



# 2021 Annual Report



Annual Meeting  
Sunday, January 23, 2022  
10:45 a.m.  
following the 9:30 a.m.  
Worship Service



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# Annual Meeting Agenda

## MESSIAH LUTHERAN CHURCH CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

**Messiah Lutheran Church**

**Annual Meeting Agenda**

**January 23, 2022 @ 10:45 AM**

1. Call to order – Beth Melgren, Council President  
Determination of quorum  
Opening prayer
2. Approval of Annual Congregation Meeting Minutes – November 14, 2021
3. Announcements
4. 2022 Budget approval:
  - A. Messiah Lutheran Church
  - B. Messiah Lighthouse Child and Family Development Center
5. Endowment Committee Elections
6. Adjournment

# Congregational Minutes

**Messiah Lutheran Church  
Congregational Meeting Minutes  
November 14, 2021**

1. **Call to Order**—Beth Melgren, called the meeting to order at 10:45. A quorum was easily declared present.
2. **Opening Prayer**—Pastor Orin offered an opening prayer.
3. **Approval of Minutes**—**Motion** was made by Bill Roark with second by David Siewert to approve January 24, 2021, and April 18, 2021 congregational meeting minutes. **Motion** carried.
4. **Elections for 2020**—Beth extended thanks to the Nominating Committee
  - a. **Council Member for 1-year term**—the slate of candidates to serve a one-year-term (2022-2023) on congregational council was presented. **Motion** made to elect Holly Marsh by acclamation. Motion passed.
  - b. **Council Members for 3-year term**—the following slate of candidates to serve a three-year-term (2022-2025) as members of the congregational council was presented. Cathy Carleton, Chris Davis, Andrew Langr, and Becky Roark. **Motion** made to elect by acclamation. **Motion** passed.
  - c. **Synod Assembly Voting Members**—**Motion** made to elect by acclamation the following as voting members to the 2022 synod assembly: Peggy Shelton & Larry Stillwell. **Motion** passed.
  - d. **Nominating Committee (4 members plus 2 outgoing council members)**—**Motion** made to elect by acclamation the following as members of the nominating committee: Wes Bowman, Scott Estrem, Nancy Hoeman, Nadine Melgren and April Gebken and Mike Hudson (outgoing council members). **Motion** passed.
5. **Adjournment**—Meeting was adjourned at 11:05 am.

Respectfully submitted,  
Vickie Donnell, Recording Secretary

**2022 Nominating Committee Members**

Wes Bowman  
Scott Estrem  
Nancy Hoeman  
Nadine Melgren  
April Gebken  
Mike Hudson

**Term 2022-2025 Council Members**

3-year term  
Cathy Carleton  
Chris Davis  
Andrew Langr  
Becky Roark

**2022 Synod Assembly Delegates**

Peggy Shelton and Larry Stillwell

**Term 2022-2023 (1-yr)**

Holly Marsh

**Returning Council Members**

Beth Melgren  
Zack Bartels  
Mary Keidle  
Charles Hill  
Eric Carlson  
Lindsey Dillion

# Messiah Staff

<b>Orin Cummings</b>	Pastor	<a href="mailto:pastor@messiahmo.org">pastor@messiahmo.org</a>
<b>Nathan Carlson</b>	Business Manager	<a href="mailto:Nathan.carlson@messiahmo.org">Nathan.carlson@messiahmo.org</a>
<b>Sydney Marsh</b>	Office Administrator	<a href="mailto:officemanager@messiahmo.org">@lighthousecfdc.org</a>
<b>Kurt Parker</b>	Messiah Lighthouse Director	<a href="mailto:kurt.parker@messiahmo.org">kurt.parker@messiahmo.org</a>
<b>Missy Fite</b>	Custodian, p/t	<a href="mailto:janitor@messiahmo.org">janitor@messiahmo.org</a>
<b>Marilyn Boston</b>	Custodian, p/t	<a href="mailto:Marilyn.boston@messiahmo.org">Marilyn.boston@messiahmo.org</a>
<b>Janelle Joswick</b>	Organist	<a href="mailto:Janelle.joswick@messiahmo.org">Janelle.joswick@messiahmo.org</a>
<b>Karen Bowman</b>	Nursery Attendant	<a href="mailto:karenbowman@messiahmo.org">karenbowman@messiahmo.org</a>
<b>Dawn Gutierrez</b>	Contemporary Worship Minister	<a href="mailto:dawn.gutierrez@messiahmo.org">dawn.gutierrez@messiahmo.org</a>
	Worship & Music Coordinator	
	Choir Director	
<b>Morgan Benedict</b>	AV/Media	<a href="mailto:morganbenedict@messiahmo.org">morganbenedict@messiahmo.org</a>

## Council President Report

Dear Messiah Members,

2021 was an astonishing year filled with joy, sadness, abrupt changes, and frequent adaptations in addition to many blessings. Phrases such as “the new normal” and “I’ll send you a zoom link” entered our vocabulary. Messiah Lutheran Church leadership faced significant transitions by implementing COVID-19 restrictions, filling several vacancies on Church Council, and hiring a fantastic Church Office Administrator. Somehow, we thrived by employing new methods of gathering. We are so blessed to return to in-person services with both singing and Holy Communion in the sanctuary.

Through all the struggles we have faced, Messiah has stayed true to our mission. Your financial support has allowed us to make needed changes in the sanctuary to live stream services and improve the quality of audio and visual technology. We painted many areas on the sanctuary ceiling along with much needed light bulb changes. We are blessed with the dedication of our Property Committee members to keep Messiah in tip top shape.

It has truly been an honor for me to work with so many dedicated and talented leaders at Messiah. I remain forever grateful for those who took personal risk to continue to operate our weekly Saturday and Sunday Services; from providing music to floral arrangements, to the staff and volunteers who continue to fill the gaps at Messiah. I especially acknowledge and respect the choices of others to remain safer at home yet continue their spiritual life and connection to Messiah. It is remarkable how many non-local friends and members of Messiah attended virtual Sunday services.

A highlight of the year was finally being able to Install Pastor Orin Cummings. What a beautiful sunny day we were blessed with in November to have social time in the parking lot. We are so grateful to Pastor Cummings and all that he has brought to our congregation and look forward to the future and our “New Normal” under his leadership!

Blessings,

Beth Melgren, Council President

Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean  
not on your own understanding. Proverbs 3:5

# Pastoral Report

Living in a time of pandemic has made so many of us feeling diminished, even the church. From the beginning, we have been afraid to be outside or with others outside of family. The weight and constraints of the crisis have worked to limit gatherings and enjoyment of life. We are afraid of getting sick. We fear losing our job, complete debilitation or dying alone. Fear of losing loved ones is real, too.

The mental toll of COVID-19 is made evident by increased levels of anxiety in the community. Waves of infection and hospitalizations, inefficient distribution of vaccines and resistance to vaccine, along with efforts to keep the economy running have left strong feelings of frustration, displeasure, and hostility. In addition, divisive politics has caused awkwardness, loss of friendships, and arguments between members enough to hinder spiritual growth.

At Messiah, we have and continue to emphasize love. "God shows his love for us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us" (Rom. 5:8). Love sacrifices for the neighbor. "Love is patient and kind; love is not jealous or boastful; it is not arrogant or rude. Love does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrong, but rejoices in the right" (1 Cor. 13:4-6). Love does not mean we will not have disagreements or experience brokenness for we know that love does not rule out hurts. However, love being one of nine gifts of the Spirit means that we receive divine aid. We do not go it alone. We "clothe ourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony" Col. 3:14).

How are we doing?

As Christians, we are reminded that fear can blind and prevent us from doing good. Instead, we accept the challenges facing our nation as opportunities to trust God and not let fear win.

Our Task Force/Ad Hoc committee has led the way by encouraging safe practices **for gatherings including worship** and taking the vaccine. With the vaccine in our arms, **we no longer face an uncertain future but we continue to wear masks at worship. The hope is that most of our members, if not all, will receive the vaccine and build up immunity. Since there is no vaccine for infants through age 5 years,** managing the virus like we manage the flu is our best approach.

Worship has and continues to be on Saturday at 5:30 p.m. and Sunday at 9:30 a.m. only. We offer three formats. Saturday is Casual worship with a traditional format that excludes sung liturgy. On Sunday, there are two formats—1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> is Contemporary worship with Revelations Praise Band, and 2<sup>nd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> is Traditional worship with sung liturgy and the organ.

**Sunday School and Confirmation classes resumed on Sunday, September 19. Adult Education resumed on Sunday, October 3 and meets in the Sanctuary during Sunday School hour. We resumed distribution of the sacrament in the sanctuary with some modification on Reformation weekend. Holy Communion is administered by continuous table.**

We persevere in this season of COVID 19 with a guarded approach until there is a sustainable decline in the number of COVID 19 cases, infection rate, hospitalizations, and deaths. There are no definitive plan to resume two worship services on Sundays. However, in October, we reintroduced **Coffee Hour on Sundays with Parish Life as host. This follows worship in the Fellowship Hall.**

Where are we going?

As a hybrid church, we acknowledge that we are being characterized by in-person and online worship. However, we struggle with our online identity as far as membership is concerned, its uniqueness, and what we are trying to convey.

In the traditional sense, we are rebuilding connections through in-person small group meetings, social events, and Christian education activities. We retain the ZOOM platform but have significantly reduced its use.

Every effort is made to visit the homebound, bring them the sacrament and help them feel connected with the church. Visitation continues to be a priority and includes reaching out to members who find it challenging to get out.

At one time, Messiah was a community church. Today, it is a church within the community because a handful of our members live in the community. We intentionally decided to remain in the community. Why?

Our vision expresses the idea of a place that is open and inviting to all, welcoming those in need and searching for the Word of God, and where wounds are healed, the lost found, the hungry fed, hope replace despair and lives are changed. The vision articulates ministry within and outside the walls of the church. Toward this end, we house and operate a Daycare on church property, host Park Crest AA groups, Al Anon, and NA groups. We charter the Scout Troop and Pack, support Holland Elementary School, and manage and run Messiah House in collaboration with Safe to Sleep.

Messiah's outreach extends beyond the Seminole/Holland neighborhood. However, in an effort to fully identify with our neighborhood, we are working with residents, the city and Community Partners of the Ozarks to reestablish the Seminole/Holland Neighborhood Association.

In our desire to serve God, we remain open to ideas from members. It would please me very much to see more members actively participate in the ministry and mission of Messiah. This would be exciting and fulfilling since "each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good" (1 Cor. 12:7).

It was a joy and relief when we hired Sydney Marsh as Office Administrator. She is a welcome addition to the staff. Also, we are getting closer to hiring a Director of Christian Discipleship. This individual will provide expert leadership in the area of children, youth and family ministry. Be praying for guidance as we finalize job description and advertise the position.

Finally, a word of thanks to all of you for your partnership in bearing witness to Jesus Christ. With gratitude to:

- + Church Council for leadership
- + Beth Melgren, President
- + Nathan Carlson, Business Manager
- + Sydney Marsh, Office Administrator
- + Kurt Parker and Missy Fite, Janitors
- + Task Force/Ad Hoc committee for your vigilance and guidance during the pandemic
- + Safety Shepherds for hospitality with grace and firmness
- + Marilyn Boston, Organist
- + Karen Bowman, Contemporary Music Coordinator
- + Morgan Benedict, AV Tech
- + Altar Guild, Flower Committee, Assisting Ministers, Acolytes, Lectors, Cantors, Revelations Praise Band, and volunteer AV Techs
- + Banner and quilters, especially Pat Lindquist, Terry Denham, Susan Spaethe, and Nancy Hoeman
- + Terry Michael for technology maintenance and upgrade
- + Jeffery and Jessica Brannon for maintaining website and Facebook
- + Office volunteers, especially Annetta Svagera
- + All who chair committees and coordinate events such as Irene Chaloupecky for Funeral Socials and Jean Bardy for Hanging the Greens, and Rachel Bergin for Christmas Program
- + Sunday School and Confirmation teachers
- + Rachel Bergin, Wee Ones and God's Kids

- + Cherub Chimes, Sydney Marsh
- + Cherub Bells, Mark Herron
- + Lucy Stillwell, Joy Ringers
- + Daycare Advisor Board and staff
- + Bud Schwab, Wes Bowman, Kurt Parker, Lucy and Larry Stillwell, Colleen Prosser, Mark Herron, and Dick and Margaret Peterson for odd jobs and maintenance of property
- + Earth angels Mary Keidle and Jim Rucker

“Blessed are those who trust in the Lord,  
 whose trust is the Lord.  
 They shall be like a tree planted by water,  
 sending out its roots by the stream.  
 It shall not fear when heat comes,  
 and its leaves shall stay green;  
 in the year of drought it is not anxious,  
 and it does not cease to bear fruit” – Jeremiah 17:7-8.

Pastor Orin Cummings

## Mutual Ministry

In affirmation of its commitment to mutuality in building up the body of Christ and carrying out the mission of Messiah, the Constitution provides for a Mutual Ministry Committee. The term “mutual ministry” recognizes that the Church’s ministry is the mutual concern and responsibility of both the laity and the pastor—everyone participating according to the gifts given to them and the ministries entrusted to them.

Keeping Messiah’s mission as its focus, the members are intentional in challenging the congregation to work as a whole while bringing encouragement to everyone’s ministry—Pastor Orin’s and Messiah’s members. The primary work of the committee members is to listen, encourage, communicate, and recommend—serving as a ‘sounding board’ for Pastor Orin on ideas, goals, and concerns and a ‘listening post’ for members of the congregation. Building community is always the priority with ongoing consideration for the spiritual, emotional, and physical wellbeing of all.

During 2021, the committee met as a group bi-monthly with members available to Pastor Orin personally to support his leadership in Messiah’s ministries. We always welcome conversations with members of the congregation as we seek to best share our gifts, ensuring that Messiah is everything that it can be as we are called to carry out the work of Christ in our congregation, our community, and our world.

Committee Members:

Pastor Orin, Rob Bergin, Wes Bowman, Vickie Donnell, Nadine Melgren, Marissa Weaver



# Memorials

The Memorial Committee is a group entrusted to acknowledging individual memorial gifts. We mail thank you notes to those who have given a donation to Messiah Lutheran Church in memory of members and friends. Nathan Carlson, the Business Manager, provides us with the information.

Our team includes Mary Nau, Annetta Svagera, and Martha Morris.

In 2021, Messiah Lutheran Church received 30 memorial gifts.

Submitted by Martha Morris

# Pub Theology

Pub Theology has continued to gather monthly through these interesting times. We have had some very interesting discussions on many varied theological issues. We gather monthly (4<sup>th</sup> Thursday) except for Thanksgiving (since it is on Thursday) and Christmas if the holiday falls close. We communicate via email each month to remind all of the time (7 p.m.) and place (Uncle Bentleys). You need to be on the email list to get the information. We send out the topic so all can be prepare to discuss. This is not a large group (4-12), but we always enjoy the time and conversation regarding faith-based theology.

Submitted by Nathan Carlson

# Stewardship Committee

For the 2020-2021 year the Stewardship Committee requested that representatives among the various committees and groups within the Church tell the congregation about their ministries, in the hope members and visitors on hearing of opportunities might be led to volunteer. Presentations were made by Stewardship, Finance, Congregational Care, Music, and Sunday School.

A drive was completed in October and November with mailings of both pledge cards and a talent survey. As of report time there were 76 cards returned with pledges of \$258,520. Thank you for the response and support for the church.

Submitted by Mark Herron

# Messiah Lighthouse Report

Messiah Lighthouse Child and Family Development Center has served children and families in the community since October 2009. The mission of Messiah Lighthouse is to provide quality childcare in a Christian environment, with a focus on strengthening families through community support. Messiah Lighthouse is licensed to care for children six weeks to six years of age and has the distinction of being one of only 13 childcare facilities in Greene County to achieve accreditation through Missouri Accreditation for Early Childhood Education.

MLCFDC operates in partnership with the Lighthouse Child and Family Development Center, with community support from the Musgrave Foundation. Through this partnership, MLCFDC contracts for the services of our Center Director and receives financial support for the position of Family Support Coordinator, as well as support for three Professional Development Days for staff and coverage of expenses for onboarding of new staff members (physical exams, TB tests, background checks, First Aid and CPR training). As an organization, Lighthouse also operates a childcare center in partnership with Life 360 Church at The Fairbanks. The Lighthouse Executive Director, Liz Hahn, provides administrative expertise, grant writing, and leadership support to MLCFDC.

During 2021, MLCFDC experienced changes in the leadership team. Jessica Phillips began as Center Director in November, after serving as center director at another childcare facility in Greene County.

MLCFDC experienced leadership team changes in 2021. Jessica Phillips began as Center Director in November, after serving three years as a lead teacher and six months as center director at another Greene County childcare facility. Jessica has an Associate of Applied Science degree in Early Childhood Development from OTC, and received her Bachelor of Science in Child and Family Development at Missouri State University in December 2021. A search will begin in January for a Family Support Coordinator, following the resignation of Jeni Rousey, MSW, LCSW. Melody Farabee, Infant Lead Teacher and Assistant Center Director, worked a part-time schedule through most of 2021 due to family caregiving responsibilities, and we will welcome her back to full time in January 2022.

The COVID-19 pandemic continued to present challenges this year to enrollment and staffing; with occasional classroom closures necessitated by virus exposures and quarantines. Classrooms were realigned by combining preschool and pre-kindergarten students. Current enrollment is 34, 85% of current capacity of 40; the preschool enrollment is capped at 10, with four spaces held open until additional staff can be hired.

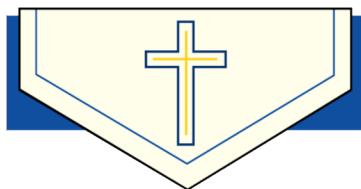
The MLCFDC ministry receives support of numerous members of the congregation. Special appreciation is extended to the following persons for their assistance in 2020:

- + The Messiah Endowment Committee for a grant in the amount of \$1520 for the purchase of classroom equipment.
- + Charles Hill and Colleen Prosser for their efforts to improve classrooms to provide a safe and healthy learning environment in compliance with licensing requirements, and Mary Keidle for her work to improve safety of the playground
- + Carolyn Malcolm, Peg Shelton, Irene Chaloupecky, and Barbara Hover for service on the Tuition Assistance Committee to review and approve applications for short-term assistance with tuition for families experiencing financial hardship.
- + Mr. Wes Carey, friend of the congregation, for donation of a refurbished washing machine
- + Nathan Carlson for assistance with financial and administrative functions.
- + Messiah Lutheran congregation members who provide support to the center through prayer and regular giving.
- + C.J. Hankins, for serving as previous Finance Team representative to the Advisory Board

+ Pastor Orin Cummings, Dennis Hoffman, Charles Hill (Council Representative), Nancy Hoeman, Joy Ward, Jason Weaver, and Mary Keidle (Finance Team representative) for service and guidance as members of the Advisory Board

Once again as we begin the new year, we look forward in faith to the restoration of operations toward normalcy with control of the pandemic. We hope that later in the year it will be possible to bring volunteers into the Center on a regular basis. In the meantime, there are many other ways the congregation can be involved in the MLCFDC ministry. We invite help with facility and playground workdays, gifts to the Tuition Assistance Fund to assist families in financial difficulty, regular giving in support of Center operations, and referrals of families in need of childcare. Above all, we ask for prayers for God's blessing on the children, families, and staff of this program

Submitted by Nancy Hoeman, on behalf of the MLCFDC Advisory Board



## Altar Guild

Messiah's Altar Guild is a ministry of volunteers which serves God and the congregation by preparing the sanctuary and altar for worship services. Each week, members of the Altar Guild prepare the chancel for the celebration of Holy Communion. The Altar Guild also cares for the paraments for each season of the Church year, the altar linens, communion vessels, and sanctuary furnishings including the processional crosses, acolyte's candlelighters, and baptismal font. Members select appropriate banners for each season of the church year and prepare for special services such as Holy Baptism.

The Altar Guild consists of six teams who serve on a rotating basis: Terry Dunham and Susan Spaethe, Lisa Melgren and Betty Wiles, Cathy Murrell and Sue Polly, Linda Elliot and Linda Michael, Holly Marsh and Sydney Marsh, and Nadine Melgren and Nancy Hoeman.

The distribution of Holy Communion was modified during the first half of the year to accommodate pandemic precautions. While consecration of the elements took place at the altar, distribution occurred as worshippers left the sanctuary. We express thanks to Joy Ward for baking bread for consecration and to the Safety Shepherds for their assistance in preparing for distribution of the Sacrament in the narthex.

The silver communion ware, originally given to the church in 1988 in memory of Ople Kruse, a former Altar Guild chair, was re-plated this year by Theiss Plating of Webster Groves, MO. This work was made possible by a grant from the Endowment Fund. The Communion set was rededicated the weekend of Pastor Orin's Installation.

The Altar Guild would like to express special appreciation for the following gifts to the congregation this year that enhance worship:

A new eternal flame sanctuary lamp was selected and installed by Charles Hill, a bequest from Mary Bielenberg-Hill.

A custom-made fair linen for the altar, donated by Kati and Jeff Dreiman and Sarah and Scott Theriault in honor of the 50th wedding anniversary of Vickie and Ed Donnell.

A processional banner for Pentecost Sunday was constructed by Terry Dunham and Nancy Hoeman.

New white and gold banners for Christ the King Sunday and Christmas, designed and constructed by Pat Lindquist and Cathy Murrell.

A tree skirt for the sanctuary Christmas tree in the ecclesiastical colors for Advent and Christmas, designed and constructed by Susan Spaethe and Terry Dunham.

Submitted by Nancy Hoeman

# Business Manager Report

The operations of Messiah continue to support the many ministries of the church locally, regionally, nationally, and worldwide. Our support has reached many areas across the region and the globe as we support local ministries and the ELCA missions on a monthly basis.

Messiah Lighthouse Child and Family Development serves youth and families of the community in a very unique way. We have given many families the chance to improve their lives in many ways. We have added strength and dedication to families and staff of both Messiah and Messiah Lighthouse Child Care.

This year Messiah has continued support of the surrounding community. We have had several projects that involved the entire Holland Neighborhood with the main project, "God's Work Our Hands". We have shown ups and downs in giving support and volunteer support. Messiah House, a very special ministry of Messiah, is helping homeless women get a new start. We have teams that regularly work on projects that involving the church properties. The Property Committee meets regularly to evaluate the needs for our properties and their support of Messiah.

The financial strength of Messiah has maintained a solid position this year. The staff and volunteers have done very well at assuring we can sustain the Ministries of Messiah by dedicated planning and funding support of the many programs we offer daily. Support has met the spending needs while not meeting the income budget, 95%. We budget for the ministries of Messiah that we strongly need to be funded. With many new needs and plans for the coming year, it will be a challenge for us all to meet these opportunities with giving and support.

Messiah must continue to grow in ministries and support. We as a church can do much more to reach those in need, as well as continue to provide for our members and friends in their daily needs. We must always challenge ourselves to do more for those who have less.

Serving in Christ.

Submitted by Nathan Carlson



## Messiah Shuttle

We didn't use the shuttle as much as we would have liked during 2021 due to COVID-19. The Scouts have used the shuttle for their Campout trips and the childcare center has used the shuttle for local fieldtrips. Hopefully 2022 will bring even more use.

Submitted by Wes Bowman

# Office Administrator Report

This past year has been a year of accepting our “new normal” in this pandemic. Guidelines are ever changing and numbers are fluctuating more than any of us would probably like! We, as a church, are back to in-person church services—Saturday evening at 5:30 p.m. and Sunday morning at 9:30 a.m. Tradition style is the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday of the month; while Contemporary style is the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays of the month. Holy Sacrament is now available during the service, which is a blessing! Reservations are no longer required for services, but masks are still required. We no longer have to space out in the pews during services, though most still choose to in order to be safe.

I wanted to say a big thank you to all the volunteers who have helped keep the office running this year. Those volunteers are: Marilyn Dial, Martha Morris, Carolyn Malcom, Vickie Donnell, JP Szesny, Ileen and Don Kendall, and Annetta Svagera. Annetta is still in the office both Wednesday and Fridays working on the attendance, keeping prayer list up-to-date, and consolidating our membership history into one place for the future.

I wanted to say another thank you to everyone for being so welcoming and patient with me as I have adjusted to the role of Office Administrator. The Church Council, Pastor, and Nathan have all been very helpful to both me, with guidance in my new position, and the congregation, as guiding voices through this year! Our 2021 Council members were Beth Melgren, Council President; Mike Hudson, Vice President; Mary Keidle, Secretary; and, Lindsey Dillion, Zack Bartels, Eric Carlson, April Gebken, Lisa Melgren, Jeff Patrick, and Charles Hill.

We have many people who keep things running at Messiah in addition to those on our leadership. These people chair the many committees at our church. Our chairpeople in 2021 were (I hope I don't miss anyone):

- + Nancy Hoeman, Altar Guild and Lighthouse Rep
- + Peggy Shelton, Altar Flower Committee
- + Susie Rucker, Christian Education
- + Rose Hohbein, Congregational Care and LWR
- + Josh Dimmick, Endowment
- + Vickie Donnell, Evangelism and Stephen Ministry
- + Martha Morris, Memorials
- + Ileen Kendall, Parish Life
- + Linda Michael, Piecemakers
- + Karen Bowman, Revelations Praise Band
- + Marcie Rosenkoetter, Prayer Team
- + Wes Bowman, Messiah Shuttle
- + Colleen Prosser, Social Ministry
- + Jean Bardy, Stephen Ministry
- + Mark Herron, Stewardship
- + Marilyn Dial, WELCA and WWW
- + Dawn Gutierrez, Worship and Music
- + Karen Bowman, Youth and Family

Our church is still very involved in supporting many ministries and groups within our community. Some of these groups include Messiah House, Holland-Seminole Neighborhood Association, NA, AA, Al Anon, Boy Scouts, and Crosslines.

Submitted by Sydney Marsh

# Holland Elementary

Since Messiah is a community partner for Holland Elementary School, we attempt to help both students and teachers as well as the community at large throughout the year. In the past year, Messiah has provided:

- + Benches for the playground at Holland. The playground is used by students and faculty as well as parents and community members. Places to sit while children play makes the space more welcoming. Funds provided from the endowment fund of Messiah.
- + An end of school year catered lunch for all faculty and staff to say thank you for the hard work on behalf of students in such difficult times.
- + Coats, hats, gloves, underwear, socks, sweat pants for students as needed. These are kept in the nurse's office and given to students when the need arises
- + A shoe closet is ongoing from a previous endowment fund grant. Students who need new shoes are referred to the school secretary and fitted for shoes from the supply on hand.
- + Several Messiah members continue to serve as "reading buddies" for students who need extra help with developing reading skills.

Submitted by Irene Chaloupecky

## Property Committee

According to the church constitution, the Church Property Committee "shall see to the proper maintenance and protection of all the property of the congregation, and take care that the same is kept in good repair." In addition to regular maintenance, the following issues were addressed:

Workdays addressing a large fallen branch, cleanup of church exterior, painting of ceiling above chancel, relamped the spotlights in the sanctuary for proper dimming, window cleaning, cleanout of attic over kitchen, mulching of landscaping, checkout of playground equipment, King's house trim painting and removal of dead bushes, repair of soffit on Messiah House, and rebuild the aluminum can storage unit.

Weekly efforts were the ongoing maintenance of landscaping.

Support for God's Work/Our Hands in September. This is a neighborhood cleanup event that Dave Siewert led the effort this year and in years past.

Thanks to the Property Committee and other volunteers for the work in 2021.

Submitted by Mark Herron

# Worship & Music Committee

January 2021 marked the completion of Dawn Gutierrez's three and a half years as our Worship and Music Coordinator, as well as our Senior Choir Director. Although we are in the midst of a worldwide pandemic, Dawn is still excited to see what God has in store for Messiah Lutheran Church in 2022.

Sunday, January 3, 2021, a prerecorded quartet of singers offered "The Glory of Christmas" composed by Lloyd Larson. It was wonderful to hear this beautiful music at the start of the New Year. Two weeks later the children from God's Kids pre-recorded themselves singing segments of the hymn "This Little Light of Mine" which was then pieced together into one video by Morgan Benedict. Dawn has been very thankful for this option of prerecorded musical offerings. Although it takes a lot more time to coordinate between Morgan, Marilyn, and the singers each week, it kept special music alive in our church, which was not only important for our church musicians but for our congregation as well.

The Worship and Music Committee decided to cancel our in-person Ash Wednesday services on February 17, 2021, due to inclement weather. Thankfully, with Morgan's help, we were able to live stream these services instead. All were able to worship in the comfort and safety of their own homes for Ash Wednesday this year.

March 2021 marked two years since we had begun using the worship assistant schedules created by Dawn Gutierrez. The worship assistant schedule is emailed to all volunteers each month. Reminder texts are sent out from Dawn every Friday to those worship assistants scheduled for that weekend. Dawn is extremely grateful this form of scheduling is still working for our church.

Our music ministries worked super hard to prepare for Holy Week and Easter. On Palm Sunday, March 28th "The King is Coming Today!" composed by Lloyd Larson was a prerecorded Vocal Quartet prelude. Dawn Gutierrez sang composer Hall Johnson's rendition of "Ride on, King Jesus" accompanied by the wonderful Marilyn Boston at the piano. It was a bombastic beginning to a beautifully planned out Holy Week!

The very end of May would have marked the end of our choir year, but due to the pandemic our choirs never offered in person musical offerings. All musical offerings were pre-recorded. Morgan Benedict has worked countless hours in 2021 to ensure that our musical offerings were transmitted over the internet to all who worship from home as well as the congregants watching on our screens in the sanctuary during our services. A huge thank you to Morgan for all his hard work on our prerecorded music!

Dawn was pleased that the Worship and Music Committee once again decided on having just one Sunday service at 9:30 a.m. over the summer months. It has always been so nice to see the entire church worshipping together. Those who normally attended the traditional service then got a taste of the contemporary style of worship and vice versa. This summer schedule has always allowed for our mission statement-"Welcome all to worship" to ring true!

Dawn had the pleasure of presenting Temple Talks at the end of July and the beginning of August in an attempt to recruit more volunteers for worship assistants. Thankfully these attempts proved fruitful! More than a dozen new volunteers stepped forward to serve as acolytes, lectors, and assisting ministers. Currently we are still in need of cantors, but Dawn remains hopeful that singers from within our congregation will step forward in 2022 to serve in this capacity.

Fall of 2021 began the start up for the Wednesday night music ministries after an 18-month hiatus. This ministry is mainly led by volunteer conductors. We are so blessed to have such a thriving music ministry here at Messiah!

Here are our groups and their directors:

Vocal Choirs

God's Kids- Rachel Bergin

Hand Bell Choirs

Cherub Chimes- Sydney Marsh

Cherub Bells- Mark Herron

# Worship & Music Committee

Joy Ringers-Lucy Stillwell  
Revelations-Karen Bowman  
Wee Ones-Rachel Bergin

The “Eternal” (as Pastor likes to say) Marilyn Boston, our church organist, reports that the church organ continues to serve us with no problems. The Clavinova also continues to serve us with no problems even though it is almost 30 years old. The pianos are being well maintained and are used continuously for rehearsals and services. Throughout the year they have been used for accompanying, piano solos, piano duets, and piano quartets. This year, the church hosted five children’s piano recitals and a small piano festival. The instruments are continuing to be used to help in the training of future church musicians.

September 2021 marked two years of having Morgan Benedict on staff as our Lead AV Tech. We have been so blessed to have him on staff, especially now in an age when we rely heavily on technology to reach our congregants at home. Morgan reports that this year has been a good year for the AV Team at Messiah. We have added two new volunteers, Elaine Novak and Scott Estrem. We have also begun improvements to Messiah’s online Worship Services via Facebook and YouTube.

We are so blessed to have Karen Bowman leading our blended services. Karen reports that 2021 began with a continuation of alternating Sundays between the traditional and blended worship formats, which had begun in July 2020. Worship has been led by Karen Bowman on keyboard plus an additional cantor, rotating between the vocal gifts of David Siewert, Jennifer Ott, and Scott Estrem. In early summer, as COVID-19 protocols eased, they transitioned to service leadership with several voices, with John Svagera returning to bass guitar. Jennifer Ott stepped away, after many years of sharing her voice with the congregation through participation in Revelations, and the band welcomed Sydney Marsh as singer and Nathan Schultz on electric guitar.

September brought a return to services which more closely resembled the way they used to worship pre-COVID-19. It has been a joy to be able to return to leading the congregation in liturgical worship through the use of contemporary music.

Revelations is thankful for the technology support of Morgan Benedict. We could not serve the congregation in this ministry without his knowledge and expertise! Revelations welcomes anyone interested in sharing their musical gifts in this ministry. Even if your schedule only allows you to join us for a Sunday, a month, or a season, they would love to have you!

Current members of Revelations are:

Karen Bowman-keyboard, vocals  
Scott Estrem-acoustic guitar, vocals  
David Siewert-vocals  
Sydney Marsh-vocals  
Nathan Schultz-electric guitar  
John Svagera-bass guitar

In the beginning of November we had a Worship Assistant Workshop Day. These workshops were designed to enhance the contributions of those already trained as assisting ministers, lectors and cantors. Our volunteers experienced uplifting sessions centered around enhancing their roles in worship at Messiah. Sessions were led by Dr. Robert Berg, Morgan Benedict, and Dawn Gutierrez.

The musical offerings in December, designed to praise our Lord, truly enhanced worship for all during the season of Advent. On the fourth Sunday of Advent in December, the youth of Messiah led a beautiful Christmas Program in celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ. Each Sunday school read wonderful narrations. Rachel Bergin led our youth throughout the program in beautiful music. The Revelations, under the leadership of Karen Bowman, and the youth of our church lifted their voices in praise to our Lord!



# Worship & Music Committee

We were unable to have our normal three Christmas Eve services due to Covid-19, but that didn't stop us from worshipping beautifully at the 5 and 10 p.m. services that were offered. The 5 p.m. service was geared towards families while the 10 p.m. service was a more traditional service. We had two fantastic cantors in Rachel Bergin and David Siewert for these services. David Siewert served as cantor at the 10 p.m. despite it being his birthday! Having the Joy Ringers ring during the 10 p.m. service was such a wonderful addition to this Christmas Eve service. Both services had a wonderful line-up of prelude music offered by our members. A big thank you to all who were involved in both of these Christmas Eve services!

It was once again not a normal year for Messiah's Music Ministries due to the pandemic. We started the year by offering pre-recorded music and are now able to sing and ring in person! Thankfully, with the work from Marilyn Boston, Morgan Benedict, Karen Bowman, and Dawn Gutierrez-not to mention all the cantors and other substitute/guest musicians along the way-the music remained constant and meaningful during these uncertain times.

Submitted by Dawn Gutierrez

# Women of the ELCA

Although the pandemic restricted our meetings, our women did meet either via Zoom or in person this year. In September all three circles resumed meeting in person (Debbie's, Lydia and Martha). In September we gathered as a whole to attend the Zoom Central States WELCA convention. At this meeting, we also elected Lisa Melgren as secretary and Sheila Schaefer as treasurer. In December we had a Christmas party and hosted Heather Hardinger who spoke about Bread For the World and her activities on the Springfield City Council. In November we collected over \$1400.00 in Thank Offering which was sent to the churchwide organization. We distributed names of shut-ins and took cookies, candy, ornaments, etc. to them. We made year end donations to Bread For the World and Messiah House. We pray that 2022 will see the end of the COVID-19 virus and we can safely return to all of our usual activities.

Submitted by Marilyn Dial



# Piecemakers

The Piecemakers began meeting again in September. Due to COVID-19 there was no auction quilt, and quilt Sunday was cancelled to to the lack of quilts. It was decided that the few quilts we have would be donated in October of 2022. The Piecemakers will meet on the first and third Mondays at 9:30 a.m. We will no longer meet on the fifth Monday of the month or holidays. We have 8 active members. If you would like more information, please contact Linda Michael.

Submitted by Linda Michael

# Attendance

The following report is prepared to show the AVERAGE weekly attendance for each month, years 2012-2021. All numbers have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

MONTH	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
January	258	236	245	213	232	199	166	139	156	87
February	272	274	236	225	196	221	190	136	168	90
March	248	285	186	216	206	169	185	152	131	108
April	331	251	336	272	181	226	213	234	—	145
May	257	231	218	231	215	160	188	155	—	80
June	236	218	219	181	186	157	170	151	—	91
July	265	225	214	194	237	176	159	126	84	82
August	268	250	262	206	205	185	167	145	94	110
September	267	250	238	253	238	188	173	165	97	105
October	273	239	217	214	230	199	170	156	93	103
November	245	250	224	230	225	188	174	165	94	116
December	614	225	278	274	181	176	171	171	89	121
Ash Wednesday	187	174	186	100	200	162	119	108	134	NR
Palm Sunday	344	230	265	251	226	224	155	164		103
Easter	521	498	541	416	119	376	351	341		131
Thanksgiving	88	60	81	92	85	81	68	57	42	45
Christmas Eve	514	503	438	507	502	358	343	342	111	137

All numbers are taken from reports turned in each Sunday. They may not be exact, but rather a guide. Sometimes there are no numbers turned in, and in that case, I average the other weeks in that month to use a guide. This year, with COVID-19, we have required masking this entire year. The first half of the year we required reservations to attend services so attendance we more detailed, we lifted the requirement for reservations during the fall.

Submitted by Annetta Svagera



# Evangelism Committee

During 2021, with the pandemic still in our midst, the Evangelism Committee continued to carry out its responsibilities to the congregation as summarized below.

**Endeavor to bring new members to Messiah congregation.** *The most important work we do to fulfill this responsibility is to provide a meaningful welcome when visitors attend worship. To this end, we are indebted to those who faithfully serve as members of the Shepherding Teams. Working with those planning safe in-person worship, shepherding was carried out with a smaller number of shepherds who continued to focus on welcoming and facilitating changes as worship evolved, returning gradually back to pre-COVID processes. We continue to provide a welcome token and a follow-up message for all visitors. The following were welcomed into Messiah membership during 2021: Andrew and Cassandra Langr, Vince, Laura, Madison, and Morgan Johnson, Cathy Carleton, Pat Lindquist, and Elaine Novak. Plans are in place to receive additional members early in 2022.*

**Facilitate immersion of new members into the life of Messiah congregation.** *Opportunities for service are discussed with new members, and committee members follow up with individuals to ensure they are welcomed into the Messiah community. Remember that it is the responsibility of all members to reach out to invite those who are new to Messiah to participate in Messiah's programs and activities. Biographical information on new members, published in the **Spirit**, facilitates contact with those new to the Messiah community.*

**Be attentive to members who have lapsed in their worship attendance and/or congregational presence.** *With the pandemic still in our midst, the most vulnerable were encouraged to use careful judgment in whether to attend in-person worship...personal choice continued to be the theme. However, as vaccinations became available, it was good to see increasing numbers attending worship in person. We give thanks for the technology that allows us to provide virtual opportunities to worship via Facebook and YouTube. We are grateful for Morgan Benedict, our AV technician, and for our volunteers, Drew Bowman and Elaine Novak. If there are folks you are not seeing in worship, give them a call and tell them they are being missed, and, as activities begin to return, be sure to invite those who might still be absent.*

**Ensure that appropriate congregational correspondence is on-going with prior visitors, members, and distant and prior members.** *Maintaining a current pictorial directory of Messiah's membership is an on-going challenge. As soon as it is published—it is outdated. However, it is time for an updated edition. The committee has discussed a new format for the directory which would allow for intermittent updating when new members are received and changes occur in contact information of members. Be watching for more information. Everyone is encouraged to contact the church office to keep contact information current. The monthly **Spirit** Newsletter (distributed via USPS) and weekly **Midweek Announcements** (distributed via e-mail) are the current correspondence methods. If you are not receiving either of these and wish to, notify the church office. Being a subscriber to Living Lutheran is the best way to stay connected to the Evangelical Lutheran Church at the churchwide level. Messiah has a congregational subscription plan that provides the opportunity to subscribe at a reduced price. If you are not a subscriber and you are interested, contact Nathan in the church office. The ELCA is a church that values and encourages diverse voice and lively dialogue—you can be a part of that through **Living Lutheran**.*

**Seek ways to encourage Messiah members to be joy-filled, vibrant witnesses to Jesus Christ.** *Again this year, the committee was able to have a presence (although limited due to a conflicting Women of the ELCA event) at the September **God's Work. Our Hands.** We provided cold drinks, donuts and smiles for both those doing the work and members of the neighborhood who took advantage of Messiah's help cleaning up the Seminole-Holland neighborhood. Everyone is encouraged to participate in the adult education classes and Bible Studies that are offered at Messiah. Learning more about who we say we are as Lutherans and 'being in the Word' surely strengthen our ability to witness for our Lord.*

The work of Evangelism is never done, and it is work each of us is called to do. Reach out to those you miss seeing around Messiah, invite acquaintances and those you meet who do not have a church home to come to worship with you or share that Messiah is on Facebook and YouTube, and live a life using words and actions to share how you experience God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit in your personal life.

Committee Members:

Jean Bardy, Vickie Donnell, Rose Hohbein, Jane Schwab, Annetta Svagera

## Youth and Family

The Youth and Family Committee coordinates youth and family activities and ministries at Messiah. Highlights of Youth and Family activities for 2021 include:

- + Fundraisers to pay for Camp Tomah Shinga, ELCA Youth Gathering-Easter bake sale, summer car wash, fall casserole sale, Thanksgiving pie sale
- + Leaf raking at the Dollison House
- + Trunk or Treat-in conjunction with the Parish Life Committee
- + Camp Tomah Shinga-Nine youth attended over two sessions, accompanied by Maria Cass, Karen Bowman, Faye Hudson, and Pastor Orin.
- + ELCA National Youth Gathering-Nine youth and five adults are planning to attend the 2022 Gathering in Minneapolis, MN, in late July 2022. Fellowship and education sessions have been taking place monthly since August 2021.
- + The Loft renovation-Plans have been approved for the next step in the updating process. Look for new paint and lighting and a climbing wall in 2022!

Thank you to the congregation for continued support of Youth and Family ministries. We look forward to more activities in 2022. As always, we welcome any suggestions for programming and activities, and we are always looking for new members to join the committee.

Submitted by Karen Bowman

# God's Work Our Hands

What a Fantastic Day! I arrived at 8 a.m. and one of the dumpsters was already 1/3 full! The chipper folks were still working at 1:30 p.m.. We made two final stops and finished at about 2:30 p.m.. With the chipper, we filled one dumpster full. Without it we would have needed three or more. People just kept coming.

Thanks to everyone who helped, including:

Mark Herron, Bud Schwab, Ed Donnell, Vickie Donnell, Paul Melgren, Mary Keidle, Pastor Orin Cummings, Samantha Cummings, Nathaniel Cummings, Bob Starr, Jean Bardy, Dennis Hoffman, Tom McConnell, Cathy Murrell, Tom Wiswall, Ken Garabino, Adam Melgren, Sydney Marsh and several cub scouts.

We had 51 yard waste deliveries, 12 shredders for paper documents, and 53 trash deliveries. Neighbors gave us \$246 in donations. It was a slice of heaven!

Submitted by David Siewert

## Christian Education Committee

This year was again interrupted by the COVID-19 virus, and the safety precautions that were in place here at Messiah. Education classes did not meet again until September of 2021. Plans to have Vacation Bible School in June were also canceled because of Covid. The committee did not meet on a regular basis and tried to keep in touch through emails. All in all it was a trying year.

### MILESTONE MINISTRIES

Confirmation took place via zoom on Sundays. Thanks to Pastor, Vickie Donnell, Chuck Ryen, and Dennis Hoffman for leading the kids in this ministry. On Easter Sunday, April 4, during the service, Caleb Creger, Jacob Creger, Nyah Dogwiler, Grace Everett, Molly Harkey, and Zach Hudson were confirmed. The kids shared their favorite Bible verses with the congregation. They received a cross necklace created by Mike Gunion. The red stoles worn by all were stitched by Terry Dunham. The kids received a Lutheran Study Bible which was gifted by Messiah's congregation. Thanks to April Gebken for the kids' photo frame. Because of restrictions, kids received their gifts and a bag of cookies on their way out.

During the service on that day, children age 3-grade 6 were invited out to Messiah's Prayer Garden during Pastor's message. They heard a short Easter story, sang songs, and did an activity. It was a beautiful day and though wearing face masks, the kids seemed glad to see some of their friends from Messiah.

First Communion took place on Sunday, April 11, during the service. Jonah Bowers, Jude Bowers, Felix Cass, Katie Colwell, and Hudson Gebken met on 3 consecutive Tuesday evenings to receive instruction led by Nadine Melgren, Bake bread with Linda Michael, and participate in a Seder Meal, led by Julie Burnell. There was a gift table set up in the Narthex where they could pick up gifts they received.

Senior Recognition took place on May 16. High School graduates, Marty Bowman, Jeffrey Harkey, Melissa Melgren, and Nathan Ott were recognized during the service. A gift table was set up in the Narthex for the graduating Seniors.

Cradle Roll is a monthly mailing to parents of children from birth to age 3. Thanks to Rose Hobein who has been volunteering in this position for several years. She is looking to retire, so if a member of Messiah would like to continue this milestone, it can be done from home and does not take a lot of time. There have not been too many new births the past year or two.

Backpack Blessing happened on August 21 and 22 during services. Students of all ages brought their backpacks to be blessed. Students received a wooden cross to attach to their backpack.

Bibles were presented to two current second graders on September 25 and 26. Nora Dimond and Lucy Weaver received a gift of a children's Bible from the congregation. Thanks goes to Linda Michael for making a tote for the kids' Bibles.

Advent materials for all ages were set up on a table in Mission Hall. They were well received.

Children's Christmas Program took place during the service on December 19. In place of Pastor's message, the children age 3- 8th grade Confirmation presented a gift to the congregation. They explained the meanings of some of the symbols of Christmas through readings and music. The kids practiced their parts and songs during the Sunday School hour. It was kept simple because of Covid. They did a great job. Thanks goes out to Rachel Bergin and all who assisted her.

#### EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

In September it was determined that the Educational ministries would try to get back to meeting again in person. With the church service still taking place from 9:30-10:30, it was decided to have Sunday School meet from 10:45-11:30. All were asked to wear face coverings.

##### Children age 3-Grade 6

On Rally Day, September 12, Kids ages 3-grade 6 met outside. The theme for the year: YOU are a "piece of God's plan. Through Bible stories, songs and activities, the kids explored what God's plan is and how they fit into it. Old Testament stories were taught through December. The last Sunday of the month was "PIECE" Sunday where the kids met together for an activity. Each Sunday, the kids met upstairs for Opening where they sang some songs. They were then dismissed to class to explore the story. The Materials we are using are from Concordia and titles Enduring Faith. Attendance has been down, and the children have been split into 3 age groups instead of the usual four. The average attendance has been 6 students. Many thanks to the teachers for going "with the flow" each week. Thanks goes out to Rachel Bergin, Nadine Melgren, Beth Melgren, Susie Rucker, Jana Everett, Jessica Atchison, Louann Sherman, Tara Melgren, and Katie Dogwiler. These teachers have had great plans for the kids, and then few show up. It's been a slow start back. Maybe 2022 will be better.

Confirmation I met every Sunday morning from 10:45-11:30 am in Room 204. Attendance has been steady with this class of seventh graders. Thanks to Chuck Ryen and Dennis Hoffman for leading the class.

Confirmation II met Sunday mornings with Pastor Orin in the choir room. They met from 11:00 -11:45 am. These kids will be confirmed on Easter Sunday.

High School met on Sunday mornings from 10:45-11:00 am. in the Youth Lounge. Faye Hudson led this class. Attendance was hit and miss.

Adults had a class meet in the Sanctuary from 10:45-11:00 on Sunday mornings. Together by Faith began on October 3 and ran through December 12. A new study Lutheran Questions, Lutheran Answers will begin in 2022.

My hope for 2022 is that the educational programs at Messiah will continue to grow as restrictions are removed and Holy Spirit fires us up. I can't wait to see what God has in mind for the youth at Messiah.

Submitted by Susie Rucker



# Congregational Care Committee

**Purpose of this committee is to minister to those with physical, emotional, and spiritual needs in our congregation and community by showing them God's love.**

This committee strives to fulfill our purpose and was involved in a vast number of activities during 2021. Committee members: Rose Hohbein, Chairperson, Beth Melgren, Council Representative, Jean Bardy, Irene Chaloupecky, Vickie Donnell, Nancy Hoeman, Barbara Hover, Carolyn Malcolm, and Marcie Rosenkoetter. Scheduled monthly meetings were held on the 2nd Thursday at 11:00 a.m.

Under Congregational Care are many Teams, including:

- Baptismal Anniversary Celebrations
- Blood Pressure Screening
- Cards and Notes Ministry
- Educational Programs
- Flower Deliveries
- Funeral Support
- Grief Support
- Healing Services
- Holy Communion and Visitation
- New Parent Ministry
- Prayer Support
- Prayer Shawl & Baby Blanket Ministry
- Stephen Ministry
- "Spirit" Articles

Articles submitted for the SPIRIT, included:

- COVID-19 Vaccines: Hope on the Horizon
- Congregational Care Committee (description of Teams)
- An update on coping with the pandemic
- How Christians and members can show love with the pandemic still active and restrictions still in place.
- Mental Health during the Pandemic
- Summer is officially here! (protecting oneself from too much sun)
- Mental Health (resources)
- Sleep
- Stress in Children and Teens
- What's New About the Flu this Year?
- Why it is Important to Stay Hydrated

Submitted by Rose Hohbein

Messiah Lutheran Church has again (in spite of Covid-19) been blessed to be a blessing!

We are so very thankful for the funds which made our 2021 LWR shipment possible and all the volunteers and those who made in-kind donations:

\$1500-Messiah Endowment Fund; and

\$500-Thrivent Financial Action Team (2 @ \$250)

With the above-noted funds:

- (1) We purchased bath towels, soap, combs, nail clippers, and toothbrushes to assemble **100 Personal Care Kits**, totaling 65 volunteer hours;
- (2) We purchased school supplies to fill **101 New School Bags** sewn with donated fabric by one of our LWR volunteers, with volunteer hours totaling at least 175 hours;
- (3) Assembled **129 Baby Care Kits**, with gently used baby items purchased from thrift stores, plus 1570 volunteer hours spent knitting or crocheting baby blankets and caps, creating and sewing baby quilts, cutting and sewing baby gowns out of donated t-shirts, cutting and hemming baby blankets out of flannel or donated materials, and cutting and sewing 516 baby diapers, mostly from donated t-shirts. (each kit included 4 diapers, two safety pins, 2 blankets, 2 gowns or sleepers, 2 t-shirts, 2 bars each of 4 oz of gentle soap, 2 pairs socks, and a sweater or jacket with hood attached or a separate cap, and a new hand towel.)
- (4) We made 59 Quilts!! Thankfully, even though Covid-19 prevented the LWR volunteers from meeting in person very often to tie our quilts, we improvised and began our "Quilt in a Bag" project. The quilt tops (sewn by volunteers at home), quilts backs (mostly donated gently used bed sheets) and warm and natural batting in between, were assembled and the edges sewn together at home prior to tying. Faithful volunteers would check out a Quilt in a Bag at the church office, tie the quilt, and return it to usually check out another. **Total volunteers hours - approximately 1600.**

Total hours volunteered-3,410; Total items sent-4,990.

Total boxes driven to St. Andrews Lutheran Church, ELCA, in Columbia, MO

(the LWR In-Gathering site) ...on September 10, 2021 ... 37 (boxes both Large and Medium sized)

Ordinary items we all take for granted and use every day mean so much to someone who has no towel, toothbrush, nail clipper, soap, or comb. For most of us, our homes contain more than one blanket or quilt to keep us warm; but for so many, a quilt with warm batting is precious for warmth and sometimes used to carry their few possessions as they flee natural disasters or war torn areas. In refugee camps, people sometimes use the quilts to form a shade from the sun or a wall for a little privacy. Baby Care Kits offer a few items for a mother to bathe and clothe her child. LWR is also working with communities to teach them how to become independent of the huge corporations, such as coffee companies. Now in many areas, the community has learned how to manage their own coffee plantations. With the adults tending the coffee process from beginning to shipment, the children of these families often receive a new School Kit so while their parents are working in the coffee plantations, the children are being provided a few school supplies to assist with their education. School Kits are so very precious to a child who has no school supplies.

Lutheran World Relief also offers HOPE, through the many ELCA GOOD GIFTS, which were featured in the Messiah SPIRIT during 2021 and also during six of the Lenten services which featured a SEASON OF HOPE: Sensing Hope, Hearing Hope, Seeing Hope, Smelling Hope, and Tasting Hope. For more information, you are encouraged to go on-line at LWR.org. There you will also find information about LWR Disaster Fund.

Submitted by Rose Hohbein



# Endowment Committee

Fund Balance (9/30/21)-572,341.97

Withdrawals for Grants-29,820.00

Donations/Memorials (estimated)-20,825.00

The Messiah Endowment Fund continues to show strong performance from both equity market growth and congregational giving. 2021 saw over \$20,000 in donations, which was an exceptional year in the history of the fund. Higher-than-average gains over the past two years helped push the grant award limit (based on 5-year growth averages) to \$30,800 this year, of which \$29,820 was comfortably awarded. Grants this year included:

Security upgrades (capital)-7,000

Altar Guild silver re-plating (capital)-4,000

Lighthouse creative curriculum (community)-1,520

Holland school playground benches (community)-1,800

Messiah House transition program (community)-2,500

Safe to Sleep (community)-3,500

Lutheran World Relief supplies (mission)-1,500

AV/Music cameras and streaming hardware (mission)-6,500

ELCA seminary scholarships (mission)-1,500

No changes in the investment strategy or grant limit calculations are recommended as the fund appears to be working as intended by the visionaries who established it nearly 30 years ago. The Endowment Committee feels that there is an appropriate balance between the need to fund meaningful projects and the need for continued growth. The current gap between the fund balance and restricted funds (principle) is nearly \$200,000. This cushion is powerful in its ability to create additional funds, while at the same time, protect the original investments by congregational members.

Committee Members	Term Expires
Josh Dimmick (Chair)	2023 (2nd)
Joy Ward (Treasurer)	2021 (2nd)
Jason Weaver (Secretary)	2021
Jason Helmke	2023 (2nd)
Paul Melgren	2022

Submitted by Josh Dimmick

# Stephen Ministry



All ministries go through transitions, and the past year was a year of transition for Stephen Ministry at Messiah. As is well known, this lay caring ministry requires extensive up-front training, as well as a commitment to engage in a weekly personal visit. Due to the large amount of training involved, individuals who desire to become Stephen Ministers are asked for a 2-year commitment to the program.

During 2021, after serving faithfully for over 3 years, Christine Carlson, Linda Schreurs, Betty Thomas, and Nancy Weiland chose to complete their services as Stephen Ministers. We celebrated their service, and each transitioned from the Ministry sharing their gratitude for what they had learned and for the experiences they had serving within Messiah congregation. The good works they accomplished were known only to a few, but they were known where it matters—to those they ministered to and to the third person in every conversation that a Stephen Minister has with a care receiver—their Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

We are grateful that Ileen Kendall and Cathy Murrell continue in the ministry. We continue to meet together twice a month to discuss caring relationships and share opportunities for learning and spiritual growth.

As with many programs, COVID has challenged Stephen Ministry. Our hope for the future is to offer another session of initial training with an emphasis on recruiting Messiah men. We surely have men with caring gifts to share with others and men in need of their caring support. As we continue in our mission to “offer healing and care to all in need”, we ask that you please include in your prayers the future of Stephen Ministry at Messiah.

Jean Bardy & Vickie Donnell  
Stephen Leaders

# Upon this Rock



## Renewed in Mission

During 2021 there were three significant measures taken that supported Messiah's progress in paying off the debt incurred with the building project completed in 2009. First, in May, a successful appeal to members, **Renewed in Mission**, resulted in 80 commitments totaling \$300,932 pledged to be given through June 2024 toward debt retirement. Secondly, in June the loan with

Thrivent Financial was renegotiated with the interest rate significantly decreased from 4.875% interest to 2.6%. Finally, a one-time principal payment of \$40,000, in addition to the regular monthly payments, allowed for a total debt pay down of \$117,268 in 2021. This leaves a debt balance as we begin 2022 of \$670,989.

We are thankful to everyone who has been generous through the years toward our **Upon this Rock** campaigns. That generosity has provided the attractive and plentiful space from which to live out our Mission. We welcome all to participate in our current campaign, **Renewed in Mission**. It is critical that all gifts given for **Renewed in Mission** be indicated as such. This indication ensures that gifts intended for debt retirement are not used for operating expenses.

We continue as people called to share the Gospel in today's world—eliminating debt will expand our freedom to further Messiah's ministry. If there are any questions about Messiah's financial activities related to debt retirement, Rex Johnson welcomes the conversation.

## Messiah Staff

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	Choir Director	
<b>Morgan Benedict</b>	AV/Media	<a href="mailto:morganbenedict@messiahmo.org">morganbenedict@messiahmo.org</a>

# Messiah Lutheran Church

## **Our Identity Statement:**

Messiah Evangelical Lutheran Church is a worshipping community so firmly and confidently rooted in the Gospel, strengthened by God's love, mercy and grace, through Word, sacrament and Christian fellowship, that we strive to be God's witnesses through caring in our congregation, in the community, and in the world.

## **God Cares . . . We Care**

## **Our Vision**

### **Imagine...**

A place open and inviting to all, welcoming those in need and searching for the Word of God.

### **Imagine...**

A community of disciples, guided by the Spirit, learning to know the Lord, studying the Word and sharing the good news.

### **Imagine...**

Laity and staff set free, caring and authentic, hungry for ministry, discovering their gifts, alert to the opportunities around them.

### **Imagine...**

Excited youth, growing, learning, committed, filled with the possibilities of living life guided by the Gospel.

### **Imagine...**

A congregation renewed and renewing, sustained by prayer, equipped through worship, alive to the Spirit, seeing Christ in every face- with all the resources necessary for growing ministries.

### **Imagine...**

Wounds being healed, the lost being found, the hungry being fed, hope replacing despair and lives being changed.

## **Imagine... Messiah Lutheran Church!**

## **Messiah's Vision Statement:**

With God's help and guidance, Messiah will be transformed to welcome all to meet Jesus' renewing love, learn to live as His disciples, and develop their gifts to offer care and healing in His name.