

ADVENT ANTICIPATION

I am consistently surprised by the way this season brings about thoughts of joy and hope, even when I am not expecting it. I smell the leaves, maybe a campfire. I see the lights and symbols appear. I hear old familiar tunes. I cannot help it. My spirit is lifted in anticipation. The season once again has a power of its own that I don't need to bring to it.



What is it we anticipate? Family and friends? Traditions and warmth? Gifts and giving? Food and festivities? Faith and fellowship? Maybe we look forward to the change of pace that snow and cold weather necessitate. Who doesn't love a snow day?

I invite you to anticipate the Choir Cantata during the first two services on December 15th. I invite you to anticipate with me our Children's Christmas Pageant, at 1 pm on the 22nd. We will have a combined Celebration Sunday service 10 am with a meal to follow. Stick around and see what the kids have planned for you! Who will you invite to the Christmas Eve candlelit service?

I invite you to anticipate one last thing this Advent and Christmas Season... we will be blessed with another guest preacher on the 8th. Let me introduce to you <u>Elisabeth Lectka</u> through a short bio I asked her to write for you:

"Over my ten years in full-time ministry, I have served in young adult, student and family ministry roles. I studied Organizational Communication and Leadership at Butler University in Indianapolis, IN. I just recently completed my Master of Divinity at Northern Seminary in June of 2024 and am discerning how to move forward toward ordination.

I grew up at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Naperville, IL and was heavily involved in the high school ministry as a student. While I thought my future might be in pharmacy, during college God revealed to me that He had other plans! After various experiences in youth and young adult ministry in college and in Berlin, Germany, I returned to Good Shepherd as a staff member in 2017. I currently serve as the Student Minister and get to walk alongside middle and high school students as they begin to figure out how to follow Jesus on their own.

My husband, David, and I were married in January of 2021 (pandemic wedding!). We live in Aurora, IL with our Golden Retriever, Charlie. In August of 2024 we welcomed our daughter, Alice Kay, into the world. In my free time, you'll find me running, cooking, reading, and traveling!

Thanks again for the invitation - I am really looking forward to the opportunity and to get to worship with the people of Messiah Lutheran!"

In anticipation of what God does next,



A big THANK YOU...

...to Ken Skinner, Rowan Hedden and Kurt Skinner for taking down the crosses that remind us of lives lost to abortions;

...to all of you for your generous donations to Samaritan's

Purse Operation Christmas Child. The boxes are used to spread the Word of God around the world;

...to Donna Stier for organizing, promoting and collecting the boxes;

...to the Michalski family, who saved to cover both the items <u>and</u> the shipping costs associated with the 25 boxes packed with love by Messiah's kids.

Instead of collecting items for Thanksgiving meals, we distributed Aldi gift cards to individuals in need for Thanksgiving.

In November, the OWLS group heard a presentation by Amy Merritt, Director of the Pregnancy Resource Center (PRC) in Joliet. Amy shared details about the services and how they help women in our area. PRC is not government funded and functions solely on private donations and donations from local churches. They saw 268 women for appointments last year. All individuals can receive a **FREE** ultrasound and also hear about their choices. They pray with the women and offer them alternatives to abortion. The center also provides postabortion counseling and offers many other services.

Pat Burke, Director

Gerry Boe, Donna Stier and Gary Phillips

Stewardship Team



Messiah Gives Back!

Nearly 150 Operation Christmas Child boxes were filled at Messiah!

Thank you!



PARISH FELLOWSHIP

Please plan on enjoying lunch with your Messiah family after the Celebration Service on **December 22** (see page 13). Parish Fellowship will be providing a nice lunch & all we ask of you is a small free will offering or a ready to serve dessert like Christmas cookies, brownies, etc. It will be a beautiful, relaxing fellowship before the Children's Christmas Pageant (see page 5)!

We are still in need of helpers for:

- -> our Wednesday Family Dinners, for setup and cleanup;
- -> bringing baked goods (homemade or store-bought) for funerals.

There are sign up sheets in the Narthex. Questions? 815-531-9781, call Terry!

Coffee hour is running smoothly and Carol Gordon has prepared the schedule through the end of the year... but we could always use more help!

Sincere thanks to those already helping our committee!

- Terry Anzalone, Parish Fellowship Director





Interested in hosting a future Wednesday Family Dinner? Please reach out to Terry Anzalone or Pastor Kurt.

In the meantime, please join us Wednesdays at 6:30 for: MKW (K-5th grades) Head2Heart (6th-8th) F.A.M. (high schoolers) Women's Bible Study (resumes January 8)

Please note these events will not take place on Christmas Day or New Years's Day.



ORDER YOUR MESSIAH T-SHIRT!

In case you missed placing your order in November... Shirts start at only \$12 and are available in four colors! See the display in the Narthex or call the church office for more information.

The deadline to get your order in is Sunday, **December 29.**

FOR THE LADIES OF MESSIAH

MESSIAH LUTHRERAN WOMEN'S MINISTRIES

We are looking to purchase tickets to attend the MORE Women's Conference at Olivet Nazarene University in Bourbonnais on **April 12, 2025**. The cost, which includes lunch, is \$75. Before we buy tickets, we'd like to have a commitment.

Please visit <u>https://www.moreconference.org/</u> for more info, or see Sherri Unyi.

WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY

We will resume Wednesday, January 8, 2025.



JOLET AREA CHRISTIAN WOMEN'S CONNECTION

You and your friends are invited to Joliet Christian Women's **Merry Christmas Luncheon** in Fellowship Hall on Wednesday, **December 11**, 11:30am-1:30pm, \$20.00 inclusive. It will feature their <u>annual cookie sale</u>! So many delicious, homemade goodies to choose from!

Guest speaker, Judy Dagraedt of Ottawa, IL, a former TV host, will share her story of abandonment.

RSVP by December 4 by contacting Barb at 815-439-2076 or <u>mrs.brutus56@gmail.com</u>, or call Sonya at 815-727-1626. Like them on Facebook at "Joliet IL Christian Women's Connection". Next luncheon Wednesday, January 15. <u>https://www.stonecroft.org/</u>

MESSIAH KIDZ CLUB HAPPENINGS!



Kindergarten – 5th grade: Join us on Wednesday nights, 6:30-8 pm. See page 3 for an important Wednesday Family Dinner update.

Questions? Contact Beth Hohisel at bhohisel@hotmail.com or 815-735-7897

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Sunday school for pre-K through 5th grades is upstairs at 9:30 am.

MESSIAH KIDS REMIND GROUP

Parents of Sunday school aged children (K-5th grade) can join the Messiah Kids Remind group by texting the code mlcmk to 81010, or by going to:

https://www.remind.com/join/mlcmk

It will be used to send reminders and notifications about Sunday school and any events we have planned. Contact Kimber Drummond at <u>christianed@mlcjoliet.org</u> with questions.

J-CHURCH

J-CHURCH, a ministry for kids and youth of all ages, takes place during the 11:00 am service the <u>third Sunday of every month</u> in the FLC! (This ministry replaced MK11 in October 2024.) Please sign up in the Narthex. We meet next on **December 15**. Volunteers are needed, so please see Leslie to get involved.



MESSIAH'S YOUTH CHOIR

Our final performance in 2024 will be on Sunday, **December 22** during the Children's Christmas Pageant that begins at 1 pm in the FLC. We ask that choir members dress in Christmas theme/colors that day.



MESSIAH STUDENT MINISTRIES

Be sure to sign up for Messiah Student Ministries on Remind to keep up to date on this and other upcoming events.

Use this link <u>https://www.remind.com/join/messiahst</u> or use class code @messiahst within the app.



MAFIA NIGHTS



HEY 6th-12th GRADERS!

Sunday morning Bible study meets at 9:30 am. 6-8th graders meet in the youth room and high schoolers are currently joining in with the Insight group, with a breakout session in classroom 101. If you have questions, comments, or are looking to connect regarding youth news, events, ministries for students in 6-12th grades, please don't hesitate to reach out to Kate Richmond via email at <u>stumin@mlcjoliet.org</u> or call the church office.

HEAD 2 HEART

H2H (otherwise known as Confirmation) meets on Wednesday evenings at 6:30. All 6-8th graders are welcome! Come at 5:30 and join us for Family Dinner <u>most Wednesdays</u> - see page 3 for an important update. If you'd like to know more, just reach out to the church office and we'll get you in touch with H2H leader, Kersten Stier.

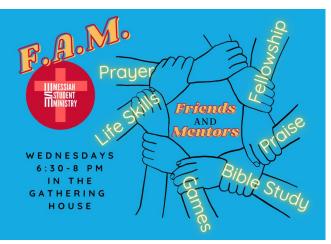
WINTERBLAST !!!

WinterBlast (**December 28-31**) registration is now open! Find more info and register at: <u>https://messiahlutheranchurch.churchcenter.com/registrations/events/2628260</u>



or use this QR code:





FRIENDS AND MENTORS (F.A.M.) A ministry for high school students and recent graduates.

F.A.M. is a chance to connect with peers and those who have navigated the path ahead of you, to learn life skills and other lessons learned along the way.

We play games, learn practical life skills, pray for each other, sing praise and more! YOU belong here!

Please see an important Wednesday Family Dinner update on page 3.

OPPORTUNITIES - GET INVOLVED!

ADULT "INSIGHT" BIBLE STUDY

Join us for adult Bible study on Sunday mornings at 9:30 in Fellowship Hall. On **December 1**, we kickoff a new four-week Advent study entitled, "Just as He Promised: How the Birth of Jesus Proves God Keeps Every Promise He Makes ."

Whether this is your first Advent study or you've been doing them for years, you'll love how God's Word and promises are illuminated during this special season. If you're in need of reminding that God keeps all of His promises, *Just As He Promised* is for you.

ALTAR FLOWERS - SIGN UP IN THE NARTHEX



Our Altar flowers sign up chart is on the Connect Wall in the Narthex (outside the Fireside Room). If you'd like to help beautify our Sanctuary and sponsor Altar flowers in honor of a special occasion or to memorialize someone important in your life, please sign up. Arrangements are \$25 each.

CHRISTMAS GIFTS TO MESSIAH

This year, Christmas gifts to Messiah will be used for a new bell tower to be repositioned at the northwest corner of the building. In addition, gifts will go towards concrete flowerpots that will add beauty and safety, defining the new concrete work. Here are a couple of EXAMPLES of what these items could look like:









DAYBREAK SHELTER



Volunteers are needed to serve dinner to needy people at Daybreak Homeless Shelter in Joliet. The commitment is from 5:30-7 pm on the second Monday of each month.

Food donations are also needed. Sign up in the Narthex or online at: mlcjoliet.org/life-groups

Messiah members will be serving at Daybreak on Monday, **December 9.**

FAITH & BODY THURSDAYS

Tie up your shoes and meet in the Family Life Center for Faith & Body! We meet each Thursday from 9-10 am. It's exciting to think how many miles we will walk this year while simultaneously strengthening our faith! Please register here:

https://messiahlutheranchurch.churchcenter.com/registrations/events/2426227

FIRESIDE CHATS



Want to know more about the people behind the scenes at Messiah? Well, here it is! On **November 28**, we released the first of a series of podcasts interviewing staff members here at Messiah, and we learned a lot about each other in the process! Next season we will be interviewing some of our board members and having their voices be heard as to what they hope to accomplish in their time as leaders at Messiah!

LIL LOVES MINISTRY

Lil Loves at Messiah aims to come alongside underserved parents and babies in the area by providing **FREE** assistance with diapers and much needed baby supplies. Lil Loves is available on a by-appointment basis, and those interested can sign up on our website.



Lil Loves thanks you for your donations of:

*Diapers and Pull-ups *Wipes *Baby Wash/Shampoo *Baby Lotion *Toiletry items for the moms such as deodorant, toothpaste, feminine hygiene, etc. Trial-sized toiletry items are especially appreciated, rather than full-sized. If you'd like to donate, please place your items in the black bin in the Narthex. Call the church office for more information. Please note Lil Loves is **NO LONGER ABLE TO ACCEPT BABY FORMULA OR USED CLOTHING.** These items are happily accepted at the Living Alternatives Pregnancy Resource Center. You may deliver them to: 903 Infantry Dr., Suite 600, in Joliet.

MEMORY BEARS

Messiah's Memory Bears Group meets here at the church from 9 am-noon once a month (sometimes twice!) to make stuffed teddy bears out of the clothing of people who have passed away, to comfort the grieving. We would love to have you join us! We have jobs that do not require sewing. <u>We do not meet in December</u>. Our next meeting is on Tuesday, **January 28**. Text Cindi Souza at 815-931-8478 or email to <u>regency118@comcast.net</u> for more info.

MESSIAH MEN'S MINISTRY (3M)

The 3M group wishes everyone a great holiday season! We are currently on break. Men, mark your calendars... We will resume our studies on **January 14** in the book of Exodus. Email Mike Brown at <u>gonzopal2017@cheerful.com</u> for more info.

MESSIAH'S NEWLY REDESIGNED WEBSITE! Drumroll, please!

Our newly redesigned website has launched! Same name, different look & feel. Please check it out at <u>https://www.mlcjoliet.org/</u>.



Messiah Gives Back!

MICRO PANTRY

Did you know that Messiah has a food pantry? This ministry is 100%

donation-driven, and is maintained by the Evangelism Board. You can support this ministry through prayer, and through monetary and/or food donations. Contact the church office for more info, or leave your donations in the bin in the Narthex. EXPIRED ITEMS ARE NOT ACCEPTABLE.

MLC OFFICE HOURS

The office is staffed Monday-Friday from 9 am - 3 pm. Saturdays and evenings are by appointment. Staff is always available by appointment, so please don't hesitate to ask!

OWLS (Older, Wiser Loving Seniors)

On December 10 at noon, we will celebrate with a Christmas theme! We ask that everyone **sign up in the Narthex** to bring your favorite "Christmassy" appetizer, desert, salad, etc. After the luncheon, we will adjourn to the Sanctuary to enjoy a special musical performance by Jeanette Wegemer, Tabra Gomski and Rose Sochan. We hope to see you on **December 10**!

PRAYER CHAIN



Messiah uses an email-based (not in-person) Prayer Chain made up of people willing to pray for our members, community, and nation in times of crisis. Prayers are shared amongst the group via email, and are confidential and anonymous as much as possible. Text Cindi Souza at 815-931-8478 or email to regency118@comcast.net for more info.

PRAYER TEAM

Our in-person Prayer Team meets Thursday mornings at 10:15 in the Fireside Room for approximately one hour, to pray together over our prayer request list. For more info text Cindi Souza at 815-931-8478 or by email to regency118@comcast.net, or Beth Hohisel at bhohisel@hotmail.com.

QUILTERS

The Messiah Quilters will meet on Tuesday, December 17, from 9 am – 2 pm. We have a lot of quilts ready to complete and if you can tie a knot, you can help us out... we even have jobs you can do sitting down! Think about stopping in to see what we do. You do not have to stay the entire time - whatever time you can give is appreciated.

If you are unable to join us and would like to sew at home, we have kits available with instructions that show how easy it is to put a quilt top together. Contact Kathy Mueller 815-953-6601 or at scpbklane@aol.com for more information. Hope to see you on **December 17**!

SANCTUARY CHOIR

Our Sanctuary Choir sings on Sunday mornings at the 9:30 service, September through May. When the Children's Choir is performing, we sing at the 8:00 service. Rehearsals take place on Thursday evenings from 7:15-8:45. We are always looking for new members! For more information please contact our Sanctuary Choir Director, Herb Alexander, at halex12240@gmail.com.

SING PRAISE

Sing Praise is currently in the process of re-evaluating scheduling needs. We hope to resume in January - please look for details to come! Questions may be directed to Justin Brown at worship@mlcjoliet.org.

STAY-O-PLAY Stay-N-Play is every Tuesday morning from 9:30-11! You may ask, "What is Stay-N-Play?" We open our Family Life Center to the community for FREE open gym time for children

five and under. It's a great place for caregivers and children to make connections with other caregivers and to have a safe place for children to play. Please like our Facebook page (MLC Stay-n-Play Playgroup) for additional information and, please, share with your friends and neighbors!

WE ARE STILL SEEKING "MESSIAH AMBASSADORS" TO TAKE TURNS BEING PRESENT AT STAY-N-PLAY TO HELP WITH SETUP, WELCOMING GUESTS AND PROMOTING MLC EVENTS. Please inquire with Sherri Unyi.

STROLLER FIT MOM'S CLUB

Attention moms with stroller-aged children! Bring your littles with you in the stroller for an opportunity to socialize & GET EXERCISE with other like-minded moms! We generally meet every-other Friday morning at the church from 9:30-10:30. We will walk outdoors, weather permitting. In the event of inclement weather, we will move into the Family Life Center. We meet only once this month, on **December 13.** Please reach out to Season Lawler at <u>seasonsummer4@aol.com</u> for more information.





WAYS TO GIVE

We will have an offering time during the services, but you can give any time during the week using one of the following ways:

- 1) Go to: bit.ly/MLCGiving
- 2) Download the Church Center app on your phone or tablet and follow the instructions given.
- 3) Text your dollar amount (with a dollar sign in front of it) to 84321.
- 4) Mail your check to the church at: 40 Houbolt Rd., Joliet, IL 60431

WEDNESDAY NIGHT DINNERS

See page 3 for more info!

WOMEN'S MINISTRY

See page 4 for upcoming events for the ladies of Messiah!



Messiah Lutheran Church -Fellowship Hall 1-3 pm in Fellowship **DECEMBER 21** Hall CANVAS COCOA Fellowship and Fainting START 1PM / \$15 PER-PERSON

> Painting, light Holiday snacks, and Cocoa Family event - Kids welcome! RSVP REQUIRED 11/24 - 12/15

Sign up with Kersten Stier in

Narthex

For more information, Email: publicrelations@mlcjoliet.org



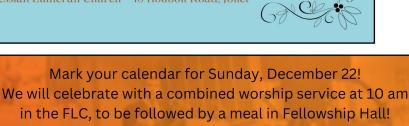
ADVENT SERVICES



Wednesday Nights 7:00 - 8:00pm December 4th, 11th, 18th "Hymns of Christmas"

Christmas Eve services: 5:00pm, 7:00pm, and 11:00pm

Messiah Lutheran Church - 40 Houbolt Road, Joliet



in the FLC, to be followed by a meal in Fellowship Hall! We will then move back to the FLC at 1 pm for our Children's Christmas Pageant.



We'll gather for Celebration Sunday once per quarter. A chance to invite family and friends - a chance to worship as one church family!

BAPTISM SUNDAY - JANUARY 19, 2025

This will be an opportunity to be baptized, or to reaffirm the promise made to you in your own baptism... an opportunity to invite family and friends to place that promise upon their children, as well. Please see Pastor Kurt if you or a family member would like to be baptized.





Giving Statements

Please help Messiah be greener and consider switching your statement delivery method from US Mail to EMAIL. Call the church office if you'd like to do this!

DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES & BIRTHDAYS



Happy Anniversary!

- 13 Terry & Pat Anderson17 Ken & Norina Schroth



- 1 -Gerald Witte
- 2 -Eliza Ferenzi
- 3 -Nikki Burke
- 4 -Tamara Lambert Ruth Ann Ungeran
- 5 -Natty Carreno
- 7 -Mark Burnetti
- 8 -Herb Alexander
- 9 -Erma Turner 10 - Lynn Bond William Calderon
- Lauren Enix
- 14 Brian Wielbik
- 15 Monica Beavis
- 23 Paul Capps
- 26 Diane Zuehl
- 27 Coby Dykstra
- 28 Mel Mitchka
- 29 Deb Dole
- 30 Angela Knudsen Bev May
- 31 Don Cyborski Tessa Michalski



<u>DECEMBER SERVERS</u>



Counters

12/01/24	Dan Stukel, Zach Hoelscher	
12/08/24	Gayle Arko, Wayne Lauffer	
12/15/24	Stan Buhr, Joy McClintock	
12/22/24	Judy Fowler, Deb Dole	
12/29/24	Dan Stukel, Zach Hoelscher	
Ushers 8:00		
12/01/24	Jerry Buchenau, Dan Stukel	
12/08/24	Paul Allen, Don Cyborski	
12/15/24	Wayne Lauffer, Bob Miller	
12/22/24	Craig Stone, Don Cyborski	
	(10 am service) more ushers needed	
12/29/24	two needed	

Ushers 9:30

	0311613 3.30
12/01/24	Bill Unyi, one needed
12/08/24	Jeff Holmes, Alan Costello
12/15/24	Roger Gordon, Josh Johnke
12/29/24	Alan Costello, one needed

Ushers 11:00

- 12/01/24 Gary Phillips, one needed
- 12/08/24 Tom & Tammie Eigenbauer
- 12/15/24 Gary Phillips, one needed
- 12/29/24 Darryl Hoelscher, one needed

Communion Assistants 8:00

12/01/24three needed12/08/24three needed12/15/24three needed12/22/24several needed (10 am service)12/29/24three needed

Communion Assistants 9:30

12/01/24	Rowan & Diane Hedden, one needed
12/15/24	Season Lawler, two needed

Communion Assistants 11:00

12/01/24	Tom & Lynn Bond, Terry Anzalone
12/15/24	Tom & Lynn Bond, Terry Anzalone

Readers 8:00

 12/01/24
 Deb Dole

 12/08/24
 Randy Ling

 12/15/24
 Greg Dole

 12/22/24
 Doug Potts (10 am service)

 12/29/24
 needed

Readers 9:30

12/01/24Angie Mitchka12/08/24Jeff Holmes12/15/24Sherri Unyi12/29/24Jane Costello

Readers 11:00

12/01/24	Tom Bond
12/08/24	Tom Bond
12/15/24	Molly Hoover
12/29/24	Tom Bond

Greeters 8:00

12/01/24 Gerry & Pat Boe
12/08/24 two needed
12/15/24 two needed
12/22/24 Kirk Brandmire (10 am service) several more needed
12/29/24 two needed

Greeters 9:30

12/01/24two needed12/08/24Beth Hohisel, one needed12/15/24Darryl & Cindi Souza12/29/24two needed

Greeters 11:00

12/01/24	two needed
12/08/24	Roger & Carol Gordon
12/15/24	two needed
12/29/24	two needed





40 Houbolt Rd. Joliet, IL 60431 (815) 741-4488



Organist Rose Ann Sochan Sanctuary Choir Director Herb Alexander Tech Coordinator Nikolai Stier Youth Administrator Kersten Stier Worship Coordinator Justin Brown

815-741-4488

info@mlcjoliet.org

Office Coordinator Vicki Dallmann

Associate Pastor: vacant

Senior Pastor Kurt Hoover

Children's Ministry Director Leslie McFarland

Children's Choir Director Season Lawler

Building Administrator Kate Richmond