

# Messiah Messenger



MESSIAH LUTHERAN CHURCH - DECEMBER - 2022

## "A New Year . . . Already?"

We began a new year at the end of last month at Messiah Lutheran Church. Some of you understand what I mean, but others of you may be asking yourselves, "*A new year . . . already?*" But it's only December!" In one sense, you're right. The calendar we normally use to plan our activities still has one month to go in A.D. 2022, but the Church follows a different calendar, one that began four weeks before Christmas Day, on November 27th. So, Happy New Year!

Now, the four weeks before Christmas are known as the season of Advent, a time of the church year in which the people of God prepare themselves for Christ's coming into the world in human form. We prepare to celebrate Christ's first coming at his birth as a baby boy, Jesus, in Bethlehem. Much of the world joins us in this celebration, even if they do not understand its full significance. It is important for them to understand it, however, so that they can prepare themselves for Christ's final coming as King and Judge of the living and the dead.

One of the ways the Church prepares herself to celebrate Christmas and to share the Good News of Christ's birth with other people is by attending midweek services during the season of Advent. This year at Messiah Lutheran Church we are following a sermon series entitled, "Dominus: The Advent of the Son of God in the Gospel of Mark," by Dr. David Lewis. He writes:

Advent means arrival, and in Mark Jesus does arrive, even if this appears suddenly when he comes as an adult to be baptized by John in the Jordan. At his baptism Jesus receives the Holy Spirit, is demonstrated to be the Messiah and Lord, is declared to be the Son of God, and then is thrown out into battle against Israel's enemies - not the Romans - but the devil, sin, and death. In this version of our Lord's advent, the dominion of these spiritual powers is defeated, we are freed, and Jesus alone has become Lord.

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## "A New Year . . . Already?"

The dates, sermon titles, and texts for our midweek Advent, Christmas Eve, and Christmas Day services are as follows:



- November 30 "The Advent of Our Lord," Mark 1:1-15
- December 07 "Our Lord's Authority over the Satanic Realm," Mark 1:21-34
- December 14 "Our Lord's Authority over Sin," Mark 2:1-17
- December 21 "Our Lord's Authority over Death," Mark 5:21-43
- December 24 Family Service at 6:30 pm
- December 24 Candlelight Service at 10:00 pm
- December 25 Christmas Day Service at 10:30 am (No Sunday School)

I pray that you will be able to join us often for our special midweek services this Advent season on Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m. as we prepare to worship our Lord Jesus Christ, born as a baby in Bethlehem.

Your co-worker in Christ, Pastor Lofgren

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*Nov. 30th - Advent Devotion from Lutheran Hour Ministries: Zechariah and Elizabeth were both righteous before God, walking blamelessly in all the commandments and statutes of the Lord. But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren, and both were advanced in years. (Luke 1:6-7)*

I feel for Zechariah and Elizabeth—two faithful people who loved God and served Him with all their hearts. And yet, they had no children, though they wanted them very much.

No doubt their neighbors had a lot to say about that. "You must have sinned," they said. "God is punishing you." As if this family didn't have enough grief to carry already!

But this was not a punishment from God. The Bible shows us that God doesn't play mind games. When He disciplines people, He makes the connection between the sin and the result very clear!

No, the fact is, we live in a broken world, and bad things happen, even to the people God loves. And we may go for years, even a lifetime, with no explanation for why God allowed it.

You, too, may be suffering and wondering why. If so, put your trust in the God who saw and loved these two—and you as well. He may not explain Himself, but He sees you and He cares. So much, in fact, that He came into this unfair, broken world to take your suffering on Himself—to mend you, and all creation, with His own blood on the cross. And when He rose from the dead, He gave us the sure and certain hope that some day, He will put all things right.

WE PRAY: Dear Lord, help me trust You as I wait for the day when You make all things new. Amen.



## Update from the Board of Directors



On November 6, Messiah had what was probably the shortest voters' meeting on record. The congregation voted to approve the budget that had been presented at the town hall meeting on October 23. This is a balanced budget of \$719,292, meaning there are no plans to take money from savings to pay for current expenses. This budget does include a less than 1% increase in the offering budget and a 10.5% decrease in budgeted expenses.

At that same meeting, the congregation approved three candidates for the board of directors: David Theis, Maurice Doublet III, and Russ Leachman. Pam Fields was approved as the new co-chair of the Fellowship Committee, which will now be led by her and Kathlin Jauregui. We thank all these folks for their willingness to serve. Sadly, the lay ministry positions of Adult Education and Youth Development remain unfilled. If you have any interest in serving the congregation in either capacity, please reach out to Pastor Lofgren or anyone on the Board of Directors.

The meeting ended with an upbeat presentation from David Theis, our local CEF representative. The Church Extension Fund supports Lutheran congregations by supplying funds for building churches and schools such as our FLC. They get money by members investing funds with CEF. The CEF provides a rebate to the congregation based on the amount of money we have invested with the CEF (as a % of our outstanding note). As the amount of money members has invested with CEF has grown, so has our rebate. It's grown from \$3,219 in 2019 to almost \$11,000 in 2021. Our rebate for 2022 should be around \$16,000. Messiah uses those rebates as additional principal payment on our mortgage, which helps reduce our total interest payment over the life of the note. If anyone would like to add to a current investment or make a new investment with the Church Extension Fund, please see David Theis.

Barring anything unforeseen, the Board won't be meeting in December, but we hope to see all of you at many of the special services in December as we prepare to celebrate our Lord's birth.

All the blessings of the season from your Board of Directors

*Tony Giardinelli, Pete Robinson, Anthony Sansone,  
Sharon Loren, Pam Fields, David Sattler, and Brad Sanders.*



## From our Elders

The Christmas season is upon us and we kicked off our celebration of the anticipation of the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, with our first Advent service on Wed. Nov. 30th.



We will continue our Advent services on Dec. 7th, 14th and 21st. Each celebration, which begins at 5:30 PM, with a light supper of various soups and deserts. This fellowship time is then followed by the service at 6:30. Be sure and join us the next three Wednesdays.

We will have the ultimate celebration of Jesus's birth with two worship services on Christmas Eve, Dec. 24th, at 5:30 pm and 10:00 pm and then at our normal worship time of 10:30 am on Sunday, Dec. 25th, which includes communion. There will be no bible class prior to the Christmas Day service. We hope you can join us for fellowship and the celebration of the birth of our Lord.

To update you on the progress being made with the formation of the 'Learning Groups', Pastor Lofgren has had a full schedule of interviews. The response has been phenomenal. It appears that Pastor's plan to have the three preliminary groups formed and ready to go to work in January is on schedule. If this does happen, which it should, and each of the groups are diligent in accomplishing their assigned tasks, it is feasible that they could be ready to hand off their information to the second stage group, the Vision group, by the end of March.

If the Vision team can then come up with a vision that suits the majority of the membership (evidenced by approval in a voter's meeting) by perhaps the end of May, the final team, the Mission Statement team will simply have to come up with a mission statement for the church and get that approved by the members.

If this can be accomplished quickly, we might find ourselves in a position to begin the call process for a permanent pastor by June or July. I realize this is optimistic, but given the willingness that has been evidenced by the interview process, it is obvious that our members are ready to tackle these tasks and get us in position to start the call process.



Let's get through the holiday season and be ready to go to work in the new year.

Your brother in Christ, Mike Lang



## Adult Education



Thanks to all who participated and led 2022 Adult Education activities. In December the Adult Education team is planning for 2023 and focusing on Worship and Advent opportunities for our members and guests. Use readings from weekly worship on Sundays and Wednesdays, the daily Portals of Prayer, and the Lutheran Hour Ministries Advent devotions, Daily Devotions Lutheran Hour Ministries (lhm.org).

Messiah's Constitution By-Laws Article VI B 4 define the responsibilities of the Lay Minister of Adult Education:

- a. be responsible for all matters which nurture and strengthen adults, single and married, from young adult years through their passing into eternal glory;
- b. aid the Pastor(s) and Staff in areas of adult education, adult service, and small group ministries (e.g. guest speakers, coordinating church library, etc.); and
- c. appoint annually, with the assistance of Pastor(s) and Staff, a committee to help fulfill the responsibilities of Adult Education.

Obviously, this position, serving under the chairmanship of the head elder, Mike Lang, needs to work closely with all other Lay Ministers, the elders and the Pastor. Adult Education supports the elders and Discipleship Lay Minister in "discipling" new and existing members, that is, to grow them spiritually in the Word of God and the Lutheran Confessions. Likewise Adult Education supports the Missions lay ministry in training for outreach, evangelism, and the defense of what we believe and hope for (1 Peter 3:15), apologetics.

After the constitution was revised to separate Fellowship and Adult Education, I was privileged to lead the new Adult Ed group for four years beginning in 2012, and to serve on the committee with others since then. Currently we have a core advisory committee and are asking for more of you to participate on the committee, to lead small groups and to teach. We also need someone to step up as Lay minister. Let Mike Lang or I know if you would like to serve in this role, or if you want to join those of us on the advisory committee.

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## Adult Education



For 2023 let us know what you would like. Currently we plan to continue Pastor's Bible class at 9:15 on Sunday's, a Friday morning weekly small group starting with a study "Contagious Faith led by Mission's Ministry, a weekly Sunday afternoon small group with various topics, and a monthly small group led by Mario & Eve Betancourt's on "Cold Case Christianity" by Wallace. We also have a monthly lady's breakfast fellowship group led by Lindy Eschenko and a weekly Tuesday morning breakfast group led by Paul Duennenberg and Dennis Parker in north Boerne at Reyna's Cafe. We seek other small groups in the Fair Oaks area and the Bergheim area. Let me know if you can volunteer to host and we'll help with a facilitator and topics.

Also, we will have a new read through the Bible program which will start January 1. One can choose their own plan, or several are using the new book by Laura Sanders, "Your Companion to the #1 Bestseller" which is a chronological reading plan mixing OT and NT chapters with daily helps and questions for reflection. There will be opportunities for small group discussions weekly.

Psalm 119:105, ESV *"Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path."*

Matthew 4:4, ESV *"Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God."*

Romans 15:4, ESV *"For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope."*

Dennis Parker - drparker46@gmail.com



Wise men, still seek him.  
Those on earth who realize  
how much they need Him.  
Following Jesus  
wherever He may lead them.  
Wise men, still seek him.  
Wise men, still seek him.





## Time and Talent Survey

The information from the 2023 Time and Talent survey is being compiled and will soon be shared with the Lay Ministry leaders. Thank you to all that contributed information and for your willingness to serve in the many aspects of Messiah's ministries.

## Refurbishment Project

The refurbishment project continues on schedule with only minor modifications. The expanded women's restroom is getting tiled and walls finished. The new kitchen, sound booth and nave areas have been framed and some sheetrock applied. There will be an anticipated slow down during December, but progress continues.

## Sleep in Heavenly Peace (SHP) Christmas Eve

SHP will have its Annual Christmas Eve Bed delivery of beds to kids without beds in San Antonio. This year SHP is planning on delivering 300 beds to cap off a total of 1300 beds built and delivered in 2022 in San Antonio.

Messiah members you can participate in the Christmas Eve Action by donating one or more "Twin XL Bed-in-a-Bag" (comforter, fitted sheet, flat sheet, pillowcase sets, e.g. get or order from Walmart). Interested in donating Bed-in-a-Bag for Christmas Eve or volunteering next year . . . let us know. See more about SHP-San Antonio at: <https://shpbeds.org/chapter/tx-san-antonio/> or find SHP San Antonio on Facebook.

Contacts: David or Lorrie Wendeborn 830-331-0870

David.Wendeborn@gmail.com



## UPCOMING EVENTS



### MARK YOUR CALENDARS

#### Christmas Card Making and Cookie Decorating Youth and Multigenerational Event

This Event is scheduled for **Sunday, December 11th**, immediately following the Worship Service.

We will be making Christmas Cards to send to our shut-ins and friends of Messiah to let them know they are loved.

We also plan on decorating cookies to eat with our lunch of pigs in the blanket, chili, and hot apple cider. Thanks in advance to Sue Parker for baking all our delicious sugar cookies and Thrivent for their donation.



#### Wacky Witnessing Olympics

Be sure and mark your calendars for **Sunday, January 8th**, when we will be holding the First ever, Wacky Witnessing Olympics. Youth and children of all ages are encouraged to invite their friends, come up with a fun event to show-off and enjoy time spent together.

The events will be judged on:

Team having the most fun.

Most creative Olympic Game

Best team costume.

The team that brings the most visitors.

It's all about Jesus and fellowship, so plan to join the fun! Adults who would like to judge or attend are also welcome. Please contact Kathy Giardinelli at 210-334-8820 or [kagiardinelli@gmail.com](mailto:kagiardinelli@gmail.com).





## Missions in Action

Over the past few months Missions Committee has been very active! Mark, Tony and myself attended the Boerne Boo on October 22. This is a great opportunity for our church to further get involved in the Boerne community! Some say, Messiah is too far outside of Boerne to interest families in attending our church. This event with hundreds of children and their parents would be a great way for Messiah to introduce itself to the community. Mission City Church had a big group there with a booth right next to ours. Please think about joining us next year for this fun event!



We followed this up at the end of October with the MKP Fall Fest on the 30th. It was lots of fun to see many of Messiah's members participate. We had Ed & Gracie Funk, Joyce and Janis Meier, Ed and Carol Mycock, Dennis and Sue Parker, Pam Risley, Tom and Kathy Bibb, Larry and Kathy Rottman, Vonda Petmecky, and Brad & Laura Sanders; plus many of Messiah's Kids Preschool staff and Gina Huskey (the Director). There were some great signs with their themes: such as the Laura Sanders' Fall in Love with "JESUS" and Brad's How the Lost is Won with Bible Verses for his old west theme. We pray next year can be even more of a witness with this opportunity!

**Operation Christmas Child:** Was a huge success! We are so thankful to Gina and the preschool for participating this year and bringing in an additional 41 boxes to our members who donated 24 online boxes and in person donations of 100 boxes. Who would have ever thought that God would bless us with over twice as many boxes as last year! Mark and I would specially like to thank Crysta Dunda for her presentation, the Fellowship Committee and Debbie Stender for helping us organize the kick-off!



We finished off with a Tie-Dye Youth Servant event on November 13th.

Those attending donated tee-shirts for the OCC shoeboxes. Thanks especially to Brooklyn, Mark and Melissa Rutledge who guided us thru and those who attended: Amani and David Rhoads, the Brosien's, Gianni Betancourt, Pam Sansone, Josh & Becca Sagebiel, Tony, Mark and myself.





# MESSIAH'S KIDS PRESCHOOL



Messiah's Kids finished out the month of November in a very giving fashion! Our classes made a large donation of feast fixings to Hill Country Daily Bread. The classes also stuffed close to 40 boxes for Operation Christmas Child. The kids were amazed with how little fits inside the box and how grateful the children are to receive these heartfelt packages.



The preschool is buzzing with excitement as they enjoy all of the festivities around Christmas. There will be many Happy Birthday Jesus parties, as well as Christmas programs and our annual Christmas walk. This year, our Christmas walk will take a closer look at the meanings of the symbols of Christmas.



- The tree points to heaven to remind us that God is eternal.



- The wreath is a circle reminding us that God's love for us never ends.

- The present reminds us of God's gift to the world.



- The cross reminds us of the sacrifice made when Jesus died for our sins.



- The bells ring out in celebration to announce the coming of the Lord.



- The baby in a manger shows the birth of Jesus, the Lord and Savior of the world.



- The candy cane is shaped like a shepherd's staff, reminding us that Jesus is our shepherd.



- The star was placed in the sky for the wise men to follow.



# *Warmest Wishes for our December Celebrations !*

## *Birthdays*

Dec 4 - Ed Mycock  
Dec 6 - Peggy Hedrick  
Dec 12 - Linda Dicke  
Dec 12 - Sara Barry  
Dec 13 - Brad Sanders  
Dec 13 - Larry Risley  
Dec 19 - Brooke Turner  
Dec 19 - John Soper  
Dec 19 - Chris Eckhart  
Dec 19 - Mel Paulson  
Dec 21 - Jim Behrens  
Dec 24 - Kim Maloy  
Dec 26 - Mike Stender  
Dec 27 - Jochen Brosien  
Dec 27 - Suzy Soper  
Dec 28 - Carol Mycock

## *Anniversaries*

*December 5th*  
*Kelly & Peggy Joseph*  
*35 years*

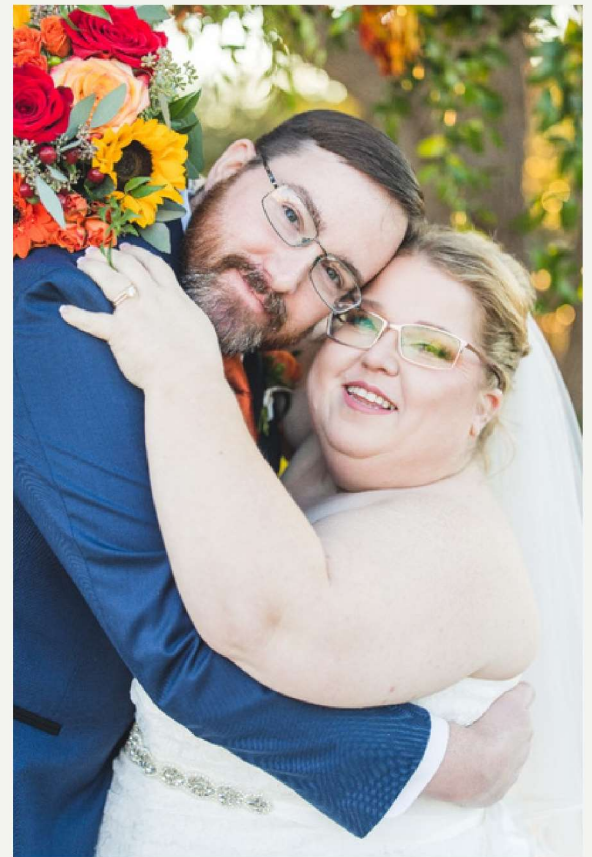
*December 30th*  
*John & Suzy Soper*  
*61 years*

THANK YOU !

Patrick and I (*the former Sarah Maloy*) want to thank our Messiah Church family for their love and prayers for our future together. We very much appreciate all the kind words and enjoyed hearing from everyone. We are so touched by your generosity of gifts and money towards our honeymoon fund. We are planning on going someplace tropical in March of 2023 during spring break!

Once again, Thank You for your continued support as we start this new phase in our lives.

*Mr. & Mrs. Smith*



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