

MESSIAH MESSENGER



2026



From Pastor's Desk

Pastor Kurt Hoover

"...If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, 'Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.'" (John 7:37b-38)

In these words Jesus is echoing the words of Deuteronomy. You are going to get cisterns that you did not dig. Actually, the promise is greater than that. Cistern occurs 22 times in the Bible.

There are a couple of problems with cisterns. Cisterns dry up. There is not always water there. Cistern's crack and leak. Not very efficient and always in need of repair. And finally, water from a cistern is always stagnant. It is not living water like that of a stream. You always needed to boil it or run the risk of disease. It is a muddy and stale source of life.

Jesus doesn't use the word in the New Testament, but He implies it when He refers to "living water." This promise and reality is echoed on the Cross when Jesus says, "I thirst." Jesus knows all the ways in which we thirst. And all the ways in which we try to quench that thirst with dry stagnant water.

When I talk to the confirmation kids about baptism this is a helpful analogy. All of our attempts to deserve God's love or earn His presence are broken cisterns. When God connects us to Himself through a community of believers – that connection is not based on how much you can give, how pious you are, or what you have to offer.

What connects you to God? What replaces all the age-old coveting covenants are words and water. Words and a meal. Baptism is the living water from which Christ draws us in a way that we thirst no more. We are satisfied with what we have and yearn to help others keep what is theirs.

Our idols are removed and replaced with God himself. The mud pits that we have dug for ourselves are replaced with living water. And because Christ is present, out of us and into the lives of everyone we bump into - flows the same living water. You truly have received water for which you did not dig.

Enjoying the freedom of the King,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Pr. Kurt Hoover'.

pastor.hoover@mlcjoliet.org

Easter
Sunday



Celebrate Easter at Messiah!

Easter Breakfast is served from 7:30-10:45 a.m. in the FLC and is sponsored by our Head2Heart and FAM youth! Free will offering is appreciated. Here is just a taste of what you can look forward to:

A variety of delicious, homemade **Breakfast Casseroles** (vegetarian option too!)

**Sausage
Fresh Fruit**

**Biscuits & Gravy
Donuts/Pastries**

**Irish Potatoes
Coffee/Fruit Juices**

Easter Sunday Services

are at 8:30 and 10:45.

There is no Education Hour on Easter.

The church office will be closed on Easter Monday.



PARISH FELLOWSHIP

"March Madness" was an understatement with Parish Fellowship this year! We had six Lenten Soup Suppers & a few funerals/celebration of life events. Thank you to the boards who have each hosted a Soup Supper & to anyone who also provided soup, desserts and/or helped with the funerals! Please don't hang up when you see my phone number come up! I appreciate all your help!

Our coffee hour is running smoothly because of Joyce Pawlowski, who manages it! Thank you, Joyce! We also thank the volunteers who set up/clean up each Sunday. The new Coffee Hour Calendar will roll over in June and our volunteers will be "rolled over" for another year. If this is a problem, please let Joyce know at 630-890-1203 asap. She is also looking for new volunteers. Many hands make light work! Join our Sunday morning coffee hour volunteer pool volunteer and you may only be called once a month or less!

Thanks for your consideration on helping with Parish Fellowship!

- *Terry Anzalone*, Parish Fellowship Director, 815-531-9781



STEWARDSHIP

Living in the Light of the Resurrection

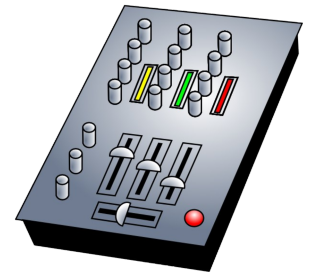
Easter celebrates the triumph of Christ over death and the hope of new life. Stewardship during this season invites us to respond to God's resurrection power by offering our time, talents, and treasures in service and generosity. As we share God's blessings with our church and community, we reflect the joy and abundance of the risen Christ in our lives.

- *Gerry Boe*, Stewardship Director, stewardship@mlcjoliet.org



WORSHIP & TECH TEAM

Recruiting Session



Can you carry a tune?
Want to learn how to work a sound board?
Then WE NEED YOU on the Worship & Tech Team!

Now's the perfect time to join! We are planning to host a recruitment/training session for anyone interested in learning more and will be setting a date soon, so please keep an eye out. Anyone can attend!

Questions? Reach out to Tech Coordinator, Nikolai Stier at tech@mlcjoliet.org or Worship Coordinator, Justin Brown at worship@mlcjoliet.org.



CARING FOR PASTORS MINISTRY

Our goal is to keep pastors engaged in ministry and to re-engage retired pastors in some way. Here is a story of success for both:

I reached out to a pastor in Iowa who I thought could help care for other pastors. He shared that he needed help. And then he shared that a retired pastor had invited him and others to go to a Lutheran camp for lunch. There were eight other pastors there. He went on to tell me that the lunch, and the conversations on the safety of other pastors, was the most healing thing in his life for the past year.

He shared that a few of them cried as they talked about their struggles, including him, while the other pastors cared for those who were in need. And when he thanked the host pastor, a retired pastor, he said, "This meal and the next three monthly meals, if you would like to come, are paid for from a Caring for Pastors Fund from a LCMC Church in Joliet, IL that John and Martha Nelson help run." He said he got in his car and cried.

He also told me he had been praying about whether to quit ministry or stay in it. After this meal with other pastors and the next three monthly meals, he decided to stay in ministry! Success! Not only a pastor helped, but a retired pastor who was called, coached and equipped through the Caring of Pastors Ministry.

We are reaching more and more pastors all the time. Thank you for your partnership to bring hope and encouragement to many.

Your Deployed Pastor,

- *Pastor John Nelson*

NEW

Grief Support Group

INTRODUCING... MESSIAH'S NEW GRIEF SUPPORT MINISTRY

Please join Messiah's new Grief Support Group on the first Thursday of every month at 1 p.m. in Room 101. This group offers caring and confidential space for those walking through loss.

You are not alone.

We are here to support one another.

-Pat Burke & Judy Fowler



WE ARE LOOKING FOR A FEW VOLUNTEERS TO HELP MESSIAH IN THE FOLLOWING AREAS:

Background Check Liaison

This would involve routine (monthly/quarterly) communication with our Lay Ministry, Children's, Christian Ed and Youth Directors to identify those needing background checks, maintaining a "background check log" document (Excel), and communicating background check needs with the office coordinator.

Daybreak Shelter

For the first time in 35 years we have had to pause our once-per-month commitment serving dinner to those less fortunate at Daybreak Homeless Shelter in Joliet. We are looking for a volunteer (or two) willing to serve as ministry leader which would entail coordinating volunteers & food donations, light shopping and communicating with Daybreak staff as needed.

Sanctuary Care

We'd love to have a volunteer who would like to take charge of cleaning up the pews and organizing pew supplies in our Sanctuary once per week... Making sure hymnals and pew Bibles are present in every pew and that there is also a supply of Connect Cards, envelopes and pens.

Stay-N-Play Ambassador

Stay-N-Play, Messiah's FREE weekly play group, opens our gym for kids five and under. Stay-N-Play meets every Tuesday morning (September-May) from 9:30-11. This important ministry is at risk of closing its doors after the end of this season if we are unable to recruit hosts to help set up toys, make coffee, greet our guests and answer questions. Guests are required to supervise their own children!

**FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE REACH OUT TO LAY MINISTRY DIRECTOR,
PAT BURKE AT LAYMIN@MLCJOLIET.ORG OR CALL THE FRONT OFFICE.**



FOR THE LADIES OF MESSIAH

*Women's Social
Event*



Bring a friend!

Saturday, April 18th 1-4 p.m.
in Fellowship Hall.
Please bring a snack to share.
RSVP to Beth Hohisel at 815-735-7897



Women's Ministry 



*Women's
Spring Luncheon*



*Friendship
God's Gift to our
Hearts*

Salad Bar
Games
Prizes

Sunday, May 3rd
Noon - 2 p.m.
Childcare provided.

Get your tickets
April 19th & 26th

Bring a Friend

How Do You
Walk the Walk
You Talk?



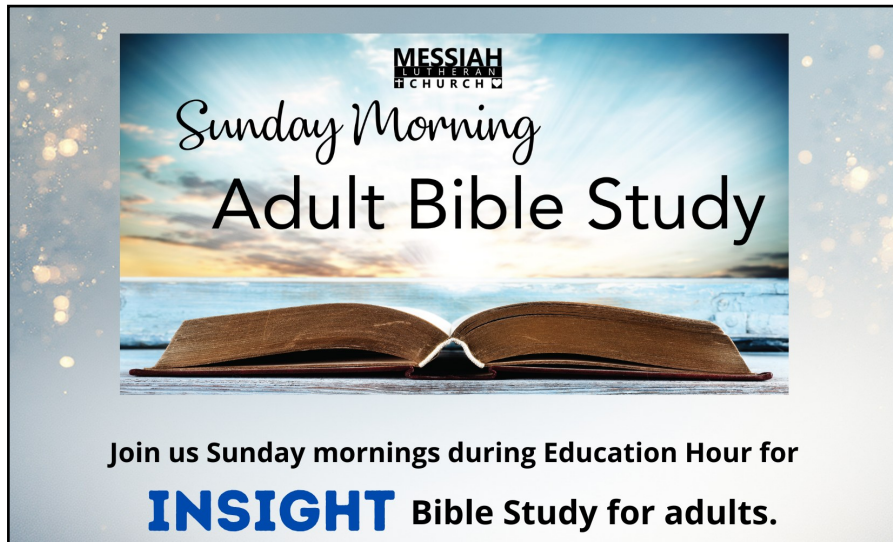
WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON BIBLE STUDY

Our Wednesday afternoon Bible Study begins a new six-week session on **April 8th** from 1-2:30 p.m. in the Fireside Room. We'll follow the book, "How Do You Walk the Walk You Talk," by Kay Arthur. This study of vital passages from Ephesians will help you discover what God says about the lifestyle of a true believer, and will equip you to live in a manner worthy of your calling. Please purchase your book on your own. Contact Laurel Ling if you have questions.

OPPORTUNITIES TO GET INVOLVED!

ADULT "INSIGHT" BIBLE STUDY EDUCATION HOUR

Join us in Fellowship Hall, Sunday mornings during Education Hour.



ALTAR FLOWERS - Sign up in the Narthex

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



FAITH & BODY THURSDAYS

Lace up your shoes and enjoy a walk in the Family Life Center, weekly on Thursdays (Sept -May) from 9-10 a.m. Everyone walks at their own pace and it's a great time for fellowship.

LIL LOVES MINISTRY



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

Lil Loves thanks you for your donations of:

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

Trial-sized toiletry items are especially appreciated, rather than full-sized. If you'd like to donate, please place your items in the black bin in the Narthex. Our Lil Loves Ministry has helped many, many families in need with care packages thanks to your loving generosity!



WE ARE NOT ABLE TO ACCEPT FORMULA OR USED ITEMS. Formula and used baby clothes are happily accepted at Living Alternatives Pregnancy Resource Center at 903 Infantry Dr., Ste. 600, in Joliet.

MEMORY BEARS

Messiah's Memory Bears Group meets at the church from 9 a.m.-noon, on the 4th Tuesday of each month. Did you know that we make stuffed teddy bears (and dogs) out of the clothing of people who have passed away, to comfort the grieving? We would love to have you join us! We have jobs that do not require sewing. Text Cindi Souza at 815-931-8478 or email regency118@comcast.net for more info. Hope to see you on **April 28th**!



MICRO PANTRY

Did you know that Messiah has TWO food pantries? Our indoor pantry is in the hallway across from the offices and our outdoor "Blessing Box" is on the sidewalk right outside the office! This ministry is 100% donation-driven, and you can help to support it through prayer, monetary and/or nonperishable food donations. Please leave your nonperishable food donations in the bin in the Narthex. **NO EXPIRED ITEMS, PLEASE.**

OFFICE HOURS & PUBLICATION DEADLINES

The office is staffed Monday-Friday from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Saturdays and evenings are by appointment. **Sunday bulletin** material must be received in the front office by 2 p.m. each Tuesday. Material for the **newsletter** is due the 20th of each month.



OWLS

OWLS meets the 2nd Tuesday of each month at noon, September through May. Be sure to sign up in the Narthex.

MESSIAH
LUTHERAN
CHURCH

Older, Wiser, Loving Seniors

OWLS

Tuesday, April 14th
at noon

Ham dinner and beverages will be provided.
Sign up in the Narthex to let us know a headcount and
what appetizer/finger food, salad, rolls or dessert you will bring!

*Our April luncheon will feature a painting craft
led by Linda & Wayne Zoellick!*



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

PRAYER TEAM

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

QUILTERS

Messiah Quilters meet monthly on the 3rd Tuesday from 9–2. 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 and see what we do. If you are unable to join us and would like to sew at home, we have kits available and can show you how easy it is to sew a quilt top together.



Contact Kathy Mueller at 815-953-6601 or scpbklane@aol.com for more information or any questions you may have. Thank you to everyone who supports us with time, materials and monetary donations! Hope to see you on **April 21st**!



SANCTUARY CHOIR

Our Sanctuary Choir sings on Sunday mornings at the 8:30 service, September through May. Rehearsals take place on Thursday evenings from 7:15-8:45. We are always looking for new members! If you'd like to join in, please contact our Sanctuary Choir Director, Herb Alexander, at halex12240@gmail.com.

STAY-N-PLAY

Stay-N-Play is our **FREE** weekly play group that opens our gym for kids five and under along with their parent/guardian. We meet on Tuesday mornings (September-May) in the FLC from 9:30-11! Please like our Facebook page ([MLC Stay-N-Play Playgroup](#)) for additional information, and share with your friends and neighbors!

Stay-N-Play is in need of hosts! Contact Sherri Unyi if you are available to serve as an MLC Stay-N-Play Ambassador to help set up toys, make coffee, greet our guests and answer questions. Guests are required to supervise their own children.

WORD PLAY! PODCAST



God Has a Word for You!

Hosted by Pastor Kurt Hoover and Nikolai Stier, you'll find a new podcast each weekday morning that delves into the Scripture readings for the coming Sunday, focusing on one word in each passage. We'll also feature occasional guest pastors from our area and other LCMC members.

Tune in as they exchange insights into the Word of God... along with some nerdy banter! Each 7–8-minute podcast is available on Spotify here:



Jesus' words of grace are enough for you (2 Cor. 12:9).
Jesus says, "You have all you need. You are not missing anything."

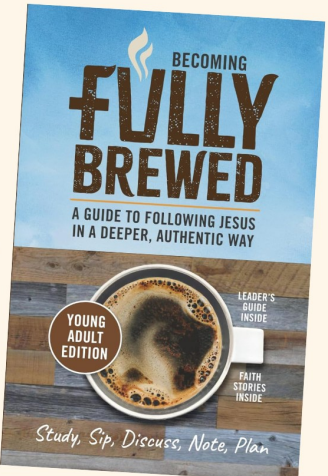
YOUNG ADULT BIBLE STUDY

IGNITE!

YOUNG ADULT BIBLE STUDY

FOR THOSE POST-HIGH SCHOOL AND OLDER

SUNDAY MORNINGS DURING EDUCATION HOUR IN CLASSROOM #101



MESSIAH KIDZ CLUB (K-5TH GRADE)

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



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

We'll send reminders/notifications about Sunday School and events!

CHILDREN'S CHOIR

Children's Choir will have their final performance this season on **May 10th** during the 10:45 service. Please contact Season Lawler for more information.



J-CHURCH

J-Church is the 3rd Sunday of every month (except December) at 10:45 in the Family Life Center!



MESSIAH KIDS WEDNESDAYS (MKW)

MKW is Wednesdays from 6-8 p.m. through April 8th, 2026. For more info, contact Beth at bhohisel@hotmail.com or (815) 735-7897.

SUNDAY SCHOOL EDUCATION HOUR

Pre-K through 5th grade groups meet at 9:40 upstairs in the Kidz Club, 6th-8th in the Youth Room!

Register here:



VBS 2026

...an Irish adventure through Psalm 23, providing hope to an anxious generation.



MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR
EMERALD CROSSING VBS!
JUNE 22-26
REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN!



MESSIAH
LUTHERAN
CHURCH

There will be a workshop for all **VBS volunteers** on Sunday, June 7th during Education Hour in Fellowship Hall.

Want to learn more about volunteering to work with our AMAZING VBS TEAM? Reach out to VBS Director, Stephanie Knudsen-Feehan at vbs@mlcjoliet.org.

For more info on ministries for kids pre-K through 5th grade, email Leslie McFarland, Children's Min. Director, at childrensmin@mlcjoliet.org or Megan Kuhn, Christian Ed. Director, at christianed@mlcjoliet.org.

MESSIAH STUDENT MINISTRIES (6th-12th GRADE)

BIBLE STUDY EDUCATION HOUR (SUNDAY MORNINGS)

- 6th-8th grade Bible Study meets in the Youth Room at 9:40!
- Bible Study for high schoolers is in the Fireside Room!

FRIENDS AND MENTORS (FAM) FOR HIGH SCHOOLERS

Mid-week Bible Study and much more! Connect with peers, play games, learn life skills, pray, sing praise and enjoy fellowship! FAM runs Wednesdays from 6-8 p.m.!

HEAD 2 HEART

Our H2H (Confirmation) program for 6th-8th graders Wednesdays from 6-8 p.m.!

For more info on ministries for students 6th through 12th grade, email Kersten Stier, Youth Director, at stumin@mlcjoliet.org.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

JOLET AREA CHRISTIAN WOMEN

You and your friends are invited to Joliet Christian Women's upcoming luncheon in Messiah's Fellowship Hall on Wednesday, **April 15th** at 11:15 a.m. \$22.00 includes a catered lunch, a special guest speaker/presentation and good fellowship. April will feature a demonstration on how to make beautiful pottery from discarded items.

RSVP by April 8th by contacting Barb at 815-439-2076 or mrs.brutus56@gmail.com, or call Sonya at 815-727-1626.

Check out their website at <https://www.stonecroft.org/>.

Next luncheon is May 20th.

NAPERVOICE

Naperville's philanthropic choir with the mission "Sing well. Do good."

SPRING CONCERT 2026

WE JOURNEY TOGETHER: THE MUSIC OF LIFE



**Sunday, April 19th at 4:00 p.m.
Grace United Methodist Church
300 E. Gartner Road, Naperville**

**Please select
Herb Alexander
as the credited
choir member.**

- Philip Spencer** Founding Conductor/Artistic Director
- Shelley May Hutchison** Collaborative Percussionist
- Dr. Zachary Zwahlen** Collaborative Pianist
- Guest Mariachi Ensemble** Los Caballos Dorados, Jordan Yi and Tony Ozuna, conductors, from Metea Valley High School

Proceeds benefit **A.D.O.P.T. Pet Shelter**
Learn more about the organization at www.adoptpetshelter.org
Go to napervoice.org for more information and to purchase tickets, or scan here:



VIRTUAL WORSHIP AND SUNDAY BULLETINS

Can't make it to church this week? The 8:30 a.m. service is live-streamed online on our Facebook and YouTube pages. Links to both are at mlcjoliet.org/worship (please scroll to the bottom of the page). You can also view or print the bulletin, if you'd like to follow along!



Giving Statements

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



MESSIAH
LUTHERAN
CHURCH

ONLINE giving



Two convenient ways to give online:

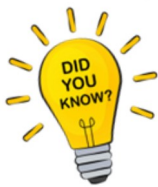
- 1) On our website at www.mlcjoliet.org/give.
- 2) Church Center app on your phone or tablet.



Fast

Simple

Secure



Download the Church Center app! It's not just for online giving.

- You can also:
- View our church calendar!
 - Receive event notifications & reminders from MLC directly to your phone (with notifications enabled)!
 - Register for events that request sign-ups!

APRIL ANNIVERSARIES & BIRTHDAYS



- 1 - Mikey Snider
Lina Spielman
- 3 - Nancy Bugnits
- 8 - Susan Kavich
Alexander Puckett
Nathan Puckett
- 10 - Patti Anderson
Dan Stukel

- 11 - Leah Kewenig
- 12 - Laurel Ling
Izak Richmond
- 13 - Mike Brown
Bob Childers
- 14 - Luke Hester
Caleb Winters
- 15 - Marty Hohisel
Doug Potts
Dave Torkelson
- 16 - Bob Zirzow
- 18 - Katy Hester
- 19 - Lyla Luebbing
- 21 - Claire Sullivan

- 22 - Judith Motley
Richard Smrekar
- 23 - Colin Sullivan
Bill Unyi
- 24 - Marjorie McClure
Tom Spielman
- 26 - Crystal Harrison
- 27 - Cheryl Rogers
Carol Smrekar
- 28 - Jeff Holmes
- 29 - Stephanie Knudsen
Nathan Southcomb
- 30 - Laura Snider

Happy Anniversary

- 5 - Mark & Lori Burnett
- 10 - Gerald & Susan Kavich
- 15 - Roger & Carol Gordon
- 17 - Ray & Sharon Anderson
- 26 - John & Jan Mueller
- 28 - Richard & Lynn Tapella



APRIL SERVERS

Counters

- 04/05/26 Gayle Arko, Bob Miller
- 04/12/26 Stan Buhr, Joy McClintock
- 04/19/26 Judy Fowler, Zach Hoelscher
- 04/26/26 Ken Skinner, Dan Stukel

Communion Assistants 8:30

- 04/05/26 Nancy Bertnik, Angie Mitchka,
Cindi Souza
- 04/12/26 Paul Allen, Rowan Hedden,
Joy McClintock
- 04/19/26 Marvinna Allen, Bev Korby,
Joy McClintock
- 04/26/26 Tom & Lynn Bond, Jane Costello

Communion Assistants 10:45

- 04/05/26 Terry Anzalone, Darryl Hoelscher,
Suzy Prybell
- 04/12/26 Terry Anzalone, Linda Hallberg,
Darryl Hoelscher
- 04/19/26 Terry Anzalone, two needed
- 04/26/26 Terry Anzalone, two needed

Greeters 8:30

- 04/05/26 Marty Hohisel, one needed
- 04/12/26 Nancy Bertnik, Wayne Lauffer
- 04/19/26 Marty Hohisel, one needed
- 04/26/26 Pat Boe, Bev Korby

Greeters 10:45

- 04/05/26 Lynn Tapella, one needed
- 04/12/26 Donna Stier, one needed
- 04/19/26 two needed
- 04/26/26 two needed

Readers 8:30

- 04/05/26 Jane Costello
- 04/12/26 Abby Allen
- 04/19/26 Paul Allen
- 04/26/26 Doug Potts



Readers 10:45

- 04/05/26 Doug Potts
- 04/12/26 Linda Hallberg
- 04/19/26 needed
- 04/26/26 Molly Hoover

Ushers 8:30

- 04/05/26 Jerry Buchenau, Dan Stukel
- 04/12/26 Bill Unyi, Alan Costello
- 04/19/26 Wayne Lauffer, Bob Miller
- 04/26/26 Craig Stone, Paul Allen

Ushers 10:45

- 04/05/26 Gary Phillips, Jeff Holmes
- 04/12/26 Tom & Tammie Eigenbauer
- 04/19/26 Jeff Holmes, Josh Johnke
- 04/26/26 Darryl Hoelscher, Gary Phillips¹³



HELP! We are looking for help in updating our church history. We have the booklets from our 75th and 100th anniversaries, but need to update the last 25 years and maybe even collect more information dating back further! So, if you have any photos, flyers, letters, programs, booklets of the people and events that have transpired over the last 25 years here at Messiah, we would love to see them. If you have a memory

you would like to share, we would love to hear it directly from you or you can write it down for us. If you were part of an event or activity and have a great story or fun memory, we would love to hear that also!

We are gathering this information now. A basket labeled "Messiah Memories" is provided in the Narthex for you to drop your info in. If you have photos (or other memorabilia) and want them back, include your name and phone and we will return them to you. Also, if you are able to identify any or all of the people in a photo, that would be wonderful!

Original charter members of Hauge Norwegian Evangelical Lutheran Church:

Nels Nelson	Jacob Wetteland	Ole Eddy	Iver Eddy	A. Thorson
G. Stnerson	Alfred Johnson	Austen Jones	Christ Erickson	

Are you related to any of these people? Let us know! Be sure to check out the historical photos on the Community Board in the Narthex. You can contact Kathy Mueller, 815-953-6601 or scpbklane@aol.com for more information or questions on Messiah's 125th Anniversary!

Our 125th Anniversary: 1901-2026!

Our story continues --- We are Relocating!

In 1977, a study was conducted that determined it was necessary to relocate to be a more effective church. In early 1978, Jim Johnson and Marv Jothan were elected to find an appropriate site with the limits of I-55 on the west, Larkin Avenue on the east, I-80 on the south and US 52 on the north. On May 30, 1979, five acres at the corner of Houbolt Road and Jefferson Street was purchased for \$137,000. This was the result of months of tough negotiations, member gifts, a loan from the American Lutheran Church, loans from other churches and a bank loan. The building committee of Marv Jothan, Jim Johnson, Ginny Strode, Louris Roath and Robert Ireland then began the work of securing an architect.

A \$325,132 contract with Winsted Builders for a 5,780 sq ft building was finally negotiated and it all came together with a ground-breaking ceremony on September 7, 1979.

In February of 1980, Messiah received an offer from Ted Benson to purchase a 1 ½ story frame home for \$1.00 if we moved it from his property on the northwest corner of Houbolt and Jefferson. A month later, a second house was offered Messiah with the same terms. Both houses were moved for a cost of \$15,652 in the fall of 1980 and combined together to become our new parsonage (later to be the Gathering House).

On June 29, 1980, the final services were held at the Hunter Street Church. A motor caravan went from Hunter Street to the new property at Houbolt and Jefferson, for the conclusion of the services. The next Sunday the congregation began services at the Troy-Shorewood School which continued for nearly a year.

The Hunter Street church property sold in July of 1980 for \$74,714 to Will County Baptist Temple, with those funds earmarked for the new parsonage. This required Pastor Glesne and his family to rent a house on Eden Lane (behind the church property) as the new parsonage was not ready yet.

Palm Sunday 1981 was the first worship service in the new facility, but it was far from finished. Members brought in chairs from home for the church service, the floor was concrete and other furnishings sparse.

Construction had numerous problems. The Glesne's rental home was sold before the parsonage was ready, so they moved in with the Jochen's on a temporary basis (parents and two children) and their household items stored in parishioner's garages. They stayed with the Jochen's until September of 1981. Money continued to be a problem, but somehow the needs were met. The members of the congregation supplied many hours of labor and many dollars so that the church could be finished. The actual dollars for this project can never be accurately accounted for.

During the summer of 1981, the Reverend Dan Diekhoff, tentmaker priest and bricklayer laid more than 21,000 bricks around the church. His price was \$1.00 plus lodging and meals. His effort saved the church many dollars. Congregational members mixed mortar, raised scaffolding, cleaned brick joints and stacked bricks.

September 25, 1981 was the dedication of the church and parsonage and the cornerstone was set at that time.

In 1981, a new constitution was adopted, we helped sponsor refugee families into the Joliet area and a youth director position discussed. Pews were ordered and installed, dividers for Sunday School rooms, carpeting and tiling of floors, a used 30-year old organ, bell tower/bell, audio system were purchased and concrete/blacktop done. The church membership continued to grow and it became apparent the new church was not big enough. Sunday School classes were held in the parsonage's family room, living room, study and bedrooms plus all areas within the church. The study to relocate was apparently correct as when Messiah moved to its new location, membership was growing.

In October of 1981, the position of Lay Pastoral Assistant was created and John Kirkeeng was brought on staff as Messiah's first Youth Director. In 1986, Bill Ziech was called to the position and served Messiah until 2000.

During the late 1970's, while still at Hunter Street, a lot of things were still happening at Messiah. In 1976, a congregational talent night was held. In 1977 the Ruth Circle held a mother-daughter salad bar with a bridal show of the past. Also during those years, Pastor Glesne had a weekly radio ministry on WJOL from 8:45-9:00 a.m. as part of the church's "Reaching Out" emphasis. An Easter breakfast and paper drive was hosted by the youth, and a church picnic was held at Dellwood Park with a worship service and games/recreation in the afternoon. Ken Skinner and Bob Robertson organized a softball team with the Joliet Park District and they had a successful 8 win/5 loss season in 1979 under the coaching of Bob Phillips. This team continued until the mid-80's. A group called "The Galileans" (married 20 and 30 year olds) held progressive dinners, hayrides, caroling, ice skating, mini golfing, bowling, retreats at Lutherdale and hiking events.

In 1979, Messiah wanted to reach out to their new neighbors on the west side of Joliet and let them know of our presence, so we participated in the Shorewood Fest for several years with a float in the parade and a booth that sold crafts, bakery, candy and plants.

A new piano was purchased in July 1980 for the new church and was stored at the home of T. Lamar Wagon. The family agreed to keep the piano and do any necessary upkeep, including a special insurance rider on the piano until the new Sanctuary was ready for it.

Messiah continued to grow. Worship attendance in 1981 was 193; 1983 was 251. In June of 1983, the congregation voted to purchase an additional five acres immediately south of the church and a study begun to determine the feasibility of an addition to the church.

To be continued next month. Stay tuned!



You're invited to worship with us this

Easter

04/02 ~ Maundy Thursday 7:00 p.m.
 04/03 ~ Good Friday Tenebrae Service
 & Choir Cantata 7:00 p.m.
 04/05 ~ Easter Sunday 8:30 & 10:45 a.m.

Easter breakfast is served
 beginning at 7:30!

MESSIAH
LUTHERAN
CHURCH
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 815-741-4488
 www.MLCJoliet.org

Senior Pastor Kurt Hoover
 Bookkeeper Sherril Unyi
 Building Liaison Kate Richmond
 Children's Choir Director Season Lawler
 Children's Ministry Director Leslie McFarland
 Office Coordinator Vicki Dallmann

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

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