

From the desk of



Pastor Kurt Hoover

TRUST

"For it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted to them his property." Mathew 25: 14

What if the church that you are a part of really is God's Kingdom on Earth? Where God gets his most important stuff done. What if we have everything at our disposal that God does? What if we lived as if that were true?

What if we took wild extravagant risks with God's stuff and trusted that what God wants to happen will happen? What if we could let go of the world's definition of "success" and simply bask in the resources and work of God?

That is the invitation of the church. A gathering of people entrusted with God's resources guaranteed to be a part of the most prosperous work and Kingdom the world has ever known.

What is in a name? What and who are... ... Messiah ... Evangelical ... Lutheran ... Church?

What if we set aside all expectations of what church should be or could be and made a fresh start with the talents that God has given us? What if we had just been through a huge trial of God's deliverance and God said, "Now surprise me!"

We will be rededicating our building to God's ministry at our Celebration Sunday on December 3. God saved our building! But the church is so much more than a building. It is the trusted relationships built up over time, families and people through which God is making his appeal. God creating a PR campaign where we would become known in our community for sharing Jesus' love and teachings.

The church is the assembly, the people, the relationships, the trust God has built in our community over time between actual human beings. The church is everywhere trust is created. And as we have seen in this great trial, God can use anything to build trust in a community. Thousands of people trust that God is at work in that "church" on the corner of Houbolt and Jefferson. They have seen it, and they are waiting to see what God does next through those that assemble here.

That is the invitation of the church. A gathering of people entrusted with God's resources, guaranteed to be a part of the most prosperous work and Kingdom the world has ever known.

In Christ,

From the desk of



Pastor David Stier

A SATISFIED SOUL

(Yes, even during the holidays)

Read: Psalm 63:1-11 But when his brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers, they hated him. (v. 4)

David is in the wilderness of Judah which, he describes as, "a dry and weary land." (v. 1) Yet, though his longing for water is intense, his desire for a close relationship with God is even more intense.

He thinks back to when he had a wonderful experience of the presence of God in worship. He has his priorities straight, "...your steadfast love is better than life." (v. 3) Therefore, in spite of his present circumstances, he will praise God. Though his present diet is very limited, his soul is satisfied.

What an example David provides for us! The world around us is wrapped up in the search for entertainment, pleasure, and material things. There is tremendous pressure to be squeezed into the world's mold and to look for those things ourselves.

Friend, during this Advent and Christmas season I prayerfully urge you to choose the better way, the way of David. For what shall it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses his own soul? A close walk with God provides a deep satisfaction that the things of this world cannot provide. What a great God we have! How wonderful to live in His loving presence. How satisfying. Try it; you'll like it. Then you will say with David, "My soul clings to you; your right hand upholds me." (v. 8)

As you pray, ask God to help you keep your priorities straight, and remind you of the joy of your relationship with Him.

In His Awesome Grip,

aka laster Dave Stiel Join us for Online Worship PRADS Can't make it to church this week? The 9:30 am service is available for streaming online on our Facebook and YouTube pages. Links to both are at mlcjoliet.org

Thank You for Saving Messiah!

Thank you to the all the volunteers and teams that worked to Save Messiah... Our Litigation Team led by Brian Wielbik, our Fundraising and PR teams that made sure the word got out about Save Messiah - led by members including Tom Bond, Gerry Boe, Pat Burke, Don Cyborski, Judy Enix, Lynn Bond, Sherri Unyi, Pastor Kurt Hoover, Lynda Mahalik and Beth Hohisel. There were many comments received from the community about what a great job Messiah did in getting the word out to the community.

Also, a big thank you to the Engagement Team who called members and conducted surveys: Judy Enix, Lynn Tapella, Pat and Gerry Boe, Karen Rebuehr, Randy and Laurel Ling, Roger and Carol Gordon, Mark Burnetti, Pat Buchenau, Irene Chapman, Pat Hester, Linda Hawkinson, Diane Hedden, Mary Etta Buhr and Judy Fowler.

The Save Messiah campaign would not have been successful without the help of everyone at Messiah pulling together as a team! Thank you to all our members!



At this time of year we spend time thinking about Thanksgiving and what we are thankful for. We are thankful for everyone who helped support Operation Christmas Child and turned in shoeboxes. Messiah sent 84 boxes to change children's lives through a gift from God.

Instead of giving Thanksgiving boxes to individuals in need, this year we distributed gift cards. We helped seven families.

Ephesians 2:10 says, "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them." Here are *just some* of the many ways that our benevolence money embodies this bible verse:

- Supporting new mothers with ultrasounds, medical assistance, and food/diapers for unborn babies at Living Alternatives.
- Giving of our time and money to support the homeless with meals thru Daybreak Shelter.
- Donating to Feed My Starving Children to help turn hunger into hope for many children.
- Changing the lives of children who arrive at the Baja or Oaxaca Missions in Mexico, sponsored by the Foundation For His Ministry.
- Supporting Morning Star Mission, who provides housing, meals and a plan to get individuals in need back on their feet. Our Thanksgiving collection was donated to Morning Star!

Pat Burke

Stewardship Director





WEDNESDAY EVENINGS DURING

No adult Insight.

Our theme is "Every Good and Perfect Gift," about how God has given us everything we need to live and serve Him!



Please join us for worship: November 29 December 6 December 13 December 20

AT

Wednesdays at 7 pm



Morning worship at 10 am, no Sunday school; Candlelight services at 5, 7 and 11 pm.





One service at 10 am, no Sunday school.

YOU AND YOUR FRIENDS ARE INVITED TO JOLIET AREA CHRISTIAN WOMEN'S

"ANNUAL COOKIE SALE!" LUNCHEON at Messiah Lutheran Church Wednesday, December 13, 11:30am-1:30pm, \$20.00 inclusive

Deb Kraulitis will entertain us with her beautiful voice, getting us into the Christmas spirit!

Jacque Baylor, from Rochelle, IL, is a bubbly 29-year old nurse who enjoys her two beautiful children, & kickboxing.

RSVP by December 6 by calling Barb at 815-439-2076 or mrs.brutus56@gmail.com, or Sonya at 815-727-1626.

"Joliet IL Christian Women's Connection" - Like us on Facebook! Next luncheon Wed., Jan. 17 www.stonecroft.org





LOST & FOUND AT MLC

Our Lost & Found is overflowing! Please take a moment to check the L&F boxes in the front office lobby, as well as the coat rack in Fellowship Hall, and help us start 2024 with less clutter.

Unclaimed items will be donated on Friday, December 29.

COMING EVENTS FOR YOUTH & TEENS



Kindergarten – 5th grade: Join us on Wednesday nights, 6:30-8 pm!

What is it? Formerly Awana, it's a fun night of worship, lessons, games, crafts, and connection – with the Bible and friends!

Extras Store nights, theme nights, getting to know your Bible.Registration \$15 per child. Maximum of \$45 per family.Questions? Contact Beth Hohisel bhohisel@hotmail.com or 815-735-7897.

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Sunday school continues at 9:30 am for ages preK-5th grade.

MESSIAH KIDS REMIND GROUP

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

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

It will be used to send reminders and notifications about Sunday school and any events we have planned. Contact Kimber Drummond at cemlcjoliet@gmail.com with questions.

MESSIAH KIDS SUNDAY (Sundays at 11:00 am)

Messiah Kids is for all kids, grades K-5th, and takes place during the 11:00 am service! Here's how it works: You will check in like you do for Sunday school at the computer in the Narthex. Then, just before the sermon, the kids will be dismissed and can leave to be with their friends. They will meet leaders in the Narthex and head to the Family Life Center (FLC) for Bible study, worship, and games. **MK11 team members are needed!** Please sign up in the Narthex, or see Leslie McFarland or Pastor Dave Stier to get involved.



Stay-N-Play is a weekly playgroup for children five and younger that meets in the Family Life Center (FLC) on Tuesday mornings from 9:30-11:30. This group is open to everyone in the community. Parents/caregivers must stay to keep an eye on their children. Coffee (for adults) is provided. Please come join us for some fun!

MESSIAH'S YOUTH CHOIR

Parents, mark your calendars! Our preK-8th graders will be rehearsing on the third Sunday of every month (except December) at 9:30, during Sunday school! They will perform at the 9:30 service on the fourth Sunday of every month (except December). We ask that they wear their choir shirts on days the group performs.

Thank you to Season Lawler, for heading up this ministry!



MESSIAH STUDENT MINISTRIES

<u>SUNDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY</u> for 9th-12th graders meets from 9:30-10:30 in the Gathering House to have coffee/tea and fellowship, watch a short video, and discuss the topic of the week. Stop in and check it out!



HEAD 2 HEART

H2H (otherwise known as Youth Group or Confirmation) meets on Wednesday evenings at 6:15. All 6th-8th graders are welcome!

Come at 5:30 and join us for **Family Dinner** (most Wednesdays) in Fellowship Hall. More info & menus on page 5.

MAFIA IS BACK!

Attention 6th-12th graders! In case you missed our awesome November Mafia Night - we'll be doing it again on **Friday, January 19** from 7-10 pm. Tell your friends and mark your calendars for a ton of fun! Also, bring your appetite... we'll be having a meal (usually pizza) and beverages. Please bring \$5 to help offset the cost of your meal.

What is MAFIA, you might be wondering? It's a mixture of tag, hide-and-goseek, and capture the flag, with lots of running around! **Here's the catch** - It's in the dark with strobes and black lights! What a blast!







Wednesday evenings, High Schoolers meet from 7-8:30 pm. Come early for Family Dinner at 5:30 in Fellowship Hall, followed by games in the FLC, or get your homework done in between – help is available if you need it!

CHRISTMAS COOKIE FUNDRAISER

Do you love Christmas cookies, but don't have the time to bake this year? Do you love the tradition of giving and receiving at Christmas?



The youth of Messiah will be making its traditional recipes of Christmas cookies again this year. Choose from undecorated or decorated sugar cookies, chocolate chip, gingerbread people, shortbread dippers, and peanut butter balls.

When you order cookies, you are giving our students the chance to earn funds to help pay for trips and activities through Messiah Student Ministries. And you receive delicious treats to enjoy and share this Christmas season!

Order here:



If you have questions, comments, or are looking to connect regarding youth news, events, ministries for students in 6-12th grades, please don't hesitate to reach out to Kate Richmond via email stumin@mlcjoliet.org or call the church office at (815) 741-4488.

WAIT - THERE'S MORE!

FAITH & BODY THURSDAYS

Our Faith & Body group is dedicated to helping each other to improve our health. We meet September through May in the FLC from 9-10 am for walking, stretching and faith building time. There is no cost. Please register on the Messiah website under Faith & Body.

Questions? Contact Sherri at 815-741-4488 or email bookkeeper@mlcjoliet.org.

Frith & Body



THURSDAYS 9AM - 10AM SEPT - MAY

MESSIAH QUILTERS

We will next meet on **Tuesday, December 19** from 9 am-12 pm. We have a lot of quilts ready to complete and, if you can tie a knot, you can help us out! We even have jobs you can do sitting down. Think about stopping in to see what we do. If you are unable to join us and would like to sew at home, we have kits available.

Our Messiah quilts are sent to Lutheran World Relief and then sent to destinations around the world to be used by those less fortunate who are struggling with chronic poverty, illness, natural disaster, or conflict. The quilts can be used as a shield against the cold and rain or for warm bedding. They can be tent, floor covering or a wrap to hold a baby on a mother's back. The need is great and we could really use your extra hands!

Contact Kathy Mueller at 815-953-6601 at scpbklane@aol.com for more information. Hope to see you on **December 19**!

PRAYER TEAM (Thursdays at 10:15 am)

Prayer Team meets in-person in the Fireside Room on Thursday mornings. Come join in the privilege of praying for others! See Pastor Stier for more information.

MEAL TRAIN

We all know someone who may be overwhelmed during a difficult time. Perhaps an illness, surgery, loss of a family member or a job, or the challenge of a new baby. Messiah has formed a Meal Train for anyone who would like to prepare and deliver a meal to someone in need. To sign up for the Meal Train Team or request a meal, please visit mlcjoliet.org/meal-train.

DAYBREAK SHELTER



dinner to needy people at Daybreak Homeless Shelter in Joliet. The commitment is from 5:30-7:00 pm on the second Monday of each month.

Volunteers are needed to serve

A team of Messiah members meets at the shelter to set up and serve dinner. Food donation needs include canned fruit cocktail, juice, potato salad, buns, baked beans, and cookies. Sign up in the Narthex or online at: mlcjoliet.org/life-groups.

Messiah members will be serving at Daybreak on Monday, December 11.

MESSIAH MEN'S MINISTRY (3M Group)

Messiahs Men's Ministry, 3M Group, is taking a brief hiatus. Please watch for updates.

LIL LOVES MINISTRY



Lil Loves at Messiah aims to come alongside underserved parents and babies in the Tri-county area by providing **FREE** assistance with diapers and much needed baby supplies. Lil Loves is available on an appointment basis, and those interested can sign up at mlcjoliet.org/lil-loves-ministry. Just to give you an idea of how valuable this ministry is to our community, we were

able to help nearly 90 families from June through November!

Lil Loves thanks you for your donations of:

*Diapers and Pull-ups *Baby Lotion *Wipes *Baby Wash/Shampoo
*Toiletry items for the moms such as deodorant, toothpaste, feminine hygiene, etc.

Trial-sized toiletry items are especially appreciated, rather than full-sized. Please note that we are **no longer able to accept baby formula or used clothing** (these items are happily accepted by Living Alternatives). If you'd like to donate, please place your items in the black bin in the Narthex, and call the church office for more information!

MOPS (Mothers of Preschoolers)



Calling all moms from pregnancy onward to join a supportive community of moms! Each meeting has a different topic related to parenting, and childcare is provided. We get to know each other more, watch a video of a MOPS speaker, have a discussion, and end with a devotional. MOPS meets the 1st and 3rd Fridays every month September through May. Contact Amy at amy12miller@gmail.com with any questions.

MEMORY BEARS

Our Memory Bear group makes teddy bears out of the clothing of people who have passed away, to comfort the grieving. We also make and sell other bears and dogs to raise money for supplies and children's charities.

If you are interested in joining our group, we would love to have you! We always need sewers but not all the jobs require sewing. We meet on the fourth Tuesday of each month (except December) from 9 am-12:00 pm in Fellowship Hall. Please call Cindi Souza at 815-931-8478 for more information. Our next meeting will be on **Tuesday, January 23**.

MICRO PANTRY

Did you know that Messiah has a micro food pantry? This ministry is 100% donation-driven, and is maintained by the Evangelism Board. You can support this ministry through prayer, and through monetary or food donations. Contact the church office for more info, or leave your donations in the bin in the Narthex.



Messiah Gives Back!

PRAYER CHAIN

Messiah uses an email-based (this group does not meet in person) Prayer Chain comprised of people who continually pray for our members, community, and nation in times of crisis. Prayers are confidential and anonymous, as much as possible. You can make a difference through the gift of your prayers! Contact Cindi Souza at regency118@comcast.net or Pastor Dave Stier at pastor.stier@mlcjoliet.org to become a partner.



UPCOMING CHRISTMAS PERFORMANCES

Our Sanctuary Choir will perform its annual **Christmas Cantata** on Sunday, December 17 during the 8 and 9:30 am services.

Our **Sunday School Christmas Program** will take place on December 17 at 3 pm in the Family Life Center/FLC. This year's program will feature a puppet show. Please come out and support Messiah's youth!

INSIGHT ADULT BIBLE STUDY

Insight meets in Fellowship Hall on Sunday mornings at 9:30. We'd love for you to join us! Please note that Insight will NOT meet on December 3, 24, or 31.

O.W.L.S. (Older Wiser Loving Seniors)

O.W.L.S. meets the second Tuesday of every month from September through May, at noon. Entertainment, entrees, and beverages provided! Please **sign up in the Narthex** if you'd like to bring a side dish, salad, bread, or dessert.



We hope to see you at our next luncheon on December 12!

MLC OFFICE HOURS

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

WAYS TO GIVE

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

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

If you need assistance please email worship@mlcjoliet.org or call the church office at 815-741-4488.



Let Your Voice Be Heard!

Join the Sanctuary Choir

The Sanctuary Choir sings at the 9:30 Sunday services, from September through May, with special music at services during Advent, Christmas Eve, Ash Wednesday and Good Friday.

When the Children's Choir is performing, we perform at the 8 am service.

We rehearse on Thursday evenings from 7:15-8:45 pm.

We are always looking to welcome new members and hope to continue to grow this ministry at Messiah! There are no formal audition requirements, and being able to read music is not an issue... you will learn your part from practice and from hearing other voices in your section!

> For more information please contact our Sanctuary Choir Director, Herb Alexander, at halex12240@gmail.com.



MLC BULLETIN BOARD We are looking for folks to care for young children in the nursery during all Adult Insight Bible Study will not meet on three Sunday services. We are hoping for a team 12/03, 12/24, of people, so that no or 12/31, individual has to serve more than one Sunday per month. This is a PAID position. Contact Tom Bond for more info: tlbond7@hotmail.com ğ CHECK THE LOST & Found at Messiah The Church office will be BY 12/29. closed 12/25 & 01/01. *See p. 5* B Choir Christmas Cantata Altar Flowers Sunday, 12/17 at 8 & 9:30 services Sponsoring altar flowers is a wonderful way to honor a loved Sunday School Christmas Program one, commemorate a special event, and contribute to the beauty of our Sunday, 12/17 at 3pm worship space! The cost is \$25 per in the Family Life Center arrangement. Please call the church office to check on open dates & sign up! **Giving Statements** Please help Messiah be greener and

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

O Gree

DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES & BIRTHDAYS



13 - Terry & Pat Anderson
17 - Ken & Norina Schroth
29 - Marcus & Sarah Haussy



- 1 Gerald Witte
- 2 Eliza Ferenzi
- 3 Nikki Burke
- 4 Tamera Lambert Ruth Ann Ungeran Sandra Edmonds
- 5 Natahlia Carreno
- 7 Mark Burnetti
- 8 Herb Alexander
- 9 Erma Turner
- 10 Lynn Bond Lauren Enix William Calderon
- 14 Brian Wielbik

- 15 Monica Beavis
- 23 Paul Capps
- 26 Louis Mahalik Diane Zuehl
- 27 Coby Dykstra
- 28 Mel Mitchka
- 29 Deb Dole
- 30 Bev May Kaitlyn Garner
- 31 Don Cyborski Tessa Michalski



DECEMBER SERVERS

Counters

12/03/23 Stan Buhr, Joy McClintock

- 12/10/23 Judy Fowler, Norina Schroth
- 12/17/23 Dana Stier, Deb Dole
- 12/24/23 Harold Stier, Dan Stukel
- 12/31/23 Gayle Arko, Wayne Lauffer

Ushers 8:00

(8 am unless otherwise noted)

- 12/03/23 (10:30) Bill Unyi, Brandon Fiday, Jerry Buchenau, Dan Stukel
- 12/10/23 Don Cyborski, Paul Allen
- 12/17/23 Wayne Lauffer, Bob Miller
- 12/24/23 (10:00) needed
- 12/31/23 (10:00) Aimee Gipes, Brandon Fiday

Ushers 9:30

12/10/23	Jeff Holmes, Brandon Fiday
12/17/23	Roger Gordon, Brandon Fiday

Ushers 11:00

12/10/23	Tom & Tammie Eigenbauer
12/17/23	Gary Phillips, Brandon Fiday

Communion Assistants 8:00

(8 am unless otherwise noted)

- 12/03/23 (10:30) Randy & Laurel Ling
- 12/10/23 Julie Bajt, Christy Werner
- 12/17/23 Nancy Bertnik, Bev Korby
- 12/24/23 (10:00) Greg & Deb Dole
- 12/31/23 (10:00) needed

Communion Assistants 9:30

12/17/23 needed

Communion Assistants 11:00

12/17/23 needed

Readers 8:00

(8 am unless otherwise noted)

- 12/03/23 (10:30) Doug Potts
- 12/10/23 Randy Ling
- 12/17/23 Caleb Winters 12/24/23 (10:00) Tom Bond
- 12/31/23 (10:00) Tom Bond

Readers 9:30

12/10/23Jane Costello12/17/23Marcy Vickers

Readers 11:00

12/10/23 Matthew Fiday 12/17/23 Tom Bond

Greeters 8:00

(8 am unless otherwise noted)		
12/03/23	(10:30) John & Leah Kewenig,	
	Donna Stier, Kim Ciuffini	
12/10/23	Nancy Bertnik, Wayne Lauffer	
12/17/23	Bev Korby, Darlene Matison	
12/24/23	(10:00) Donna Stier	
12/31/23	(10:00) Gerry & Pat Boe	

Greeters 9:30

12/10/23	Beth Hohisel
12/17/23	Darryl & Cyndi Souza

Greeters 11:00

12/10/23	Brandon & Aubrey Fiday
12/17/23	Donna Stier, Beth Hohisel





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



Senior Pastor Kurt Hoover Associate Pastor David Stier Worship Coordinator Lloyd Evans Organist Rose Ann Sochan info@mlcjoliet.org

Choir Director Herb Alexander Children's Ministry Director Leslie McFarland Interim Student Ministry Administrator Kate Richmond Interim Office Coordinator Vicki Dallmann 815-741-4488