



Messiah Messenger

May 2024

Messiah's Mission: *To know Christ and to make Christ known through the spreading of the Gospel of Jesus Christ to all through a Word and Sacrament ministry of worship, Christian Education, fellowship, outreach and service.*

Rev. Eric Black, *Pastor*

Rick Krueger, *Parish Assistant*

Vonda Smestad, *Preschool Director*

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Greetings in the name of Christ!

Alleluia! Christ is risen! It is still the season of Easter, at least for the first half of May. We still get to enjoy the Alleluias. We still get to look upon the white paraments and be reminded we are made pure by the blood of the lamb. We still get to share the Easter greeting. But then comes Pentecost.

With the changing of the colors, white to red, with the account of Pentecost itself, all coming on the heels of Ascension, we are reminded the joys of Easter are not just for us. We are a city on a hill, a light, we are salt, we are the church, we are the body of Christ, and Christ is alive and well and active. We have work to do.

The red of the day, as with every color of the year, comes with multiple meanings, but among the most important, red brings to minds the flames of Pentecost, and also passion. The disciples were not to remain sequestered behind locked doors, the church was not to bottle itself up or hide itself away, it was not to blend in and vanish, staying comfortably out of sight and out of mind. It was to burn, to be a light, and this has never changed.

We get to proclaim Christ to the nations, we get to speak in defense of the helpless and those in any need, we get to love our enemies, we get to be the body of Christ, caring for one another, and always seeking to welcome one more into God's family. We get to forgive, even as we are forgiven each day by God. We get to live out lives of God given faith, promised in our baptisms, nourished by the body and blood of Christ. We get to live lives not focused on putting ourselves first, but always seeking to love those around us, those God has placed before us.

Life, true lasting eternal life, this is what we have received and what we get to offer to the world. And thus, red gives way to green, the color of life. When Mary Magdalene mistook Jesus for the gardener, she wasn't entirely mistaken. We know Christ is the good Shepherd of course, but many times He also refers to His work in terms of gardening, pruning, harvesting and so on. In the beginning that is what creation was, a garden, a paradise, empty of weeds, full of work that was never toilsome, everything grew, everything was full of life, and it will be again. In this hope we get to live, and this hope is what we get to share.

So, although May is a busy month, full of changes, graduations, transition to summer and so forth, including in the church itself, remember in all things Christ is ever leading us closer to Him. And as we listen, as we read His word, worship together and receive His gifts, pray without ceasing, remember many do not have what we have been given. Who will tell them, "Alleluia! Christ is risen!" if not the church? It's not that we have to, but we get to, sharing the same faith, hope, and love, that will see us into eternity through our risen Savior Jesus Christ, amen.

Your brother in Christ,
Pastor Eric

Messiah Updates for May

FOR PASTORAL CARE: contact Pastor Eric at 210-274-1208 or pastor.black@messiahgr.org.

WORSHIP AND BIBLE CLASS: Throughout May, we will continue with one Divine Service at **10:00 am on Sundays**, with Bible Class beforehand at **9:00 am**. The Sunday morning service will be livestreamed at

- www.youtube.com/@MessiahGR/streams
- Our Facebook page www.facebook.com/messiahgr
- The most recent service is viewable at our webpage, www.messiahgr.org

ASCENSION DAY AT MESSIAH: On **Thursday, May 9th**, our brothers and sisters in Christ from St. Peter's Lutheran Church in Rockford will join us here at Messiah to celebrate *The Ascension of Our Lord!* A meal will be served in the fellowship hall at **6:00 pm**, followed by the service at **7:00 pm**. Pastor Eric will preside, and Pastor Jason Peterson will preach; a joint choir led by St. Peter's retiring music director Julie Busen will provide anthems and musical leadership. The service will also be livestreamed as above.

SUMMER WORSHIP UPDATE: At their April meeting, the Board of Elders set Messiah's summer worship schedule. From **Sunday, May 26th** (Memorial Day weekend) through **Sunday, September 1st** (Labor Day weekend), we'll continue with the Sunday schedule as above. Monday night services will also be held from **Monday, June 3rd through Monday, August 26th at 7:00 pm**.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION UPDATE: During the first three Sundays in May, we'll continue supplying families of Sunday School-aged children with weekly lessons from Concordia Publishing House's *Enduring Faith* curriculum. Messiah's Board of Education hopes that this helps and enables parents & grandparents to take the lead in fostering our children's spiritual growth.

Lesson materials for children & teaching guides for adults will be placed in family mailboxes. If you're also interested in receiving these lessons to share with children in your life, please contact the church office.

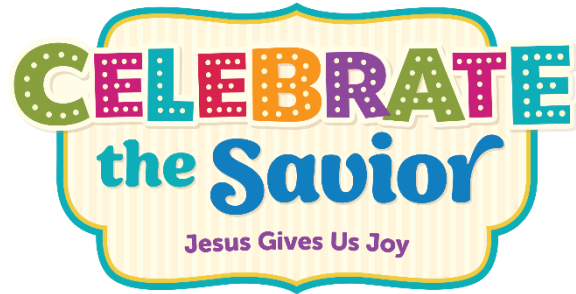
May's lessons conclude the Old Testament unit *God Restores His People*:

- *A Fiery Marvel – Three Men in the Fiery Furnace (May 5th)*
- *Return to Rebuild – Rebuilding the Temple (May 12th)*
- *Promised Messengers – Waiting for God's Messenger (May 19th)*

With God's help, the Board of Education is looking to resume weekly Sunday School classes in the fall of 2024. We ask for your prayers as we plan and prepare for this much-desired relaunch.

Messiah Updates for May, Continued;

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL: On **Monday-Friday, June 24th - 28th from 9:00 to 11:45 am**, Messiah will hold our *Vacation Bible School*. This year's theme is *Celebrate the Savior!* During VBS children will look into the Bible, God's Holy Word, and discover that Jesus gives us the joy of eternal life with Him! Our loving God has given us so much to celebrate – family, friends, food, and especially forgiveness through faith in Jesus, our Savior. As kids explore five key events in the life of Jesus, they will discover how the love of Jesus fills us with joy.



Kids age 4 as of August 1st through grade 6 are invited to join us for lessons, music, crafts, snacks, activities and more! Together we'll learn how the Good News of Jesus Christ satisfies our thirsty souls and fills us with love to serve our neighbors' needs, to the glory of God our heavenly Father.

Can you help with VBS this year? We need volunteers for these tasks:

- *Group Leaders and helpers* for the following classes:
 - Pre-Kindergarten
 - Kindergarten
 - Grades 1 & 2
 - Grades 3 & 4
 - Grades 5 & 6
- *Bible Story Helper*
- *Craft Helper*
- *Recreation Helpers*
- *Teen Helpers* - kids love to see teen faces at VBS! Teen "greeters" will greet and escort children to their class each day for opening, then help in other areas like games or crafts as they choose.
- *Kitchen Helpers*
- *People with Muscles* to set up & take down furniture before and after VBS, and also help move tables for the frozen treat reception after Friday's closing.
- *Registration Workers* to enroll students at 8:30 a.m. We get new students almost every day of VBS!
- *Greeters* to welcome & direct students arriving each day.
- Volunteers to set up and serve frozen treats after Friday's closing.
- *Photographer(s)* to take pictures for photo boards and Messiah's website & social media.

Volunteers can sign up at the Welcome Center or call Steve Ledbetter (our 2024 VBS Director) at 616-460-8981.

A *VBS Staff Training Day* for all group and activity leaders and helpers is set for **Saturday, May 18th, 9:00 to 11:00 am** in the fellowship hall. Donuts and coffee will be served.

To register your child(ren) or grandchildren online, beginning Wednesday, May 1st:

1. Go to: vbsmate.com/messiahgr2024 (Or, click on the VBS announcement banner across the top of Messiah's website.)
2. Click on "Students" tab at top of screen.
3. Then click the blue "Add student" box.
4. Enter the personal information required to enroll your child.

Messiah Updates for May, Continued;

FAMILY GAME NIGHT – Saturday, May 4th in the Fellowship Hall from 5:00 - 7:00 pm. Bring a game and a snack to share. Fun for all! Sign up at the Welcome Center.

THANK YOU - A heartfelt thank you to Pastor Black, all the prayers and the Meet and Greet Group at Messiah who have prayed for me for 12 weeks. I had successful TAVR heart valve replacement on April 16. I am in cardio therapy and recovery for a few weeks now. Then, on to a regular schedule. God's provision is amazing!

I am forever grateful for the care, concern, calls, cards, messages and prayers of Messiah congregation. Live streamed services are great but "in-person" will be better soon. God Bless each of you!

In His Love, *Ann Beuschel*

TRUSTEE CLEAN-UP DAY THANK YOU - The Trustees send a big THANK YOU to the volunteers who came to our Spring Clean-up Day! Thank you to Kevin, Rick D., Rick C., Mel, Ron, Joe & Chang, Dave & Teri, Dick, Pastor Eric, Carol, and Kurt. Check out how beautiful our property is. All Praise to God!

FROM THE FAMILY OF MIKE MULL: We would like to thank everyone for their generous donation of food, cards, thoughtfulness, and most of all your continued prayers. An additional thank you to all of you who contributed to the capital improvement fund in Mike's memory. – *Pat*

DIRECTORY CHANGE: There are a couple of addresses to update.

Jarry Swanson: 2500 Breton Woods DR. SE, Unit 1006
Grand Rapids, MI 49512

Louis Welke: Sentinel Point Room 330
2900 Thornhill Ave SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49546

OFFERING REPORT: The stewardship report contains regular contributions for the month, including electronic giving, mailed in checks, and offering envelopes. The report does not contain preschool, other special offerings, or miscellaneous income received. The regular offerings budget is \$25,564.00 per month.

March: \$31,504.00; Year to Date: \$98,099.00; Year to Date Budget: \$76,692.00

From the Parish Assistant

WORSHIP IN MAY

On the first two Sundays in May and for the Ascension of Our Lord, we will continue to pray Divine Service, Setting Three from *Lutheran Service Book*. For **Sunday, May 19th**, the Day of Pentecost, we will pray the festive Divine Service, Setting Five, then switch to Divine Service, Setting Four for the first portion of *the Time of the Church*, the Sundays after Pentecost.

While the seasons of Advent through Easter focus on specific events in the life of Christ, the Time of the Church focuses on Jesus' ministry – His preaching and teaching, healings and miracles – as recorded for us in the Gospels of Mark and John. We'll begin the Time of the Church with **Trinity Sunday, May 26th**; this day will also feature the responsive reading of the *Athanasian Creed*, in which we speak together the profound Biblical truths of the Holy Trinity and Christ's full divinity and humanity.



From the Parish Assistant, Continued:

As always, we pray that your hearing of God's Word and partaking of the Lord's Supper at Messiah will strengthen your faith, empowering you to respond with thanksgiving in worship and share Christ's love with the people in your life!

NOTES FROM THE CHOIR LOFT: As the Senior Choir get ready to break for the summer, we thank the singers and instrumentalists who have helped lead us in worship during the past year:

- Instrumentalists: Andrew Ahrens, Brittany Keller and Chris Mueller.
- Handchime players: Linda Blain, Judy Gerke, Sheryl Keller & Marijo Pataniczek.
- Senior Choir: Tammy Ahrens, Linda Blain, Barb Brinkman, Mary Cunningham, Judy Gerke, Shirley Hoese, Sandy Hoffman, Sheryl Keller, Deb Krueger, Kevin Mueller, Carol Mushong, Teri Pembrook, Kurt Veitengruber and Dick Wilson.
- Also, thanks to Julie Beuschel and Nicole Mungia of Our Savior Lutheran Church in Grand Rapids, who will serve as organists in May while Rick Krueger is on medical leave. Thanks also to Beth McKay of St. James Lutheran Church who will serve as pianist for our Preschool's Year End Program on **Thursday, May 16th at 9:00 am.**



THANKS, FROM THE BOARD OF OUTREACH: We are grateful to everyone who supported the annual Easter Egg Hunt! On Saturday, March 30th, we proclaimed the Good News of Jesus' resurrection to 150 children, families and caregivers. Thanks to all who volunteered, donated food and other items, and kept this event in your prayers!

Women's Ministry

SANDY'S TRADITION: May 16th at 11:30 am at Shots (5760 W River Dr NE, Belmont, MI 49306). Contact Judy Gerke at 616-363-8412 so reservations can be made.

MENTAL HEALTH TRAINING AND OUTREACH is LWML's mission grant emphasis for May. There is a need and opportunity for Lutheran outreach to people struggling with mental health illnesses and disorders. However, it is challenging for pastors, church workers, and lay leaders because they do not have enough training to provide effective and appropriate care. LCMS Life ministry received an LWML Mission Grant of \$96,500 to help meet the cost of developing materials for training church workers as they minister to those suffering from mental illnesses. Messiah's mites will help meet this need.

Other

PRESCHOOL YARD SIGNS – Spring is here... and that means the Preschool yard signs are ready to be proudly displayed in YOUR yard. We are actively enrolling for the Fall and your partnership is so appreciated. The signs and sign-out form are at the welcome center, ready for your use. Thank you for helping promote our program! Please return the sign when you are finished using it.

In Our Prayers

- ✦ Those with immediate prayer concerns: **(Rick Krueger, Gary Buss, Jack Keller, Gina Griffis, Tom Driscoll, Lori Martin); Linda Reed**, friend of Rich & Gina Griffis; **Fran Wilson**, brother of Dick Wilson; **Alice Feigel**, mother of Renee Davis; **Mike Brumley**, brother of Shirley Kremm; **Mike Buckley**, brother-in-law of Sandy & Larry Goodlander; **Nora Rotman** friend of Sandy & Larry Goodlander.
- ✦ Those with ongoing prayer concerns: **(Nancy Buss, Carol Hull, Eileen Ottenjan, Mike Mull, MaryAnn Snell, Claudia London, Kathy Mueller); Ariel Cunningham**, friend of Victor VanEtten; **Gulaug Peterson**, friend of Lisa Van Etten; **David Brock**, friend of Sandy & Larry Goodlander, **James Mullooly**, relative of Joann Hilton, **Kris Doris**, friend of Lisa VanEtten; **Denny Katona**, friend of Lisa VanEtten; **Cole Tribley**, son of a friend of Lisa VanEtten, **Ariel Cunningham**, friend of Victor VanEtten; **Darla Linn**, friend of Victor VanEtten; **Sharry Milner**, daughter in-law of Shirley Lang; **Tina Eikenroth**, friend of Matt VanEtten.
- ✦ Those serving in the military: **Eric & Kristel Gerke**, grandson and granddaughter of Judy Gerke
- ✦ Our Missionaries: **Pastor Masih and Pastor Mahlburg**.
- ✦ All those in authority, especially Joseph our president, Gretchen our governor, Rosalynn our mayor, and all those who make, administer, and judge our laws.
- ✦ Peace in our world, our nation and our community.



“WORSHIP ANEW” is a Lutheran television, 30-minute worship service with no commercials or repeats. It is not a tape of a Sunday morning service, but a special taping done just for the viewer at home. Worship for Shut-Ins airs locally **Sunday mornings at 11:30 am** on Comcast (channel 21), Charter (channel 2), AT&T (channel 24), Dish Network (channel 54) and DirecTV (channel 377).

May 5, 2024 – Sixth Sunday of Easter

“When You Feel Overwhelmed” - *Sermon Text: 1 John 5:1-8* - Rev. Paul Shoemaker

May 12, 2024 – Ascension of Our Lord (Observed)

“Ascended but not Gone” - *Sermon Text: Luke 24:44-53* - Rev. William Mueller

May 19, 2024 – Pentecost Sunday

“I Will” - *Sermon Text: Ezekiel 37:1-14* - Rev. Dr. Lawrence Rast, Jr.

May 26, 2024 – Holy Trinity Sunday Rev.

“When the Darkness Hides God” - *Sermon Text: Isaiah 6:1-8* - Dr. Thomas Ahlersmeyer

LUTHERAN HOUR MINISTRIES - is available on these radio stations:

WTRV –100.5 FM Sundays at 7:00 am

WSRW –105.7 FM Sundays at 6:30 am

Visit lutheranhour.org to read about next Sunday’s message.

SERVING YOU

Staff:

Eric Black, Pastor
Richard Krueger, Parish Assistant
Noelle Kaminski, Office Manager
Tammy Ahrens, Office Assistant
Vonda Smestad, Pre-school Director

Officers and Board Chairmen:

President, David Ahrens
Vice-President, Ken Martin
Treasurer, Dale Robart
Secretary, Kurt Veitengruber
Education, Dan Bohlinger
Elders, Kevin Mueller
Outreach, Rick Krueger
Social Ministry, Shirley Kremm
Stewardship, Dan Hula
Trustees, Kurt Veitengruber

Congregational Auxiliaries & Services:

Acolytes, Pastor Eric
Altar Guild, Carol Mushong
Bowling League, Joanne Gillette
CARES Bible Study,
Church Extension, Richard Tank
LifeLight, Dwight Anderson
LIFT, Dave Ahrens
LWML, Linda Blain
 and Shirley Hoese
Parish Service Guild, Barbara Brinkman
 and Sherry Troutwine
Prayer Chain, Sharon Fahling
Wedding Coordinator, Sherry Troutwine
Ushers, Pete Garchow

Messiah Service Calendar – May 2024

Sunday, May 5, 2024 – 10:00 am

Elders: Jim Hoffman
Ushers: Team 1
Acolyte:
Altar Guild: Team 3: Judy Gerke, Deb Krueger, Diane Wheeler, Barbara Wilson
Counters: Mark Altemann and Dave Kremm
Lawn Mower: Rick Domine

Thursday, May 9, 2024 – 7:00 pm

Elders: Pete Garchow
Ushers: Team 1
Acolyte:
Altar Guild: Team 3: Judy Gerke, Deb Krueger, Diane Wheeler, Barbara Wilson

Sunday, May 12, 2024 – 10:00 am

Elders: Larry Goodlander
Ushers: Team 2
Acolyte:
Altar Guild: Team 4: Sharon Hula, Joann Hilton, Rita Van Etten, Marcy Merkle
Counters: Lori Martin and Joann Hilton
Lawn Mower:

Sunday, May 19, 2024 – 10:00 am

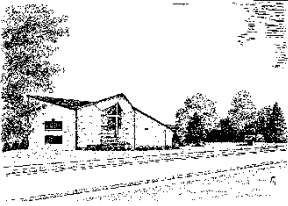
Elders: Rich Griffis
Ushers: Team 3
Acolyte:
Altar Guild: Team 4: Sharon Hula, Joann Hilton, Rita Van Etten, Marcy Merkle
Counters: Judy Gerke and Diane Wheeler
Lawn Mower: Pete Garchow

Sunday, May 26, 2024 – 10:00 am

Elders: Kevin Mueller
Ushers: Team 4
Acolyte:
Altar Guild: Team 1: Carol Mushong, Barb Brinkman, Laura Altemann, Arlene Mansfield
Counters: Jerry Tiedt and Marijo Pataniczek
Lawn Mower: Ron Mansfield

Sign Changer: Peter Tessin

Thank you all for serving!



May 2024

Messiah Lutheran Church



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 LifeLight 6:00 pm Choir 7:00 pm	2 Confessions Study 10:00 am	3 Pastor's Day Off	4 Family Game Night 5:00 pm
5 Worship/Communion 10:00 am Bible Class 9:00 am	6 Elders 7:00 pm	7 Trustees 7:00 pm Outreach 7:00 pm	8 LifeLight 6:00 pm Choir 7:00 pm	9 Service Guild 1:00 pm Ascension Meal 5:00 pm Ascension Worship 7:00 pm	10 Pastor's Day Off	11
12 Worship/Communion 10:00 am Bible Class 9:00 am	13	14 Education 7:00 pm	15 LifeLight 6:00 pm	16 Sandy's Tradition 11:30 am Preschool End of Year Program 6:00 pm	17 Pastor's Day Off	18 VBS Staff Training 9:00 am Urdu Worship Service 5:00 pm
19 Worship/Communion 10:00 am Bible Class 9:00 am	20 Newsletter Deadline 9:00 am Council 7:00 pm	21	22 LifeLight 6:00 pm	23	24 Pastor's Day Off	25
26 Worship/Communion 10:00 am Bible Class 9:00 am	27 Memorial Day Office Closed	28	29 LifeLight 6:00 pm	30	31 Rick's Day Off Pastor's Day Off	

* Rick is on Leave through Monday, May 27th.