands in Action. We call it this because these are the years when the kids go through classes to prepare them for Confirmation in the Fall of their Freshman year.

- Sunday, February 4 –
Chili Cook-off, 12:00-2:00 PM Satre Hall (gym)
NO YOUTH HOUSE
- Sunday, February 11 – EDGE/CIA Youth House 12:00-2:00 PM Superbowl Party
- Thursday, February 15 – WinterJAM, 6:00 PM
- Sunday, February 18 – Confirmation Class, 12:00-3:00 PM
- Saturday, February 24 – Sunday, February 25 – LOMIK Toboggan Retreat (CIA/PULSE)
- Sunday, February 26 – NO YOUTH HOUSE

EDGE

EDGE is our youth group for those students currently in grades 5 and 6. Why EDGE? Because these students are riding on the edge of being kids and teenagers! EDGE is still part of our Journey (children’s Sunday School program) and has their own Bible study on Sundays during the 10:30 AM service in Room 8 (west hallway of childcare.)

- Sunday, February 4 –
EDGE Bible Study, 10:30 – The Beatitudes
Chili Cook-off, noon-2 PM. Satre Hall (gym)
NO YOUTH HOUSE
- Sunday, February 11 –
EDGE Bible Study, 10:30 AM – House Upon the Rock
EDGE/CIA Youth House 12:00-2:00 PM Superbowl Party

GROWTH & LEARNING *(cont)*

- Sunday, February 18 –
EDGE Bible Study, 10:30 AM – Jesus Meets the Children
NO EDGE YOUTH HOUSE
- Sunday, February 26 –
EDGE Bible Study, 10:30 AM – Good Samaritan
NO YOUTH HOUSE

Adult Bible Studies

As we approach the Lenten season, there will be several changes to our regular schedule. Here are the upcoming schedule for Messiah's various Bible studies:

Tuesday Quest, 9:00 AM: This group will continue meeting throughout the Lenten season and will follow the Lenten discussion from our Soup Supper Wednesdays.

Wednesday, 10:00 AM: This group will meet through Wednesday, February 7th, and then be on pause until after the Lenten season.

Thursday, 10:00 AM: This group will meet on Thursday, February 8th and then pause until after the Lenten season. However, we will NOT meet on February 1st.

Thursday Good News Study Group, 6:30 PM: This group will meet through Thursday February 8th, and then pause until after the Lenten season. However, we will NOT meet on February 1st.

After Easter, Pastor Dave Williamson will be leading the Good News Study Group in an Adult Study titled: "FORGIVENESS, GOD'S AND OURS." We will meet on Thursdays from 6:30-7:30 PM beginning on April 11th. We will look at Bible passages as well as miraculous examples of forgiveness in history. PLEASE CONSIDER JOINING US!!

NO EXPERIENCE OR PREVIOUS KNOWLEDGE NECESSARY! If you have an interest in deepening your faith and understanding with the others seeking the same, please prayerfully consider joining us. Please send an email to pastortim@messiahlc.com.

Messiah Child Care and Preschool News

Hello February! This is the month of love and friendships! This is also Black History month; be sure to check out the fun facts that will be listed here and there on the whiteboard in the office! During the month of February, classrooms will be learning about presidents, acts of kindness, and animals that hibernate. They will also be learning about the heart shape, the number six, and the color pink. Be sure to check with your child's teacher to see if they have any Valentine-themed parties planned. :)

Teacher Feature

Our teacher feature this month is Miss Cali! Miss Cali is one of our fabulous floaters! Miss Cali has been with Messiah Childcare for a little over a year but has been involved with Messiah Church for quite a while. Her favorite color is Aqua blue and her favorite food is spaghetti. In her spare time she likes to color, draw, or paint. If you see Miss Cali in the hallways, be sure to wave her a hello!

Upcoming Dates

February 14th: Valentine's Day (be sure to check with your child's teacher to see if they have any parties planned).

Riddle Corner

Q: I am tall when I am young and I am short when I am old; what am I? A: A candle

Bible Verse of the Month

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths.” -*Proverbs 3:5-6*

—Portia Howard, Director

Woman to Woman

February 2024

I am thankful, loving Father,

1. that you are always with me. 5¢
2. for showing me the way to live. 25¢
3. for your constant presence through all the changes of life. 10¢
4. for your guidance and courage in times of despair. 10¢
5. for the blessings you have bestowed on us today. 5¢
6. for God's warmth and light in the presence of Jesus. 10¢
7. for your gift of forgiveness. Is there someone in my life I need to forgive? Help me, Lord. 10¢
8. for the laundry I have to do and I pray for those who have no clothes. 5¢
9. for the gift of contentment. Help me, Lord. I have so much. 15¢
10. for Pastor Tim, Pastor Brian, and all Messiah staff. I pray they seek your way always. 25¢
11. for giving us Jesus to teach us how to live in union with you. 20¢
12. for providing care and love to my family and friends. 25¢
13. for your strength and peace as we weather the challenges and setbacks of our ever-changing lives. 5¢
14. for this Ash Wednesday as we look to Jesus Christ and his love for us in eternal life. 25¢
15. Help me to open my mind to you so that you can fill it with faith. 20¢
16. that I have so much to give. Help me to remember that I have more than most people. 10¢
17. for giving me the faith to trust your purpose for my life. 25¢
18. for the trust we have in you to carry out your will. 20¢
19. Stir me Lord, to do your will. 25¢
20. for your peace which passes all understanding. 10¢
21. for our troops, at home and abroad. Give them strength and courage. 5¢
22. for this Lenten season to lift our love and faithfulness to you always. 25¢
23. for your great faithfulness to me. 20¢
24. that you grant me grace sufficient for the day. 10¢
25. for being there for those who are hurting physically, mentally, or emotionally. Let them know your presence. 5¢
26. for counting us always precious in your sight. 25¢
27. for the gift of the cross — reminding me of the price you paid for me. 15¢
28. for your help in adopting your values as our own. 10¢
29. that you receive me into the healing arms of your love, Lord. 25¢

Please send or bring offering to church on February 25.

CARE & NURTURE

From the Parish Health Ministry

Do you need something to laugh at? Is the weather taxing your sense of humor? Have you been cooped up in the house for just a bit too long? Maybe it is time to laugh!

It's no joke that laughter really does relieve stress and does us good. God created laughter in God's wisdom. Just like our bodies sweat when it is heated up — laughing is similar. When something strikes us as funny, we reflexively smile or laugh.

A good sense of humor cannot cure all of our ailments, but there are many benefits to a good laugh. When we start to laugh, it doesn't just lighten our loads mentally but induces physical changes in our bodies as well.

Laughter increases our intake of oxygen stimulating our heart, lungs, and muscles and increases endorphins in our brains. It increases and then decreases our heart rate and blood pressure resulting in a good, relaxed feeling. Because laughter stimulates our circulation and muscle relaxation, some of the physical symptoms of stress are reduced.

Over the long term, laughter improves our immune system and can relieve pain. It makes it easier to cope with difficult situations as well as difficult people and improve our overall mood.

God has been telling us for centuries "A cheerful heart is good medicine, but a crushed spirit dries up the bones." (Proverbs 17:22)

Give it a try — turn up the corners of your mouth into smile and give a little laugh — even if it feels a little forced. Tell a silly knock-knock joke at dinner with your family. Now evaluate how you feel. Are you more relaxed? Are you less tense? That is the natural wonder of laughter at work.

Messiah Parish Nurses

CARE & NURTURE *(cont)*

Prayer List

Please submit names to karla@messiahlc.com or call the church office at (260) 485-8716. Names will remain on the prayer list for one month. If you would like to join the prayer chain, please let Karla know by email or calling the office.

For members and friends of the congregation:

Barb Franklin and family on the death of her mother, Nancy J. Berry
Sharon Clark
Lark Keltner and family on the death of her father, Al Tangeman
Phyllis Mort
Anita Ebert
Jan Modesitt
Chris Waldron
Stephanie Welbaum
Reggie & Diana Shull
Jaclynn Studebaker (*daughter of Bill & Charnell Marker*)
Marcus Black (*son of Eric & Joyce Black*)

For the men and women of our Armed Services:

Braxtyn Weidler (*great-nephew of Eric & Joyce Black*)
Preston Kerlegrand (*grandson of Garry & Jean Pook*)
Daniel Herschberger (*grandson of Sharon Clark*)
Luke Hunter (*grandson of Stan & Pam Engle, cousin of Katie*)
Juan Astorga (*nephew of Bill & Charnell Marker*)
Grace Marker (*niece of Bill & Charnell Marker*)
Cayla Ort (*daughter of Cara Ort*)
Dirk Herschberger (*grandson of Sharon Clark*)
Mark Chase (*son-in-law of Matt & Denise Gibbons*)
Bailey Marker (*niece of Bill & Charnell Marker*)
Ike Studebaker (*husband of Jackie Studebaker*)



OUTREACH & IN TOUCH

Food Bank News

Thank you for your continued support of Maplewood Mennonite, Purdue Fort Wayne, and Faith & Light Food Pantries. Items especially needed this month are pancake mix, syrup, cereal, canned meats, boxed dinners, pasta sauce, and dry beans. The Pantries are always in need of canned vegetables, canned fruits, canned meats, peanut butter, cereal, pancake mix, syrup, toothpaste, bar soap, feminine hygiene products, adult incontinence supplies, and diapers.

Undie Sunday

There continues to be a need for sweatpants, sweatshirts, underwear, socks, and cammies for elementary school age kids. These items will be donated to Arlington Elementary School at the end of February. Please place any donations in the labeled cart in the front door vestibule. Please direct any questions to Bill or Char Marker (bcwmarker@aol.com). Thank you!

Bags of Grace Assembly on February 11

Thank you to everyone for the generous donations of socks, coats, gloves, hats, and blankets. Join us on Sunday, February 11, between the two services as we assemble the Bags of Grace, giving us plenty to share when we distribute the bags. Looking ahead: we will next need donations of protein, pudding, toothpaste, toothbrushes, and peanut butter/cheese crackers.

Sheets Needed

Kathy Johnsonbaugh and the St. James Lutheran Church Stitchers have put out a plea:

We are in desperate need of used sheets to make into pads for cancer patients. We use plain, printed, flannel—any fabric and any sheet size (no pillowcases). I will wash them so you don't have to. This is a good opportunity to clean out your closets. Place the sheets in the collection bin in the gym marked "Outreach." You are very much appreciated!



A Baby's Closet

A Baby's Closet (ABC) is a Ministry of Associated Churches of Fort Wayne and Allen County. ABC helps families experiencing hardships by providing essential baby items to care for their children safely and adequately. ABC's location is in downtown Fort Wayne, IN.

Parents earn coupons by participating in designated parenting, educational, and well-baby events from local provider partners as well as caring for the nutritional and medical needs of their children. Participants redeem their coupons at ABC.

ABC is in need of baby blankets, bedding, warm clothes, and diapers. If you knit, crochet, sew, or want to spend time shopping, this is an opportunity to contribute to a very worthwhile cause. Place any donations in the bin in Satre Hall marked A Baby's Closet. Please contact Shirley Craven at (260) 415-0429 or shirley_craven@yahoo.com with any questions.

A Baby's Closet (ABC) Needs (Handmade, New, or Gently Used Items)

Urgently Needed Items:

Diapers (Sizes Newborn, 4, 5 & 6)
Baby Blankets (Handmade or New)
Baby Formula (especially Gerber brand, including Soy)

Much Needed Items:

Clothing, Sizes Newborn to 4T
Crib Sheets/Wash Cloths/Baby Bath Towels
Nail Clippers
Baby Bottles/Spoons/Sippy Cups
Teething Rings/Handheld Infant toys
Highchairs/Baby Gates/Strollers
Monetary Donations (Check made to Messiah Lutheran Church)

Miscellaneous New Items

Baby Wipes/Diaper Ointment
Bath Wash/Baby Oil/Lotion/Shampoo
Q-Tips/Cotton Balls

OPERATIONS

Safety and Security Initiative

Throughout history, churches have been both places of safety and the targets of vandalism, anger, and violence. Threats to churches are increasing, so it's important to put safety and security at the forefront and make sure that we are making Messiah safe for all. This project has been several years in the making, but we are now beginning to see many changes around the campus. These changes are major strides towards protecting the people who visit Messiah and the physical property itself.

Messiah has been able to secure grants in the sum of \$150,000.00 from the Department of Homeland Security, and \$50,000.00 from The Lutheran Foundation. These funds are dedicated to improving safety and security across our campus. These funds allow us to focus on three main areas or initiatives in our campus security project. The first initiative was to improve our outdoor lighting. We have added five new light posts around the back drive of the property and made needed repairs to the outdoor ground lights. The second initiative allows us to move towards better securing the physical building envelope by re-keying all exterior doors and adding new electronic access controls throughout the building. This initiative included replacing several doors, repairing others, and changing all the locks. If you are a current key holder, we are asking that you return your old key to the church office so it can be properly recycled. These keys will no longer gain you access to the facility. The third initiative focuses on video monitoring and surveillance. We will soon be adding ten different cameras and three video intercoms across the campus. These improvements will allow us to monitor any activity taking place across the campus.

At Messiah we want our church to be welcoming AND security safe. We want those who attend our services and events to feel physically comfortable so that they can focus on worship and ministry. This cannot happen if they feel threatened, or unwelcome. The goal of these improved security measures is to harden campus defenses and provide a new level of safety for all those who participate in the daily life of the congregation while still maintaining an inviting atmosphere. Messiah's mission is to help people grow a faith in Jesus Christ that works in real life. Sometimes real life has uncomfortable realities and Messiah strives to offer a safe environment for everyone.

OPERATIONS *(cont)*

Support Childcare and Preschool with Kroger Rewards

You can support Messiah Lutheran Childcare & Preschool while you shop at Kroger! Here's how to get started: Go to <https://www.kroger.com/communityrewards>. Click on Create an Account (If you already have a Kroger Plus card but are not an online customer) or click on Sign in (if you are an online customer already and want to designate Messiah Lutheran Childcare & Preschool as your charity of choice). Our organization number is VU077.

Thank you for your support! Please pass this information along and encourage your family and friends to enroll as well!

Thrivent Action Teams

Thrivent Financial Group allows benefit members to lead two Action Teams per calendar year, and associate members are eligible to lead one per calendar year. Thrivent provides promotional resources and \$250 worth of seed money to jump-start fundraisers, educational events, or service projects. If you have an Action Team available and are interested in helping out, Messiah is constantly seeking these resources to support the many ministries we offer. If you are willing to share an Action Team, please call the church office.

If you are not familiar with the Thrivent Action Team program, it is a fantastic benefit that can help offset the cost of many special ministry projects at Messiah. Thrivent Financial Group's generosity programs make it easy to give of yourself and live generously! This is FREE money that can be used to directly support the ministries of our congregation. These funds do not come from your personal Thrivent accounts; this is money designated by Thrivent to be used as seed money to jump-start fundraisers, educational events, or service projects of your choosing. Please consider directing your Action Teams to support Messiah. If you have any questions about Action Teams, please contact your Thrivent representative or the church office. We are more than willing to work with you throughout the application and reporting process.

Thrivent Choice Dollars

Do you have Choice Dollars to share? The Thrivent Choice program lets eligible members recommend where some of Thrivent Financials' charitable outreach funds go by directing Choice Dollars. Visit www.thrivent.com/thriventchoice to direct yours today!

Have you considered planned giving?

If you would like to make a lasting impact on the ministries here at Messiah Lutheran Church, and the future generations of disciples, a gift made in your estate plan could be the perfect option for you. This type of charitable gift arrangement allows you to make a gift now or after your lifetime while providing financial benefits for yourself and your loved ones.

Church Staff Email Addresses

Pastor Tim Graham pastortim@messiahlc.com
Pastor Brian Spahr pastorbrian@messiahlc.com
Executive Administrator Cory Dold cory@messiahlc.com
Director of Music Stan Engle stan@messiahlc.com
Director, Children & Youth Ministries Heidi Kissner heidi@messiahlc.com
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Facilities Director Denise Gibbons denise@messiahlc.com
Technical Director Josh Gumbert josh@messiahlc.com
Office Administrator Karla Myers karla@messiahlc.com

Church Board Email Addresses

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Cindy Riebersal cariebersal@gmail.com
Mary Satre mesatre@comcast.net
Steve Van Wyngarden stevevanw@comcast.net

OPERATIONS *(cont)*

Inclement Weather Policy

As the winter season approaches, we want to remind everyone of Messiah's inclement Weather Policy. Obviously, we want to stress the importance of safety to all who participate at Messiah. In the event of inclement weather, or the anticipation of inclement weather, here are the following schedules:

Sundays: One service, at 10:00 AM only; no Sunday school. This will be decided no later than 6:00 AM.

Please check local TV station listings. It will show: "Messiah Lutheran – Fort Wayne: 10:00 AM Schedule"

Check the website: www.messiahlc.com

Check the Messiah Facebook page.

Weekday Daytime Activities: Any cancellations will be decided no later than 6:00 AM.

Please check local TV station listings for cancellations.

Check the website: www.messiahlc.com

Check the Messiah Facebook page.

Weekday Evening Activities: Any cancellations will be decided no later than 3:00 PM.

You can call the Church Office.

Please check local TV station listings for cancellations.

Check the website: www.messiahlc.com

Check the Messiah Facebook page.

Messiah Lutheran Church Vision Statement

Our Vision: To forever change lives through the Gospel of Jesus by becoming an equipping, empowering, and mobilizing church in our community that displays the love of Christ and connects with people of all walks of life through worship, communion, service, fellowship, and compassion, led by the Holy Spirit and focused on the Great Commission (Mt 28.18-20).

Our vision includes a 3-5-year focus on...

MEAM – Messiah Emerging Adult Ministry (ages 20-30)

We desire to broaden our scope of ministry to meet the practical spiritual needs of single, young adults.

Messiah Lutheran Church will commit resources to expand hospitality and engagement to emerging adults.

In the next year, we will develop a social media ministry to engage young adults in meaningful issues of faith and life. We will also create a physical space on our premises that will foster hospitable and authentic conversations.

Families with Young Children

Messiah Lutheran Church desires to partner in worship and ministry with families with young children. Through our preschool and childcare ministry (Preschool/Childcare), we can meet the needs of this group, which comprises a large portion of the community surrounding the church. It is of utmost importance to connect with these families because youth are the lifeblood and future of our church.

We will build and strengthen our relationships to families with young children through the Preschool/Childcare ministry.

In the next five years, we dream of growing church membership within the Preschool/Childcare program from 10% to 60%. Furthermore, we desire to increase attendance and inclusion of the congregation at Preschool/Childcare events and Preschool/Childcare families at congregational events.

Forever Young

Messiah Lutheran Church is called by God to reach Empty Nesters, both those nearing retirement and those already retired, with the Good News of abundant life through Jesus Christ. The skills and experiences of these adults are a rich resource for our community.

We will offer them new opportunities for worship, for fellowship among themselves and within our congregation, seminars and personal services to maintain and improve their quality of life, and avenues for them to be of service to the community.

In each of the next 5 years, we will offer 4-6 meaningful outreach activities for personal growth, fellowship, and service.



Messiah Lutheran Church
7211 Stellhorn Road
Fort Wayne, IN 46815-5551

Place mailing label here

Ministers
The People of Messiah

Senior Pastor
Timothy Graham, M. Div.

Associate Pastor
Brian Spahr, M. Div.

Pastor Emeritus
Carl H. Satre, D.D.

*

Sunday Services

9:00 AM

10:30 AM

in person and online